

Get Creative, Mankato



A Framework for Artistic, Cultural and Economic Vitality



Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Preface: Purpose, Values, and Vision.....	6
Planning Process	7
Get Creative, Mankato.....	7
Plan Recommendations	9
Overview	9
Principal Recommendations of <i>Get Creative, Mankato</i>	9
Community Design.....	10
Promotion and Support	15
Arts and Culture Access	18
Financial Resources.....	22
Tourism and Economic Vitality	26
Next Steps	29
Appendix	30
Partner Organizations	30
Community Engagement Sessions, February 21 & 25, 2017, Word Clouds	31
Public Engagement Sessions, Public Comments, February 21 & 25, 2017	33
Community Focus Group: Funding	37
Community Focus Group: Multiculturalism.....	38
Community Focus Group: Promotion + Support	39
Community Focus Group: Education	41
Community Focus Group: Education – High School	42
Community Focus Group: Needs of the Arts Community	43
Open House, Survey Responses, January 23, 2018	44
Open House, Public Comments, January 23, 2018	45
Open House, Gary Pettis’ Visuals, January 23, 2018.....	50
Artspace Creative Spaces Consulting Report.....	63

Executive Summary

Get Creative, Mankato

A Framework for Artistic, Cultural and Economic Vitality

Over the past ten years, Mankato has made great strides in its commitment to infusing arts and culture into the fabric of the community. Most goals from the first arts and culture plan developed in 2007 (*Arts, Culture and Community Enhancement plan*) were realized, leading to a need for a revised and refocused arts plan to direct future arts and culture initiatives. The City of Mankato partnered with Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (City of Mankato's Arts Commission) and the City Center Partnership to lead an update to the arts and culture plan and build on the significant changes in the arts and culture setting in Mankato since the first plan was implemented.

Throughout the process key questions were raised during public engagement:

- How do we recruit and retain talent in Mankato?
- How do we develop a 21st century workforce?
- How do we make Mankato a more welcoming community for all creatives and cultures?
- How can arts and culture play a role in providing answers to these complex issues?

One solution to these questions is in our city's commitment to a healthy creative economy.

Creative Economy Defined: *Economic systems where value is based on imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land, labor and capital.* ~ John Howkins (2001)

A prominent opinion in today's marketplace is the view that *creativity* is the defining characteristic of 21st century economies, just as manufacturing was in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to providing life changing experiences, educational opportunities and accessibility to diverse audiences, creative workers, artists and arts and culture organizations are important employers and economic engines. Investing in the creative economy gives Mankato a competitive edge. For south central Minnesota, it's been found that the combined economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations, their audiences and artists and creative workers exceeds \$33 million annually (Creative Minnesota Report 2017).

Get Creative, Mankato is an outline for artistic, cultural and economic strength over the next ten years. The plan summarizes arts and culture values expressed by the larger community, what the community would like to see new or enhanced, and what would help the creative economy prosper in Greater Mankato. This plan will be used as an advocacy tool to garner support and investment in the creative sector.

Public Opinion based on the 2017 Creative Minnesota Report:

- 91% of Minnesotans believe that people who create art are contributing something important to their communities
- 90% of Minnesotans believe that arts & cultural activities help make Minnesota an attractive place to live and work
- 82% of Minnesotans believe it's important to have the opportunity to express themselves creatively or to experience the creativity of others every day

Get Creative, Mankato is organized into five overarching sections:

1. Community Design
2. Promotion and Support
3. Arts and Culture Access
4. Financial Resources
5. Tourism and Economic Vitality

Goal statements and priorities of each section based on community engagement:

Community Design: It is important to create spaces throughout the community that encourage creativity and innovation, enhance livability and aesthetics, serve the needs of creative businesses, individuals and nonprofits, highlight the unique history and identity of Mankato, and demonstrate high standards of design and accessibility in public spaces.

Priorities:

- Identification, development and promotion of Creative Districts.
- Establishment of Community Cultural Center and affordable spaces for creative work.

Promotion and Support: Mankato will experience a surge in arts and culture participation by creatives and their target audiences as the message and advocacy efforts of the value of arts and culture is strengthened.

Priorities:

- Identify the creative silos in our community to connect them to resources and to provide support.
- Strengthen creative resources to increase participation in arts and culture.

Arts and Culture Access: Everyone, regardless of background, in the Greater Mankato community will have equal access to arts and cultural learning at all stages of life, contributing to a welcoming community with a strong appreciation for the arts.

Priorities:

- Emphasis on diversity and inclusion to create a welcoming community.
- Offer diverse arts and culture learning opportunities relevant to our 21st century global society.

Financial Resources: Develop new funding resources for creative and cultural programs, individuals, businesses, and organizations while sustaining and maximizing current resources. Ensure that resources are made available to underserved populations, such as people whose first language is not English and people of all abilities.

Priorities:

- Diversify funding strategies for arts and culture initiatives.
- Explore centralized sponsorship opportunity for arts and culture.

Tourism and Economic Vitality: Mankato will be a regional hub for creative and innovative businesses. The rich arts and culture found throughout Mankato will attract business, organizations, entrepreneurs, artists, residents and visitors.

Priorities:

- Explore ways to build on the intersection of creative economy and traditional market economy.
- Work toward positioning Mankato as an innovative and creative regional hub.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Join – The implementation team for *Get Creative, Mankato* will include representatives from Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, City of Mankato, City Center Partnership, Greater Mankato Growth, Visit Mankato, arts and culture organizations, and other stakeholders. Each team will focus on a specific section of the plan. Sign up to be on a committee to move the goals and objectives forward.

Invest – Review the full plan at www.mankatomn.gov determine where you would like to make an impact and support these initiatives with financial resources. Contact Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, City Center Partnership or City of Mankato Community Development staff to discuss the areas you are most passionate about.

Promote – Become an ambassador for *Get Creative, Mankato*. Spread the word that this plan exists within your network, share updates on social media and help us share and celebrate the positive impact that arts and culture are having on our community.

Preface: Purpose, Values, and Vision

PURPOSE

Mankato is a culturally rich community where all forms of art and culture are valued and celebrated. The vitality of the arts, culture and historical sectors of our community flourish through the support, encouragement and fostering of public-private partnerships.

The benefits of arts and culture are extensive. Arts and culture can improve the quality of life through several means, including beautification, bringing the community and different cultures together, developing perspectives, making people more resilient, enhancing connections to our heritage, providing community identity, increasing civic participation, and reducing stress levels. Arts and culture activities attract residents and tourism that support adjacent businesses, providing a positive economic impact.

Under the City Center Renaissance Plan, an Arts, Culture and Community Enhancement (ACCE) committee was convened in 2007 where two methods to enrich the region were identified:

Developing a physical district that supports the arts: This district, located in the City Center of Mankato and coordinating with the City Center Renaissance plan, would be populated with arts and culture venues, museums, galleries, studio and rehearsal space, retail, residential and office space that enhances the community and attracts visitors.

Developing a community culture that supports the arts: Mankato has a multitude of arts, cultural and historical organizations and events that improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. Promoting these existing assets and fostering new ones, encouraging diversity and educational opportunities and supporting an entrepreneurial spirit can benefit both the community spirit and economic vitality of the region.

The *Get Creative, Mankato* process provides an update to the 2007 plan by defining through public engagement the public's arts and culture values, what the community would like to see new or enhanced, and what would help the creative economy flourish in Mankato.

VALUES

Several values emerged from the community engagement process as core, over-arching values for arts, culture and creativity in Mankato:

1. **Inclusion:** We value sharing (information, resources, processes); we value being a welcoming community to the immigrant or refugee, to the college student, to the new family, to all that call Mankato their home
2. **Collaboration:** We value working together, recognizing that when one person succeeds, we all benefit; that there is strength in numbers; that there is enough for everyone.
3. **Discovery:** We value everyone's story – including our own; we are intentional about reaching out and inviting those on the fringes, ignored, without voice to the table to hear their stories. We will discover and uncover truths about ourselves and use art to build a more compassionate and inclusive community.

VISION

In 2028, Mankato identifies as a creative community, having developed an atmosphere where arts, culture, heritage and creativity are integral to the fabric of everyday life. A multitude of arts, cultural and historical organizations and events enhance the quality of life for residents and attract visitors, and the public is strongly supportive of these creative initiatives and institutions. Residents have equal opportunities to learn and create, finding inspiration from the talent and inventiveness that surrounds them. Drawn and nurtured by our community's appreciation for creativity and the energy it creates, creative entrepreneurial businesses thrive. The richness of our cultural assets and the strength of the creative economy heighten community pride and benefit the economic vitality of the region.



Planning Process

Get Creative, Mankato

The City of Mankato partnered with Twin Rivers Council for the Arts and the City Center Partnership on a planning effort to update the *Arts, Culture and Community Enhancement (ACCE) plan*, which was adopted in 2007.



The ACCE plan was completed in 2007 per *Envision 2020* and the *City Center Renaissance plan* to develop a community culture to support the arts, cultural organizations and events that improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. The plan also called for establishment of an arts and culture district and serves as an appendix to the *City Center Renaissance plan*.

Outcomes of the ACCE plan included the creation of Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, City Center Partnership, CityArt program, Greater Mankato Events website, Riverfront Park, Mankato Heritage Plaque program, Songs on the Lawn, Alive After 5, Hockey Night, Civic Center plaza, Heritage Preservation Commission, and Heritage Preservation Ordinance.

With significant progress to date on initial goals within the ACCE plan, an increased number of creative economy organizations, and new recognition among the public of the value of arts and culture in enhancing our community, an update was necessary for arts and culture to continue to flourish.

The process began by reconvening the ACCE committee to review the 2007 plan and determine what goals were met, relevancy of goals today, and to evaluate the success of realized initiatives. Two citywide community engagement sessions were held on February 21 and February 25, 2017, which included a brief presentation about the previous plan and current state of the arts, roundtable discussions, and a performance by local musicians.

The sessions were designed to bring together residents, artists and community members to engage on issues related to arts and culture. A pop-up museum of ideas provided a way for the public to communicate their “future creative Mankato” in an interactive, visual way, as part of the community engagement sessions. Over forty people participated in the community engagement sessions. Additionally, those unable to attend the community engagement sessions or focus groups were able to participate virtually via a community remarks page. The web page allowed users to map comments and leave general comments regarding arts and culture in Mankato.



Focus groups were also held throughout the community from March 9 through April 4, 2017 to dig deeper into specific priority areas: needs of the creative community, multiculturalism and the arts, promotion and support, and arts and culture education. Over 45 people participated in the focus groups. The steering committee formed a small working group for each section of the plan thereafter to review recommendations and provide feedback on the plan.

More than 40 people attended an open house on January 23, 2018 at the Emy Frentz Arts Guild to see the unveiling of the plan’s recommendations. The open house included artwork by local artist, writer, and graphic designer, Gary Pettis. Mr. Pettis was selected through a community wide RFP process to create a visual display to communicate the essence of the vision of the plan. Mr. Pettis’ visuals are included in the appendix. Attendees were asked to provide feedback via surveys which were available at the open house and online for those unable to attend. The plan recommendations were printed on a large scale for view and attendees were asked to write comments directly on the printout. The community expressed their support for the plan and its comprehensiveness. Feedback received from the community is included in the appendix.

Plan Recommendations

Overview

Recommendations have been developed to effectuate the plan and are based on input received at public engagement sessions, focus groups, online, and an open house. The plan is divided into five sections:

1. Community Design
2. Promotion and Support
3. Arts and Culture Access
4. Financial Resources
5. Tourism and Economic Vitality

Another dominant theme that arose throughout the process was multiculturalism and diversity. The community values multiculturalism and believes it should be reflected within each section.

Each recommendation is followed by a matrix of suggested implementation tactics that include the following:

Implementers: suggested, based on input from the community as to possible roles and responsibilities.
Timeline: Short Term = 1 – 3 years Medium Term = 4 – 9 years Long Term = 10+ years
Models: referenced examples of programs from other communities.
Resources: financial, in-kind, and volunteer time are suggested.
First Steps: suggested to guide implementation of the recommendation.
Benefits/rationale: impact to the community from implementing the recommendation.
Evaluation Criteria: means of measuring completion of the recommendation.

Principal Recommendations of *Get Creative, Mankato*

The result of this process is this document: *Get Creative, Mankato!* The plan’s vision, values, goals, and recommendations provide themes to develop tactical plans as opportunities and challenges arise. The goal of the plan is to develop a vision and make recommendations about how the city and its partners can build, strengthen and invest in people, places, communities and ideas that define culture within southern Minnesota. The plan also links other community planning efforts, including:

- City of Mankato Strategic Plan
- City of Mankato Transit Development Plan
- Old Town Master Plan
- City of Mankato Wayfinding Plan
- City Center Renaissance Plan
- City Center Open Space Plan
- Artspace Creative Spaces Consulting Report
- South Front Street Connectivity Plan

The following five ideas emerged as the most important principal recommendations of the Arts + Culture Plan:

- Identification, development and promotion of Creative Districts;
- Establishment of community cultural center and affordable spaces for creative work;
- Increase in funding strategies for arts and culture initiatives;
- Emphasis on diversity and inclusion to create a welcoming community; and
- Intersection of creative economy and the traditional market economy.

Community Design

Public spaces are vital to creating opportunities to gather, create and share. The American Planning Association and Project for Public Spaces provides guidance in creating great public spaces with the following characteristics:

- Offer reasons to linger and return
- Comfortable and clean
- Conduits of sociability
- Ample seating
- Safe, welcoming, and accommodating for all users
- Visually compelling
- Reflect the local culture or history
- Relate well to bordering uses
- Have unique or special character
- Have design and architectural features that are visually interesting

Parks and other public spaces found throughout Mankato should be enhanced to tell the story of each neighborhood's distinct cultural and historical identity. The distinct attributes of these neighborhoods should be augmented to enhance the city's livability and to attract visitors. New public spaces should be created as appropriate.

Additionally, as the city of Mankato continues to build its public art collection and programming, it is important to put clear guidelines and expectations in place to support the artist, ensure consistent quality, and maintain the public art assets to ensure their longevity. Policies should be established regarding locating/relocating, commissioning/decommissioning, and maintaining public art. Adoption of a public art ordinance will provide a legal basis for a public art program and should be evaluated.



The city of Mankato and its citizens have a history of supporting large scale cultural venues, as seen with the creation of Riverfront Park amphitheater and most recently the expansion of the Verizon Center into a multi-use event center. Community engagement meetings and focus groups continue to express the need for affordable, flexible and viable performance space for the performing arts and more intimate events.

During the public engagement process, there was much interest in varying facets of public art. The Mankato area is comprised of talented artists whose talents should be tapped.

Community Design Goal: Spaces will be created throughout the community that encourage creativity and innovation, enhance livability and aesthetics, serve the needs of creative businesses, individuals and nonprofits, highlight the unique history and identity of Mankato, and demonstrate high standards of design and accessibility in public spaces.

Recommendation 1: Develop public art ordinance and policies to encourage and support diverse offerings of public art and creative placemaking projects throughout Mankato.

Public art can enhance the community and quality of life through integration into building design or public spaces. A public art ordinance and specific policies will guide Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (City of Mankato’s Arts Commission), City of Mankato, other organizations and individual artists in growing the public art collection in a thoughtful, effective way. Written policies will outline desired locations for public art, a process for acquiring or commissioning art, and a clear plan for the maintenance of public art assets. Care should be take when crafting an ordinance and policies so that they do not result in discouraging growth of Mankato’s public art assets. Policies should be simple and not too restrictive.



Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, City Center Partnership, City of Mankato, art educators, artists, neighborhood groups.
Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).
Models: City of Saint Paul, Minnesota; City of Berkeley, California; How to do Creative Placemaking, National Endowment for the Arts.
Resources: Forecast Public Art, Springboard for the Arts
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt a public art ordinance and create public art policy that includes clear and simple processes for creatives wishing to complete public art projects and events. 2. Clearly communicate public art processes to the creative community and general public, including via public meetings and City of Mankato and Twin Rivers Council for the Arts websites. 3. Provide training to creatives on how to implement public art and creative placemaking projects.
Benefits/rationale: Public art enhances the community by adding to the quality of life and attracting tourism. This leads to a positive economic impact. Having a public art ordinance and public art policies in place will provide guidance for growing and maintaining public art assets.
Evaluation Criteria: Adoption of public art ordinance and public art policies; successful implementation; community support; increased number of public art projects.

Recommendation 2: Recognize and support naturally occurring creative districts within Mankato.

Creative districts will enhance and encourage the creative economy and draw visitors to Mankato while creating a sense of place for residents. Creative districts should include performance venues, cultural establishments, unique retail and hospitality establishments, offices, studio and residential space.



Identification and support of creative districts as they naturally occur will assist with marketing areas by highlighting their unique characteristics to draw interest and facilitate vibrancy. Arts, creative, cultural, heritage and/or historic districts should feature appropriate design and creative elements in future infrastructure projects to highlight the unique qualities of these districts and provide visual

cohesion. Visual cues, signage, interpretive plaques and public art are also important designators of these districts.

In 2016, Artspace, the nation’s leading nonprofit developer of arts facilities, provided consulting services to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a creative district in Mankato; their report can be found within the appendix. Creative districts have the potential to naturally occur within different areas of the city, as evidenced in the recent organic growth in the Old Town neighborhood. The density of historic buildings and a variety of creative, local business, as well as the establishment of the Minnesota State University Mankato’s Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, is a prime example of a naturally occurring creative district identified by the Artspace evaluation.



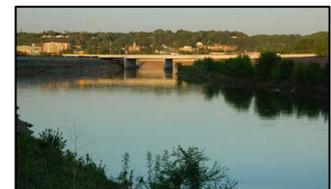
Implementers: City Center Partnership, City of Mankato, Old Town Collaborative Association, Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, Washington Park Neighborhood Association, Minnesota State University-Mankato, Blue Earth County Historical Society, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Mankato Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Minnesota Makers and Artists Guild, Mankato Makerspace.
Timeline: Medium term (4 – 9 years).
Models: RiNO (Denver, Colorado); Lowertown (St. Paul, Minnesota); Sioux City, Iowa.
Resources: Artspace Creative Consulting Report (include link to report); Minnesota Main Street Program
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and use the ArtSpace Creative Spaces Consulting Report completed in 2016 for Mankato. 2. Develop criteria to recognize naturally occurring creative and cultural districts; provide formal recognition of current and potential creative districts in Mankato. 3. Establish parameters of support the City can provide within these districts.
Benefits/rationale: Creative districts will enhance and encourage the creative economy and help draw visitors to Mankato, while creating a sense of place for residents. Creative districts include venues, retail, office, creative and residential space. Identification and support of creative districts as they naturally occur would assist with marketing the areas by highlighting their unique characteristics to draw interest and facilitate vibrancy.
Evaluation Criteria: Designation of district(s), community support, increased innovation and business creation in those districts, increased visitor traffic, ongoing vitality of districts.

Recommendation 3: Use art to reconnect to the Minnesota River.

Mankato was established in 1852 near the junction of the Blue Earth and Minnesota rivers. Its ideal location made the area accessible for trade and transportation, spurring growth in industry and agriculture. The river provided opportunities for the city to grow, but also brought challenges with flooding. The river provides an opportunity yet again to serve as an asset to be capitalized.

Community engagement sessions from the Mankato strategic planning process have shown high interest from the community in finding ways to connect to our water systems, increase recreational activity in and along the riverfront, and create an improved aesthetic in the riverfront areas of the City Center.

As opportunities arise to develop the area along the riverfront, creative spaces should be incorporated, as well as strategies to connect the riverfront with the rest of the community. Reconnection to the river may also be accomplished through public art or repurposing of existing structures, such as retrofitting existing spaces to allow for views of the river. Cultural events also provide opportunities to reconnect to the river, which played a key role in Mankato’s development.



Implementers: City of Mankato, Army Corp of Engineers, City Center Partnership, downtown stakeholders, private developers.
Timeline: Long term (10+ years).
Models: St. Cloud, Minnesota – river walk; San Antonio, Texas – river walk; Milwaukee, Wisconsin – river walk; Tampa, Florida – river walk
Resources: Public and private sector funding; Grants may be available for public art installation, interpretive plaques, or events; opportunities may exist with Mankato Area Foundation, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, and State Historic Preservation Office. Mankato Strategic Plan
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research other redeveloped riverfront communities and examine best practices for incorporating art into the design, especially communities with flood projects. 2. Include art and culture in the redevelopment of Mankato's riverfront, both inside and outside the floodwall that will attract new business development, increase pedestrian traffic and recreational activity. 3. Develop creative spaces that connect to the Minnesota River and tell the story of its importance in Mankato's history.
Benefits/rationale: Community engagement sessions have shown high interest from the community in finding ways to connect to our water systems and create an improved aesthetic in the downtown. This would provide new ways for people to interact, attract visitors and artists to the community. Reconnecting the community to the river would leverage the river to attract new business development and economic growth, increasing recreational activity in and along the riverfront.
Evaluation Criteria: Improved access to the river and increased pedestrian activity.

Recommendation 4: Identify, enhance and create cultural facilities for creatives, residents and visitors.

Creative use of underused existing spaces can provide artists with affordable space for rehearsals, performances, creation and displays. In addition to providing a needed resource for creatives, this also benefits the greater community by allowing residents to experience additional arts and culture opportunities.

Throughout the public engagement process, artists and residents brought up the need for affordable spaces that facilitate the creative process and enhance the vitality of our community. Requests from the public include:

- Utilize and share the existing resources for outside the box venues (example parks, berms, food truck hub, temporary street closures, and vacant storefronts).
- Create a master list of venues, costs, and point of contact.
- Collaboration and partnerships to create mutually beneficial opportunities for multi-artistic and cultural venues and uses.
- Working with multiple users for storage and resources; example a shared warehouse.
- An affordable black box theater space for small theatrical, musical and dance productions and rehearsals.
- A maker space that might include welding equipment, shared kilns, pottery wheels, kitchen, 3-D printers, sewing equipment, specialty tools, etc. to allow community members to learn and express their creativity – “a place to go create.” Could also be used for workforce development for skills such as welding and machining.
- Additional studio space for visual artists.
- Community sculpture center that provides workshops and opportunities to learn sculpting.
- Free skateboard parks with large-scale visual art incorporated.

Existing spaces, such as schools, universities, and churches, may be able to serve as venues for performances or studios. Partnerships should be developed to encourage low-cost access to existing spaces when they are not being used. Incentive programs can also be developed to assist nonprofits in establishing these spaces.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, arts and culture nonprofits, local developers, City of Mankato.
Timeline: Medium term (4 – 9 years).
Models: Austin, Texas
Resources: Parks, berms, food truck hub, temporary street closures, and vacant storefronts; Post Office Reuse report.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a master list of current venues/facilities; include types of activities spaces can support (i.e. performance, studio space, maker space, etc.), costs, and contact. 2. Determine the space/facility needs of the creative community of Greater Mankato. 3. Identify partners willing to collaborate with creatives on additional facilities. 4. Follow up with donors and developers that have shown interest in the Post Office; utilize 2007 performing arts center research, costs and possible build out options. Research how other small-mid-sized cities fund their performing arts centers. 5. Research the feasibility of a designated Cultural Center that includes space for creative businesses and services, arts and cultural displays and activities, and rehearsals and performances. 6. Research and develop funding strategies for building owners who donate a portion of their space for noncommercial use (i.e. art installations; rehearsal; etc.). Identify the city of Mankato’s support role in developing and offering funding strategies.
Benefits/rationale: Creatively using existing spaces and venues and providing a “one-stop shop” of resources. The benefits include ease of finding spaces and allowing creative design of spaces.
Evaluation Criteria: More venue opportunities and utilization, therefore creative options would be available to art and culture consumers.

Recommendation 5: Utilize the artist perspective in city design.

The City of Mankato will collaborate with Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (TRCA) on reviewing opportunities to incorporate public art into city projects. The City of Mankato should collaborate with TRCA on major initiatives and encourage creative collaboration across city divisions as an avenue to support local artists and bring new perspectives. The artist perspective should be considered across city divisions (parks, planning, public works, planning studies, ongoing street and sidewalk maintenance, programming of public spaces, etc.). This will allow local artists to participate in enhancing Mankato’s livability.

Implementers: City of Mankato, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts.
Timeline: Long term (10+ years).
Models: Public Art Saint Paul – Saint Paul, Minnesota; Austin, Texas; Minneapolis Creative City.
Resources: City of Mankato Strategic Plan; City of Mankato Capital Investment Plan.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a city Artist in Residence program. 2. Explore ways to include local artists in the Mankato Strategic Plan planning and implementation process.
Benefits/rationale: Artist in Residence programs can provide creative approaches to problem-solving and empower and support local artists.
Evaluation Criteria: Incorporation of public art in city projects.

Recommendation 6: Enhance quality of life and visitor experiences through public art and creative placemaking.

Fostering public art and creative placemaking opportunities will create conversation, enhance the quality of life and visitor experience and foster community pride. During the public engagement process, there was much interest in varying facets of public art and creative placemaking. These may include:



- Integrating art into infrastructure (sewer lids, tree grates, utility box wraps, murals, benches, bike racks, lighting, parks, etc.);
- Interpreting Mankato’s unique heritage to assist with generating an appreciation of our heritage and instilling community pride;
- Creative placemaking utilizing neighborhood resources to promote and create community art opportunities;
- Streetscaping improvements to soften pedestrian realm (trees, ornamental plantings, lighting, banners, benches, etc.);
- Alleyway enhancements (landscaping, lighting, consolidation of parking); and
- Gateway enhancements (including entrances into Mankato from Highway 169).
- Identifying “Art Deserts” and creating “Art Oasis”

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, City of Mankato, City Center Partnership, Visit Mankato Partners: neighborhood associations, business and property owners, local artists and arts organizations.
Timeline: Short to medium term (1 – 9 years)/ ongoing.
Models: Miles of Murals – Chicago, Illinois; Cloud Gate (the bean), Millennium Park, Chicago, Illinois; Parking ramp enhancements – Louisville, Kentucky; Columbia, Missouri; Fort Collins, Colorado; Art in Public Spaces, Austin, Texas.
Resources: Forecast for Public Art; Springboard for the Arts; Artists; Grants may be available for public art installation; opportunities may exist with Mankato Area Foundation, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify areas where public art and creative placemaking opportunities may exist to enhance the visitor experience and city’s livability. 2. Enhance gateways into the city and into the trail system with public art. 3. Create a large-scale public art piece that is unique to Mankato, as a tourism draw.
Benefits/rationale: Creates conversation, organic promotion of community, enhances visitor and resident experience and promotes pride in the community.
Evaluation Criteria: Implementation, attracting attention and visitors.

Promotion and Support

The Mankato community has shown increasing support of art and cultural initiatives, however, the community engagement process for this plan also revealed gaps. Many artists and community members are not aware of all of Mankato’s cultural offerings. The community wants more collaboration on promotional efforts and needs administrative support to promote events and offerings. The community also revealed a gap in the types of diverse and multicultural experiences residents and visitors are looking for outside of Mankato. The Promotion and Support recommendations are suggestions generated by artists and community members to increase these offerings.

Creative community members, as well as those residents who patronize arts and culture, and those visitors who look upon Mankato as a place of artistic, musical, literary and historical experience, look for promotional campaigns that inform, are fun and serve scheduling needs.

The amount of engagement between individual artists and creative organizations needs to increase. Initiatives to actively support and enroll all of the talents and creative minds beyond the current reach will attract more people. Proactive support will bring in a greater number of participants.

Promotion and Support Goal: Mankato will experience a surge in arts and culture participation by creatives and their target audiences as the message and advocacy efforts of the value arts and culture is strengthened.

Recommendation 1: Recognize and support Twin Rivers Council for the Arts as the umbrella arts and culture council and arts commission for Greater Mankato.

Empowering and recognizing Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (TRCA) as the central resource for creatives will improve communication within the creative sector, increase creative opportunities, and expand resources and advocacy efforts. There should be inclusivity in representing all arts organizations and creatives. This builds on existing framework and resources.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Greater Mankato Growth, City of Mankato, City of North Mankato. Partners: TRCA, Visit Mankato, local creative economy.
Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).
Models: https://www.philaculture.org/ ; https://www.austincreativealliance.org/ .
Resources: Membership/volunteer involvement, staff capacity building
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform direct outreach to ensure the creative community understands the role of TRCA as Mankato’s designated arts commission. 2. Recruit TRCA affiliates to serve at the board and committee level. 3. Involve TRCA affiliates in the organization’s strategic planning process. 4. Update website content to expand affiliate presence, profiles and resources. 5. Present clear advantages/benefits for affiliation.
Benefits/rationale: Empowering and recognizing Twin Rivers Council for the Arts as the central resource for creatives improves communication within the creative sector, increases creative opportunities, and expands resources and advocacy efforts. Builds on existing framework and resources.
Evaluation Criteria: Increase in affiliate membership and involvement within the organization.

Recommendation 2: Design professional skill-building, team-building and networking programs for the creative economy. Organizations providing these programs should work together to determine offerings to provide expert service and avoid duplication.

Artists, creatives and nonprofit leaders benefit from high-quality continuing education and networking programs. Currently several organizations offer these types of programs, but there are gaps and duplication. Strategic partnerships and deliberate planning are necessary to ensure the creative community has access to opportunities and resources.

Networking and training opportunities for artists, creative, and cultural organizations will allow for growth and development, creating a stronger base for arts and culture in the Mankato area. Offerings should continue to be built to provide creative entrepreneurs the skills and tools needed to succeed. New mechanisms should be explored such as fundraising training and workplace giving.

<p>Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for Arts, Community Education and Recreation, Small Business Development Center, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council.</p> <p>Partners: Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Connect the Grey, Greater Mankato Growth, 410 Project, Carnegie Art Center, Minnesota State University Mankato, Bethany Lutheran College, South Central College, Mankato Makerspace, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, ISD 77.</p>
<p>Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years) / ongoing.</p>
<p>Models: Springboard for the arts “Business of Art” / “Work of Art” curriculum; Connect the Grey “Explorations”; Twin Rivers Council for the Arts “Spark”; Creative Mornings; Iowa City MC Ginsburg artist in residence program & visiting author program; NEA – Creativity Connects: https://www.arts.gov/partnerships/creativity-connects; Anderson Center for the Arts, Red Wing, Minnesota: http://www.andersoncenter.org/video.html; Arts in Oil City Program: http://www.artsoilcity.com/.</p>
<p>Resources: staff time; technology resources; funding for facilitators and/or curriculum; implementers as identified above.</p>
<p>First Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inventory the current curriculum offered in Mankato. Look for gaps in programming and determine organization(s) best suited to fill the gap. 2. Develop online tools/resources for individuals to complete learning in their own time/at their own pace. 3. Invest in “train the trainer” workshops to increase number of teachers/facilitators in Greater Mankato. 4. Develop a list of teaching artists and facilitators who can provide ongoing training to creatives (related to Recommendation 1 in Arts and Culture Access). 5. Survey area creatives on the types of networking events they are looking for. Develop consistent, relevant programming to build community among creatives. 6. Establish arts and culture liaisons for the business, nonprofit and education sectors to strengthen ties between artists, arts/culture organizations and larger community. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Start a dialogue with school administrators to introduce the concept and discuss available options. b. Start a dialogue with social service agencies to gauge interest. c. Discuss interest in an Artist in Residence program with local art centers and other organizations. d. Partner with university faculty and/or graduate students to develop the liaison models. e. Provide support to leaders of immigrant communities to act as liaison; disseminating information, facilitate and host community meetings within these populations.
<p>Benefits/rationale: Cross promotion of curriculum offerings; new skills and partnerships being formed; increase the types of events and projects being done across the city. Strengthen ties between arts/culture organizations and the larger community.</p>
<p>Evaluation Criteria: Participation, new partnerships, new skills. Liaisons engaged, creation of network, evaluate feedback from stakeholders and residents about experiences and learning.</p>

Recommendation 3: Determine who is seeking to earn a sustainable income from artistic endeavors. Provide coaching on the multi-step process from Hobby Creative to Professional Creative. Build up creatives to value their work and build a community that values and supports our local creative economy.

In order to provide education and resources to entrepreneurial creatives, it is important to know who they are and what resources they need to succeed. For local artists to succeed financially in Mankato, the community needs to value arts and form the habit of purchasing local artwork and paying for artistic and cultural experiences. Marketing efforts may support this recommendation. It may also be helpful to communicate where local artwork can be purchased.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts. Partners: Greater Mankato Growth, Small Business Development Center, Connect the Grey, University arts and humanities departments, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council.
Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).
Models: CreativeMN research model; Boulder artists census survey; Creative Lexington videos.
Resources: staff time, graduate students; online technology to gather data; videographer to create professional creative profiles.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a comprehensive survey to determine who identifies as a “hobby” artist, “emerging” artist and “professional” artist. Determine through the survey the number of artists who want to remain hobby vs those who want to earn a sustainable income from their art. 2. Offer peer learning (panel discussions, videos) from local creatives who transitioned from hobby to professional artist. Encourage hobby artists to see the value of their art medium to the community. 3. Encourage businesses to commission and/or purchase local artwork; provide information on the commissioning process. 4. Establish a youth art fair for K-12 and college artists. 5. Encourage small retail businesses to carry local artists’ artwork. 6. Research an artist co-op retail gallery and develop a network of artists to manage it (long term goal).
Benefits/rationale: Gain a better understanding of who our creative audience is and how to serve them.
Evaluation Criteria: Survey participation and growth in professional creatives.

Recommendation 4: Establish creative profiles according to primary areas of interest (i.e. traditional art forms, emerging art forms, and professional services).

Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (TRCA) should build and strengthen creative directories to increase knowledge, encourage partnership, create connection, and build trust. TRCA and Visit Mankato should amplify the presence of Mankato arts/culture throughout the region and state.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts.
Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).
Models: https://www.MnArtists.org ; https://www.austincreativealliance.org/members/#!/directory ; Southern Minnesota Visual Art Gallery Alliance; Boulder, Colorado – Dance Bridge.
Resources: Staff time, funding.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the creative silos found in Greater Mankato and leaders who can bring the individuals/groups together. 2. Create opportunities for creative silos to come together, share what they do and their unique, specific needs. 3. Encourage artists to become TRCA affiliates and be listed in the local directory; encourage artists to create a profile on Mnartists.org. 4. Create a series of sub-brands to market specific local creative silos and use these sub-brands to draw attention to the talents and capabilities of the overall art and culture community (i.e. Mankato Arts, Mankato Music, Mankato Makerspace, Mankato Theatre, etc.).
Benefits/rationale: Develop a clearing house for various creative silos to increase networking, knowledge, partnership; build trust – tear down walls; build a larger presence of Mankato arts/culture throughout the region and state.
Evaluation Criteria: Number of artists participating in these directories; use of directories by people and organizations looking for creatives.

Arts and Culture Access

Arts and cultural learning enhances school achievement and attendance, contributes to healthy youth development, and instills problem solving and creative thinking skills. Arts and culture education should

be a priority in the community, providing resources that create opportunities for artists to teach and for the community to learn.

Arts and culture should be included within all levels of education and opportunities should be available for all ages. Offerings for special and advanced instruction should be available in greater Mankato to diminish the need to travel to advance one's skills or knowledge.

Retention of students will support the growth of Mankato's creative economy if opportunities are provided. Students come to Mankato to study at colleges and universities and often leave upon graduation; for some it is because there is a lack of opportunities for them to grow their creative abilities and share their crafts. It is important to support these individuals and provide opportunities for them to continue to learn and grow and inspire future generations.

Education and exposure to different cultures within Mankato, past and present, is another area that should be a priority. This would promote cultural awareness and sensitivity. Offerings may include food, arts, and language. Creation of a cultural center could provide a location to house the offerings. A community based mural could provide learning opportunities in designing and creating the mural, along with an opportunity to illustrate the cultures of Mankato, past and present.

Arts and Culture Access Goal: Everyone, regardless of background, in the Greater Mankato community will have equal access to arts and cultural learning at all stages of life, contributing to a welcoming community with a strong appreciation for the arts.

Recommendation 1: Offer diverse arts and culture learning opportunities to the public that include creative offerings relevant to our 21st century global society, retaining old knowledge along with gaining new knowledge and skills. Ensure that creative instructors are adequately compensated.

Individuals of all ages and backgrounds would benefit from cultural experiences and/or education that they currently seek outside of Mankato such as ethnic food, multicultural events, museums and a broader offering of fashion and music. These offerings and opportunities create community, broaden knowledge and understanding, and encourage critical and creative thinking skills. It is important to ensure that teaching artists and other creative instructors are adequately paid for their work to allow higher quality teachers and opportunities to expand and build curriculum offerings.

Mankato is fortunate to be the home of talented artistic and creative individuals, ranging from students in elementary school to graduate school, to retired individuals looking to reconnect to their passions. Arts and culture should be included within all levels of education and opportunities should be available for all ages. It was uncovered during the community engagement process that the community's older population desires more options for creative learning, including theater, choirs, bands, etc. that prominently feature older adults.

Education and interpretation on different cultures within Mankato, past and present, is another area that should be a priority. This would promote cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Universities, ISD 77, Creative business sector, arts and culture teaching organizations (410 Project, Mankato Makerspace, Carnegie Arts Center, Community Education and Recreation, Theater, Dance, etc.), Blue Earth County Historical Society, Mankato Heritage Preservation Commission, Mdewakanton Sioux.
Timeline: Medium term (4 – 9 years).
Models: http://imagination.org/our-projects/imagination-chapters/ ; http://springboardforthearts.org/ ; http://think360arts.org/ ; http://www.lifetimearts.org/institute/ ; http://www.ruralartsandculturesummit.com/ ; https://www.openbadgeacademy.com/home
Resources: Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, Minnesota Historical Society.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey residents to see what they currently participate in and what they want. 2. Develop comprehensive index of current arts and cultural experiences offered (and who they are offered by), with gaps in offerings identified. Update index to reflect additions and share information with the community. 3. Identify diverse groups who could provide new cultural offerings to supplement existing programs. Additions could include design incubators in schools, businesses, and community organizations. 4. Offer opportunities for youth and young adults to be exposed to creative career options: Creative Career Conference; expanded summer programming; and internships and work study programs connected to creative careers. 5. Develop teaching artist roster and research/develop models for paying teachers that encourage retention (related to Recommendation 2 in Promotion and Support).
Benefits/rationale: Supports individuals with an interest in arts and cultural experiences and/or learning who might otherwise leave or seek experiences outside of Mankato. Creates a continuous experience of community through differing age groups in the community. If teaching artists are adequately paid, the result will be higher quality teachers and the opportunity to expand and build curriculum offerings.
Evaluation Criteria: Survey results, index creation, track participation/engagement and data/feedback from offered programming. Summarize findings, reflect on findings and determine if model will continue.

Recommendation 2: Develop supports to ensure all citizens of Greater Mankato have access to arts and culture learning and experiences.

Real and perceived barriers prevent all residents from equally accessing arts and cultural opportunities. Barriers include cost, childcare, transportation/mobility issues, language, and fear of being unwelcome or out of place. Simple actions and partnerships can provide increased access to the community and make arts and culture more inclusive.

Mankato continues to become more diverse, and intentional efforts should be made to celebrate the entire community. Increased multi-cultural offerings will assist in building diverse audiences. The community noted during the engagement process that one of the main reasons for leaving Mankato was to be immersed in different cultures or to attend multi-cultural events.

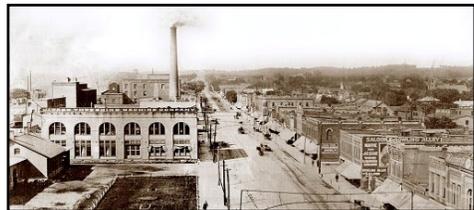
Intentional efforts should be made to form partnerships with diverse organizations. Through public engagement, it was discussed that that immigrant populations are more likely to participate in cultural offerings if they see themselves represented. Diverse populations in general (i.e. people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, older adults, etc.) are under-represented in Greater Mankato cultural offerings. It was discussed that new Americans are struggling to meet basic needs (i.e. housing, employment, safety, etc.), therefore, involvement in arts and culture is not a priority. Partnerships can serve to mentor new immigrant populations on resources available in the community. Examples include how to find and write a grant, training on sewing to make cultural garments not found in locally, and creative job skills training to help in finding employment.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts. Partners: VINE Faith in Action, YWCA, Minnesota Council of Churches, Greater Mankato Diversity Council, Minnesota Valley Action Council, Open Door Health Center, Lincoln Community Center, library systems, childcare facilities, cultural facilities, transportation systems, art/culture organizations

Timeline: Short to Medium term (1 – 9 years).
Models: Eagan Puppet Wagon (https://www.cityofeagan.com/puppets); Minneapolis Art Lending Library (http://www.artlending.org/); http://www.artlending.org/other-art-lending-libraries.html ; http://www.act1az.org/faq/
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create an Arts Access Pass that would allow residents free access to arts and cultural experiences. 2. Develop an Art Lending Library: Individuals and businesses check out original local artwork for a specific time period for free. 3. Create an Arts Mobile gallery on wheels; bring multiple art forms to various parts of the community. 4. Build partnerships to offer childcare to families so that they can attend cultural events; publicize cultural events where children are welcome. 5. Build networks for people seeking companions to attend cultural events if they are uncomfortable going alone. 6. Host under 21 nights so that young adults can enjoy performances in a unique and fun setting. 7. Explore how to improve transportation to and from events; especially on weekends. Develop networks to provide affordable, safe transportation options. 8. Work with leaders of immigrant communities to ensure new Americans feel welcome attending arts and cultural events in our community.
Benefits/rationale: Provide increased access to the community and making arts and culture more inclusive. Retention of arts and culture community.
Evaluation Criteria: Number of artists/cultural leaders served. Increase in community arts participation, especially among members of underserved populations.

Recommendation 3: Provide cultural education to the community about Greater Mankato’s rich heritage and changing cultural community.

Mankato has a rich heritage that has been influenced many cultural communities, from the native Dakota through waves of migrants to the recent new Americans. In order to develop pride in the community and understanding of our heritage and culture, programs should offer historic and civic education and stimulate creative engagement in future community participation and planning. Programs should work to remove barriers and encourage diverse participation. Community education and outreach on the City’s history, heritage and historically significant properties will build support for preservation efforts, instill community pride and increase heritage tourism opportunities.



The City Center Renaissance plan and Old Town master plan highlighted the importance of historic preservation. The community also noted their appreciation for historic properties and our community’s heritage during the community engagement process for this plan.



Historic designations mean the property or district is significant and worthy of recognition and protection. There are two types of historic designations, either at the local level (heritage preservation landmarks /districts) or at the national level (National Register of Historic Places).

The city’s Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) makes recommendations to the City Council that certain properties be locally designated as heritage preservation landmarks and districts. The HPC reviews construction activity affecting the exterior of buildings and properties that are locally designated. The design review is not to prevent change, but rather guide change through review of exterior alterations so that they do not jeopardize the historic integrity of the building and property.

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of properties worthy of preservation; this listing is an honorary designation. Review of alterations to properties listed on the National Register require review by the State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service only if the project uses federal funds.

Historically significant properties should continue to be surveyed and designated and their historic significance should be communicated to the public. Means of communicating the city’s heritage include signage (interpretive plaques, gateway signage, signs on historic buildings), mapping of historic resources, historic walking tours and brochures, audio tours, historical performances, and mobile apps.

<p>Implementers: Blue Earth County Historical Society, Neighborhood Associations, theaters, City of Mankato Heritage Preservation Commission, Visit Mankato, City Center Partnership, Mahkato Mdewakanton Association, Children’s Museum of Southern Minnesota.</p>
<p>Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years) - long term (10+ years) / ongoing.</p>
<p>Models: Small Towns Big Ideas; Great American Think Off, New York Mills MN (https://www.kulcher.org/think-off/the-great-american-think-off/); Dane Dances (http://www.danedances.org/); Mobile Saint Paul; https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/city-council/services/mobile-saint-paul; National Trust for Historic Places; heritage tourism; Berkely Historical Plaque Project; http://berkeleyplaques.org/.</p>
<p>Resources: Minnesota Historical Society, Blue Earth County Historical Society, City of Mankato, Mankato Free Press, Minnesota Council of Churches, Greater Mankato Diversity Council, other local cultural/historical societies, Mahkato Mdewakanton Association, neighborhood associations, City of Mankato Historic Context Study; Grants may be available through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for heritage tourism projects; Grants may be available through the Mankato Area Foundation.</p>
<p>First Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather information from the community, cultural and historic organizations about important elements of Mankato’s heritage and community identity. 2. Hold workshops with the larger community to identify diverse key groups, leaders and resources that could foster cultural partnerships. 3. Develop (a) festival(s) that highlight Mankato’s history, heritage and rich cultural diversity. 4. Include Dakota language as a companion to Dakota interpretive signage. 5. Commission and install public art that tells the story of Mankato’s diverse populations, from the native Dakota through immigrants from European countries to the newest Americans from Latin America, Somalia and Sudan. 6. Designate Heritage landmarks and districts. 7. Complete the river history walk and the history wall within Mankato Place Mall. 8. Identify project recommendations within the Mankato Historic Context Study. 9. Explore programming to communicate the city’s heritage, including interpretive plaques, gateway signage, historic designation markers, mapping of historic resources, historic walking tours and brochures, audio tours, historical performances, and mobile apps.
<p>Benefits/rationale: To build support for preservation efforts, instill community pride and increase heritage tourism opportunities. Create wider understanding and appreciation for the area we live in. Remove barriers in communication and foster a sense of connection to place and civic engagement citywide. Offer context for who we are as a community today; stimulate thinking to create ideas/possibilities about future roles in our community; strengthen ties to community/citizenship by protecting the heritage and cultural assets that the community feels are important.</p>
<p>Evaluation Criteria: Feedback from community stakeholders, formation of partnerships with diverse groups, direct exchanges of information and learning between city and citizen groups, creation of communication through sharing of knowledge and cultural heritage through multiple venues and mediums. Designation of district(s) and landmarks, community support, historic tours, increased historical promotion and presence in those districts, increased visitor traffic, ongoing vitality of districts.</p>

Financial Resources

Mankato is a generous community, supporting arts and culture with both private and public funds. Community engagement meetings around the issue of funding revealed that potential donors are not

aware of all the possible arts funding opportunities available. Nonprofit organizations expressed the scarcity of operational support grants, noting the burden of needing to create new programming in to receive grant dollars. There is a level of competition among the arts and culture organizations for funding and more collaboration is needed among the sector in order to build a positive unifying message around the positive impact that supporting the arts brings to the community.

Funding Goal: Develop new funding resources for creative and cultural programs, individuals, businesses, and organizations while sustaining and maximizing current resources. Ensure that resources are made available to underserved populations, including people whose first language is not English and people of all abilities.

Recommendation 1: Incorporate public art funding into new City construction.

Communities across the nation are adopting policies and programs to build and support their public art collection. Some communities adopt a Percent for Art program where a predetermined percentage of project costs for public facilities is used to incorporate public art (in some cases, only public improvements over a certain cost threshold are required to participate). A Percent for Art program should be explored for incorporating public art for new city facilities, buildings, or major renovations for projects that exceed \$1,000,000. A percentage of the project costs could to public art at the project site or at another location within the City.

Implementers: City of Mankato, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Public Art Advisory Committee. Partners: artists, developers.
Timeline: Medium to Long term (4+ years).
Models: RiNo Art District BID (Denver, Colorado); Duluth, Minnesota Percent for Art; St. Paul, Minnesota Percent for Art; East Lansing, Michigan Public Art Ordinance, Missoula, Montana Public Art.
Resources: Staff to research, Public Art Fund along with impact to cost.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research best practices to identify the best model for Mankato. 2. Communicate current status of public art programming and what public art is planned for the future to help build community interest and enthusiasm for the program. 3. Develop a draft recommendation for the consideration by the City Council after public engagement with stakeholders including community members, developers, artists, city officials, and Twin Rivers Council for the Arts.
Benefits/rationale: Will encourage and support the vitality and growth of arts and culture in Mankato.
Evaluation Criteria: Support from community stakeholders; approval of the program fund.

Recommendation 2: Diversify support to encourage investment in arts and culture activities.

A variety of arts funding mechanisms and programs would ensure adequate support for creative activities and projects in Mankato. It is important to educate residents on the importance of donating to arts and culture and to provide easy mechanisms to do so. In addition, current funding support for investment in the creative economy should be publicized, and new support should be considered. When considering establishment of new support strategies, the City should focus on whether the strategy will encourage and support the goals of this plan and the recommendations and outcomes supported by the community.

Support strategies should encourage installation of public art, installation of heritage plaques, heritage tourism, building rehabilitation, historic preservation, and the establishment and retention of creative businesses.

The City of Mankato has maintained a wish book which highlights opportunities that the community can realize through donations. The city has been fortunate to have many of the items realized throughout the years. Similar to a crowd funding platform, the city establishes a funding goal for a particular Wish List project. An online giving portal could show the progress made on the fundraising goal for each project. Once the goal is reached, the project would be completed.

An avenue for a round-up for the arts campaign should be explored where an option would be provided to donate to the arts by rounding up a purchase or utility bill to the nearest dollar. Proceeds could go to support art projects within the City. Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (TRCA) serves as the arts commission for the cities of Mankato and North Mankato and is the local organization that also serves to represent the needs of the various artists and arts organizations. TRCA may serve as the organization to collect contributions to then disperse proceeds to support arts and culture in the community.

A special service district, also known as a business improvement district (BID), is a public/private partnership in which property and business owners of a defined area, through a defined cooperative review process, elect to make a collective contribution to the maintenance, development and marketing/promotion of a district. Property owners must be the lead and petition for establishment of a special service district. BIDs typically provide services such as street and sidewalk maintenance, public safety officers, streetscape maintenance, marketing, capital improvements and various development projects. BIDs tend to be most successful if they are generated from a private sector interest. An example is the South Front Street Special Service District where property owners pay for the increased level of services through service charges which are based on property values, as determined by the Blue Earth County Assessor. Fees collected were also used to provide streetscaping improvements.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Greater Mankato Growth, City of Mankato.
Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).
Models: Boulder County Arts Alliance Community Arts Fund. https://www.bouldercountyarts.org/caf_faq ; Articulture. https://www.articulture.org/donate/ ; Columbia Arts Fund. https://www.como.gov/arts/columbia-arts-fund/ ; Lincoln Arts Council. https://artsceneorg.presencehost.net/get-involved/donate.html ; City of Fredericksburg, Virginia; RiNo Art District BID (Denver, Colorado);
Resources: Grant funds may be available to develop web page to serve as the host to donate funds to a specific wish list project; opportunities may exist with Mankato Area Foundation, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council; publicity needed to market and promote the community arts fund.
First Steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Creative Community Arts Fund that supports local arts and culture initiatives, including a “wish list” of public art projects; publicize to the community and encourage donations. Develop criteria for use and dispersal of Community Arts Fund donations; these criteria should incorporate means to support diverse and underserved artists and organizations. 2. Investigate a Round-Up for the Arts program, which provides residents the option of rounding up their utility bill for arts/culture activities/programming. Direct donations to Community Arts Fund. 3. Investigate establishment of a Business Improvement District that supports the arts through property/business owner petition. 4. Publicize existing funding to developers and property owners; investigate if additional funding strategies would benefit the goals of this plan.
Benefits/rationale: Allows the community to make an impact no matter how big or small the amount is. Will encourage and support the vitality and growth of arts and culture in Mankato.

Evaluation Criteria: Improved utilization of existing resources, growth of creative sector in Mankato.

Recommendation 3: Explore a centralized sponsorship for the arts

By pooling efforts together, nonprofits may broaden their outreach and audience. An organized approach to fundraising efforts among nonprofit arts and culture organizations would limit the amount of daily requests to individuals and businesses, and would support small nonprofits administratively. A comprehensive marketing sell on sponsorship needs could be created as a flyer to provide to area individuals and businesses who might be interested in sponsoring arts and culture events and programming.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts.

Partners: nonprofit arts and culture organizations; individual artists.

Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).

Models: Greater Mankato Growth marketing opportunities book.

Resources: Grant funds may be available to develop a web page to serve as the host to donate funds to the centralized sponsorship for the arts or to develop a marketing sell; opportunities may exist with Mankato Area Foundation, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council; publicity needed to market and promote the centralized sponsorship.

First Steps:

1. Identify nonprofit arts and culture organizations willing to combine fundraising efforts.
2. Identify eligible activities for utilization of funds and structure of options to donate to specific activities and/or organizations.
3. Create a comprehensive marketing sell sheet on annual arts/culture sponsorship needs and target to individuals and businesses who are interested in sponsoring arts and culture events, programming and projects.

Benefits/rationale: By pooling efforts together, nonprofits may broaden their outreach and audience. Limit the number of “asks” to businesses by arts nonprofits; one-stop-shop on sponsorship opps available to the community. An organized approach to combine fundraising efforts among nonprofit arts and culture organizations would limit the amount of daily requests to individuals and businesses, and would support small nonprofits administratively.

Evaluation Criteria: Successful marketing of the site and receipt of donations.

Recommendation 4: Provide resources and education to creatives on opportunities for grants, funding, scholarships, and crowd funding, as well as freelance/employment opportunities.

A centralized source of information on funding opportunities will make it easier for individual artists and small organizations to find resources vital for operations and growth. Continued education and skill development is important in our rapidly changing landscape.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Prairie Lakes Council for the Arts, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, Mankato Area Foundation, schools/universities, City Center Partnership, Greater Mankato Growth.

Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years).

Models: Greater Mankato Growth ops book; <http://www.Creative-Capital.org>; Springboard for the Arts, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits; Kick Starter.

Resources: Staff time, facilitators, curriculum. Grant funds may be available to develop a web page to serve as the host to donate funds to the centralized sponsorship for the arts or to develop a marketing sell; opportunities may exist with Mankato Area Foundation, Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council; publicity needed to market and promote the centralized sponsorship.

First Steps:

1. Consolidate all funding information in one place on the Twin Rivers Council for the Arts website.
2. Provide financial workshops (i.e. grant writing, business plan development, independent contractor proposals, fundraising/development skills, information sharing for creative entrepreneurs and nonprofits) on a regular basis according to the needs and interests of the creative community.
3. Create a freelance job board on Twin Rivers Council for the Arts website.

Benefits/rationale: Skill building and self-driven.

Evaluation Criteria: More funding and more projects completed. Increased private sector support.

Tourism and Economic Vitality

Tourism and Economic Vitality Goal: Mankato will be a regional hub for creative and innovative businesses. The rich arts and culture found throughout Mankato will attract business, organizations, entrepreneurs, artists, residents and visitors.

Recommendation 1: Work toward positioning Mankato as an innovative and creative regional hub. Advocate and support community recognition of the importance of arts experiences and arts and culture learning.

Mankato is facing a workforce shortage projected to last until 2030. As business and community leaders actively pursue ways to attract and retain talent, livability and community vitality are key. Strategic attention to the community's vitality will help attract and retain needed workforce. Workplaces and the community as a whole must adapt to the talent shortage by becoming places talented workers clamor to be part of and where entrepreneurial students see a future for themselves. Enhanced partnerships between businesses and arts organizations will positively differentiate Mankato from other communities and provide revenue opportunities for creative organizations.

Arts experiences and arts and culture learning improves quality of life through shared vision. Research consistently shows the benefits of arts and cultural learning, which provide problem solving and creative thinking skills necessary for a 21st century workforce.

Businesses already in Mankato should be encouraged to take advantage of the creativity and innovation around them. Partnerships between the creative and business sectors can help businesses adapt to the changing workplace while providing revenue opportunities for creative organizations. Employees in all businesses should be made aware of opportunities to use the arts and culture to enhance their professional development – i.e. by taking an improvisation class to aid in public speaking or working with a poet to add flair to marketing copy.

Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Greater Mankato Growth, City Center Partnership, City of Mankato, Minnesota State University – Mankato Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, South Central College, Bethany Lutheran College, Rasmussen College, Gustavus Adolphus College, Connect the Grey, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, Blue Earth County Historical Society (coalition similar to E2020 efforts), Community Education, school systems - including home school, library systems, arts/culture groups, community/social service groups, museums, health organizations.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Models: NEA Creativity Connects; Fort Collins, Colorado; Austin, Texas; Any Given Child Initiative: <http://education.kennedy-center.org/education/anygivenchild/>; New Horizons Band: <http://www.iowacitynhb.org/>; Arts access pass: <http://www.act1az.org/faq/>; NEA Partnership Plan.

Resources: Staff and volunteer time needed; training/consulting; Artspace; Springboard for the Arts; funding; NEA (https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2017_NEAGuide-FINAL.pdf); board/volunteer time.

First Steps:

1. Identify barriers for creative/innovation entrepreneurs (i.e. affordable housing, codes, talent needs) and research best practices to reduce these barriers.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Educate the business community on opportunities to use local arts and culture assets to enhance professional development and adapt to the changing workplace. 3. Develop branding, marketing and communication plan for each creative district. 4. Form an advisory board with broad sector representation to develop plans for gathering and sharing information. 5. Research and gather information about how people encounter and experience arts and culture in Greater Mankato. 6. Develop a promotional campaign to share the value of arts and culture experiences and learning, highlighting opportunities available in Mankato. Provide and update a calendar with all arts and culture activities. 7. Support and promote collaboration between university and community organizations to share opportunities. 8. Bring performances and events to new spaces in the community, making particular efforts to reach diverse and underserved populations.
<p>Benefits/rationale: Help to attract and retain needed workforce by contributing to the vitality of our community; differentiation from other communities for workers and businesses. Improves quality of life through shared vision.</p>
<p>Evaluation Criteria: Establish a baseline at 2017; evaluate changes in five years. Formation of a board, summary of information, survey, and reports on collaboration.</p>

Recommendation 2: Develop partnerships between the corporate and nonprofit arts sector to show support for local arts and culture and encourage innovative thinking about business and community issues.

Businesses can use the arts to inspire employees, stimulate innovation and foster creative collaboration. The creative sector benefits by accessing the expertise, resources and leadership of business sector.

A number of Mankato businesses display original art in their public or private spaces for the enjoyment of their employees and visitors. Some of these businesses proudly display their employees’ creative work. A toolkit could be developed for other businesses who would like to incorporate original art into their workspaces, but are unsure how to start. The community should develop a digital catalog of available work. This could include details on the lending library included in this plan, samples of local artists’ work, resources for commissioning original work and information on displaying artwork.

Businesses who incorporate artwork into their workspace and otherwise celebrate creativity should be recognized. Tours can be developed of businesses that display art in their public and semi-public spaces to showcase the creative atmosphere that inspires innovation in Mankato’s businesses.

An “arts mobile” can also offer opportunities to display art or to bring performance art to various parts of the community. This would provide increased access to the community and making arts and culture more inclusive.

<p>Implementers: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts (committee or workgroup). Partners: Blue Earth County Library, Minnesota State University-Mankato (library and arts department), higher education to create program, participating businesses, Greater Mankato Growth, design professionals, art students and local artists.</p>
<p>Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years) / ongoing.</p>
<p>Models: League of Chicago Theatres; Fargo, North Dakota; Des Moines, Iowa; Eau Claire, Wisconsin; http://www.partnershipmovement.org</p>
<p>Resources: Staff and volunteer time; funding for quality photo and video; marketing knowledge/expertise.</p>
<p>First Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a partnership program between for-profits and non-profits where businesses donate time, expertise, and/or services, providing opportunities for businesses to get involved in the creative community and give back. In return, creatives and arts/culture groups offer creative solutions, ideas, and/or experiences to the business. 2. Connect business leaders to nonprofit art/culture boards. 3. Incentivize employees to volunteer for arts related activities. 4. Develop Artist in Residence model for businesses (related to Arts and Culture Access Section). 5. Create a toolkit with information and resources on displaying art in a workspace. Make this available to marketing managers with marketing kit on how to publicize their support of arts and culture.

6. Create a toolkit for businesses on how to host pop-up art events at their offices.
7. Create a digital catalog of work available for loaned or purchased display at area businesses (may be combined with Art Lending Library included in the Arts and Culture Access section of this plan) which includes samples of local artists' work and resources for commissioning original work.
8. Create tours of businesses that display art and/or support other types of art mediums in their public and semi-public spaces to showcase the creative atmosphere that inspires innovation in Mankato's businesses.

Benefits/rationale: Businesses use the arts to inspire employees, stimulate innovation and foster creative collaboration. The creative sector benefits by utilizing the expertise, resources and leadership of business sector.

Evaluation Criteria: Creation of toolkit and catalog; number of participating artists and businesses; feedback from participants.

Recommendation 3: As a community, develop programs, strategies and collateral to market Mankato arts and culture.

The Mankato tourism brand, adopted and promoted by Visit Mankato, is built on outdoor recreation and arts and culture. While larger cultural events, like major concerts, Kiwanis Holiday Lights and the Mahkato Wacipi Pow Wow, draw visitors on their own, smaller events and organizations enhance the overall experience of those who come to Mankato for conventions, sporting events, healthcare, shopping, recreation and university visits.

Avenues should be developed to ensure Visit Mankato staff is knowledgeable about cultural and creative organizations and events. Twin Rivers Council for the Arts could facilitate regular meetings with Visit Mankato staff and staff/volunteers from arts and cultural organizations to ensure there is appropriate communication of opportunities that will be of interest to visitors. Visit Mankato and Twin Rivers Council for the Arts can provide guidance to artists and organizations on what types of collateral and information would be of most interest to visitors.

Mankato's residents should be empowered to be ambassadors for the artistic and cultural economy. The iKnow Mankato program provides information to frontline staff on the area's attractions and activities. Art and culture should feature strongly in this and similar programs. The iKnow program should be expanded to include the frontline staff within reception and admissions departments as well.

Visit Mankato's promotional materials should highlight information on arts and culture in Mankato. Cultural organizations should provide Visit Mankato with accurate information and high-quality visual assets.

Cultural and artistic events and venues should also be concierges for the greater community, providing information about Mankato's highlights and attractions to visitors and residents.

Implementers: Visit Mankato, Greater Mankato Growth, City Center Partnership, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts.
Partners: Verizon Center, arts and cultural organizations, higher education.

Timeline: Short term (1 – 3 years) / ongoing.

Models: League of Chicago Theatres; Fargo, North Dakota; Des Moines, Iowa; Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Resources: Staff and volunteer time; Funding for quality photo and video; Marketing knowledge/expertise.

First Steps:

1. Convene a gathering of tourism, arts and culture professionals to discuss best means of communication between arts and culture organizations, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts and Visit Mankato.
2. Create guidelines and provide services for the type of collateral artists and organizations should provide to Visit Mankato.

3. Ensure Visit Mankato's iKnow Mankato program, which provides information to frontline staff on the area's attractions and activities, includes arts and cultural locations and events.
4. Create a plan for cultural and artistic venues to be concierges for the greater community, providing information about Mankato highlights and attractions to visitors and residents.
5. Create a plan to empower Mankato's residents to be ambassadors for the artistic and cultural economy all year long (i.e. every season).

Benefits/rationale: Supporting local artists and creating welcoming creative workspaces.

Evaluation Criteria: Evidence of strengthened, cohesive relationships and communications, shared messaging creation, attendance at forums/education sessions.

Next Steps

1. An implementation team will be created to guide and document progress on this plan. This team should include representatives from Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, City of Mankato, City Center Partnership, Greater Mankato Growth, Visit Mankato, arts and culture organizations, and other stakeholders. This group will report annually on progress and recommend updates to the plan.
2. Twin River Council for the Arts, as the City's designated arts commission, will take the leadership role in the implementation of this plan. The responsibilities of City leadership and staff should also be defined. Creative and cultural leaders should also commit to furthering the goals of this plan by identifying the areas where they and their organizations can make an impact.
3. This plan should be publicized to the Greater Mankato community and community members encouraged to join the implementation efforts.

Appendix

Partner Organizations

- Bethany Lutheran College
- Blue Earth County Historical Society
- Carnegie Arts Center
- City Center Partnership
- Community Education and Recreation
- Connect the Grey
- Greater Mankato Diversity Council
- Greater Mankato Growth
- Linking For Good
- Mankato Area Foundation
- Mankato Makerspace
- Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Neighborhood Associations (Old Town Collaborative, Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, Washington Park Neighborhood Association, Tourtellotte Park Neighborhood Association)
- Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council
- South Central College
- Southern MN Initiative Foundation
- The 410 Project
- Twin Rivers Council for the Arts
- Verizon Center
- VINE
- Visit Mankato
- YMCA
- YWCA

Public Engagement Sessions, Public Comments, February 21 & 25, 2017

Question #1: What arts and cultural activities do you regularly enjoy in Mankato?

- Historical society
- Architecture
- outdoor restaurants
- alive after 5
- trails
- Mankato symphony orchestra
- Food, wine, and beer
- rive ramble
- promotion of the river in old town
- city parks
- library
- Minneopa State Park
- international festival
- MSU theatre,
- live music at the Coffee Hag
- Pub 500,
- Wine Café
- Mankato marathon
- performances at riverfront park
- blues on Belgrade
- poetry readings
- open mic nights
- retooling festival
- MSU international festival
- MSU concert series
- KMSU concerts
- local radio broadcasting
- pow-wow
- historical society events
- boy in blue events
- reconciliation ride at reconciliation park
- Kiwanis holiday lights
- book clubs
- murals
- poetry walk
- music events
- author events
- riverfront park concerts
- live music art bars
- ballet
- MSU theatre and merely players
- Betsy Tacy events
- songs on the lawn
- gallery exhibits
- old town arts fair
- north Mankato library arts fair
- chamber performances at Bethany
- symphony
- music
- live music at brewery
- Pan African conference at MSU
- twin rivers gallery
- standup comedy
- world talent competition at MSU
- international festival at east HS
- enjoy a variety of cultural events
- dialogue not found in smaller rural communities
- Tom Miller sculptures
- rib fest
- art truck
- outdoor stories
- river trail
- old town arts fair
- wineries and brewers
- bands at the 410 project
- outdoor art fairs
- community ED
- art classes at the 410 project
- arts by the river
- concerts
- ice sculptures
- open mic performances
- rural route dance ensemble
- MSU dance shows
- Satori Violet belly dance
- Lincoln community center
- riverfront park events
- hiking
- biking and skiing tracts
- shop small
- dancing with the stars
- art galleries
- photo club
- karaoke
- listen to all music
- photography online
- make/ sell jewelry
- Hubbard gardens or house
- Carnegie and Emy Frentz art exhibitions.

Question #2: What kinds of arts and cultural activities do you regularly leave Mankato to experience?

- Science museum
- major concerts
- fine art exhibits
- Grand Old Days
- major author events

- St. Peter open day Arts cooperative
- Nobel conference
- fine dining
- children’s museum
- history center
- major league sports
- Northern Spark (climate change through art)
- ice houses
- winter carnival
- bed & breakfast experience
- Art crawl
- Minneapolis uptown art fair
- Native American history
- Edina arts festival
- Food
- Sculpture park
- sports events,
- drive- in movies
- parks
- multi-cultural experiences
- Duluth
- Shopping
- uptown arts festivals
- historic sites
- Walker
- log cabin theatre
- renaissance festival
- traveling shows
- experience more visuals through art or the people about diversity
- more diverse community
- historical museums for different cultures
- better shopping
- MN opera
- better food options

- update fashion options (big and tall)
- Weisman Museum at the University of Minnesota
- Walker and sculpture garden
- jazz (Dakota club)
- target center
- NE Minneapolis
- spoken word
- furniture
- black history month events
- Rochester Thursday
- farm America
- expand music genres
- no urban music
- need events more Mondays
- bigger name bands
- dry art
- DIY art
- vegetarian or vegan food festivals
- ethnic food
- churches
- mid-town global market
- farm to table.

Question #3: How can arts and culture play a role enhancing our community?

- Diversity
- Business
- destination location
- open mindedness
- great for kids
- colleges and universities
- grow the economy
- beautification
- transcend cultural boundaries

- shared experiences
- keep creativity in the curriculum – beyond sports
- give value to individuality
- art is an expression
- art and culture change minds
- perspectives and opinions
- get out of comfort zones
- have SSC host a global conference
- have MSU host an international festival
- create a low fuel economy
- create a place that we want to stay in
- get out of comfort zones
- create joy
- relief stress
- create a vibrant living environment
- creativity makes resilient people
- emotionally intelligent
- it’s beautiful
- improves quality of life
- bring excitement
- it’s fun
- promote businesses to come here
- bring people together over all and with other ethnicities
- it can blow your mind (painting electric boxes)
- social connections
- provide experiences through multiculturalism
- help kids and people develop as they get older

- bring more people to Mankato
- get more support from businesses
- bring in universities
- good for the economy
- make Mankato more attractive to students
- bring diversity of people businesses, and venues
- it can bring people together and anyone can enjoy it
- beautification
- art shows that people care= less crime and crime rates
- pride
- education tool (values and cultures)
- sense of place
- providing and living for artist and entrepreneurs brings quality of life and helps with attraction and retention
- art inspires art
- gets community to interact in new and different ways
- impacts local economy
- draws tourists
- marketing tool for Mankato
- makes kids smarter
- encourages creativity
- bridges or history and new ideas
- connects people
- new ideas
- shares stories
- draws visitors

- increases property values
- keeps people here and brings them back
- town pride
- fun
- jobs
- keeps kids in schools
- improves self-worth
- connects businesses and art organizations
- encourages youth engagement
- highlight rural community
- greater appreciation for different cultures
- increases student and citizen participation
- connects people
- aesthetics
- builds pride
- respect
- sense of place
- gives people a sense of loyalty and would care more
- economic impact
- shared experiences
- free things to do
- expands or mind and culture
- become more accepting
- draw people to Mankato, stability
- more museums
- galleries or events about cultures to make more community more vibrant
- improve transportation to make art more accessible

- improve general health and quality of life
- welcoming to new people
- education
- teaching
- modeling
- role playing to help get rid of ignorance
- many economic benefits, catalyst to think differently
- boosts local pride
- promotes cultural awareness
- provides community identity
- can lure new residents
- inspires creativity
- stimulates conversation.

Question #4: What's your BIG IDEA for Mankato arts and culture?

- Outside dance area
- art schools
- pop up galleries
- puppet parades
- expand art districts
- light display downtown
- bike share
- photo booths in parks
- food trucks
- inviting artists to talk and make art,
- more live music that is not in bars so all ages can enjoy it
- interactive sculptures
- colored flags
- flower sculptures
- art making outside

- more murals on flood wall
- alley art
- arts hub
- boat trips
- international market
- banner drops off bridge
- music practice areas
- community based murals
- green space
- street performance
- hand painted signage
- more festivals
- repaint signs
- benches that are sculptures
- roof top venues
- murals
- river walks restaurants/ culture
- Broadway show
- bridge from Land of Memories to Sibley park, a musical walk
- production studios (film, sound, and stage)
- interactive
- roof top venues
- information share workshops
- art center for kids
- add patio
- dinner theatre
- Old Hubbard silos
- light up vinyl wrap
- art center for kids
- coordinates and planned communication in order to get the work out
- artist
- yoga and art
- Old Town on Fridays
- greater Mankato events
- arts and culture marketing
- living artist wage (union?)
- public use space
- affordable and rentable gallery/ concert/ theatre flex space
- destination build a market regular venue
- popup markets
- outdoor movies at Riverfront Park
- Local author sculptures similar to snoopy sculptures
- an arts district with a marquee for arts information
- use old quarry for farmers markets
- restaurants or food trucks
- rooftop dining
- stories on the steps (personal story slam)
- river boat
- cultural center to retain and educate about cultures
- “history of here” historical events or activities about Mankato
- Arboretum
- Conservatory
- fountain in Washington Park
- Bringing MSU’s prominent speakers to the civic center as well
- more connectivity, permanent chalk wall that anyone can draw on
- tie culture and neighborhoods together
- revamp stage to provide a better atmosphere. Improve on landscaping, make flexible for theatre and other arts
- assistance with grant and business plan writing
- promote local artists
- more partnerships
- state fair- like events, sculptures in every park in order engage kids
- public transportation to get people home late at night
- more night options for people under the age of 21
- promoting resources available for small business owners
- have a sister city
- hosting international conditions subsidizing artist’s housing
- lights on flood wall
- plaques that highlight Mankato’s history
- creating an event that engages more kids
- street musicians
- a clear process for getting a performance permit
- archways
- gateways to old town district
- tour packages
- rotating graffiti mural
- poetry night
- Earth Day festival

- regular annual events outside
 - more recycling bins
 - graffiti art wall
 - more areas to sit and enjoy native grasslands
 - celebrate the river
 - art trains to Mankato
 - murals on silos
 - Native American Dakota language classes
 - affordable housing
 - huge public access project to nontraditional spaces
 - more art projects
 - get rid of flood wall because it blocks the view of the river
 - winter carnival
 - move library to post office
 - historical society
 - make a flag for the city of Mankato
-

Community Focus Group: Funding

March 9, 2017, Shared Spaces

FORMER OVERALL GOAL: Develop a funding strategy to support our existing Arts and Culture Facilities and Organizations and encourage the location of residents, businesses, organizations, and facilities to create the Arts and Cultural District.

1. What are your priorities? (MAF)
 - a. Looking to impact quality of life for the community – “Livability.”
 - b. Caretakers for donor advised funds – help to find people with big interests in the arts.
 - c. Looking for that “big project” and is it a good fit.
 - d. Does not support operational support.
 - e. Mayo Health System has developed a “community outreach board” to get more involved in the community. Starting to understand health in a more holistic/wellness sense.
 - f. Bush Foundation – primary focus is assisting communities of color.
 - g. Bremer Foundation – looking to get more involved; not sure where they stand in terms of arts/culture priorities.

2. Are you aware of arts/culture activities? Adequately informed?
 - a. Yes, most of the grants MAF receives are for arts/culture.
 - b. Also meet with organizations one-on-one to hear about what they’re doing and get a sense of the needs out in the community.

3. Many of the same businesses and individuals are asked repeatedly for sponsorships and donations. Would it be helpful to have one place/one way for businesses to give, to cut down on the amount of asks? Similar to the GMG marketing opps?
 - a. Possibly – the schools do an “All City” ask for needs within the school system. One ask/once a year.
 - b. Suggested a membership system. How could this benefit the entire arts community?

4. What kind of ROI are you looking for?

- a. We're not. We are looking at impact vs. ROI; a visible result/change/shift in the community from the money invested.
 - b. We're the bricks and mortar people. We invest \$40K to support operations, in-kind support from city staff, community grant and tax credits. Rehabilitation funding models.
5. How do we cultivate a culture of giving? Not just for the top level donors, but among everyone?
- a. All about relationships, and other donors encouraging others to give – to get on board.
 - b. We need to provide training to our arts groups on how to fundraise.
 - i. That is a grant that MAF would fund; training/education/skill building.
 - c. Talk with United Way about how they work to develop a culture of giving and how they manage their workplace giving.
 - d. Interested in exploring the idea of setting aside a percentage of Capital Improvement Projects bond money for art; this would potentially be about \$26K – need to determine the legality and policy issues surrounding the bonding.
 - e. This is something to explore/research – this added money is a step in the right direction if we want to do really cool, unique art in Mankato.
 - f. Is the idea of Round up for the Arts on the utility bill still on the table?
 - i. Yes – we are going paperless. I would suggest giving people the option of donating a dollar at the time of payment. This could be used for additional grant dollars.

MISC.

What about the Legacy dollars at the state level?

Only certain budget sizes are eligible for operating support grants. Other grant categories include:
<http://www.arts.state.mn.us/grants/>

There is also our regional arts council (PLRAC) that manages a separate pool of Legacy money. The max amount that you can request is \$8,000. Not much to do a major art project.

Community Focus Group: Multiculturalism

March 23, 2017, Craft Collective – Centenary United Methodist Church

The Craft Collective meets the fourth Thursday of every month from 5-7pm. They work on simple sewing projects, jewelry making, and share a meal together. This is an offshoot of the Tapestry project which connects refugees to local residents for relationship building and information sharing.

Unfortunately, no people of color or refugees showed up to this meeting. The women mentors that attend each month met to help bridge the gap between refugees and the community.

Perceived barriers to participating in the arts:

- Language – sometimes the children act as interpreter.
- More transient population – still trying to get settled; working on life issues such as housing, transportation, work, etc.

- Limited knowledge of how to secure grant funding for art projects; need more mentoring.

Where to begin in building connection to refugee community?

- Start small – potluck at an inclusive venue like a park (Highland Park), invite religious leaders, invite them to play music from their culture.

How to disseminate information to refugee community?

- Islamic Center – however this is volunteer run; not always easy to get information passed.
- Community Education Adult Education.
- Health Connections.
- Word of mouth.
- High School guidance counselors.

Questions that came up through discussion:

- How can arts help bring healing from traumatic experiences?
- How can arts help educate refugees on US customs/ways of life?
- How to provide sewing training to women so they can make the type of clothing they want. There is a lack of appropriate fabric for Muslim women; can't find what they need here and often purchase online which is more expensive.

Community Focus Group: Promotion + Support

March 21, 2017, Emy Frentz Arts Guild

FORMER OVERALL GOALS:

1. To raise awareness of the various forms of arts/culture, actively coordinate the publicity of these activities and assist the creation, support and collaboration of these organizations and individuals.
2. Provide training for artists and arts organizations to help develop relations with local media, including guidelines on writing effective and timely news releases.

Question – How do people currently get their arts news? And what tools do you use to promote?

- Facebook, Instagram, other social media – although difficult to reach new audiences – value in boosting posts to gain more viewership.
- PLRAC newsletter.
- Greatermankatoevents.com.
- Twin Rivers website.
- Free Press – although sometimes the information is promoted too late; they are selective with what they will promote.
- Word of mouth – getting in front of your audience and letting them know.
- KMSU, KTOE.
- MN River Valley Woman magazine, Mankato Magazine.
- KEYC TV – opportunity for organizations with set time slots to share their slots with others and to promote each other's work.
- Digital marquees and temporary signage along roadways.

- Direct mail (postcards, mailers, etc.).

Ideas:

- Training on audience development.
- More collaboration – have collateral at other events to cross promote – can we develop a centralized mechanism to streamline this process?
- First Friday – all the arts do something; open air market, “Arts Night Out”; music, theatre, dance – many activities going on; businesses could open their space for artists to display/sell; promote all the businesses that show local art (Radiance Salon, Coffee Hag, Tandem Bagels, Fillin Station, etc.).
- Walkability issues – trolley that takes people around city center.
- Have a city wide arts/culture open house – 1x/quarter or 1x/yr, scavenger hunt, passport program.
- Arts needs to show a united front; we are a community working together; strengthen arts bond.
- Develop a print piece that highlights arts/culture – professional looking tourism piece.
- Could we incorporate set number of pages in MN Valley Business Mag to arts/culture?
- Would like to see more support from Free Press on covering arts news/happenings.
- Collaborate on press releases to get more coverage.
- Small nonprofits with lots of turnover – need more administrative support/training.
- KTV – interview artists/arts groups – use videos for promotion – can we use students to produce?
- Create an arts podcast.
- Need consistency in whatever approach we use to promote to generate interest and awareness.
- Create an artist award – recognizing sustainable arts organizations – include award at GMG Hall of Fame – recognize business that has supported art that year (buying art, commissioning sculpture, etc.).
- Build network among arts groups, creating comfort in sharing audience and information.
- Organized campaign to “Show and Tell” about arts groups.
- Work together to build an annual calendar of events.
- General community unaware of all of the arts/culture happenings and the high quality of what we have to offer.
- New artists have hard time connecting to the arts community.
- Create an arts/culture visitor center/resource center where people can find arts info; collateral pieces.
- Educate artists to use the internet to promote their work.
- Educate artist on pricing their work and finding the value in their work.
- Art festival in downtown.

Community Focus Group: Education

March 31, 2017, VINE Faith in Action

What types of art classes/learning opportunities do you partake of in Mankato?

- Ceramics studio – community education
- Musicorum
- MN Valley Chorale
- Dance classes
- Library story hour
- ECFE toddler art classes
- 410 Project – art classes for youth
- St. Peter Co-Op cooking classes
- Suzuki School of Music
- Music Garden – youth
- Riverfront Performing Arts – starting a First Friday Folk Dance Fun – 6:30 – 8 p.m. – learning dances from Mexico – uses guest instructors, students, grad students.

What do we need in Mankato?

- People commute to cities for special/advanced instruction. You can only get so far with a skill in Mankato; then you need to travel outside to become an expert or find expert instructors.
- Additional music venues.
- Black box theatre – where in Mankato?
- Connect teaching artists to emerging artists.
- Artist space.
- Arts Center for textile arts, maker space, clay studio.
- Restructure model for paying teaching artists – get away from number of registrants = whether or not the class will continue; pay teachers stipend up front so that there is less competition for student fees. If you pay teaching artists, you get higher quality teachers. It also gives you time to build and expand your curriculum.
- Amount of schools applying for grant dollars is expanding in order to maintain what arts they have, but arts opportunities are not expanding.
- Schools can apply for funding – this is good! Who is being tasked with writing the grants?
- The stronger the PTO – the stronger the extracurricular activities. Arts experiences depends on active PTO (parent volunteers also acting as teaching artists); unfortunately the kids that need it most aren't getting it. How to make it more equitable among all schools in the district?
- PTO will pay artists to come in and provide learning experience.
- More foreign language immersion.
- Current curriculum doesn't allow for much flexibility for outside learning/extra experiences.
- More retired people in community and they want more options for learning.
- Need more promotion around “looking for teaching artists” – use repeat instructors – needs to be worth their time too.

Community Focus Group: Education – High School

Focus Group – Mankato West high school

What is one of your favorite art experiences in school?

- Art-a-thon – 12 hr art project on a Saturday.
- Cup Show in partnership with East (similar to Souper Bowl Sunday) – sell the cups for charity.
- Learning abstract painting.
- Print making – resident artist program.
- Photography in nursing homes – gave photos to residents.
- Art Club – attended Speechless Film Festival; uses 410 Project a lot for supplemental learning; afterschool art making.
- Mixed media/graphic design.
- AP Art History.
- Partnered with elementary school child to create their drawing into a 3-D sculpture.

What do you need/want?

- Art workshops after school and in the summer.
- Maker space for youth.
- Teaching artists to come into the schools.
- Model after Owatonna Art Center – doing great things; ceramics; lots of classes.
- Graffiti wall.
- Art festival with music.
- Performance art.
- Graphic design, 3D animation/illustration classes, more technology type arts classes.
- Design labs – tools for students to support a creative career path.
- Have an electives day to show possible options; students don't always know what to ask for.
- Arts Symposium – panels and speakers of various creative fields showing youth what is possible in a creative career.
- More museums/galleries.
- More time to develop skills.
- More pottery wheels.
- First Friday – arts/culture experience.

How do you find information related to arts/culture activities?

- Teachers
- Instagram/Facebook
- It would be great to have a community arts/culture page/website/FB page
- Just Art FB page for Mankato

Community Focus Group: Needs of the Arts Community

March 9, 2017, Coffee Hag

1. What are the needs of the creative community? What do you need to thrive in this community?
 - a. Heather Vogus & Matthew Harding - Free skateboard parks and incorporate art into the parks. Right now you have to pay \$8 to skate at the YMCA skate park. Heather is working on developing a free skate park(s) in Mankato – affordable; accessible; food trucks; music. She has a spot identified, but it is only temporary.
 - b. Means of gathering; more connection to other artists; consistent time/place that artists gather to exchange ideas; collaborate; better communication.
 - c. Create more synergy among the arts community.
 - d. Is there a sense of competition? Fear of losing your audience/donors
 - i. Need to shift this perceived fear to create healthy synergy, shared communication, collaboration.
 - e. More murals on sides of buildings.
 - f. Book up and coming bands instead of “has-beens.”
 - g. We have a great local music scene, but lack viable performance spaces.
 - h. Amphitheatre is underused; make it affordable for local musicians/arts groups to use.
 - i. Training on how to collaborate with others in other disciplines
 - j. Get the sense that we keep having these conversations about collaboration, building the arts/culture community, and there is no follow-through. Sense of fatigue in the planning process.
 - k. Place to register as a creative professional so that people can find you (businesses, others that want to collaborate).
 - l. Update TRCA website to highlight affiliates more and how to contact them.
 - m. More Native American presence/ways to honor in the community.
 - n. More events throughout the year to create more natural connection among the arts community.
 - o. The Mankato market of creatives is small – need to keep this in mind when developing realistic plan.
 - p. How to find arts/culture jobs?
 - q. Artists need to learn how to make money at their craft.
 - r. Winter festival – accessible and affordable – the GSR Fine Arts Festival is higher end and expensive to get into.
 - s. Offerings for college age people; under 21 spaces to play and listen to music; “off campus” experiences
 - t. More street presence – you visit other cities and there are musicians playing on the street; little markets selling art; here there is not enough density to make that worth the time/effort; need to create more density.
 - u. Innovation Center in Old Town developing into cross-collaboration space.
 - v. Community buy-in campaign
 - w. Arts awareness/value campaign – bring the arts community together with strong, unified message

- x. Open Space Plan – how to incorporate findings/ideas into this plan?

Possible partners:

- Connect the Grey
- Innovation Center
- GMG
- VWC
- Still need to hear from schools (district, community ed)

Open House, Survey Responses, January 23, 2018

Emy Frentz Arts Guild

1. What three recommendations from this plan are you most excited about?
 - a. Public art spaces, river renewal, collaboration
 - b. Partnering with Mankato Area Foundation and Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council should be explored along with private donors.
 - c. Coordinating “cultural” districts with city/county/state planning and using the concepts of “complete streets”
 - d. Coordinating alternate participation events for more inclusivity.
 - e. Identify, enhance and create cultural facilities for creatives, residents and visitors.
 - f. Recognize and support naturally occurring creative districts within Mankato.
 - g. The public engagement aspects woven throughout.
 - h. The entrepreneurial mindset (recognizing the connection between art and economy).
 - i. That there is going to be a creative center
 - j. May there be a systematic design center; Emy Frentz is somewhat small, but there is.
 - k. That I can be on the “ground floor” as there is a lot of talent in this area.
 - l. One of my specialties is writing grants; that was one of my talents as a grant writer in the school district I retained from back in 2000.
 - m. Space is a big issue, so collectively working to find usable performance venues, etc. really excites me.
 - n. I also really like thinking in creative districts, building up the great things about neighborhoods, which I think allows a diverse rather than homogeneous understanding of the city.
 - o. I also like making links between businesses and artists – each as a resource flowing each way. This is especially important as business culture values creativity more and more. If Mankato wants to participate and grow in the larger discourse, its business culture needs to embrace that.
2. Did we miss anything?
 - a. Having workshops is useful, but maybe they need to be slightly broader? Example, grant writing is a good topic, but maybe making sure that the various types of grants are covered by financial institution (MAF, PLRAC, State Arts board, etc.)
 - b. Need to support women’s interest too. Artists as well as visitors. We are 50% of the population.

- c. I've got some ideas for how the three pieces mentioned up above could utilize some creative process design skills.
- d. No, this is a good beginning.
- e. Not that I can tell – you folks did a comprehensive job.

Open House, Public Comments, January 23, 2018

Emy Frentz Arts Guild

- Highlight on public access TV.
- **Community Design**
 - Be careful with art ordinance.
 - Coordinate with city and county entities for “complete streets” concept for accessibility act, pedestrian events.
 - Ensure that spaces and events are accessible and affordable for high school students.
 - Remember to partner with historic/cultural districts for synergy.
 - Love the “creative districts”
 - Ordinance: rules can be the enemy of innovation. Keep them minimal. Policy: this is where help for creatives can be. Again – minimal rules.
 - Too many rules become restrictive. More stimulation, less regulation.
 - Under “First Steps”
 - Simple processes for creatives wishing to do public art projects and events.
 - Prefer arts district to creative placemaking projects.
 - Cool – know our past to build our future.
 - Would be great to know (create a master list of current venues/facilities; include types of activities spaces can support (i.e. performance, studio space, maker spaces, etc.), costs, and contact).
 - Be smart about scheduling and publicizing and scheduling spaces.
 - Talk to developers and building owners to arrange temporary art work/display spaces.
 - Create some kind of billboard (online?) where artists can post “looking for x” x = other artists, supplies, locations, venues, etc.
 - Under Recommendation 3, add seventh step: Create a calendar that has all arts and culture activities (art, theater, music, etc.).
 - “Update” a calendar...
 - Recommendation 3, revise to read: “Identify, promote, enhance, and create cultural facilities for creatives, residents and visitors.
 - Key City Bike, 204 E. Vine Street. Outside of building – needs murals and colorful art.
 - Intermedia arts had a BIG impact in MPLS... (re. artist residency).
 - Cultivate spaces for young talent – encourage students to stay in Mankato to draw in aspiring artists (college and high school).
 - Recommendation 6, “every level” is a killer to the arts.
- **Promotion and Support**
 - Participatory leadership works! Re: prof. skill building.
 - What does designated arts commission mean?

- Based on 1/21/2018 FP article on the Mankato Area Foundation – is there some opportunities for financial partnerships?
- Need to allow other arts organizations to exist.
- Offer more paid internship opportunities in creative fields.
- Good idea! → *“Survey area creatives on the types of networking events they are looking for. Develop consistent, relevant programming to build community among creatives.”*
- Spaces and programs for those interested in film and writing = a gap.
- CIE work with students MSU.
- While possibly useful – it’s a snapshot and would have to be separated. Might not be worth it. → *“Conduct a comprehensive survey to determine who identifies as a “hobby” artist, “emerging” artist and “professional” artist...”*
 - Admit a “3rd way”
- Yes! → *“Provide coaching on the multi-step process from Hobby Creative to Professional Creative.”*
- Or from hobby creative to NETWORKED creative → *“Provide coaching on the multi-step process from Hobby Creative to Professional Creative.”*
- Just visual? → *“Establish a youth art fair for K-12 and college artists.”*
 - Perhaps something less juvenile for older students?
- 410 Project? → *“Research an artist co-op gallery and develop a network of artists to manage it.”*
 - Eg. Rochester, MN
- Yes! Online!! → *“TRCA should build and strengthen creative directories to increase knowledge, encourage partnership, create connection, and build trust. TRCA should amplify the presence of Mankato arts/culture throughout the region and state.”*
- **Arts and Culture Access**
 - Yes!! → *“Support and promote collaboration between university and community organizations to **systematically** share opportunities.”*
 - Applaud serendipity – a surprise around every corner.
 - Better accessibility for the disabled.
 - “Flash” art exhibits.
 - “Flash” art creative opportunities, i.e. on the street!
 - ? → *“Create an Arts Access pass that is checked out at the library...”*
 - ☺ → *“Develop and Art Lending Library”*
 - Had one, should do again!
 - Something that doesn’t mess up work schedules.
 - Definitely! → *“Build partnerships to offer childcare to families so that they can attend cultural events; publicize cultural events where children are welcome.”*
 - Yes * → *“Host under 21 nights so that young adults can enjoy performances in a unique and fun setting.”*
 - Yes!
 - Yes!!
 - E.g. through VINE Adult Community Center, Community Ed... → *“Build networks for people seeking companions to attend cultural events if they are uncomfortable going alone.”*

- Better bus service overall, to venues, studios, Mankato Makerspace, not just for college → *“...Develop networks to provide affordable, safe transportation options.”*
 - Improved bicycle infrastructure.
 - Or “culture vulture” ubers?
- Produce art and events that celebrate new Americans.
- Wheel chair accessible and ASL. Perhaps programs for young, middle, and high schoolers immigrating to Mankato?
- Create a list of speakers that can come to businesses and talk about art.
- Take arts to where senior citizens live and meet. Like O.M.V., Pathstone, VINE, etc.
- * MSU Mankato has international students from almost 100 countries. Celebrate this resource.
- Connect public to MSU offerings (Native American Student Association).
- Super important for creative HS juniors/seniors → *“Offer opportunities for youth and young adults to be exposed to creative career options: Creative Career Conference; expanded summer programming; and internships and work study programs connected to creative careers.”*
 - Yes!
 - Should include the MANY ways you can be part of the arts scene – art, film, writing, photography, music, etc.
 - Contests and competitions.
- !! → *“Start a dialogue with school administrators to introduce the concept and discuss available options.”*
- !! → *“Start a dialogue with social service agencies to gauge interest.”*
- Utilize diverse artists to provide examples and venue for them to be involved.
- Mankato has an active LGBTQ community – embrace them.
- Also a Justice component. Include the churches in a spiritual arts component?
- *” ...pride in the community...”
- This! → *“Commission and install public art that tells the story of Mankato’s diverse populations, from the native Dakota through immigrants from European countries to the newest Americans from Latin America, Somalia and Sudan.”*
 - * Cool idea
- **Financial Resources**
 - Steady income stream is vital. Good idea.
 - Survey amount of financial support to purchase art by individuals and corporations/groups.
 - 1% for the Arts Program for all public projects.
 - What about something like the State’s Legacy fund (yes, another tax...).
 - Need % for arts for building projects for arts funding.
 - Encourage Mankato and North Mankato to have historic preservation levies.
 - How can crowd funding be used for local opportunities? I.e. purchasing community art. Bringing in speakers, etc.
 - Golden carrot to businesses that renovate buildings that are historically significant v. ripping them down.
 - This needs a stellar champion → *Recommendation 3: Explore a centralized sponsorship opportunity for the arts.*

- * Yes! → *“Investigate a Round-Up for the Arts program...”*
- Shannon R. did a great job explaining economic and social benefits of the arts.
 - Could/would she help do so again?
- Provide more information to high school students interested in pursuing the arts (presentation or pamphlets in schools). Ensure that Mankato would be an artistic community they would like to stay in for college!
- Showcase a website where all creatives can showcase their work.
- Coordinate with Mankato Area Foundation “one-stop shop for philanthropy” and nonprofit grant opportunities.
- Best place? Does the website/board need to staff an expert at all times to stay current? → *“Consolidate all funding information in one place on the Twin Rivers Councils for the Arts Website.”*
- Yes! → *“Consolidate all funding information in one place...”*
- Who would maintain this going forward? If TRCA, staff/funding concerns? → *“Create a freelance job board on Twin Rivers Council for the Arts website.”*
- Jill Fischer, Purple Porchlight → sign up to help implement financial resources
- **Tourism and Economic Vitality**
 - Eliminate ordinance rental limits (10% 25%) that tend to raise rents and limit affordable housing!
 - Affordable artist housing!
 - Artist Lofts would help bridge the gap for affordable housing and build community for artists.
 - Post Office?
 - This would be wonderful for art students at MSU as well!
 - Need multi-use, black box performance space – cabaret, comedy, theater, improve*
 - Cost for young arts classes tend to be much too high → *“...affordable housing...”*
 - And places and sense of place → *“Develop branding support...”*
 - Advertise existing artistic institutions to young people (high school and college).
 - Get more businesses to display art and provide space for developing artists to be noticed.
 - Post on social media featured Artists by location, businesses will gain more customers and artist will get more attention.
 - ☺ → *“Create tours of businesses that display art in their public and semi-public spaces....”*
 - There are active participants and not just 1 figure head → *“Connect business leaders to nonprofit art/culture boards.”*
 - More “women friendly” art opportunities. What do women want?
 - Less structure and more serendipity.
 - Strong local scene that can attract tourism. Not all “special wants,” but local arts.
 - Like the City Center back alley? → *“...artistic alleyway enhancements...”*
 - A whiz bang unified calendar would be a great tool.
 - This will happen when we enhance our own access to creative spaces in our town.
 - Enhance the overall experience
 - Establish a region wide Dakota uprising tour.
 - What arts or culture organization are you a part of?
 - GSR Fine Art Festival.

- TRCA Board.
- Arts Center of Saint Peter.
- 410 Project.
- Centenary U.M.C. Arts, Spirituality, & Justice Committee.
- Where is Mankato Makerspace (represented at implementation team)?
- The outtakes productions theouttakesinfo.com
- SMPS x 2
- Implementation
- Implementation team
- Twin Rivers Council for the Arts.....City's designated arts commission...take the leadership.



2027 Vision

In 2027, Mankato identifies as a creative community, having developed an atmosphere where arts, culture, heritage and creativity are integral to the fabric of everyday life. A multitude of arts, cultural and historical organizations and events enhance the quality of life for residents and attract visitors, and the public is strongly supportive of these creative initiatives and institutions. Residents have equal opportunities to learn and create, finding inspiration from the talent and inventiveness that surrounds them, Drawn and nurtured by our community's appreciation for creativity and the energy it creates, a number of creative entrepreneurial businesses thrive. The richness of our cultural assets and the strength of the creative economy heighten community pride and benefit the economic vitality of the region.

Top Plan Goals

Community Design

Spaces will be created throughout the community that encourage creativity and innovation, enhance livability and aesthetics, serve the needs of creative businesses, individuals and nonprofits, highlight the unique history and identity of Mankato, and demonstrate high standards of design and accessibility in public spaces.

Promotion and Support

Mankato will experience a surge in arts and culture participation by creatives and their target audiences as the message and advocacy efforts of the value of arts and culture is strengthened.

Arts and Culture Access

Everyone, regardless of background, in the Greater Mankato community will have equal access to arts and cultural learning at all stages of life, contributing to a welcoming community with a strong appreciation for the arts.

Financial Resources

Develop new funding resources for creative and cultural programs, individuals, businesses, and organizations while sustaining and maximizing current resources. Ensure that resources are made available to underserved populations, including people whose first language is not English and people of all abilities.

Tourism and Economic Vitality

Mankato will be a regional hub for creative and innovative businesses. The rich arts and culture found throughout Mankato will attract business, organizations, entrepreneurs, artists, residents and visitors.



**Get
Creative
Mankato**

1

Harnessing the power of our creative community
at the right time, for all of the right reasons.

Get Creat!ve Mankato

Reports say Mankato's next-stage community growth is certain. As the city grows, new doors of creative opportunity and arts and culture participation will open.

In the past, several local figures left their fingerprints on our arts, music, theatre, history, and community involvement scene.

Today, we're inspired by their legacy as we face a future where we must do more, create more, make more, and involve more area residents.

Want to use your imagination to help make a difference?

You have come to the right place. For all of us, it's time to get creative—and together, get things moving.

Fuel our efforts by getting involved to keep
the plan moving forward.

2

All the signs tell us we're moving forward, and we're prepared for what's ahead.

Three organizations teamed to give us the next-step vision from the 2007 Arts, Culture and Community Enhancement Committee.

The City of Mankato seeks solutions on how to easily engage visitors and new residents into all of our Arts & Culture-driven events, programs and activities.

The City Center Partnership follows through with its mission to revitalize Mankato's traditional downtown area. Finding ways to enlist and leverage Mankato's group of creative residents will help achieve the goals of building a stronger creative economy.

And the Twin Rivers Council for the Arts has been given the green light to accelerate with its role as the city's creative community strategist and liaison between City Hall and our creatives.

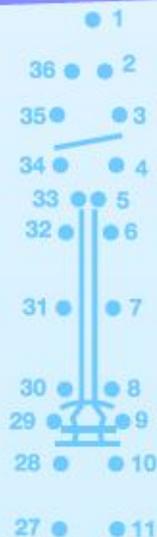
It all starts here.

Get Creative Mankato

Share your ideas on how visitors and new residents can easily connect with our creative environment.

3

A creative's best friend for creatives who want less time tracking down and figuring out the details.



We connect the creative dots. So you don't have to.

The Twin Rivers Council for the Arts sees the collective of our creative residents, groups and activities from the highest point possible. It holds the view of how things connect together in our Arts & Culture community.

From this perspective, we survey all of the information and details—big and small—whose availability might contribute to turning a creative's vision into reality. Because we connect the creative dots in Mankato, it saves creatives, groups, organizations and supporters time, money and energy.

Focus on being creative and let us do the fact-finding and information gathering.

Knowledge is shared. Dots connected.

Get Creative Mankato



Submit to the Twin Rivers Council for the Arts news of events, new programs and live performances.

4

Funding availability gives ideas and imaginative possibilities momentum.

Money is time facing a blank sheet of paper.

A fantastic idea might be burning inside and an imagination races to jot down, sketch or plot out on a blank sheet of paper the vision for the idea. But distractions get in the way, like having the money on hand to afford the time and resources the idea deserves.

So let's examine the funding and grant options available. For starters, tracking the stream of current funding for things like public art.

Next, we work with the private sector to put together new funding and grant programs.

Finally, a certain percentage of capital improvement projects might fund public art projects in the area. But we'll have options.

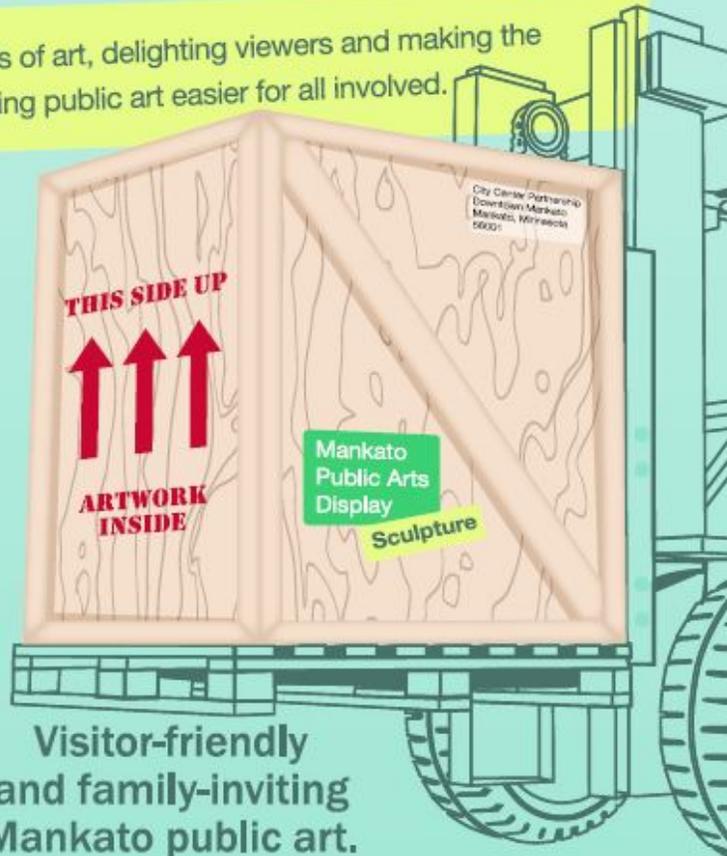
Giving a marked-up, note-filled sheet of paper a chance to make it.

Get
Creative
Mankato

Help us locate businesses and organizations willing to make a funding difference.

5

Public displays of art, delighting viewers and making the process of doing public art easier for all involved.



Visitor-friendly and family-inviting Mankato public art.

So far, our early pursuit of arty and compelling public art displays proved to be successful, years after the first pieces were installed.

Our use of art and sculpture along sidewalks, near downtown streets, increases interest in putting different works of art on display, regardless of suitability to their surroundings.

And there, we need to take a brief pause.

Attracting visitors and new residents ranks high on our list of priorities. It's back to Marketing 101. We need to be sensitive to the needs of our audiences, plus we need to support our artists as much as possible. So, helping draft a City Ordinance is required, an ordinance that subjects public art displays to specific standards and requires approval before display.

**Get
Creative
Mankato**

Give us your thoughts on how a citywide ordinance could be applied.

6

There's something about the openness of space that stirs the imagination.



The emptiness of space is what we long for.

Space. Lots of it. A vacant room with the right amount of length, width and height gives an artistically or musically inclined person enough space where inspiration might be found. We intend to always be on the lookout for unused rooms and difficult-to-rent vacant buildings in Mankato.

Creative spaces represent endless possibilities.

By finding potential places where our creatives can create, make, think, write and produce. Likewise, new and existing facilities that already feature amenities that support our creative processes can only support our cause. Donors and the business sector now have the chance to invest in the development of buildings and rooms to accommodate local creatives . . . and support the community.

**Get
Creative
Mankato**

It's in these spaces where our community's overall body of creative work is strengthened.

Tune us in if open space opportunities appear on your radar.

7

Technologies and information access change how we identify talent and creativity.



**Assembling a group
of talented and skilled people
of all measure.**

Years ago, when we began a public arts program, we focused in on the finished works of sculptors and visual artists.

But things are different today.

Our updated plan covers all people in Mankato with different creative skills and unique visions on how to use them, bringing forth their own finished works. As plan writers, we now have a community obligation to make time for our creative residents and to tell the good stories about the city's creative achievements, then and now.

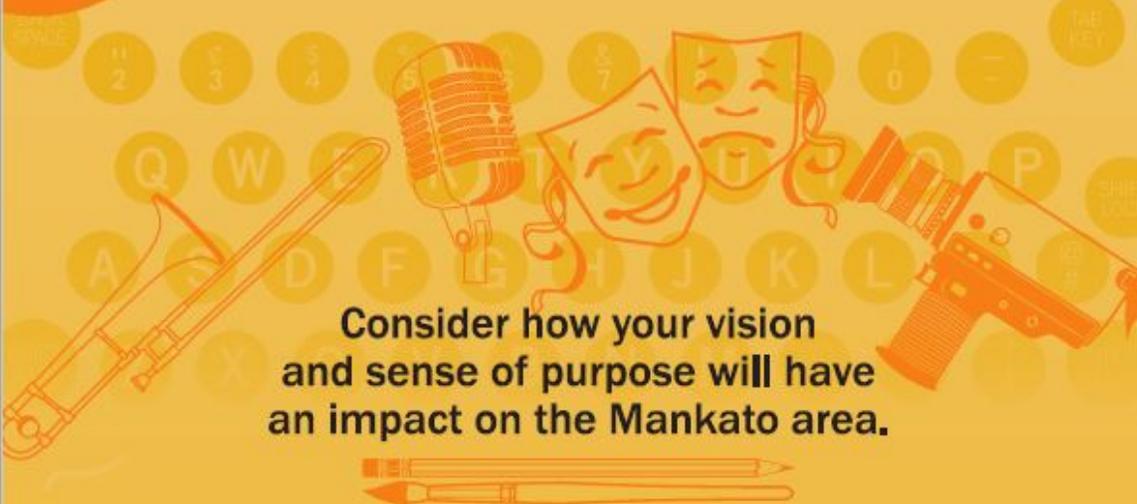
How we stack up as plan leaders will contribute directly to the city's ability to market Mankato as a destination to visit or a place to live.

**Get
Creat!ve
Mankato**

Please speak up if you know someone using personal imagination to make something that is impossible for us to imagine.

8

After launching our plan, cool results might come for those who dare to make the impossible possible.



Consider how your vision and sense of purpose will have an impact on the Mankato area.

The Big Dream sessions from our community Arts & Culture discussions helped define the Big Goals that we will try to achieve in the next months and years.

Now we're poised to team with many Mankato leaders, as well as the creative community, to explore the possibilities of taking the dreams from what was envisioned to turning them into reality.

For instance, individual neighborhoods or sections of Mankato branded for their charm and personalities. They could be labeled a designated Creative District, which offers a marketing and tourism opportunity. Various artists, sculptors and artisans could fill a Mankato Cultural Center, an existing structure or a new building.

Also on our possibilities list is a public walkway along the Minnesota River, which generates visions of how contemporary creative thinking could be blended with the memories of historic Mankato in various art forms.

Dreaming? Maybe.

But let's explore together the possibilities within all of our different Arts & Culture sectors.

**Get
Creative
Mankato**

Let's Dream Big together and create something great.

9

Strike up the band. Hit the keys. Take brush to canvas. Rehearse until you get it right. This is the place to do it.

Explore the unlimited ways to express yourself in Mankato.

Young and old, whose home is Mankato, know Mankato has always been recognized as a hub of Arts & Culture activity, both on the creative side and on the participation side. This fact can be credited to a lot of things, such as the focus on quality public education and the coming and going of entertainment businesses while the city grew.

The love of music, the patronage of the arts, the opportunities to go to live theatre productions, etc., here in Mankato created the environment where there are more than one way for a creative person to express him and herself. Many Mankato creatives are multi-talented and indulge in different types of art forms.

Get Creative Mankato

The range of arts options and cultural activities are sure to peak the curiosity of visitors and new residents, who remember their parents and grandparents gushing about the fun and memorable experiences they had in Mankato.

Give us your ideas on how we can capitalize further on the Arts & Culture choices awaiting our creative talent.

10

Our history stirs up emotions and sparks stories about the deeds and events that shaped our city since 1852.

FORGIVE EVERYONE EVERYTHING



Take a moment.
Take a seat.

Let's share stories about Mankato's past.

History remains one of Mankato's most important assets. Evidence of our past can be found everywhere in the city. Interest in local history and the retelling of tales from our early days creates numerous history enthusiasts eager to dig deep into everything and anything Mankato.

The discoveries from the efforts of this group of enthusiasts can inspire, for example, an artist's painting, a singer's song or a director's next stage production. They can also make their way into books, newspapers and destination marketing materials.

A consequence of our local history is that we have plenty of material to help reintroduce to Mankato residents, new residents and visitors.

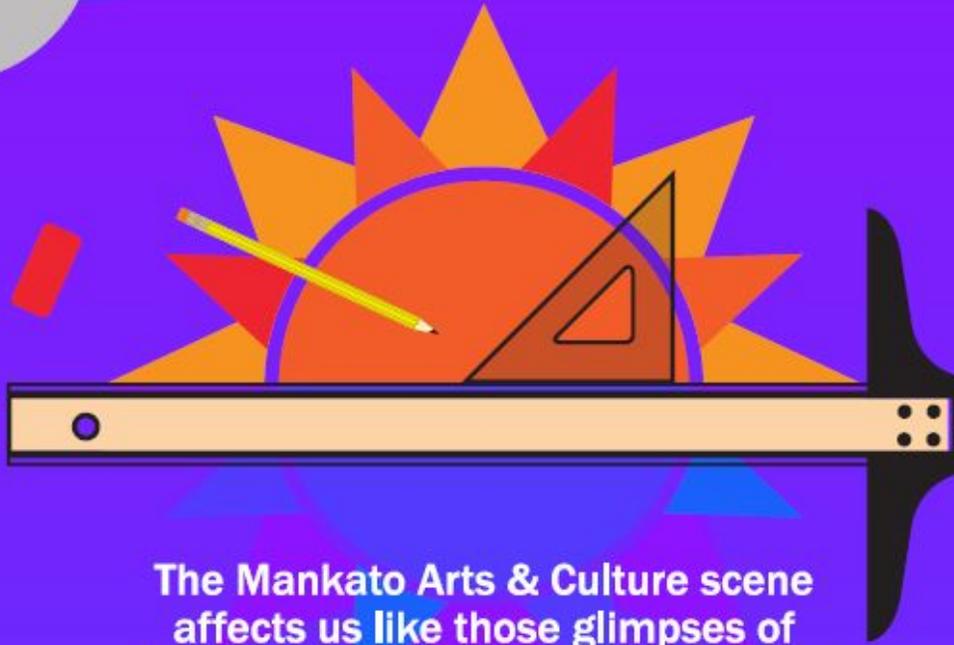
**Get
Creat!ve
Mankato**

This is our chance to explain how our history helped influence the city we are today. It's our history, and nobody can share it like we can.

Sign up with us if you take pride in your Mankato history knowledge.

11

Great strides must be taken to assure everybody feels welcome in our Arts & Culture environment.



The Mankato Arts & Culture scene affects us like those glimpses of sunshine during winter's coldest days.

All of us brave Mankatoans deserve a little sunshine after witnessing falling snow, freezing temperatures and icy roads. Walking through an art gallery, enjoying a night at the theatre, or filling a seat close to a band gives us that feeling of joy, escape and wonder as a few rays of sunshine does during the coldest January day.

As Art & Culture advocates, we believe that everyone in the Mankato area should have opportunity to participate fully and share their skills and their stories. Everyone.

From the very young to the very old, participation keeps lives vibrant and stirs imaginative thinking. It's essential to brainstorm with arts educators, school administrators and local diversity group leaders. Our early efforts will attempt to remove the barriers of money, perception and lack of awareness.

**Get
Creative
Mankato**

Connect us with educators and leaders who want to help us achieve this goal.

12

Twin Rivers Council for the Arts offers local creatives the opportunity to become an affiliate with the organization.



What best describes you?

- Hobbyist
- Skill Development
- Professional
- Arts & Culture Supporter

Members of our creative community fit nicely into different ambition levels and abilities to commit time to their creative aspirations.

Our planning results set the stage for the Twin Rivers Council for the Arts to serve and support all levels of experience, interest, and artistic and skill accomplishment in Mankato.

What everyone must have in common is a willingness to help make our Arts & Culture environment thrive. Then, we stand a better chance at contributing to our local Creative Economy.

Likewise, we can search for opportunities and places for all creatives and the people who support them to *Get Creative Mankato*.

**Get
Creative
Mankato**

Participate in upcoming Artist Census to provide data on who we are serving and how best to serve them.

