



## **Minnesota State University, Mankato**

### **Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Grant Request**

### **Unlimited Bus Access for MSU Students & Employees**

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Current Date: 3/15/01  
[Amended 4/4/01]  
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#### **Overview of Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Minnesota State University, Mankato, a comprehensive university in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system, is located on a 354 acre campus in Mankato, Minnesota, a community of approximately 42,000 situated in the Minnesota River Valley of south central Minnesota. The University offers a full range of undergraduate and a broad selection of graduate programs, and as such, has statewide responsibilities for the articulation of and providing access to professional programs not available at other colleges and regional universities. The University also has a major obligation to provide leadership in applied research important to the economy and quality of life in the state.

Baccalaureate programs are offered in the liberal arts and sciences, the fine arts, social science, human services, health sciences, nursing, teacher education, business, engineering and technology. Several pre-baccalaureate programs are also offered.

The University offers 71 graduate programs in such areas as arts and humanities, natural sciences, allied health and nursing, education, science, business, social science and fine arts.

Founded in 1868, Minnesota State University, Mankato, has evolved from its beginnings as a normal school to become in 1921 Mankato State Teachers College when it was authorized to offer a four-year curriculum. Because of its increasing commitment to providing more than teacher preparation, the name was changed to Mankato State University in 1957. The institution continued to grow in size and its reputation for academic excellence led to university status in 1975. Mankato State University became Minnesota State University, Mankato, in September 1998, giving further prominence to its growth to an institution recognized nationally.

The University is under the control and management of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board of Trustees, an agency of the State of Minnesota.

Total campus enrollment for the fall quarter was 12,843 students.

#### **Demographics**

During the 2000-01 academic year 2,840 students lived on campus in university residence halls, of which there are three. Roughly 4,500 students live within three blocks of the campus in private apartment developments. Another 2,750 live within the Greater Mankato Area including the Cities of Mankato and North Mankato. The balance of MSU's student population drive from nearby towns. The bulk of MSU's 1,543 full and part-time employees live in the Greater Mankato Area and drive to work.

## **Transportation Modal Split**

The University encourages students and employees whenever possible to walk or take the bus. Of the many community-wide bus routes provided by the City of Mankato's Heartland Express, two routes are dedicated exclusively to handling University traffic in and around the campus. Last year, ridership for MSU routes 1 and 8 totaled 11,031, a number which represented 34.5% of the City's overall ridership. MSU parking funds have been committed to keep the two routes going as the Parking Advisory Committee struggles each week day to handle 7,500 vehicles trying to park in 5,100 surface campus parking stalls.

City-wide bus services shut down at 6 PM which creates a burden on MSU students taking night classes, attending evening spectator events on campus, and getting to and from part-time jobs. The two MSU bus routes quit running at 10:15 PM Monday through Thursday and are limited to 15 minute runs around the campus and to nearby apartment complexes – these are not city-wide routes. Students can buy a "U" Zone pass for \$31 per semester or pay \$1.25 per ride to get around the two cities of Mankato and North Mankato. Because of bus cost increases the Parking Advisory Committee has recommended that the individual fare go up to \$1 per ride for those using MSU's routes 1 and 8. Each day over 3,000 students and employees park in Lots 20, 21, 22, and 23 which are blocks from the campus core. Those having a parking permit take the bus and ride free after they produce a special bus tag and show the bus driver. Non-permit holders who park in the University free lot, the most distant of MSU's parking areas, must either show a "U Zone" bus card or pay the individual fare.

## **Busing Needs of Minnesota State University, Mankato**

The University is located on the western edge of the Greater Mankato community, far from major shopping malls and businesses which hire part-time employees. Without a vehicle MSU's 3,000 on-campus residence hall students have few entertainment or job options. The same thing can be said for the 4,500 students living adjacent to campus property. Unless MSU can find a way to expand existing bus services, the University anticipates more and more demand for parking spaces, a huge investment for the self-sustaining parking budget – no state aid is given to support parking.

As part of the "Statewide U-Pass Initiative" MSU seeks to broaden bus access for its students and employees at an attractive and affordable price. However, without additional nighttime service that targets major shopping malls and businesses hiring part-time help, it will be difficult to convince students and employees to drive less or not at all. These objectives are central to meet MSU's growing need:

- Establishment of a dedicated MSU Shopper/Worker bus route that would deliver and pick up MSU customers from key shopping malls and businesses. Mankato's River Hills Mall is huge and North Mankato's Taylor Companies employ hundreds of MSU students part-time. This route would run from 6 PM to Midnight five nights a week and all day Saturday. Estimated cost: \$135,000.
- Creation of a citywide "U Pass" which would be honored on all Heartland Express bus routes in Mankato and North Mankato as well as the two MSU funded bus routes.
- Add an additional bus route which would augment the existing Campus Express route #1 picking up passengers now left standing as full buses drive by Monday through Thursday on class days. Estimated cost: \$85,000.
- Provide financial support to ensure against any reduction in current service.

**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

**Universal Bus Pass/Expanded Services Grant Request**

**Program Expenses and Revenues**

<b>Projected Expenses</b>	<b>City-Wide “U” Bus Pass</b>	<b>Shopper/Worker Express Shuttle</b>	<b>Campus Express 2<sup>nd</sup> Bus</b>	<b>Support Existing Services</b>	<b>Annual Total</b>
Staffing	\$20,000	\$63,000	\$48,000	\$5,000	\$136,000
Equipment	3,000	50,000	35,000	45,000	133,000
Supplies (“U” Pass Cards, postage, etc.)	7,000	10,000	6,500		23,500
Marketing	10,000	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		10,000
Administrative Overhead	5,000	12,000	7,500		24,500
Other	2,000	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		2,000
<b>Expense Totals:</b>	<b>\$47,000</b>	<b>\$135,000</b>	<b>\$97,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$329,000</b>
<b>Estimated Income</b>					
MSU Parking Fund	See Line Total	See Line Total	See Line Total	See Line Total	\$ 35,000
U-Pass Sales @ \$25 Per Semester	25,000	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	20,000
Farebox Revenues @ 50¢ per ride for Campus Routes 1 & 8	See Line Total	See Line Total	See Line Total	See Line Total	24,000
<b>Income Total:</b>	See Line Total	See Line Total	See Line Total	See Line Total	<b>\$79,000</b>
<b>Requested Grant Support from Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Funds</b>					<b>250,000 Per Year or \$500,000 for the life of the Grant Amended 4/4/01</b>

**MSU Request Approved:**

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David Cowan, Facilities Services Manager  
Minnesota State University, Mankato

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Date