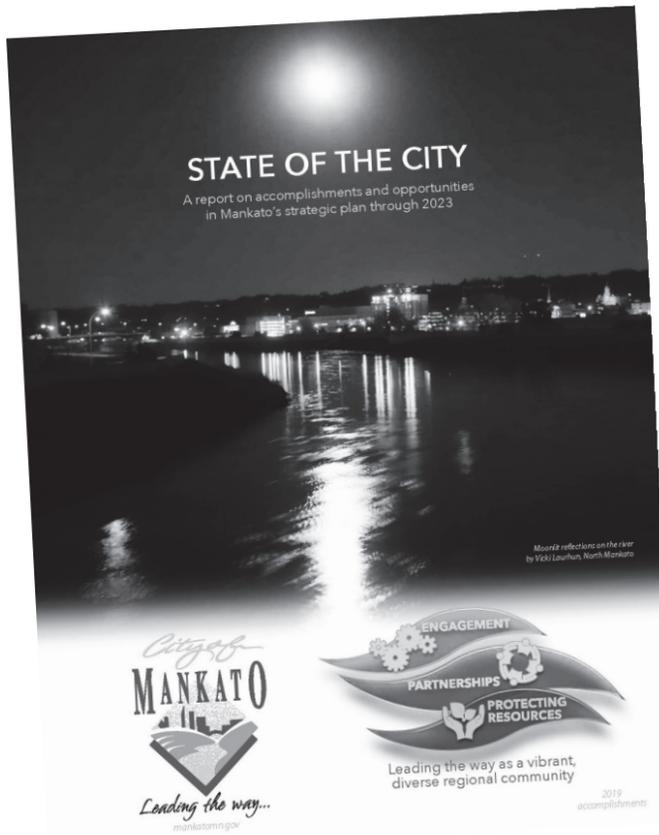


Mankato's "State of the City" highlights accomplishments and shares progress made on Strategic Plan

By Edell Fiedler, public information



Mankato's annual "State of the City" reports accomplishments and opportunities in Mankato's "Strategic Plan" from the past year.

Mankato's "State of the City" reviews and shares progress made on Mankato's "Strategic Plan through 2023." Focus areas in "State of the City" include engagement, partnerships and protecting resources—all within the "Strategic Plan" themes of community building, affordability and stewardship.

"How we measure success of Mankato's strategic plan is more than achieving outcomes and seeing results," says City Manager Patrick Hentges. "It's how we fulfill our purpose through engagement, partnerships, protecting resources and managing finances. It's service the Mankato way."

A sample of highlights featured in "State of the City:"

- ◆ In Land of Memories Park, 100 Amos Owen Lane, installation of a steel arbor—a structure symbolic of bringing people together to the Indigenous Dakota Nation.
- ◆ A grant helped place new automatic external defibrillators in public safety vehicles and city buildings to help save lives.

- ◆ More than \$16 million in bonding funds requested for river valley safety and improvements was included in Governor Tim Walz's proposed "Local Jobs and Projects Plan."
- ◆ Mankato is recognized as a leader in providing high quality drinking water by the national American Water Works Association.
- ◆ "Bus Mankato," an easy-to-access technology tool developed in partnership with Minnesota State University, Mankato provided students a hands-on learning opportunity. The app allows GPS access for customers to see exactly where buses are on their route.
- ◆ Mankato City Center development included construction of two private buildings and work beginning on a third to continue downtown revitalization.

View "State of the City" at mankatomn.gov. For a printed copy, contact staff at 311 or 507-387-8600. For more information about "State of the City," contact City Manager Patrick Hentges at 507-387-8695.

A communication tool for transparency celebrating 25 years of communication and engagement Mankato's website—mankatomn.gov

Twenty-five years ago, a decision was made to develop a city website. Worst case scenario, if city officials decided to abandon internet communication about the same cost would have been spent on a brochure about city services. The return on investment made sense. **A look back as we move forward** Citizen input is important and helpful in shaping quality of life through city service. Making information available is basic, responsible, transparent and important to accountability. Convenient information, along with tools that provide more access to engagement and messaging help the community and city officials begin efforts with the end in mind. When the World Wide Web came along, it provided an affordable and practical way to share content. It can be a very useful benefit in an emergency situation.

Back in the beginning, Mankato, Minnesota's online presence earned 7th in the nation (February 1996) in a study initiated by the University of Illinois National Center for Supercomputing Applications. Winners of the top six slots were: Los Angeles, Calif., San Diego, Calif., St. Paul, Minn., Palo Alto, Calif., Lakeland, Fla. and Belmont, Calif. Winning criteria included audience, content, design, depth and range of information. *Dr. Alaina Kanfer, a social science research associate at the University of Illinois who led the study said, "We don't know what they were trying to do, but Mankato scored almost perfect in all areas. Very few sites were really making an effort to attract new businesses and residents. Mankato had the highest score possible in that area."

All these years later—especially with its dynamic nature, the city's website remains a tool for city service communication and transaction.

24-hour service

24-hour online city services include:

- ◆ Complete a customer service request online: mankatomn.gov/city-services-a-z/customer-service
- ◆ Pay a utility bill: ipn2.paymentus.com/cp/mnkt
- ◆ Apply for a city job: mankatomn.gov/city-services-a-z/city-services-a-m/employment
- ◆ Pay a parking citation: selfservice.mankatomn.gov/MSS/citizens/ParkingTickets/default.aspx
- ◆ Apply to volunteer: mankatomn.gov/how-do-i/volunteer/apply-to-volunteer
- ◆ Make a city park reservation: mankatomn.gov/city-services-a-z/city-services-n-z/parks/park-reservations
- ◆ Find a bus route: mankatomn.gov/city-services-a-z/bus-routes

- ◆ Subscribe to city news:

mankatomn.gov/about-mankato/news/subscribe-to-mankato-news Back then it was really no different than now, a continuing goal is to always be on the lookout for new and innovative tools to communicate more effectively. It was thought that online communication tools may be an unstoppable paradigm shift. The rest is history. Meaningful, easy to use and its ability to bring all types of people together some of the pluses to using online tools. For questions or more information, contact the office of public information and communication at 507-387-8692 or communications@mankatomn.gov.

*According to *The Free Press*, Mankato, Minn.



Mankato's website celebrates 25 years of communication and engagement.