



news release

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Third Inter-City Leadership Visit set for Charlottesville, VA

MANKATO, Minn. (July 11, 2011) - Charlottesville, Virginia will be the destination for the next Inter-City Leadership Visit (ICLV) of the Greater Mankato Leadership Delegation, a program of Greater Mankato Growth (GMG).

A delegation of invited business and community leaders will travel to Charlottesville November 6 - 8, 2011 to study innovative ideas and best practices that may be adapted to the Greater Mankato region. Of particular interest will be the way Charlottesville has addressed the six key performance areas identified by Envision 2020, with the first three being ranked the highest by recent surveys of leaders:

- **Community Planning and Regional Governance**
- **Economic Development**
- **Education**
- Health and Human Services
- Livability
- Transportation

Research and a recent site visit confirmed that Charlottesville has assets and experiences that the Greater Mankato region can identify with and emulate. Like Greater Mankato, Charlottesville has a rural city appeal, an expanding health care system, a premier university and college environment, downtown revitalization and strong relationships between business and education. Entrepreneurism, regional partnerships between cities, counties, and non-profits, and forward-thinking economic development strategies are also key to the success of both areas.

Barb Embacher, Vice President for Greater Mankato Growth, concurred that Charlottesville is an ideal choice for the Leadership Delegation's upcoming ICLV. "There are a lot of similarities between Charlottesville and Greater Mankato. Both are university towns, with agriculture and surrounding rural communities that play a significant role in our economy and ambiance. Both are committed to downtown revitalization. And both have first-rate businesses and corporations that partner with education and play substantial roles in the community. We think Charlottesville can learn from Greater Mankato as well."

The planning committee and staff at GMG did extensive research and surveyed past delegates to pick the best city that is demographically similar and has matching initiatives and community goals. Charlottesville has a slightly larger population and is within 90 miles of two large metros: Richmond and Washington D.C.

Most recently, the Greater Mankato Leadership Delegation was called together in 2009 for a close-to-home retreat to focus on current economic challenges and opportunities here. The last ICLV trip was to Fort Collins, Colorado in the fall of 2006, which produced some great results for Greater Mankato. Prior to that, a delegation traveled to Bellingham, Washington, which helped shape the beginnings of Envision 2020. The 2011 delegation will again include diverse representation from the corporate, nonprofit, and government sectors.

"The benefits of these trips are phenomenal. Along with getting good ideas that we can bring back to implement in Greater Mankato, we also strengthen the sense of community, build a shared vision, and strengthen professional relationships among the top leaders in Greater Mankato," stated Chad Surprenant, President/CEO of I&S Group and member of the ICLV Planning Committee. "Relationships developed during the visit pay off every day here in the region."

About Greater Mankato Growth

Greater Mankato Growth (GMG) is committed to advancing business for a stronger community. As the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development organization serving the regional marketplace, GMG advances business through: existing business support, new business growth, business promotion, talent development, public affairs, community marketing, visitor attraction and servicing and civic engagement.

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