

REGIONAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

ANNUAL REPORT
2021 - 2022

INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS

REGIONAL SUCCESS



REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ALLIANCE



GREATER
MANKATO
GROWTH



Welcome to the 2021-2022 Regional Economic Development Alliance (REDA) Annual Report. We invite you to learn more about the collective efforts of the Alliance that focus on a common vision and work towards regional objectives. 2022 marks thirteen years of this public/private partnership that continues to strengthen and

position our region well.

This report features highlights related to strategic activities outlined in the REDA joint services agreement in the areas of business retention and expansion, new enterprise and emerging business development, new business development and marketplace enhancements. Additionally, this document provides data related to the economic landscape of the region. Our team has been working hard to promote our region. please enjoy a recap of some of our events and marketing efforts over the past year.

Please join us in celebrating the work of the partnership over the past year in addition to the future opportunities of this region in leveraging our strengths and continuing to transform what we can accomplish together.

Opportunity Lives Here!

Jessica Beyer

President & CEO
Greater Mankato Growth, Inc

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The Team

At Greater Mankato Growth, we work for all of the participating communities of the Regional Economic Development Alliance every day. Think of the staff listed here as an extension of the participating communities. They work to provide data, connect resources and retain and attract vital businesses across the region. Because the staff works with many communities, businesses and organizations, they have a pulse on what is happening across the marketplace and can leverage resources and knowledge for the benefit of all.

Additional staff members contribute to Regional Economic Development Alliance and participate on an as-needed basis alongside the core group that is listed below.



Mayor Mark Dehen

Chair, Regional Economic Development Alliance



Keri Johnson

Vice Chair, Regional Economic Development Alliance



Ryan Vesey

Economic Development & Research Manager



Andy Wilke

Business Development & Public Affairs Director



Courtney Malone

Economic Development Marketing Manager



Sam Ziegler

Director of GreenSeam

*Individual
Strengths.
Regional
Success.*



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Note: All information presented in this report is for the period of September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022 unless otherwise noted.

Why We Partner



OBJECTIVE

To retain and grow the primary economic base of the Greater Mankato Regional Marketplace through business retention, new enterprise, emerging business development and new business development.

PURPOSE

It has become broadly accepted, embraced and understood that economic prosperity and activities do not stop at jurisdictional boundaries. Rather our economic and community prosperity lies in the success of our collective and immediate marketplace.

For this reason, the parties wish to facilitate economic development of the communities that make up the Greater Mankato Regional Marketplace. This endeavor will offer a “forum to strategically facilitate regional assets and opportunities” for the purpose of business development, and will enable us to enhance and develop our future economic prosperity.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Economic prosperity
- Atmosphere of cooperation
- Unique strengths and characteristics
- Direct technical assistance
- Efficient and effective delivery
- Supportive Actions

“Ryan from Greater Mankato Growth was one of our first calls when we were first exploring our startup’s concept and potential. He pointed us to organizational and grant resources and went above and beyond by directly connecting us with numerous leaders including Sam from GreenSeam. I’ve known Ryan for many years and he has always been knowledgeable and willing to go the extra mile.”

Colette Drager – President of the Meatery

Alliance Partners

The Regional Economic Development Alliance is comprised of five cities and two counties with Greater Mankato Growth serving as the facilitator. All partners and representatives are committed to serving all of the cities in the Mankato - North Mankato Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Advisory Committee

Chair: Mark Dehen

Vice Chair: Keri Johnson

President & CEO: Jessica Beyer



Board Chair

David Krause, Pioneer Bank

Staff Representative:

Jessica Beyer, President & CEO



MANKATO

Elected Official:

Mike Laven, Council Member

Staff Representative:

Susan Arntz, City Manager

Affiliated Staff:

Paul Vogel, Director of Community Development
Courtney Kramlinger, Economic Development Specialist



BLUE EARTH COUNTY

Elected Official:

Mark Piepho, Commissioner

Staff Representative:

Bob Meyer, County Administrator



EAGLE LAKE

Elected Official:

Jim Beal, EDA Commissioner

Staff Representative:

Jennifer Bromeland, City Administrator



NORTH MANKATO

Elected Official:

Mark Dehen, Mayor

Staff Representative:

Kevin McCann, City Administrator

Affiliated Staff:

Mike Fischer, Community Development Director
Matt Lassonde, City Planner



NICOLLET COUNTY

Elected Official:

Jack Kolars, Commissioner

Staff Representative:

Mandy Landkamer, County Administrator



LAKE CRYSTAL

Elected Official:

Todd Wiens, Mayor

Staff Representative:

Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator

Affiliated Staff:

Angie Stier, Economic Development Specialist



SAINT PETER

Elected Official:

Keri Johnson, Council Member

Staff Representative:

Todd Prafke, City Administrator

Affiliated Staff:

Ben Baker, Community Development Director



Region Nine Development Commission serves as a regional liaison.

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Mankato, Minnesota, taken at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue. The city below is densely packed with buildings, mostly multi-story brick structures. There are many trees, some with autumn-colored leaves. A river or large body of water is visible in the distance on the right side. The overall scene is a high-angle, wide-area shot of an urban landscape.

Applied for and received a **\$1.9 million** grant through the Main Street Economic Revitalization Program. All REDA Cities as well as Nicollet and Courtland are included in the eligible grant corridors.

Ran a 7-billboard campaign in the Minneapolis market targeting resident relocation to Greater Mankato resulting in **1.2 million impressions**

Assisted Saint Peter with becoming a **Telecommuter Forward!** certified community

Worked with the Blue Earth County Treatment Court System to establish multiple relationships with employers in the region for second chance hiring including one relationship that resulted in a **nationwide** pilot program for second chance hiring at all their locations

Launched GreaterMankatoTalent.com with a playbook of resources for recruitment & retention

1,323 page views since Launch

**REGIONAL
HIGHLIGHTS**



Every \$1 committed to REDA by public partners in 2021
resulted in \$198 of private capital investment in the region

Helped Minnesota State University, Mankato
with their “Launch Your Career,
Right Here” campaign targeting existing
students with information regarding career
opportunities and talent livability elements of
our community

Assisted with a relocation of a business
that produces BMX equipment for local and
international competitions including the
Olympics to Mankato

Had 12 meetings with site selectors from
the Chicago and Minneapolis markets to introduce
the Greater Mankato region to develop long-term
relationships. These virtual meetings proved to
be more beneficial than trade shows

Created a new email distribution regarding workforce resources with
over 360 business representatives included

Strategic Activities

Over the last nine months, Greater Mankato Growth staff implemented the four strategic areas of the REDA Joint Services Agreement and REDA work: Business Retention & Expansion, New Enterprise & Emerging Business Development, New Business Development, and Marketplace Enhancements. Below are highlights of these efforts.

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

1. Launched three new KEYC videos targeted at assisting businesses with talent development
2. Launched GreaterMankatoTalent.com with a playbook of resources for recruitment & retention
3. Organized the 2021 Hybrid Tour of Manufacturing
4. Coordinated representatives from the Restaurant & Hospitality industry to create a new task force for MAPS
5. Met with Alumacraft alongside Saint Peter staff to discuss workforce recruitment strategies
6. Consulted with local manufacturers on workplace inclusivity amenities resulting in at least one manufacturer installing foot washing stations in their facility
7. Helped develop an IT work-based learning program between Taylor Corporation and Mankato Area Public Schools
8. Worked with the Blue Earth County Treatment Court System to establish multiple relationships with employers in the region for second chance hiring including one relationship that resulted in a nationwide pilot program for second chance hiring at all their locations
9. Met with multiple businesses to conduct job posting audits (exploring where their jobs were posted, how difficult they were to find, ways the postings themselves could be improved, and what other companies in the industry had done)
10. Created a new email distribution regarding workforce resources with over 360 business representatives included
11. Shared the Good Food Access Program with all the small and minority owned grocery stores in the area
12. Connected a local food ingredient manufacturer with a value-added production facility following a request from DEED
13. Helped multiple area manufacturers to establish a relationship with Blue Earth County Employment services to increase refugee and immigrant recruitment
14. Worked with Walmart Distribution Center and the Travel Center to create a plan to get trucks to park at the Travel Center and off the road
15. Assisted Region Nine Development Commission with information regarding recreation marketing
16. Provided information to First Farmers & Merchants Bank to support the development of Victory Drive
17. Cumulated marketplace information for a local jeweler to help increase Rolex investment into the region
18. Ran a LinkedIn ad campaign sharing talent support resources with businesses
19. Provided a dental practice an average cost per square foot so they could write a lease for their new space

NEW ENTERPRISE & EMERGING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

1. Revitalized the local 1 Million Cups program, returning the program to 20-40 attendees bringing the event to 70% pre COVID averages
2. Joined the planning team with the 2021 Global Entrepreneurship Week coordinating a webinar and an Entrepreneurship pitch event with Junior Achievement for students at Mankato Area Public Schools
3. Assisted HACER and Minnesota State University, Mankato with the Creando Ando program providing entrepreneurial education to Hispanic and Latino individuals
4. Assisted with planning and writing a letter of support for Minnesota State University, Mankato's renewal of the Launch Minnesota application and joined the core working group for implementing the program
5. Joined the City of Mankato and African Fashion on a presentation to Adult Basic Education students on owning businesses
6. Connected a local student entrepreneur with Launch Minnesota resources to fund his R&D research
7. Worked with an SBDC client to research lease rates to support the acquisition of an investment warehouse
8. Supported 50+ new businesses in providing them media contacts to help grow and expand their business
9. Worked with two new businesses to be semifinalists in the MN Cup

Assisted the South Central Regional Center locate space for:



Self-Storage
Facility



Indoor Golf
Simulator Business



Mental Health
Practice



ADA Compliant
Office to Write &
Publish Books



South Central Regional Center



"Entrepreneurship is not done in a vacuum. A community needs cheerleaders and champions in order to foster creativity for entrepreneurs to succeed. Greater Mankato Growth is that conduit that connects the entire region together "raising the tide in lifting all boats." The University and the SBDC celebrates our partnership with them. "

*– Mike Hahn,
Small Business Development Center*

Strategic Activities Continued...

NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



1. Assisted with a relocation of a business that produces BMX equipment for local and international competitions including the Olympics to Mankato



Est. 2018

2. Assisted EON (Employee Ownership Network) with an expansion of a physical office location to Mankato

3. Had 12 meetings with site selectors from the Chicago and Minneapolis markets to introduce the Greater Mankato region to develop long term relationships. These virtual meetings proved to be more beneficial to trade shows
4. A new distribution company was completely operational and added 20,000 sf to their operations with a presence in Mankato/North Mankato

5. Helped Central McGowan with an expansion into the former Fastenal building



6. Created an investment packet to support private investment for the City Center hotel redevelopment
7. Worked with two local developers on plans for special warehouse/building developments
8. Hosted the Greater Mankato Real Estate Summit with more than 110 real estate professionals, investors, contractors, and other leaders
9. Made multiple contacts to Crisp & Green highlighting the demographics of the community following a lead from a site selection consultant. Crisp & Green announced their plans to expand to Mankato in April



MARKETPLACE ENHANCEMENTS

1. Coordinated meetings with REDA Partners and small cities to discuss strategies for utilization of ARPA funds
2. Assisted Saint Peter with becoming a Telecommuter Forward! certified community
3. Conducted a City Center Vacancy Analysis in order to maintain Minnesota Main Street eligibility and access to grant funding. The city center saw a vacancy rate of only 7% excluding properties that were intentionally left vacant for the purpose of redevelopment
4. Coordinated a meeting between regional housing stakeholders and the Minnesota Multi Housing Association
5. Organized a focus group between business representatives and Central High School to create new skills-based portfolios for graduating students
6. Worked with Anisa Hajimumin, then Assistant Commissioner for Refugee and Immigrant Affairs, to support the establishment of the Office of New Americans
7. Applied for and received a \$1.9 million grant through the Main Street Economic Revitalization Program. All REDA Cities as well as Nicollet and Courtland are included in the eligible grant corridors
8. Ran two LinkedIn ad campaigns designed to encourage former attendees of Greater Mankato colleges/universities to return to the community
9. Provided information for a Hotel Study exploring the Norwood Inn redevelopment
10. Coordinated advocacy efforts to fund a state trail connecting Mankato to St Peter on HWY 22
11. Connected the City of Good Thunder with multiple developers to discuss potential reuse plans for the school
12. Helped organize the “My Story” event at the regional Career Expo
13. Helped Minnesota State University, Mankato with their “Launch Your Career, Right Here” campaign targeting existing students with information regarding career opportunities and talent livability elements of our community
14. Updated the Major Employer survey
15. Assisted the State of Minnesota with the search for a new COVID-19 testing site
16. Worked with Minnesota Council of Churches to strategize how to utilize a grant they received to help connect East African youth with employment
17. Joined a MAPS task force designed to determine strategies to capitalize on the district’s strengths to increase enrollment
18. Ran a 7-billboard campaign in the Minneapolis market targeting resident relocation to Greater Mankato with a successful campaign of 1.2 million ad placement
19. Worked with Region 9 to strategize elements of the new Eagle Lake Comprehensive Plan

DID YOU HEAR?

Greater Mankato was the 1st partner in the 2nd round to accept applications and the 3rd overall

Marketing Efforts



KEYC VIDEO CAMPAIGN - PLACED OVER 5,000 ADS

Social Media



GREATER
MANKATO
GROWTH

154,503 PAGE REACH

FACEBOOK UP 19.50%

8,501 PAGE REACH

INSTAGRAM UP 237.50%

754 NEW LIKES

FACEBOOK UP 45%

583 PAGE VISITS

INSTAGRAM UP 13.60%

HIGHEST PERFORMING POST

Swiss & Madison Ribbon Cutting

8,025 Reach | 316 Likes & Reactions



10 REASONS

TO GROW

YOUR BUSINESS HERE



17.5 MINUTE COMMUTE

The average commute time is only **17.5 minutes**, thanks to the ease of access from public infrastructure investments.

10 REASONS TO GROW CAMPAIGN

Facebook & LinkedIn



Greater Mankato Growth
2,492 followers
Promoted

Greater Mankato Growth has the tools you need to design your talent attraction and retention strategy.

Find the resources to grow your business.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS

0:00 / 0:30

If you're struggling to find and retain talent, we have the resources to help. [Learn more](#)

Tara Berg and 14 others 2 shares

Reactions

7

Greater Mankato Growth
2,492 followers
Promoted

Ready to relocate? Return to Greater Mankato where you get the benefits of a Metropolitan Area with a small-town feel.

Find things to do for the whole family

Experience a variety of entertainment options

CAMPAIGN STATS

Campaign statistics pulled from a video, carousel and sponsored conversation

PAID LINKEDIN

- 23,984 Impressions
- 181 Clicks
- 4,175 views
- 45 Shares

ORGANIC 241,424 Impressions

Website Data

Year-over-year comparison



GREATER
MANKATO
GROWTH

102,476 USERS
UP 10.88%

101,544
NEW USERS
UP 12.02%

127,832
SESSIONS
UP 6.30%



GREENSEAM™

36,923 PAGEVIEWS
UP 31.13%

15,355
NEW USERS
UP 28.02%

20,613
SESSIONS
UP 38.39%

BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN - MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

Ran from 8/15/2022 to 8/21/2022

Locations:

I-694 SS 0.2MI E/O LEXINGTON

I-35W WS 25FT N/O 118TH ST

I-394 NS 30FT E/O CITY VIEW DRIVE

I-94 ES 350FT N/O BROADWAY

I-35W WS 100FT S/O 18TH ST

HWY 36 NS 0.2MI W/O WHITE BEAR

I-94 & PAYNE CL 0.25MI E/O HWY 52

1.2 Million Impressions



Greater Mankato Real Estate Summit

Real estate professionals, investors, contractors, and business community members interested in the status of commercial real estate development in the Greater Mankato area were invited to attend the 2022 Greater Mankato Real Estate summit. The event, in partnership with the Minnesota Real Estate Journal (MREJ) featured a variety of business and community leaders discussing changing demographics, recent development projects and opportunities, education and workforce training pipeline, and much more.

The MREJ event was of high importance and has proven its success through the following indicators:

- Over 100 professionals came together
- Multiple sessions focuses on a variety of leaders
- Advertisement exposure for the region
- Attendees continue to show interest in Greater Mankato
- RE Journal ads will continue to run into 2023

Facebook Post & Testimonial

"I went to the Greater Mankato RE journals real estate summit yesterday to network...I didn't expect to be so impressed...Greater Mankato really seems happening. There is a lot of civic pride and engagement, the economy seems to be bustling and there is a palpable sense of community there."

Moshe Zeffren MREJ attendee



GREATER
MANKATO
GROWTH

GREATER MANKATO REAL ESTATE SUMMIT

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 12 - 4 PM

FOUR HOURS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

RE Journal Ad

Welcome to Greater Mankato.

INVEST WITH CONFIDENCE

SUPPLY CHAIN

We offer abundant existing suppliers and complimentary industries, with a particularly strong presence in metal, power generation, and electronics manufacturing as well as printing, agriculture and food processing.



IDEALLY LOCATED

We are located just 60 minutes south of MSP, at the confluence of two four-lane highways, 169/60 and 14. The region boasts a regional airport as well as train service. We serve as a regional hub for health care, education, retail, agriculture and industry across Southern MN.



17.5 MINUTE COMMUTE

The average commute time is only 17.5 minutes, thanks to the ease of access from public infrastructure investments.



"Greater Mankato Growth staff are among my hardest working partners. They are dedicated advocates for the Greater Mankato region. They are responsive to requests and work diligently to provide and update information as it is requested by the businesses I work with. They make projects a reality!" – Lisa Hughes, Department of Employment and Economic Development

COMPILED AND CREATED BY
GREATER MANKATO GROWTH

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