



Volume 9: Edition 3, March 2011

[Print the Newsletter](#)

Civic center included in governor's bonding bill

Make a difference as a part-time police or reserve officer



Architectural rendering of Mankato's proposed civic center project expansion, which includes a performing arts center. The project will increase facility use and result in approximately \$27.6 million in economic impact.

Governor Mark Dayton has included Mankato's civic center in his construction proposal project. Mankato is requesting 50 percent of this \$30 million dollar project. The other 50 percent of funding will come from the existing local option sales tax. If approved, funds will be used to renovate and expand the civic center's hockey arena and All Seasons Arena as well as include an 1,100-seat performing arts center.

These updates will play an important role in Mankato's economic vitality by keeping the community competitive with other regional centers. By meeting current needs as well as planning for the future, Mankato can offer options for hosting conventions, meetings and concerts that will attract and retain customers lost to other markets. This results in an annual loss of \$3.7 million of known economic impact. Adding a performing arts auditorium would provide another place for performances, concerts, conventions and corporate meetings.

In addition, updates will be beneficial to the partnership between Minnesota State Mankato, Mankato (MSU) and the city of Mankato:

- the remodel at All Seasons Arena--home to the MSU women's hockey team--would resolve current equity issues and will position the facility to accommodate another sheet of ice in the future to meet community programming needs.
- the construction of the auditorium will meet the needs of the civic center, MSU and regionally significant performing arts organizations and avoid costly duplication of facilities.



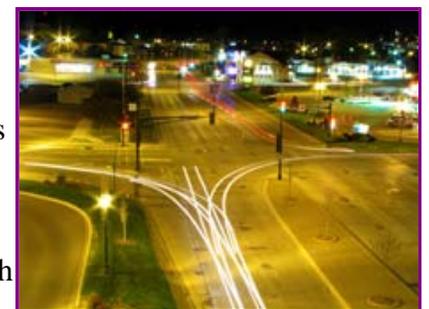
Shelly Bartlett, part-time police officer with the Mankato Department of Public Safety. Photo courtesy of Sports Pix.

Shelly Bartlett remembers an incident where citizens were asked to help the Mankato Department of Public Safety look for a missing person. The experience helped her realize how she could give back to her community. She became a reserve officer, and eventually she took the next step to become a part-time police officer.

[Learn](#) more about this opportunity. [Applications](#) are available online and will be accepted through Monday, March 21. For more information [contact](#) public safety staff at 507-387-8790.

Mankato gears up for 2011 street projects

The city of Mankato is preparing for street projects scheduled to begin this spring. Details for this year's projects are available in Mankato's [capital improvement plan](#), which provides information about Mankato's street and construction projects for the next five years.



Mankato streets are prioritized based on improvements needed. City Center bright lights by Kyle Seys, Mankato.

The capital improvement plan is a useful communication tool that highlights where the city plans to ensure resources are allocated to priority projects because of limited dollars.

- improvements to the arena are planned to meet Western Collegiate Hockey Association needs, which is important because the civic center's main tenant is the division one MSU men's hockey team.

Mankato's civic center has been funded through a local option sales tax and a food, beverage and entertainment tax; whereas, other regional centers have received state funding for building and expanding convention and meeting facilities.

“Expanding the civic center will have direct benefits in our community” said City Manager Patrick Hentges. “It will position Mankato for the future, create and build upon partnership opportunities and positively impact our local economy.”

[Learn](#) more about the civic center expansion project. For more information [contact](#) City Manager Patrick Hentges at 507-387-8690.

Mankato celebrates 143 years of service



Then and now. Mankato streets staff repairing roads in the 1890s and today. Historical photo courtesy of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

The city of Mankato was chartered on March 6, 1868. This year marks the city’s 143rd year of service. [Learn](#) more about Mankato’s rich history.

Save the date--Thursday, April 21--for Mankato's water treatment plant open house.

the water treatment plant.

Call Mankato's 24-hour water service at 507-387-8661. For more information about the event [contact](#) staff at 507-387-8692.

Avoid being towed

Engineering staff oversees planning and design of (reconstruction and new construction) sanitary sewers, storm drainage systems, streets, sidewalks and other projects. Projects are carefully selected based on maintenance and improvement needs. Engineering staff inspects and evaluates the streets using a rating system to prioritize infrastructure projects and also creates a list of future street reconstruction projects.

Staff looks for opportunities to save costs and minimize inconvenience. For example, if both street and utilities need to be replaced, they are done at the same time so the road only needs to be reconstructed once. Prior to moving forward, proposed street reconstruction projects that are assessed to abutting properties require public hearings and City Council approval. Proposed street construction projects for this year:

- [West Second and Marcy Street \(phase two\)](#)
- [Oak Knoll Boulevard \(phase three\)](#)
- [Vine Street](#)
- [Bradley Street and Locke Street](#)
- [Park Lane and Carney Avenue](#)
- [Ramsey Street](#)

Keeping citizens informed and engaged is an important part of the process. Engineering staff sends a letter of notification to property owners to notify them about possible construction on a street project in their area. When the City Council approves a proposed project, the design is finalized and engineering staff follow-up with residents as requested. Property owners are then sent a letter explaining the proposed assessments associated with the respective improvements. A public hearing on proposed assessments is held at a City Council meeting about three weeks following the hearing.

Before construction begins, engineering staff meets with property owners to answer questions as well as provide additional project information.

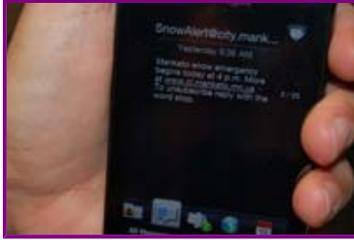
“Connecting with residents on these projects is an essential part of moving forward on any of these projects,” said Michael McCarty, acting city engineer. “We want to get their input and also make them aware of what’s happening.”

[Learn](#) more about Mankato’s capital improvement projects. For more information, [contact](#) engineering staff at 507-387-8634.

Give Mankato “your take” about needed street repairs

It's always a good time to subscribe to snow emergency text message alerts

March can still bring plenty of snow. Be prepared and prevent being towed by [subscribing](#) to receive snow emergency alerts by text message. Additional ways to learn all the latest about snow emergencies in Mankato:



Now's a great time to sign up for snow emergency text message alerts. Sign up today.

- [Subscribe](#) to receive city news updates by email.
- [Subscribe](#) to receive notifications about Mankato's snow emergency messages on Facebook.
- [Subscribe](#) to Mankato's snow emergency messages on Twitter.
- Telephone Mankato's snow emergency line at 507-387-9001, 24-hour service.

Mankato's goal is to minimize, or ideally, eliminate towing. For more information about signing up for snow emergency alerts, [contact](#) public information staff at 507-387-8692. [Learn](#) more about Mankato's snow and ice control efforts.

Planning construction?

Don't forget a building permit

Construction season is just around the corner. Before any new construction or building alteration projects are started, it's important to get a building permit. Permits are generally required whenever a building is improved, converted, reconstructed, altered, moved, removed or demolished and for plumbing and electrical work.

The first step to getting a building permit is applying for one. [Applications](#) are available online or at the Intergovernmental Center, 10 Civic Center Plaza. For more information, or to obtain a building permit [contact](#) community development staff at 507-387-8600.

A simple way to pay utility bills

It's easy to pay Mankato utility bills with the city's [online and electronic](#) bill pay options. Signing up benefits the environment and residents save:

- \$2 each month by using electronic fund transfer.
- \$1 each month by using



Sign up and save with Mankato's online and electronic billing options.

Since it's pothole season, the city has had their patching machine in use for the past couple weeks on a regular basis. These patches help to make the streets more driveable and smoother and prevent damage to vehicles, water infiltration and pavement deterioration.

It's difficult for staff to ascertain the condition of every street in Mankato, so it's helpful when people contact staff to report street conditions of particular concern. Then the city can mobilize staff to take on problem areas in a timely manner.

"The sooner the pothole is patched, the less likely damage will result that requires more time and material to fill the pothole," said Mark Knoff, director of public works.

Costs for patchwork are expected to be down from last year. "The concrete overlays we worked on last year have really helped to keep Mankato streets in good shape," said Jim Braunshausen, streets superintendent. Several overlays are planned this year on major commercial routes within the city:

- Raintree Road
- Haefner Drive
- Adams Street
- Madison Avenue

Additionally, in 2012, a \$4 million reconstruction of Madison Avenue is planned. Citizens are encouraged to report potholes by:

- calling Mankato's 24-hour street maintenance request line at 507-345-0600.
- giving "[your take](#)" about needed street repairs.
- using Mankato's [online customer service](#) reporting tool
- posting to Twitter.com.
- posting to Facebook.com.

Freeze-thaw cycles create pothole challenges. Many are under the impression that a road system could be designed at a reasonable price that wouldn't pothole; however, until we change the laws of physics our roads will continue to break up with the change in weather.

For more information [contact](#) Mankato's public works staff at or 507-387-8649.

Mankato's online police reporting

the city's paperless billing option.

To sign up, [contact](#) city of Mankato staff at 507-387-8600, or [complete](#) out an online application and mail to:

City of Mankato
Water Billing
Intergovernmental Center
10 Civic Center Plaza
P.O. Box 3368
Mankato, MN 56002-3368

For more information, [contact](#) city of Mankato staff at 507-387-8600.

Have you adopted your fire hydrant?

It's not too late to adopt a Mankato fire hydrant. Help us help you by adopting the hydrant on your street and keeping it clear of snow. Doing so gives firefighters access to hydrants in case of an emergency, which can help save lives.

Cleared hydrants also help save costs because drivers can see them. Although hydrants are designed to break off if hit, sometimes they can break. The cost to repair a broken hydrant can range from \$600 to a few thousand dollars depending on the type of damage.

Learn more about adopting a fire hydrant by watching the latest City Update online, [Facebook](#), or on public access channels 10 (HickoryTech) or 12 (Charter):

- Sundays at 6:55 a.m.
- Mondays at 12:55 p.m.
- Tuesdays at 9:55 p.m.
- Wednesdays at 1:55 p.m.
- Thursdays at 8:55 a.m.
- Fridays at 4:55 p.m.
- Saturdays at 6:55 p.m.

For more information, to adopt a fire hydrant, or to get help with a buried fire hydrant, [contact](#) staff with the Mankato Department of Public Safety at 507-387-8792. To report a damaged fire hydrant [contact](#) public works staff at 507-387-8660.

Connect with local government

The city of Mankato, the City Council and City Manager Patrick Hentges are on [Facebook](#). Become a Facebook fan and connect with local government and officials. Or, follow the city of Mankato on Twitter.



Mankato's online police reporting tool is accessible, easy to use, and the report is submitted immediately.

Mankato's citizen [online police reporting feature](#) makes it easy to report an incident from the comfort of home. Citizens can fill out reports for criminal damage to property, harassing phone calls, information, lost property, theft, theft from a vehicle and theft of a license plate or license tab.

"People don't always need to talk to a police officer to file a report," said Todd A. Miller, director of public safety. "In those situations, they can file a police report online at their convenience."

What's important for citizens to keep in mind is that there are times when calling 911 is the best option, such as an emergency or in-progress situation. Additionally, citizens must be within Mankato city limits. If not, the call must be made to the police agency that represents that person's area.

For more information [contact](#) public safety staff at 507-387-8795.

Elk's Nature Center events

Save the date for upcoming events at [Elk's Nature Center in Rasmussen Woods](#), 555 Stoltzman Road:

Springtime adventures with children

Monday, March 7

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5 suggested donation

Discover some great seasonal fun ideas to explore with children and how these ideas benefit a child's development. Pre-registration is required. Sign up by [contacting](#) staff at 507-387-8501 or 507-387-8585.

Prescribed fire training presented by Randy Schindle

Tuesday, March 8

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

No cost

Instructor Randy Schindle will teach participants how to preplan, prepare and execute a controlled burn, which are necessary in order to maintain healthy grassland ecosystems.

For more information, [contact](#) public information staff at 507-387-8516.

Enter to win Mankato's 2012 city calendar photo contest



Submit photo entries for Mankato's 2012 photo entries today.

Make sure to grab those end-of-the-winter season shots for Mankato's 2012 city calendar photo contest. Photos of Mankato places and spaces are encouraged. Everyone is welcome to participate. [Entry forms](#) are available online.

[Learn](#) more about the contest, and see photo winners over the past few years. Copies of Mankato's 2011 city calendar are still available at the Intergovernmental Center, 10 Civic Center Plaza and [online](#).

For more information about the contest or to receive a city calendar, [contact](#) Mankato's public information staff at 507-387-8692.

Mankato's city bus -- the clean air alternative



Mankato's city bus -- your destination on time.

Consider Mankato's city bus for your transportation needs. The city bus is convenient, reliable and affordable. Plus, it's the clean air alternative. On average, riding the bus cuts hydrocarbon emissions that produce smog by 90

percent, carbon monoxide by more than 75 percent and nitrogen oxide by 15 to 75 percent.

[Learn](#) more about Mankato's buses and see routes online, or call 507-625-RIDE. Have your ad seen throughout Mankato by advertising on a city bus. For more information [contact](#) public works staff at 507-387-8655.

To register, [contact](#) staff Elk's Nature Center at 507-387-8585.

Full moon walk
Friday, March 18

Community day geocache, a high-tech treasure hunt
Saturday, April 15

Save the date for a high-tech treasure hunt in Rasmussen Woods. Geocaching is a fun, healthy, hands-on outdoor activity for all ages that can be done individually or alone. To register, [contact](#) staff Elk's Nature Center at 507-387-8585.

Rock and mineral Day
Sunday, April 16
12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Learn more about rocks and minerals at this event. Activities meet badge requirements for boy and girl scouts.

Shrubs for the home landscape
Thursday, April 21
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Cost: \$9

Learn about the best choice of shrubs for different situations in the home landscape. Discussions focus on shrubs best suited for foundation plantings, flowering capabilities, hedges and windbreaks and wildlife habitat. Each participant will receive a color-photo booklet showing many shrubs well adapted to southern Minnesota landscapes. Register online at www.mankatocer.com.

Minnesota native plants for the landscape
Tuesday, April 26
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Cost: \$9

Interest in the native plant species has grown as people become more concerned for the natural environment. There are a variety of plants that grow naturally in Minnesota habitats. Topics included the qualities of native trees and shrubs, the herbaceous prairie and woodland plants, which can readily adapt to the home landscape. These plants are hardy and offer a more natural alternative to the homeowner or gardener. Register online at www.mankatocer.com.

For more information about Elk's Nature Center events [contact](#) staff 507-387-8585.

Upcoming events at the Verizon Wireless Center

[MSU Maverick Men's Hockey vs. Alaska-Anchorage](#)

Friday, March 4 at 7:37 p.m.

Saturday, March 5 at 7:07 p.m.

[17th Annual Southern Minnesota Home & Builders Show](#)

Friday, March 18, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Saturday, March 19, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday, March 20, noon to 5 p.m.

[Music as a weapon tour with Disturbed and Korn](#)

Tuesday, March 22, 6:30 p.m.

[C & N Dart Tournament](#)

Friday, March 25 through Sunday, March 27

[Sign up](#) for EventMail to receive upcoming Verizon Wireless Center event information.

24-hour city services

- Public safety: 911
- [Customer service](#) online
- Graffiti hotline: 507-387-8610
- Street maintenance request: 507-345-0600
- [File](#) a police report online
- Snow emergencies: 507-387-9001
- Water: 507-387-8661

[Editor](#)

507-387-8692

