



Historic PLACES TOUR

MANKATO • NORTH MANKATO

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Welcome to the Mankato - North Mankato Historic Places Tour. This driving and walking tour will guide you to Mankato and North Mankato's most historically significant places. Many of the sites have been recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. Collectively, the cities of Mankato and North Mankato have designated over 20 places as historically significant by erecting a heritage plaque at the site. An additional feature to this tour is the "Greater Mankato on the Move" audio tour featuring unique stories about select sites.

Scan the QR code to listen to the audio tour.

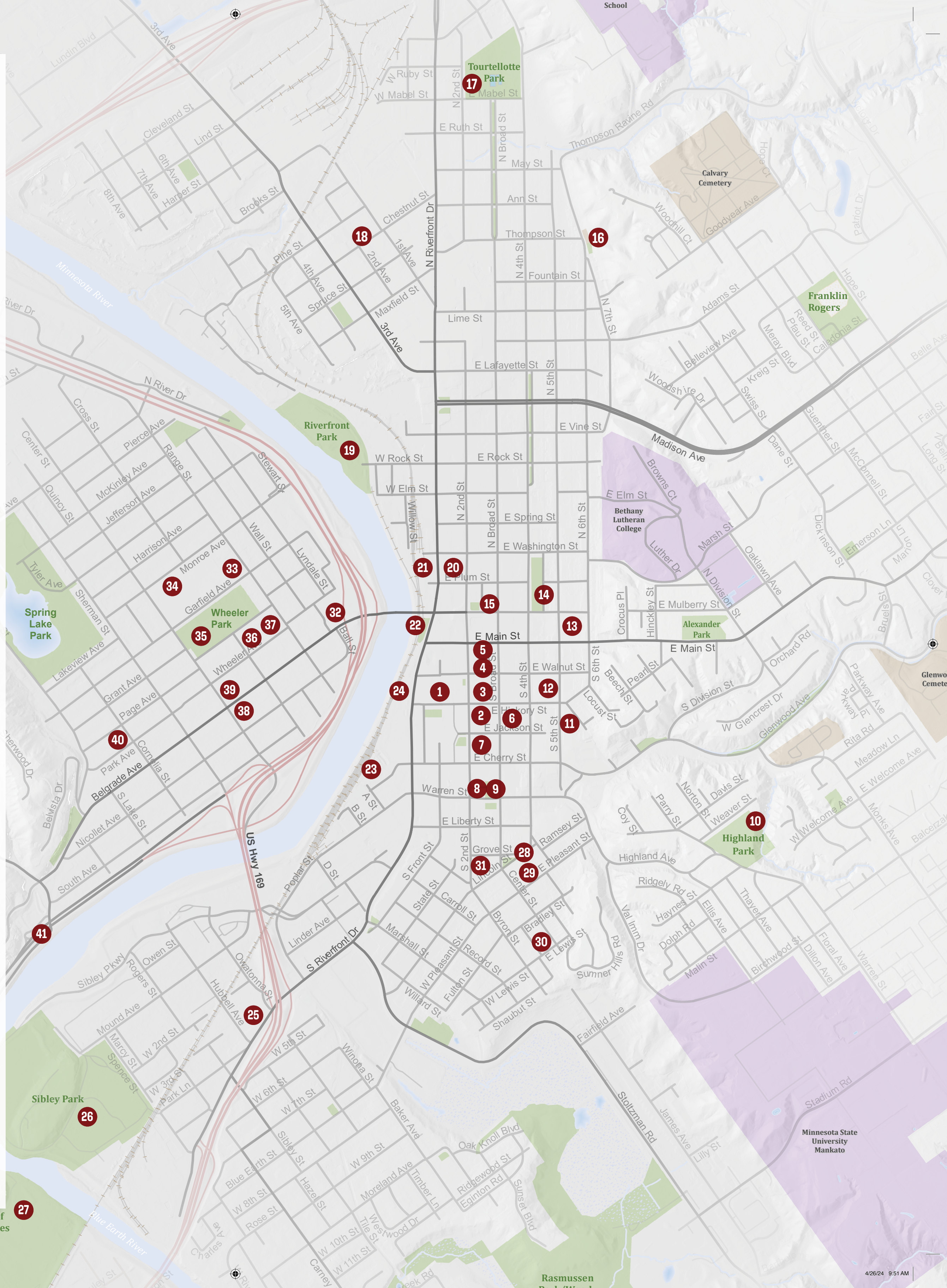


Partners:
 Blue Earth County Historical Society
 City Center Partnership
 City of Mankato
 City of North Mankato
 Visit Mankato

Historic PLACES TOUR

MANKATO • NORTH MANKATO

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Historic Places

1 Ellerbe Building

1 Civic Center Plaza

This was the site of Mankato's first private banking institution in 1865. The First National Bank, Minnesota's 7th nationally chartered bank, operated here from 1868-1974. This building was built in 1913 by architects Ellerbe and Round in the Prairie style. In 1994, this building was saved from demolition when incorporated into the construction of the Civic Center.



2 Masonic Temple

309 S. 2nd St.

Minnesota's Masonic Lodge #12 in Mankato built this building in 1877. It was remodeled in 1916 in the Neoclassical style with the copper-plated metal cornices you see today. For many years, the second floor served as the lodge headquarters and the first floor was rented out. Today, the building still serves Lodge #12, but also serves as a community gathering space.



3 First Presbyterian Church

220 E. Hickory St.

The First Presbyterian Church of Mankato can trace its roots back to the early days of Mankato with its first services held in 1855. The church's bell has served the community since 1857; most notably to announce the end of both WWI and WWII. The current church building was built in 1894.



4 Carnegie Library

120 S. Broad St.

In 1901, the library board accepted a \$40,000 gift from steel industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to construct a library building. This Renaissance Revival style building opened in 1903 and served as the public library until 1977. It has served as the Carnegie Art Center, a multi-purpose community arts center, since 1981.



5 Mankato Clinic Building

227 E. Main St.

This building was built in 1926 as the Mankato Clinic with eight healthcare departments. The objective was to practice group medicine, a relatively new concept at the time. This building and group of doctors elevated Mankato as a medical hub for Southern Minnesota.



6 Sinclair Lewis' Summer Home

315 S. Broad St.

This home was Minnesota author Sinclair Lewis' summer residence in 1919. The author wrote much of his novel *Main Street* here. He enjoyed the area and people so much that his main character, Carol Milford, hails from Mankato. *Main Street* was published in 1920.



7 Post Office and Federal Courthouse

401 S. 2nd St.

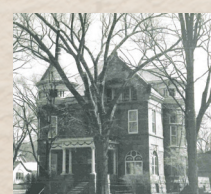
The Mankato Post Office and Federal Courthouse was built in 1895, and expanded in 1933 and 1965 using local Mankato Kasota stone. The first floor served as the postal service and the second floor was federal offices and courts. In 2015, due to decreased demand for postal services, the building was sold for private development.



8 Cray House

603 S. 2nd St.

The Cray House was the residence of Mankato judge and entrepreneur, Lorin P. Cray and his wife, Lulu. The elegant Queen Anne style house, built in 1898, is constructed of buff Chaska brick, red Mankato brick, pink granite, and Kasota limestone. The house was gifted to the YWCA in 1927; they operated out of the building until 2008. Today it is a private residence.



9 Hubbard House

606 S. Broad St.

Rensselaer Hubbard, founder of Hubbard Milling Company, built this house in 1871. The house was the first private residence in Mankato to have indoor plumbing, electricity, and a telephone. It stands as one of the finest examples of French Second Empire style of architecture in Minnesota. Today, it is a historic house museum.



10 Highland Park

950 Warren St.

In 1874 the Mankato City Council purchased 10 acres of what was then known as Bunker Hill, with the intention of providing residents with the first free flowing artesian well. After many failed attempts to develop the well, it became a City Park in 1896.



11 Old Main

301 S. 5th St.

Old Main was once part of the Mankato Normal School (now Minnesota State University, Mankato) campus. This building was built in 1924 after a fire destroyed the original building. As the University grew in the 1960s-70s, the campus moved to its current location. The building has been home to a senior housing complex called Old Main Village since 1987.



12 Blue Earth County Courthouse

204 S. 5th St.

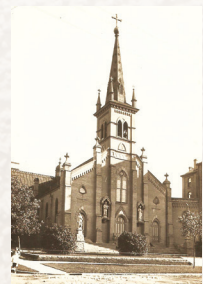
The Blue Earth County Courthouse, completed in 1889, is a mixture of Italian and French Renaissance styles with Mankato limestone as the primary building material. Lady Justice watches over the valley from her iconic spot atop the courthouse.



13 Saints Peter and Paul's Catholic Church

105 N. 5th St.

The church was built in 1873 for the German catholic community. A grade and high school soon followed. It has the distinction of being one of the only parcels of land in Mankato still owned by the original group. The immense Gothic structure stands as one of Mankato's most visible landmarks.



14 Washington Park

215 N. 4th St.

In 1868, the first railroad to arrive in Mankato had its depot, freight house, engine house and turntable at this site. After the railroad abandoned these tracks, Washington Park was dedicated as a City Park in 1915.



15 Union School

200 N. Broad St.

The Mankato Public School system started here in 1856, just four years after Mankato was founded. A one-room log schoolhouse was replaced with a modern stone building named Union School in 1868. The current building, built in 1920, served as a school until 1975. Today, it is a commercial office building.



16 Pioneer Memorial Park

1351 N 6th St.

Pioneer Memorial Park, also known as "Pioneer Memorial Cemetery," was the site of two short-lived cemeteries in the mid-19th Century. The Rural Grove Cemetery was a venture of the Mankato Masonic Lodge #12, and the Roman Catholic cemetery served all local Catholics. The headstones you see today are just a small demonstration of those previously buried along this hillside, and are not representative of their original locations.



17 Tourtellotte Park

300 E. Mabel St.

Tourtellotte Park is named for Colonel John E. Tourtellotte—a Mankato lawyer, Civil War veteran and Mankato's first community philanthropist. Tourtellotte Park was created in 1939 through the Works Progress Administration (a Great Depression work program). A swimming pool, wading pool and bathhouse opened to the public in 1940.



18 Kato Ballroom

200 Chestnut St.

The Kato Ballroom opened in 1946. The current building was built in 1954 after a fire destroyed the first building. The most "famous" event here was the "Winter Dance Party" tour on January 25, 1959. The tour featured Buddy Holly and the Crickets, Ritchie Valens, J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson, and Dion and the Belmonts. This concert was one week before the ill-fated leg of the tour where Holly, Valens and Richardson died in a plane crash on February 3. The Kato Ballroom is one of the last remaining ballrooms in Minnesota.



19 Riverfront Park

309 W. Rock St.

From the founding of Mankato in 1852 to today, this area on the banks of the Minnesota River served as the birthplace of industrial and commercial development in Mankato. Today, it serves as a hub for entertainment at Vetter Stone Amphitheater.



20 Old Town Historic Commercial District (Wine Café to Coffee Hag)

300 block of N. Riverfront Dr. (East side only)

The Old Town Historic Commercial District represents a well-preserved and important surviving remnant of Mankato's commercial development between the 1870s and early 1900s. At one time, the central business district was over 10 blocks long. In the 1970s, over half of the district was destroyed by urban renewal projects. Many of the buildings in Old Town were spared.



21 Hubbard Mill

424 N. Riverfront Dr.

The Hubbard Milling Company was founded by R.D. Hubbard in 1878. The mill's original steam-powered "A" Mill opened in 1879 with the latest technologies. In addition, the mill pumped water into city water mains and its steam whistle was used as a city-wide fire alarm and curfew whistle. In 2020 the mill's silos were transformed into Minnesota's largest public art mural.



22 Dakota Memorial and Reconciliation Park

100 N. Riverfront Dr.

This park is the approximate location of the mass execution of 38 Dakota warriors for their affiliation with the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. Today, it serves as a memorial and a place of reflection and reconciliation.



23 Ho-Chunk

South of Reconciliation Park on the River Walk

Through treaty negotiations, the Ho-Chunk were moved to Blue Earth County in 1855, and in 1863 moved off their land again. A heritage plaque is located where they first arrived along the Minnesota River and highlights their history in the area.



24 Union Depot

112 S. Riverfront Dr

The first railroad arrived in Mankato in 1868. Between 1870 to 1907, a network of rail lines extended throughout Blue Earth County, totaling seven in all, five of which radiated from Mankato. This depot was built in 1896 by the Chicago and Northwestern and the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railways. The last passenger train went through Mankato in 1963. The Union Depot is the only remaining train depot in Blue Earth County.



25 Irving House

1620 S. Riverfront Dr.

This two-story French Second Empire style house was built in 1873 by William Irving. The central portion of the house has a full bell-cast mansard roof. William settled in Mankato in 1856, four years after the town was platted, and entered the tailoring business. After his retirement, he built this residence west of town in an area that was just being developed.



26 Sibley Park and WWI Memorial

900 Park Lane

The city purchased 120 acres of land at the confluence of the Blue Earth and Minnesota Rivers to create the first city park here in 1887. For well over a century, Sibley Park has served as a recreation destination featuring a zoo, bandshell, sports fields and an annual holiday lights event in December. Mankato's World War I memorial stands here.



27 Land of Memories Park

100 Amos Owen Lane

The Dakota people historically gathered here at the confluence of the Blue Earth and Minnesota Rivers to trade goods and share ideas. In 1980, the City of Mankato designated this site as "Land of Memories" in honor of the Dakota people and the annual traditional Mahkato Wacipi. The Wacipi is held every September to honor the 38 Dakota warriors who were executed for their affiliation with the U.S. Dakota War of 1862.



28 Lincoln Park

200 Lincoln St.

Lincoln Park was created in 1886 as a memorial to Mankato's Civil War veterans. Lincoln Park anchors its namesake historic neighborhood. This area, built mainly between 1856 to 1930, was where the upper class residents built their homes. Lincoln Park neighborhood has over 175 structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



29 Eberhart House

228 E. Pleasant St.

The Eberhart house was built in 1903 for local politician Adolph Olson Eberhart and his family. Eberhart represented Mankato in the State Senate from 1902-1904, as Lieutenant Governor from 1906-1909, and then Minnesota's 17th Governor from 1909-1913.



30 Maud Hart Lovelace and Betsy Tacy

332-3 Center St.

These two houses were not only the Hart and Kenney family homes, but they were also the setting for author Maud Hart Lovelace's *Betsy-Tacy* book series. In 1940, childhood neighbors and friends Maud Hart and Frances "Bick" Kenney became known as Betsy Ray (Maud) and Tacy Kelly (Bick). Today, these two Literary Landmarks are historic house museums.



31 Hunt House

811 S. 2nd St.

In 1886, Lewis and Lisbeth Hunt renovated a small house into this Queen Anne style brick house. At this time, Lewis was owner and editor of *The Free Press*. However, this house is most remembered as the Moulin Rouge Beauty Shop which operated for 70 years. Today, it has been beautifully restored as the Moulin Rouge Bed and Breakfast.



32 Marigold Dairy

200 Belgrade Ave.

This site was the location of Marigold Dairies from 1936-1981. Marigold dominated the local market, producing and delivering milk, ice cream, and cottage cheese. It was one of the largest local employers, and was one of the top-rated independent dairy companies in the nation. The building was razed in 1990.



33 Stewart House

733 Range Street

In 1905, William E. Stewart opened the Mankato Brick and Tile Company on this site, adjacent to the Wheeler and Bennett brickyard. In 1910, Stewart's house, carriage house, and barn were built using Stewart brick. By 1918, the Stewart yard was the only brickyard operating in the area; closing in 1935.



34 Tanley Field

441 Monroe Ave.

In 1936, Bill Tanley built Tanley Field, a popular regional ballpark with all the modern amenities. Unfortunately, the ballpark was flooded-out in April 1951, and was torn down by 1958. Today, this site is Monroe Elementary School.



35 Wheeler and Bennett Brickyard

402 Page Ave.

In 1886, A.L. Wheeler and O.E. Bennett started a brickyard on this site. Many of these North Mankato bricks were used in the local building boom of the time. The brickyard closed in 1905, and shortly after, the city bought the land for Wheeler Park.



36 Wheeler House

348 Wheeler Ave.

The A.L. Wheeler house was built in 1886 in the Queen Anne style made with local North Mankato brick. Wheeler and O.E. Bennett were co-founders of the Wheeler and Bennett Brickyard.



37 Bennett House

322 Wheeler Ave.

The O.E. Bennett house was built in 1886 with local North Mankato bricks. The Bennett home was the location where residents incorporated North Mankato as an independent village in 1898. Bennett and A.L. Wheeler were co-founders of the Wheeler and Bennett Brickyard.



38 Municipal Building

443 Belgrade Ave.

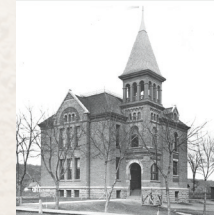
This building served as the center for North Mankato's municipal services. In 1926, this brick civic building was constructed for city offices, public library, police department, fire station, and an all-purpose civic auditorium. The City Hall remained here until the late 1960s when the current municipal building opened.



39 North Mankato School

442 Belgrade Ave.

In 1890, the first school in North Mankato was built of local brick on this corner. In 1904, the building was doubled in size and expanded again in 1920. This building was especially noted for its number of large windows. The building was decommissioned as a school in 1959, and has been used as an apartment building since 1984.



40 Nelsen House

503 Cornelia St.

Jacob B. Nelsen was a prominent North Mankato building contractor and operator of a quarry along the bluff. Among the buildings his company erected are some located on the campuses of Minnesota State University's valley campus, Bethany Lutheran College and Our Lady of Good Counsel Academy in Mankato. The company also built many other public and private structures in the Mankato-North Mankato area. Nelsen was president of North Mankato between 1900-1916.



41 Cummings Ferry Landing

Judson Bottom Road near Lookout Drive

In the mid-19th Century, the Cummings Ferry operated here moving passengers, livestock, and products across the Minnesota River between North Mankato and Mankato. The ferry used a cable and pulley system to navigate a raft across the river. The Cummings Ferry was the larger of two ferryboat services in the area. It operated until the early 1880s when the first bridge opened.

