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Rochester first U.S. City to join Intercultural Cities Initiative

June 12, 2018 – On Wednesday, June 13th, 2018 at 11:00 am, the Journey to Growth team, the City of Rochester and citizens of Rochester will gather in the City Hall Atrium for a special Signing Ceremony, designating Rochester as the first U.S. City to join the Council of Europe’s ICI (Intercultural Cities Initiative) program.

Irena Guidikova from the Council of Europe will be visiting Rochester for the day and joining Mayor Brede to sign the letter of intent.

“Rochester has realized there is a wealth of experience they can tap into, utilize new tools and add them to their toolbox. They are thinking about diversity as an advantage; not just an equality challenge but as a richness to be explored.” Said Guidokova.

The intercultural integration policy model comes from an extensive analysis of city practice and a wide range of international standards. It calls on local political, social, cultural and economic institutions to focus on harnessing the skills and talents of all citizens; including migrants and refugees, and creating the best conditions for their full participation in society and the economy. The model is now being implemented by over 100 cities in Europe, as well as in Japan, Korea, Africa, Mexico and Canada.

The Rochester City Council approved moving forward with the ICI designation at the April 2nd Council meeting.

Journey to Growth Diversity & Inclusion Committee co-chairs, Barbara Jordan and Rebeca Sedarski are thrilled to see the initiative move forward.

“We are delighted to welcome Irena and our partners to celebrate and learn more about the program,” said Sedarski. “We appreciate the support of our community leaders and the City Council.”

The price tag of the 5 year program is \$45,000. Journey to Growth will assist in administration and the Diversity Council will serve as fiscal agent.

The Ceremony will take place at 11:00 am in the Rochester City Hall atrium. The public is encouraged to attend this momentous occasion and meet Irena. For more information on the Council of Europe and the Intercultural Cities Initiative visit <https://bit.ly/2HTriCn>

About Journey To Growth (J2G)

The Journey To Growth Partnership is a 501c3. J2G is a comprehensive five-year strategy coordinated by Rochester Area Economic Development, Inc. (RAEDI) and the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce to effectively grow and diversify the economy of the southeast region consisting of the following counties without borders: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Steele, Wabasha and Winona. For more information on the Journey To Growth Partnership visit www.j2gmn.com and [J2G Facebook](#).

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