

Employment and Economy

While many factors influence the need for housing, employment opportunities represent a predominant demand-generator. Without jobs and corresponding wages, the means to afford housing is severely limited. Employment opportunities are provided by a broad range of private and public business sectors. Jobs are available in manufacturing, commercial services, agriculture, and other industries. The type of employment, wage level, and working conditions will each influence the kind of housing that is needed and at what level of affordability.

The Cities of Mankato and North Mankato are the major employment centers for the immediate region. Because of the size of the area, Mankato and North Mankato are classified as a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Before 2010, the area had been classified as a Micropolitan Statistical Area (MiSA). The MiSA designation was in place at the time of the 2010 Census. Both the MiSA and the MSA boundaries include all of Blue Earth County and all of Nicollet County.

Labor Force, Work Force and Unemployment

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development provides employment information for the Mankato-North Mankato MiSA/MSA.

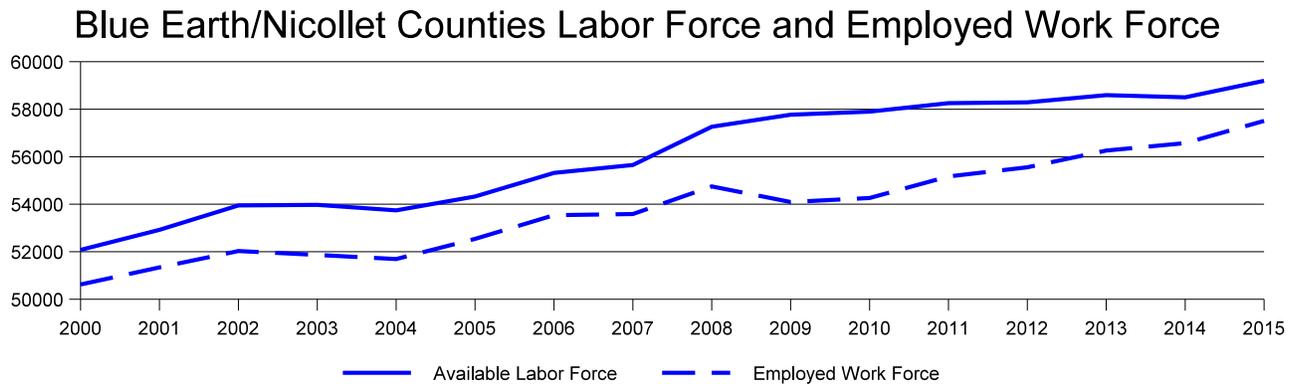
Table 33 MSA/MiSA Labor Force and Employment: 2000 - 2015						
Year	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate - MSA	Unemployment Rate - MN	Unemployment Rate - US
2000	52,076	50,622	1,454	2.8%	3.2%	4.0%
2001	52,921	51,339	1,582	3.0%	3.8%	4.7%
2002	53,948	52,031	1,917	3.6%	4.5%	5.8%
2003	53,972	51,866	2,106	3.9%	4.9%	6.0%
2004	53,743	51,692	2,051	3.8%	4.7%	5.6%
2005	54,323	52,539	1,784	3.3%	4.1%	5.1%
2006	55,319	53,538	1,781	3.2%	4.0%	4.6%
2007	55,651	53,588	2,063	3.7%	4.6%	4.6%
2008	57,259	54,751	2,508	4.4%	5.4%	5.8%
2009	57,770	54,094	3,676	6.4%	7.8%	9.3%
2010	57,896	54,261	3,635	6.3%	7.4%	9.6%
2011	58,253	55,169	3,084	5.3%	6.5%	8.9%
2012	58,290	55,556	2,734	4.7%	5.6%	8.1%
2013	58,594	56,259	2,335	4.0%	4.9%	7.4%
2014	58,501	56,570	1,931	3.3%	4.2%	6.2%
2015	59,195	57,505	1,690	2.9%	3.7%	5.3%

Source: MN Department of Employment and Economic Development

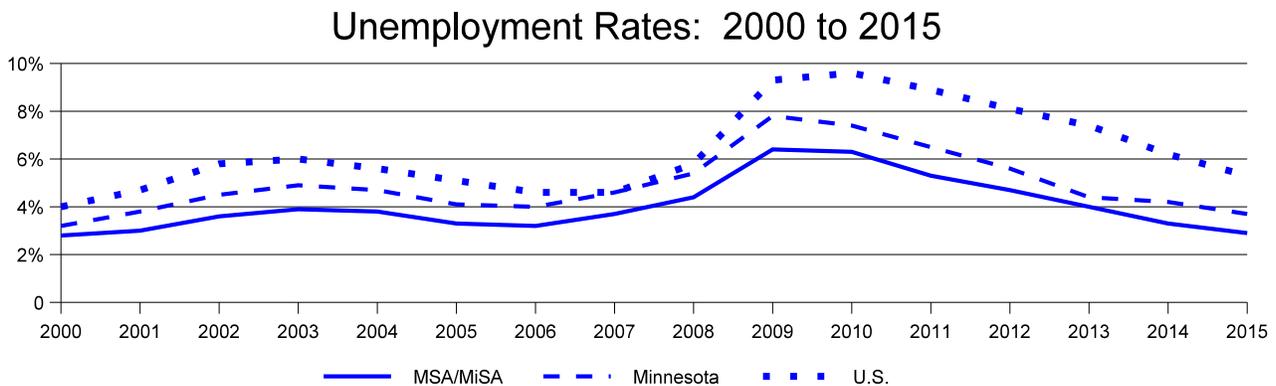
The Mankato area has experienced long-term growth in the size of the available labor force. Over the time period reviewed, from 2000 through 2015, the available resident labor force increased by more than 7,100 people, or 13.7%.

This growth has generally been gradual and consistent, with nearly all years showing a year-over-year increase in the number of residents within the labor pool.

The employed work force has also grown over time. When comparing 2015 to 2000, the number of employed residents has grown by nearly 6,900 people, or 13.6%.



The MSA’s unemployment rate for the area has fluctuated somewhat over time. The unemployment rate peaked in 2009 at 6.4%, but has steadily declined since that time. In 2015, the unemployment rate in the Mankato area was at only 2.9%. Throughout the time period reviewed, the unemployment rate in the area has remained below the State and national unemployment levels.



Employment and Wages by Industry

The following table shows the annual employment and average annual wages by major employment sector in 2014, the last full year of data. It is important to note that the major employment sectors listed do not represent all employment in the City. Some groups, including self-employment, are not represented. This information is only for the City of Mankato.

Table 34 Mankato Average Annual Wages by Industry Detail - 2014		
Industry	2014 Employment	2014 Average Wage
Total All Industry	32,285	\$38,896
Natural Resources, Mining	24	\$26,988
Construction	935	\$45,656
Manufacturing	2,667	\$50,388
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	6,997	\$29,484
Information	1,191	\$49,348
Financial Activities	1,438	\$49,036
Professional and Business Services	2,319	\$47,424
Education and Health Services	10,908	\$45,864
Leisure and Hospitality	3,605	\$12,636
Other Services	1,156	\$26,312
Public Administration	1,026	\$55,224

Source: MN Department of Employment and Economic Development

The average annual wage for all industry in 2014 was \$38,896. The highest paying wage sectors were Public Administration, at \$55,224, and Manufacturing, at \$50,388. The City’s largest single employment sector, Education and Health Services, had an average annual wage of \$45,864.

The lowest paying wage sectors were Leisure and Hospitality, with an average annual wage of only \$12,636, and Other Services, at \$26,312. The second largest sector for total employment, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, also had a relatively low average wage at \$29,484.

Major Mankato Employers

Most of the job opportunities in the area are located in Mankato and North Mankato. Although an updated list of major employers was not obtained in 2015, previous research had identified the following list of large employers in Mankato and North Mankato:

- ▶ Immanuel-St. Joseph's - Mayo Health System
- ▶ Minnesota State University at Mankato
- ▶ Mankato Area Public Schools
- ▶ Mankato Rehabilitation Center, Inc.
- ▶ Carlson Craft Social - North Mankato
- ▶ Mankato Clinic
- ▶ The Thro Company
- ▶ Carlson Craft Commercial - North Mankato
- ▶ Verizon Wireless
- ▶ Kato Engineering/Reliance Electric - North Mankato
- ▶ Blue Earth County
- ▶ Precision Press - North Mankato
- ▶ MTU Onsite Energy
- ▶ Taylor Corp. - North Mankato
- ▶ City of Mankato
- ▶ Mico Inc. - North Mankato
- ▶ Hickory Tech
- ▶ Bolton-Menk Inc.
- ▶ Southern MN Construction
- ▶ Carlson Craft Catalog Division - North Mankato
- ▶ Schwickert Company
- ▶ Coughlan Companies
- ▶ South Central College Mankato - North Mankato
- ▶ Johnson Outdoors/Minnkota
- ▶ CHS Inc.
- ▶ Masterpiece Studios - North Mankato

Source: Community Profiles, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development

In addition to the larger employers listed above, the Mankato area has added some new companies and industries, including Imperial Plastics, the Wal-Mart distribution facility, and a significant amount of growth in retail establishments.

Commuting Patterns of Area Workers

Only limited information is available on area workers that commute for employment. The most recent information is from the 2014 American Community Survey. Information is for the City of Mankato. The first table examines travel times for people that live in Mankato, while the second table is for people that work in the City. The information is for people age 16 and older that traveled for employment, and excludes people that work at home.

Table 35 Travel Times for Mankato Residents - 2014		
Travel Time	City of Mankato	
	Number	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	6,040	28.3%
10 to 19 minutes	11,333	53.1%
20 to 29 minutes	1,809	8.5%
30 to 39 minutes	867	4.1%
40 minutes or more	1,299	6.1%
Total	21,348	100%

Source: 2014 American Community Survey; Community Partners Research, Inc.

The large majority of Mankato residents were traveling less than 20 minutes to work, according to the American Community Survey. Presumably, most residents were working in Mankato or in North Mankato, where most of the area’s employment opportunities exist. More than 81% of Mankato residents commuted less than 20 minutes, and nearly 90% commuted less than 30 minutes to work.

Information also exists for people that are employed in Mankato.

Table 36 Travel Times for Mankato-based Employees - 2014		
Travel Time	City of Mankato	
	Number	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	7,095	22.1%
10 to 19 minutes	15,136	47.1%
20 to 29 minutes	4,498	14.0%
30 to 39 minutes	2,616	8.1%
40 minutes or more	2,805	8.7%
Total	32,150	100%

Source: 2014 American Community Survey; Community Partners Research, Inc.

People working in Mankato would include City residents that also work in the community, as well as people in the surrounding area that travel to Mankato for employment. Overall, more than 69% of the city-based employees had a travel time of less than 20 minutes to work, and more than 83% commuted less than 30 minutes.

Despite the fact that most Mankato workers did live in the immediate area, nearly 9% of the work force did travel 40 minutes or more to their job in Mankato.

Census On the Map

The Census Bureau also produces commuter reports through its Center for Economic Studies division. This information is based on reports for the year 2014, but provides a further breakdown of worker movement.

According to the report for Mankato, there were 26,597 people that were employed within the City in 2014. Approximately 26% of these city-based employees also lived in Mankato. The remaining 74% of employees lived outside the City and commuted in.

On the Map can also be used to track worker outflow patterns from the City. Overall, there were 14,191 Mankato residents that were employed. Approximately 51% of these City residents also worked inside the community, but the remaining 49% traveled to other locations for employment.

