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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VISIT MANKATO'S FIVE YEAR PLAN BASED ON FAKE WEBSITE – NO LAUGHING MATTER

MANKATO, MN – Visit Mankato released its five year strategic plan today covering 2015 to 2020. The main direction of the strategic plan is to recreate the wonders of Mankato's "fake" website (a link can be found at www.visitmankatomn.com/press) and use those said wonders as a base of Visit Mankato's marketing efforts to draw visitors to Mankato. Visit Mankato leads the development of the visitor economy in Mankato.

"In developing our plan for the next five years it dawned us that we should be embracing what we know works – complete fabrication," said Anna Thill, President of Visit Mankato. "The fake website has been drawing visitors to Mankato for years – albeit based on lies and vulnerabilities. So we decided to create the attractions visitors already are interested in from the fake website."

The key pieces of the strategic plan include the following product development: an Ancient Underwater City, an Underwater World, a Pyramid, Whales in the Minnesota River and a recreation of Castle Dracula. The strategic plan also calls for creating a much warmer climate for the City of Mankato.

Visit Mankato is asking for the community's help in implementing the strategies of the strategic plan. They need help with collecting sand for the pyramids, heating the city to create a more tropical climate and attracting whales to the Minnesota River to name a few.

"This is a big initiative for us," said Thill. "We'll need the whole community to rally together and get these attractions off the ground! The outcome will be a visitor boom for years to come!"

Visit Mankato plans on reaching these goals over the span of five years. First steps include acquiring adequate funding, involving major stakeholders in the planning process, establishing strategic linkages with public decision-makers and financially supporting marketing strategies to attract visitors to the wonders of the "fake" website.

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Citizens can submit their ideas on how to recreate other wonders of the fake website to visitor@visitmankatomn.com. To find out more about Visit Mankato's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan please contact Anna Thill at athill@visitmankatomn.com or 507.385.6664.

We should also mention it is April Fools' Day and although this release is an April Fools' joke, the fake website it not and it is has indeed attracted many visitors from around the country. It is rare for a week to go by without an inquiry on something from the fake Mankato website. Visit Mankato is working on a real five year strategic plan, but that will be released once it has been fully developed.

Attachment 1: Visit Mankato Leisure Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020

About Visit Mankato:

Visit Mankato, LLC, the local Convention & Visitors Bureau, is a Limited Liability Corporation of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. Visit Mankato leads the development of the visitor economy in Mankato by actively promoting Mankato as a premier destination for conventions, tournaments and tourism. These activities bring a steady flow of visitors and business activity to Mankato that benefits local residents and future visitors. The work of Visit Mankato helps strengthen the hospitality industry which provides jobs, a diverse tax base and amenities for everyone to enjoy. www.visitmankatomn.com