



AGENDA

**City Council Work Session
Monday, November 3, 2025
Minnesota River Room**

1. Community Partnerships; Greater Mankato Growth Presentation
2. Update from Bradley Peterson, Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
3. Review of the 2026 Budget; Enterprise Funds
4. Adjournment

City Council Work Session

1.

Meeting Date: 11/03/2025

Title:

Submitted By: Renae Kopischke, City Clerk

Agenda Item:

Community Partnerships; Greater Mankato Growth Presentation

Attachments

GMG Presentation



Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. (GMG)

**City of Mankato
Council Work Session Presentation**

November 3, 2025



City of Mankato & GMG Partnership

Areas of Work



\$645,990
Budgeted Visit Mankato 2025
Lodging Tax Funds



\$192,116
2025 Partnership Contribution



\$25,000
2025 Investment



Visit Mankato Mission & Vision

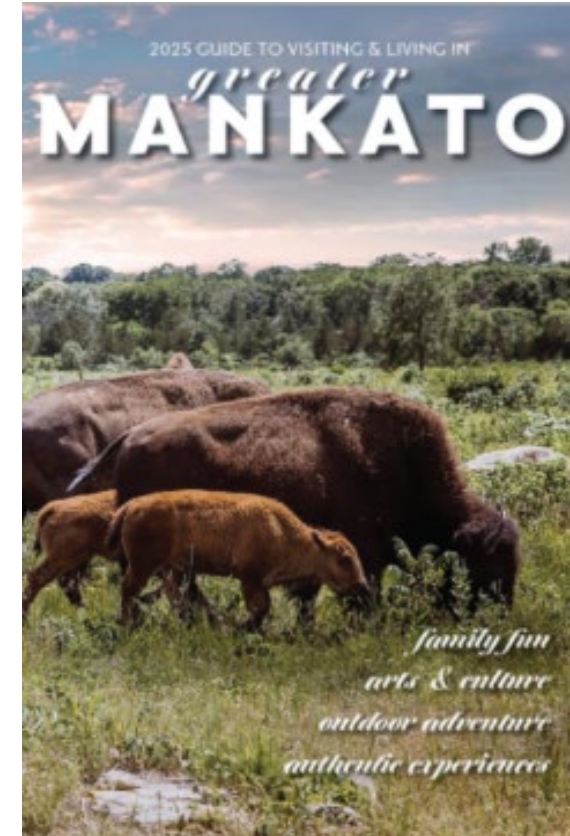


Our **Mission** is to lead development of the visitor economy in Greater Mankato.

Our **Vision** is to be a catalyst for a vibrant, balanced, and growing travel and tourism economy.

Key Areas of Work:

- Visitor Attraction
- Enhancing Visitor Experiences
- Business Support Services
- Event Support Services
- Destination Development



The Greater Mankato Tourism Economy



2023 Visitation to Mankato:

Supported 2,223 tourism jobs

Visitor spending \$266.7 million

Generated \$24.6 million state & local taxes

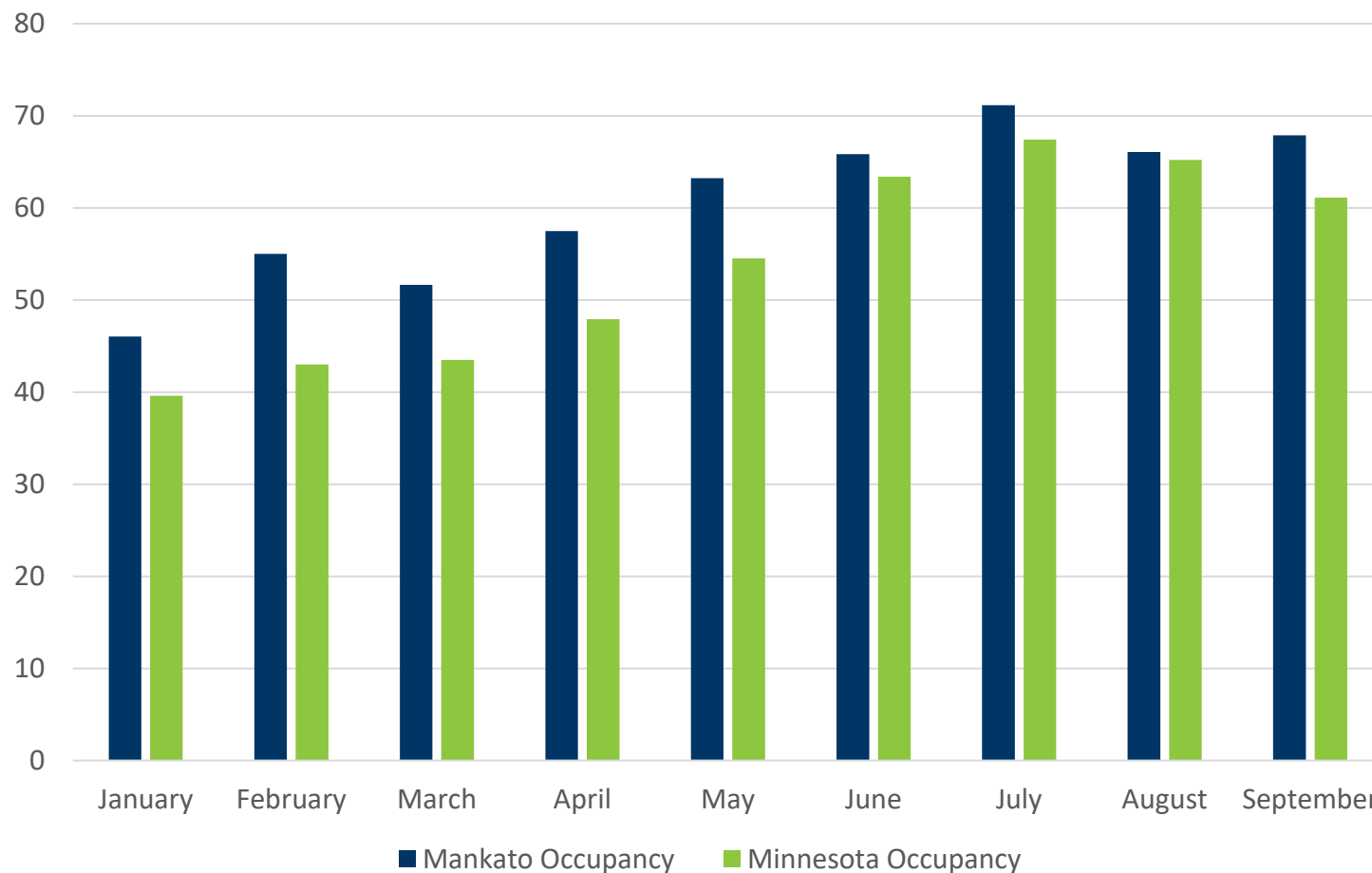
Jan – Aug 2025 Occupancy Rates

Minnesota: 57.5%

Southern MN Region: 52.8%

Mankato: 59.55%

*Source: CoStar/STR Dashboard; Explore MN Spring/Summer Travel Indicators Report

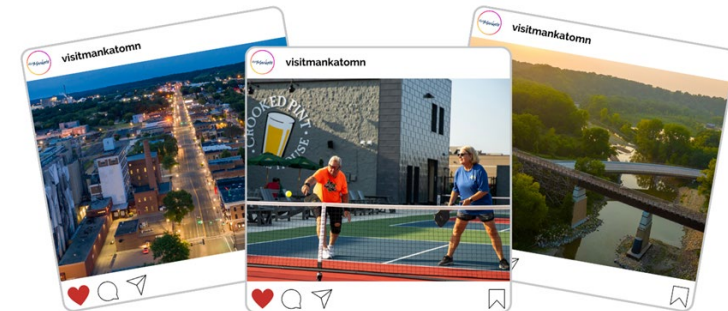
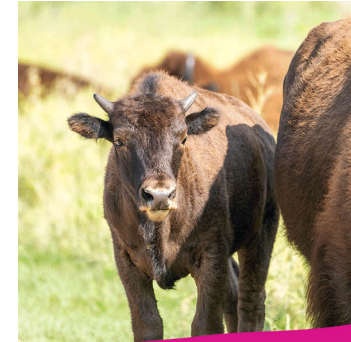


2025 Highlights – Leisure Marketing

Marketing Impact: Launched multi-channel campaigns (social, digital, print, mobile billboard, YouTube video)

- **Winter 24-25 Niches:** Winter outdoor recreation, Ice Fishing, Indoor adventures, Mount Kato and Kiwanis Holiday Lights display
- **Warm Season '25 Niches:** Wine & Brew, Bison/Minneopa State Park, Arts & Culture, Outdoor Recreation, Summer Events
- **Fall '25 Niches:** Fall Festivals & Events, Guide to Fall Colors, Hotels & Accommodations

Leisure Event Support: \$9,000 in leisure grants to Kiwanis Holiday Lights, Mankato Pridefest, and Old Town Day of the Dead. Additional targeted marketing campaigns for Bend of the River Festival and Ribfest.



2025 Highlights – Leisure Marketing



Visit Mankato Website
January 1 - October 1



Web Sessions
144,736



Engaged Sessions
+12% YOY

Most-visited Page:
Events + Festivals
20,585 Sessions

Social Media Followers
January 1 - October 1



18,289 (+6%)



3,915 (+8%)



1,129 (+55%)



**Received Explore Minnesota Award for
Outstanding Marketing Campaign**

Top 10 Visitor Origin CBSAs (Jan – August)

YOY Growth in Visitor Nights

1. Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN	+25.34%
2. Rochester, MN	+13.85%
3. St. Cloud, MN	+41.40%
4. Duluth, MN	+13.38%
5. Sioux Falls, SD	+17.96%
6. Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL	+39.30%
7. Fargo, ND	+22.3%
8. Austin, MN	+11.46%
9. Wilmar, MN	+21.63%
10. Eau Claire, WI	+7.19%



2025 Highlights – Restaurant Week



Inaugural Event: Created in collaboration with Downtown Partnership

Participation: 18 restaurants participated with limited time only breakfast, lunch, and dinner specials.

Public Relations: Media coverage in Star Tribune and Fox 9, KEYC, Mankato Free Press, and six segments on Kato Living.

Paid Meta Campaign: 364,000+ impressions, 5,332 link clicks.

Website: The Restaurant Week landing page had the highest number of page views on GMG.com from January to the event's end.



"I am really excited about how this turned out. It was a cool opportunity to get new people in the door and come together around food across our community. I hope this becomes a yearly event!"



"We had a lot of people that came out specifically because they had heard about restaurant week. Thank You!!"



2025 Highlights – Sports Tourism



12

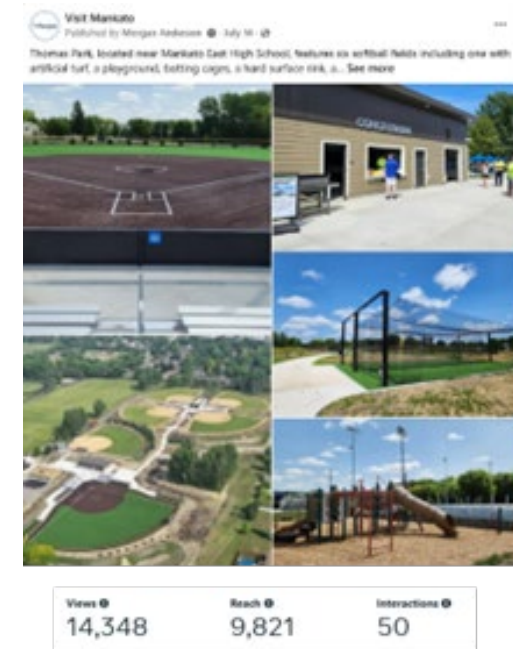
1:1 Sales Meetings with Sports Rights Holders

45

Total Events Supported

- Supported **20+** events with hotel room blocks
- Awarded **\$19,695** in event grants for **14** sporting events
- Provided equipment for **15+** events

Est. Economic Impact
\$12M+



2025 Visit Mankato Organized Sport Events



Mankato Marathon:

- 3,429 registrations
- 997 5K registrations (highest ever in race history!)
- Runners from 35 states, plus countries including Germany, England, and Canada
- Estimated economic impact: \$2M
- New website redesign – anticipated launch in late 2025

MN Senior Games

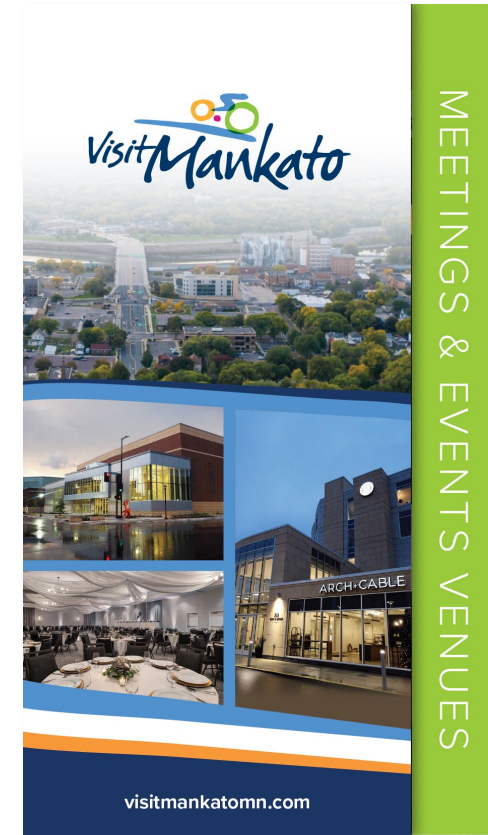
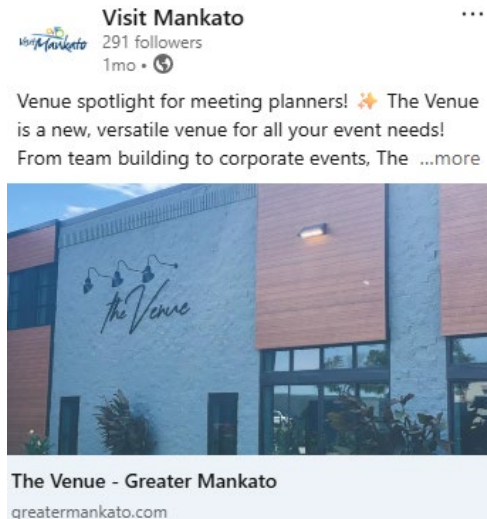
- 340 registrations
- 19 states represented
- Top events: Pickleball, Track & Field, Cycling, Table Tennis, Swimming
- 20+ media stories
- Oldest participant: 97 years old



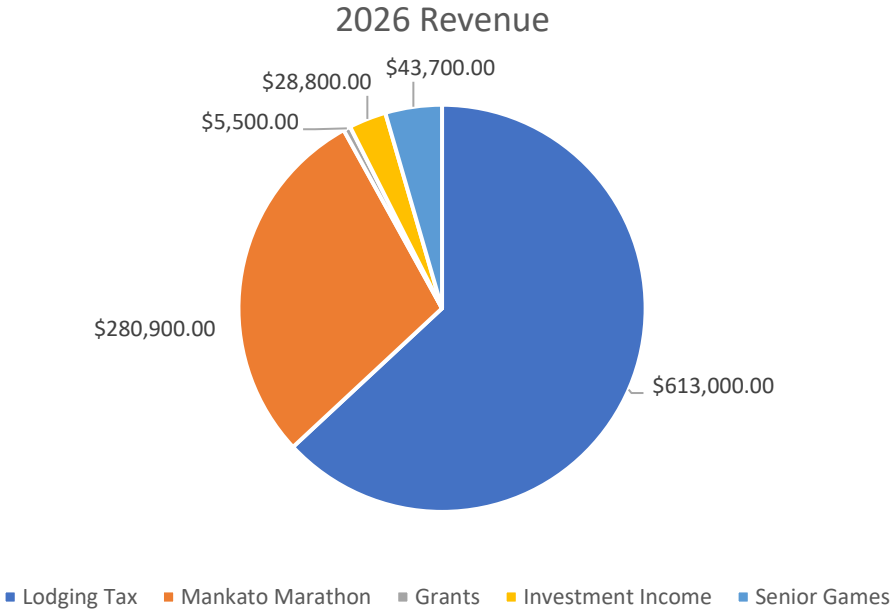
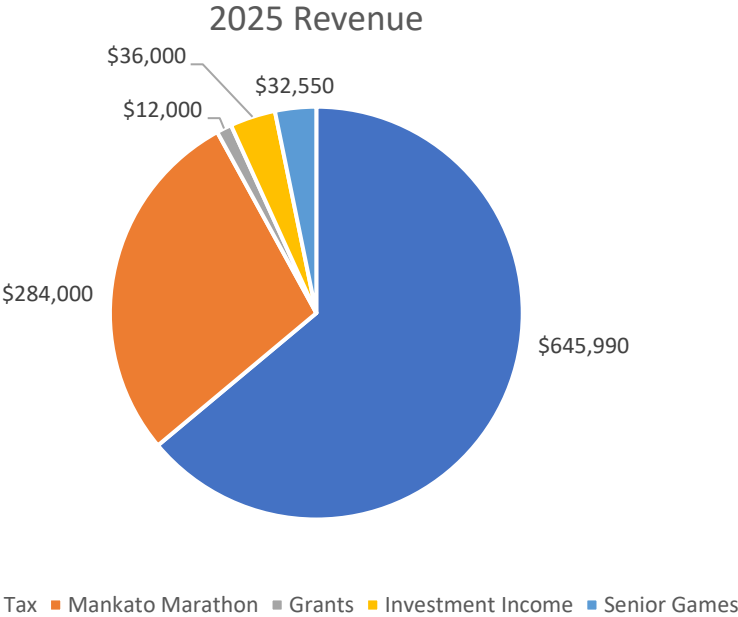
2025 Highlights – Meetings & Conventions

Meetings & Conference Support:

- Supported 21+ conferences with services including site visits, bid support, venue and transportation connections, and on-site assistance such as welcome tables
- Provided welcome bags/tables for 12 meetings and conventions
- Awarded \$2,300 in meeting & conventions grants, with a new grant program under development for 2026



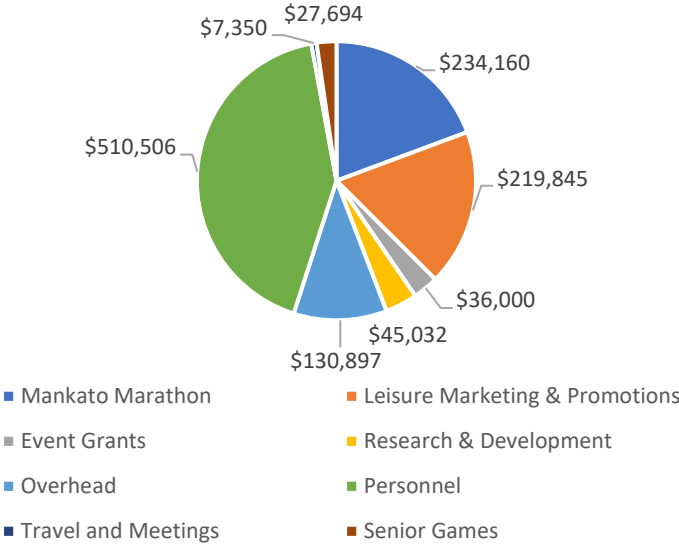
Revenue Breakdown



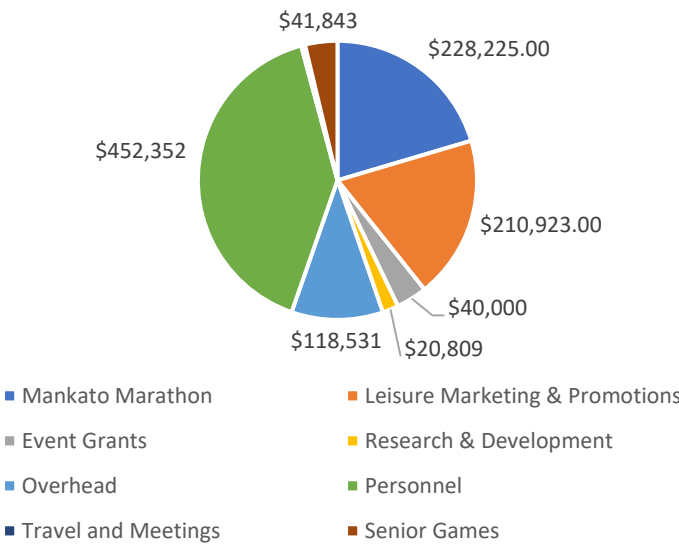
Budget Allocation



2025 Budget Allocation



2026 Budget Allocation



REDA Partnership



"It is 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 marketplace."

- Business Retention & Expansion
- New Enterprise and Emerging Business Development
- New Business Development
- Marketplace Enhancements

Alliance Partners

- Eagle Lake
- Lake Crystal
- Madison Lake
- Mankato
- North Mankato
- St. Peter
- Blue Earth County
- Nicollet County



REDA Strategic Activity Highlights



Business Retention Expansion Visits

Conducted **74** Business Retention & Expansion visits with **50** visits resulting in follow-up resources.



Responsive

Provided resources, connections, or data in response to **56 requests** businesses with a current presence in the regional market.



Business Engagement

Issued or responded to **14 RFPs** for out-of-region businesses including facilitating one site visit.



Childcare

Ongoing childcare initiatives through the RCCIP program and the Whole Community Approach have created **66 new slots** in Mankato and Eagle Lake, with an additional **150 regional slots** currently being supported.

New Business Feature – Bricks & Minifigs



As a new business in its first year of start-up, and as an owner with no prior retail ownership knowledge, GMG has been my strongest teammate. They've provided support at every level, from helping me choose a location based on traffic to providing business-to-business networking.

- Greta Alms, Bricks & Minifigs Mankato



Marketing Highlights



580,272
organic
impressions
623 new
followers



272,578
total reach
875 new
followers



*Greater Mankato
Support Local Group*

10,410
posts with
2,950,000
views

Billboard Campaign Results

Resident Recruitment Impressions: 4,881,672

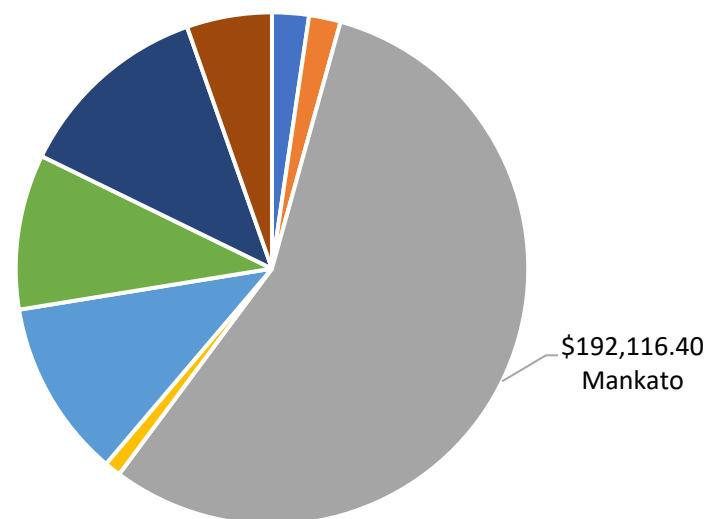
Kiwanis Holiday Lights Impressions: 2,930,729

Total Billboard Impressions: 7,812,401



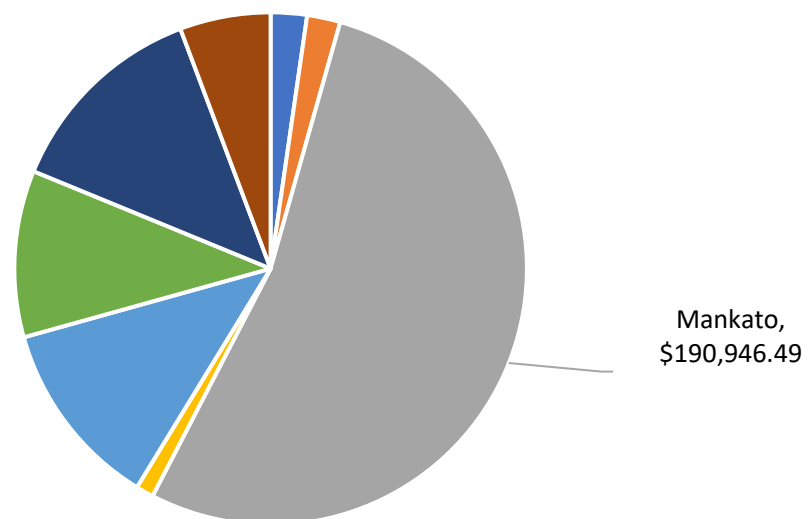
City of Mankato Contribution

2025 REDA Contribution \$343,947.42



- Eagle Lake
- Lake Crystal
- Mankato
- Madison Lake
- North Mankato
- St. Peter
- Blue Earth County
- Nicollet County

2026 REDA Contribution \$358,669.11

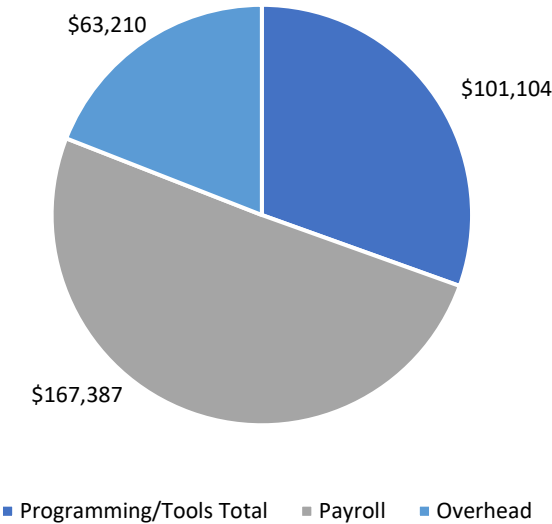


- Eagle Lake
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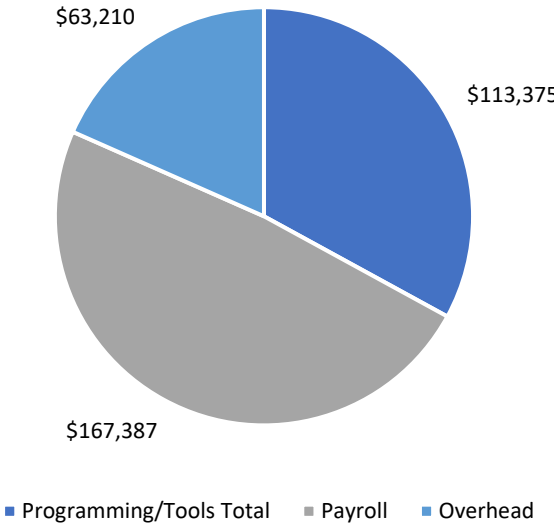


Funding Breakdown

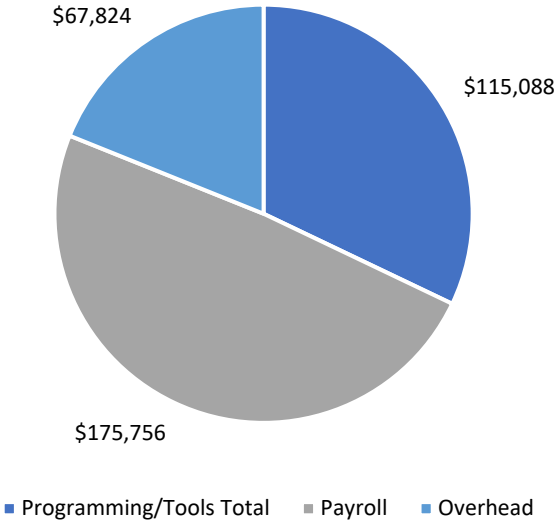
Funding Breakdown - 2024



Funding Breakdown - 2025

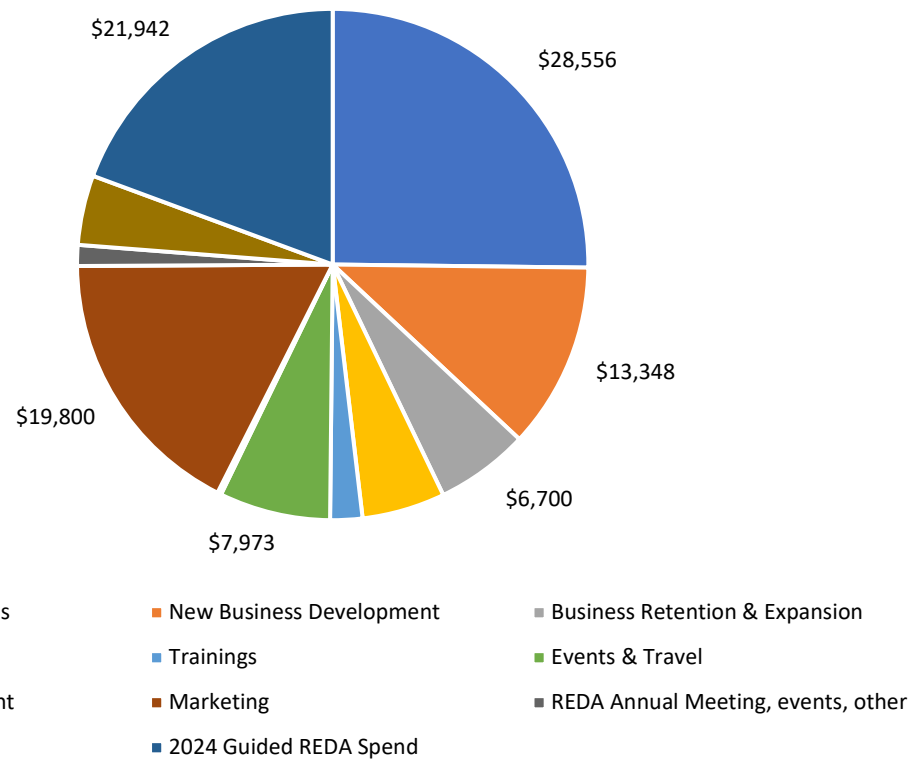


Funding Breakdown - 2026

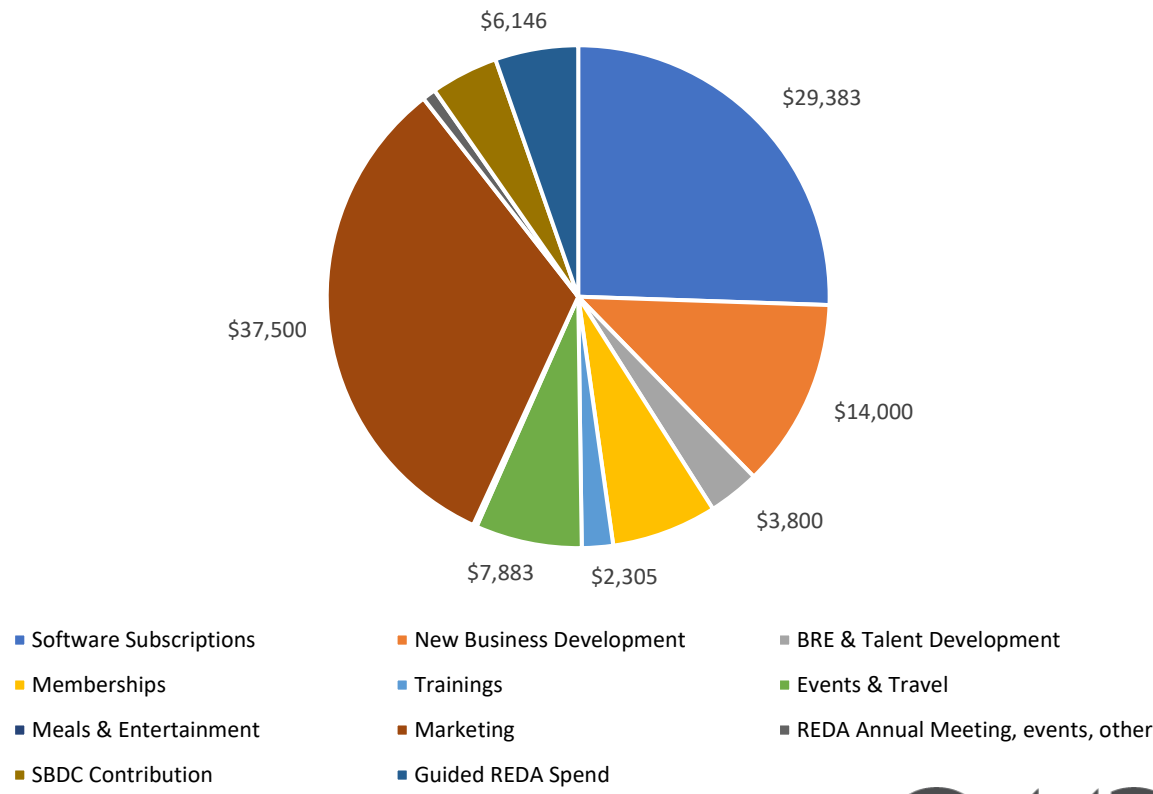


Programming & Tools

Programming & Tools - 2025

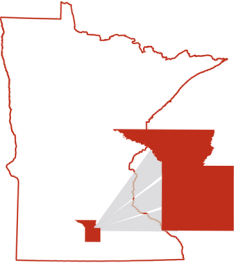


Programming & Tools - 2026



Funding Well Spent

REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ALLIANCE



\$1 → \$889

Every \$1 committed to REDA by public partners in 2024 supported \$889 of **private capital investment** in the region.



Downtown Partnership Mission & Vision



Our **Mission** is to promote collaboration and foster investment in the downtown of Mankato and North Mankato to attract and support the growth of a diverse array of businesses, customers, visitors and residents to the region.

Our **Vision** is a vibrant downtown that anchors and exemplifies the creativity, diversity, and vitality of the region.

Mainstreet Four Point Approach

- Economic Vitality
- Design
- Organization
- Promotion



Organization



Building Leadership and Strong Partnerships

- Redefined downtown district boundaries
- Adopted a new name
- Introduced an updated logo
- Launched a monthly Downtown Business E-Newsletter



Social Media Followers July 22 (Name Change) - October 1

 3,373 (+6%)

 135 (+187%)



Promotions



Enhancing Visibility and Supporting Local Commerce

- Implements retail and traffic-building initiatives
- Collaborates with partners and promotes existing events
- Encourages a "Buy Local" culture
- Administers the Bonus Gift Card Program
- **Looking Ahead:** Coordinating Shop Downtown

A large, dark brown circular icon containing a white dollar sign (\$).

**OVER \$27K IN
RECEIPTS SUBMITTED
FOR THE 2024
HOLIDAY BONUS GIFT
CARD PROGRAM**



Creating an Inviting and Inclusive Downtown Environment

- Enhances the physical appearance of the downtown districts
- Implements the Let it Glow, Kato storefront decorating contest
- Partners with the City of Mankato on the Adopt-A-Planter Program



2024 PEOPLE'S CHOICE WINNERS:



OUT OF 16 TOTAL PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES

Adopt-A-Planter 2025

25 Planters (+150%)

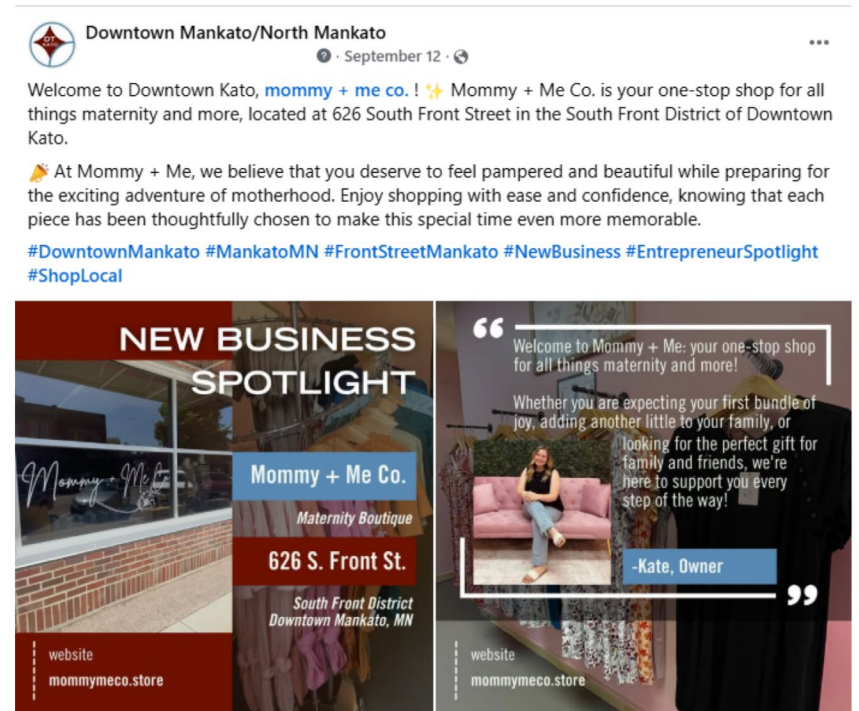
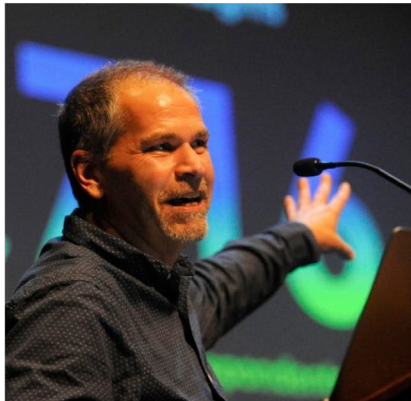


Economic Vitality



Strengthening and Supporting Downtown Businesses

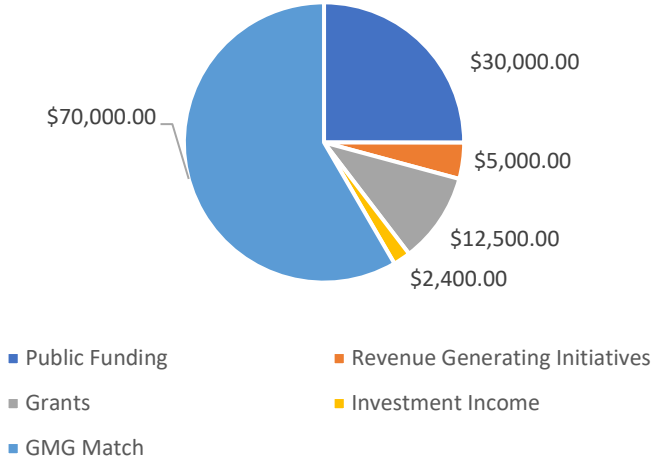
- Supports and strengthens existing core-area businesses
- Provides business assistance and resources
- Conducts regular Business Walks
- **Looking Ahead:** Hosting a professional development session; Presenter Jay Schlinsog, Downtown Professionals Network: December 9 – 10



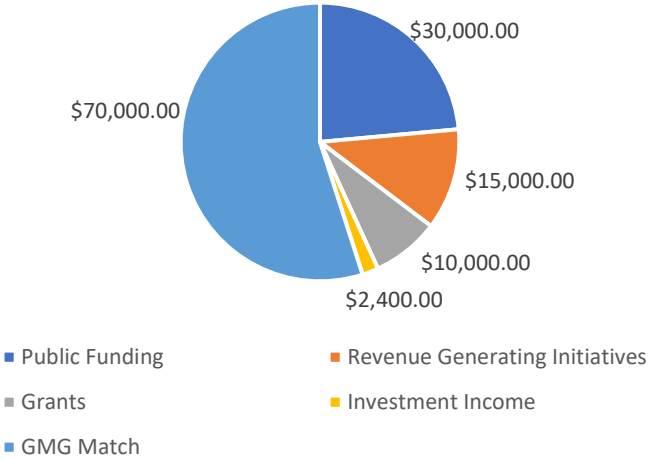
Revenue Breakdown



2025 Revenue



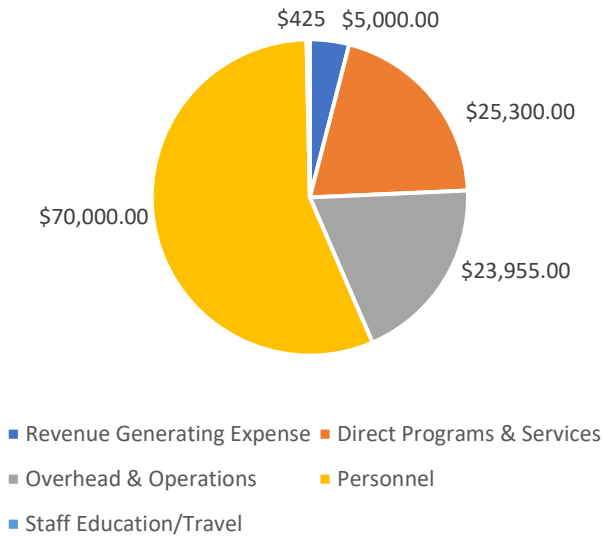
2026 Revenue



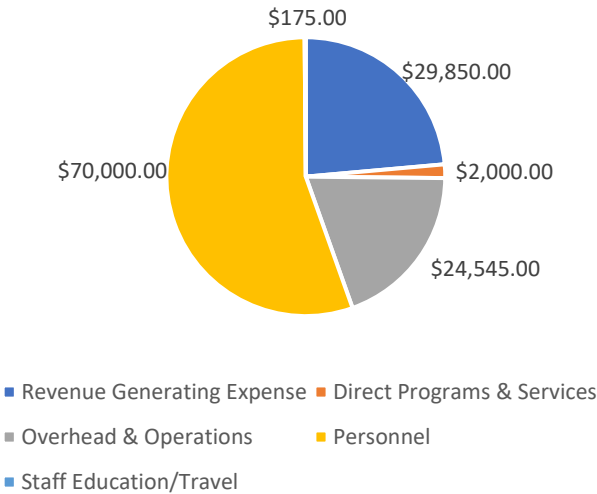
Budget Allocation



2025 Budget Allocation



2026 Budget Allocation



Questions?



THANK YOU

