



City of Duluth Communications Office

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April 14, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For additional information, contact Mayor Don Ness at (218) 730-5230; Michael Ashcraft at (913) 397-7178.

Michael Ashcraft selected for Chief Administrative Officer

Michael Ashcraft has been selected by Mayor Don Ness to be Duluth's next Chief Administrative Officer.

"Michael Ashcraft will bring a dynamic mix of experience to City Hall," said Mayor Don Ness. "Mr. Ashcraft is both strategic and innovative in his approach and is exceptionally well versed in developing high performance organizations. While I am very disappointed to lose Mark, having Mr. Ashcraft able to step into this position gives me great confidence that this transition will be successful."

Michael Ashcraft was a finalist in the Mayor's CAO search in 2008. "I came from that search process impressed with Mr. Ashcraft's experience in organizational development. Since that time, he and I have said in contact, often exchanging ideas and perspective on issues facing the city. I have found him to be insightful in his advice – he quickly understood the dynamics at play despite observing the situation from Kansas."

"Duluth is a beautiful community. My wife and I are excited about coming to Duluth and for the challenges ahead," said Michael Ashcraft. "Duluth may face challenges, but with the kind of spirit I see in citizens and City employees, those challenges will be overcome. I am honored to have the opportunity to work with the Mayor in service to the city."

Michael grew up in Indiana and received his bachelor's degree in political science/sociology from the University of Southern Indiana and his master degree in public administration from the University of Alabama. He is a trained mediator and facilitator in addition to holding competencies in governmental financial management practices and human resource management. Mr. Ashcraft has over 20 years experience in state and local government. Since 2008, Mr. Ashcraft has been in private practice offering leadership and community development services to clients in the Midwest.

Michael Wilkes, City Manager for Olathe, said this, "Michael Ashcraft was the architect of change for our organization and that change has led to the success we're seeing today." Wilkes continued, "Michael is one of the brightest people with whom I've ever worked."

Mr. Ashcraft's name will be submitted to the Duluth City Council for approval in the form of a resolution at the April 27th Council Meeting. Upon approval, Ashcraft would start the job on May



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11th. Mayor Ness and Mr. Ashcraft will hold a press conference Monday, April 20th.

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