



Northumberland County

Council Resolution

SENT VIA EMAIL

November 25, 2025

All Ontario Municipalities

**Re: Correspondence, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
'2024 Annual Report and Presentation'**

At a meeting held on November 19th, 2025 Northumberland County Council approved Council Resolution # 2025-11-19-929, adopting the below resolution:

Moved by: Councillor Lucas Cleveland

Seconded by: Councillor Robert Crate

"**Whereas** the Economic Development, Tourism, and Land Use Planning Committee (November 5, 2025) considered Correspondence, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative '2024 Annual Report and Presentation', and County Council identified this item for separate discussion at the November 19, 2025 County Council meeting;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That County Council adopt the following:

- **That** County Council approve the Northumberland County Warden to serve as the Northumberland County representative to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and direct staff to submit a membership application.

Further That this motion be distributed to all Ontario municipalities."

Council Resolution # 2025-11-19-929

Carried

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at bennett@northumberland.ca or by telephone at 905-372-3329 ext. 2238.

Sincerely,
Tonia Bennett



Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk
Northumberland County

Council Resolution

Moved By (L.C.) L. Cleveland

Seconded By (B.C.) R. Crate

Agenda
Item 11.b
(2)

Resolution Number
2025-11-19- 929

Council Date: November 19, 2025

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Recorded Vote
Requested by

Councillor's Name

Carried

Warden's Signature

Deferred

Warden's Signature

Defeated

Warden's Signature



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

**Mayors Securing the
Future of Our Basin**

Annual Report 2024

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
P.O. Box 1332 New Lenox, IL 60451
312.201.4518

www.glslcities.org

Executive Summary

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2024, our organization deepened its commitment to fostering resilient and thriving communities across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin, emerging as a leading advocate for preparing for a changing climate and advancing sustainable economic development. With over 70 organizations (business, government, and non-profit partners) joining the Mayors Commission on Economic Transformation, we have built an unprecedented coal-

ition to chart the development of our region's economy. We remain dedicated to a prosperous and sustainable future for all our communities — that means ensuring that your residents have access to good jobs, reliable and safe infrastructure, communities that are resilient to extreme weather, and access to all the opportunities that come with being in a region that makes up over 80 percent of North America's fresh water.

\$420 M

Supported the launch of the independent **Canada Water Agency** and securing the first phase of funding under Canada's **\$420 million** Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River protection commitment.

UP TO
\$425 M

Provided project planning and grant support for **62 projects** through the **Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative** for a total project value of up to **\$425 million.***

\$400 M

Advocated for nearly **\$400 million** in funding to prevent the devastating spread of invasive carp through the Brandon Road Interbasin Project.

450

Trained approximately **450 participants** through webinars, workshops, and sessions on sustainable solutions for coastal resilience challenges.

OVER
750

Presented at various conferences to a **total audience of over 750**, highlighting the climate action initiatives spearheaded by the Cities Initiative and its members.



Photo by Ryan Hagerty/USFWS



350

Hosted **12 workshops** with industry, agency, and non-profit partners in The Blue Mountains, Montreal, and Upstate New York with a **total of 350 people participating**.

OVER
\$2 B

Helped secure over **\$2 billion** for water infrastructure funding across Canada to accelerate housing construction in our basin.

Letter from Our Co-Chairs

Dear Members,

As we reflected on 2024, our organization celebrated a year of delivering meaningful support to advance your priorities. We provided and secured financial resources, technical training, and instructional programs to help you and your staff implement effective green solutions for challenges facing your communities. We also worked alongside you and your teams to advocate for legislation and policies that improved your residents' lives. Our coalition grew to nearly 270 communities, supported by a dedicated team committed to providing the resources needed to make a real difference.

As mayors, we understood the immense challenges faced by our communities, especially when resources were limited. Our organization remained hyper-focused on helping your residents live healthy and fulfilling lives. Our mission was to safeguard the resilience and success of all communities across the basin for future generations.

Protecting the environment and a freshwater resource that is the envy of the world was critical to our region's ongoing success and ability to attract the best and brightest people, companies, and changemakers. We empowered you and your staff to address the most pressing issues impacting your residents, including flooding, coastal erosion, aging infrastructure, and ensuring that every resident had access to clean and affordable water.

We also recognized the potential for our basin to become a leading blue-green economic corridor. In 2025, our Mayors Commission on Economic Transformation planned to deliver a 10-year plan to remake our fresh coast economy and ensure that the basin remained an ideal place to live, work, invest, and play for the next 50 years.

We looked forward to your continued commitment to the Cities Initiative. Please review this report, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. Let's aim to make 2025 an even more successful year for our coalition.

Mayor Gino Moretti, Co-Chair
Saint-Anicet, QC



Mayor Ryan Sorenson, Co-Chair
Sheboygan, WI



Protecting Our Environment. Securing Our Future.

KEY DELIVERABLES ACHIEVED

- 1 Advocated for the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, unlocking **\$274 million** in federal funding and **\$114 million** in non-federal funding, advancing the project to the construction phase to **prevent the spread of invasive carp**.
- 2 Pushed for the **implementation of the CAD \$500 million Blue Fund in Québec** through increased royalties on important water users to finance water-quality protection initiatives, including **\$80 million** for water-infrastructure including upgrades.
- 3 Supported the launch of the independent **Canada Water Agency** to strengthen coordination of freshwater policy and securing the roll out of the first phase of enhanced funding under Canada's **\$420+ million** Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River protection commitment.
- 4 **Endorsed the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Act of 2024**, encouraging the U.S. Congress to extend the GLRI's authorization for an additional five years while increasing spending to **\$500 million** annually.
- 5 Advocated to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for fair distribution of lead service line funding under the **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**, resulting in funding increases for five of eight Great Lakes states and a **\$16 million award to Milwaukee** for lead service line replacement funding.

over

\$1.9B

Funding Secured
Thanks to the
Cities Initiative



Coastal and Climate Resilience

US PROGRAMMING

40

Provided training and technical assistance to **40 communities**, including **28 vulnerable ones**, through our Initiative for Resilient Great Lakes Coasts partnership program with NOAA.

up to
\$425M

Provided project planning and grant support for **62 projects** through the Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative for a total project value of up to **\$425 million.***

22

Provided engineering and design support for **22 projects** through our coastal programs, moving these projects one step closer to construction.

over
\$24M

Submitted over **\$24 million in grant applications to American funding agencies** for new programming at the Cities Initiative to support our members with their resilience and source water protection concerns.



ONTARIO, CA

Pursuing new federal program funding in partnership with **Conservation Ontario** and over 15 member municipalities to create **new coastal programs** on three Great Lakes over the next three years.



QUÉBEC, CA

Working to foster stakeholder collaboration among municipalities from **Greater Québec City with a hands-on workshop** to support the metropolitan community's climate adaptation mandate.

*Source: Estimated average funding per project based on 2024 data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), indicating Coastal Resilience projects at approximately \$6.88 million each.



Enhancing International Cooperation and Influence

Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the **Council of the Great Lakes Region** — an organization dedicated to maintaining the Great Lakes region's economic competitiveness through sustainable development — to help guide our new strategic pillar on Economic Transformation.

Established a **Memorandum of Cooperation with Conservation Ontario** to address coastal erosion, flooding and storm impacts for member communities in addition to partnering on a briefing for elected officials at the **Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Annual Conference in Ottawa**.

Recruited more than 70 businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to serve as **advisors to the Mayors Commission on Economic Transformation**.

Co-organized a **Mayoral Reception at the Dutch Ambassador's residence** with Climate Mayors and Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative, which was attended by more than 100 thought leaders and government officials, including Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota

and John Podesta, Senior Advisor to the President for Clean Energy Innovation and Implementation.

Hosted an educational public event in Chicago entitled, "Honoring Our Waters," to **showcase strong partnership between Indigenous and Municipal leaders**, co-hosted by our partners at the Biinaagami Initiative, Canadian Geographic, Swim Drink Fish, and the City of Chicago.



2024 Highlights

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR THE BASIN



Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study

Hosted a high-impact policy roundtable in Washington D.C., led by the Mayors Commission on Coastal Resilience, to strengthen municipal engagement with the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study. This event featured Major General Mark C. Quander, Commander of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, alongside other key project partners, resulting in a renewed commitment to collaborative resilience planning and actionable support for Great Lakes communities.



Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership at the Water Summit

Launched the Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership at the White House Water Summit in April 2024, led by three Mayors Commission on Water Equity members – Mayor Brandon Johnson of Chicago, Mayor Mike Duggan of Detroit, and Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee – to expedite lead service line replacement in Great Lakes big cities with the heaviest lead burdens.





Basin-Wide Declaration Signed by Major Cities and Endorsed by All Members

With record attendance, the Cities Initiative's launched the Mayors Commission on Economic Transformation at its 2024 Annual Conference in Montréal, QC. Mayors Valérie Plante of Montréal, Mayor Brandon Johnson of Chicago, IL and Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee, WI signed a declaration, endorsed by all Cities Initiative members, to collaborate on an Action Plan that will guide the way for our region to become a leading blue-green economic corridor



Québec Government's New Maritime Strategy

Teamed up with the Québec Union of Municipalities and the Saint-Lawrence Economic Development Network to position mayors and industry leaders as key partners as the Québec government renews its maritime strategy. This vital and strategic industry supports over 27,000 jobs in the province, and more than 350,000 jobs across the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway, while connecting the heart of North America to the Atlantic Ocean.

Be a Part of Economic Transformation

A shift from traditional industry to a sustainable blue-green economic corridor that attracts eco-friendly industries, revitalizes waterfronts, adopts renewable energy, and enhances water-based commerce, establishing the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin as a leader in sustainable development while preserving freshwater resources for future generations.



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Today, the economy and environment are inextricably linked, and our success depends on integrating them seamlessly. Our 2024 initiatives—Coastal and Climate Resilience, Economic Transformation, and Enhancing International Cooperation and Influence—are vital to unlocking the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin's immense growth potential for the next 50 years. Building a blue-green economic corridor is essential for driving sustainable progress in our communities while protecting the invaluable resources that define our region.

— Jon Altenberg, CEO, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
P.O. Box 1332 New Lenox, IL 60451
312.201.4518

www.glslcities.org

Photo Credit: USEPA Environmental Protection Agency



THE FUTURE OF
**FRESH
WATER**

Mark your
calendar now for
May 14-16, 2025,
in Milwaukee!



Introducing the Cities Initiative

Local government leaders
at the heart of North America



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GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE

CITIES INITIATIVE

ABOUT US



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
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THE CITIES INITIATIVE



Founded in 2003 by the Mayors of Chicago and Toronto to:

- Give communities in the region a **voice in protecting and managing the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence**
- Unite cities that share a critical resource that:
 - Provides **drinking water to 40 million Canadians and Americans**
 - Supports an **\$10T regional economy**



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OUR MISSION

We are a **multinational coalition of local government leaders** working to:

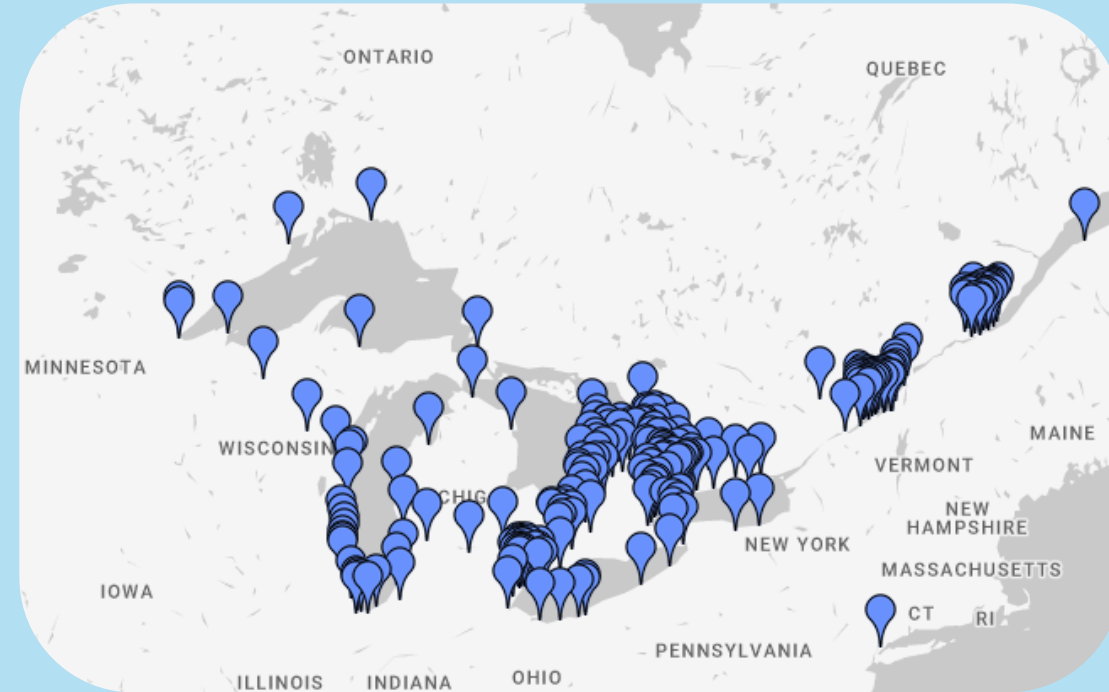
- **promote economic prosperity**
- **protect our fresh water for the benefit of current and future generations.**



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A GROWING COALITION

- Cities Initiative members **represents more than 350 communities and over 21 million residents** across the region
- Membership **spans from Duluth, MN to Gaspé, QC**
- Broadening our coalition with **Tribes and First Nations**
- **New Allies program** of associate memberships for non-profits, colleges/universities



OUR PILLARS & PRIORITIES



Healthy Lakes
and Rivers



Climate and
Coastal
Resilience



Safe and
Affordable Water



Economic
Transformation



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ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



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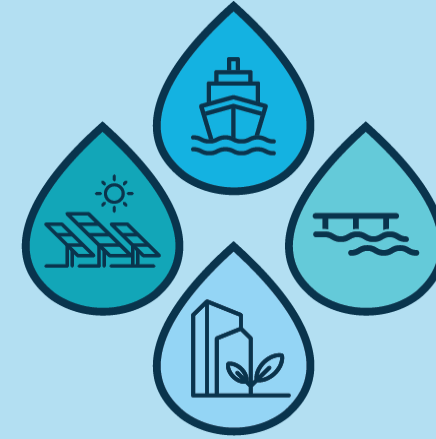
ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

- **Launched Sept 24** in NYC as part of Climate Week
- More than **60 attendees**, including Mayors Johnson (Chicago), Plante (Montréal), and Bibb (Cleveland)
- Broadcast online live for press in the region to tune in



ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

- **One Vision: Develop the Fresh Coast Economic Corridor**
- Five Regional Goals
- Four Transformational Pillars
- 17 Strategies, 76 Actions, and 12 Program Concepts



**Scan to consult
our Action Plan**



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
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REGIONAL GOALS

1

ATTRACT
HALF A MILLION
NEW
BUSINESSES

2

CREATE 18
MILLION NEW
JOBS

3

AVOID INCREASE
IN % WATER
LOSS

4

IMPROVE WATER
QUALITY FROM
"FAIR" TO
"GOOD"

5

REDUCE
EMISSIONS BY
300 MILLION MT

**Together, let's build a prosperous, resilient, and sustainable future for
the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region.**



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CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS



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A GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE STRONG RESPONSE

- Given the current climate, the Cities Initiative provides a **network of municipal leaders and partners dedicated to maintaining strong ties** between both nations
- In February, we took our ***Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Strong*** position on the trade war and launched a binational Mayors Transition Team to strategize on new CAD and U.S. federal governments and current trade context
- Reinforced during Great Lakes Day in D.C. and at our May 2025 Annual Conference in Milwaukee



#GLSLSTRONG



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ENGAGING WITH US



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MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

POLICY & ADVOCACY

- Mayors Commissions
- U.S. and Canadian Days on the Hill
- Policy Resolutions



COLLABORATION & LEARNING

- Project-based partnerships
- Conferences
- International Events
- Webinars



STRATEGIC INPUT

- Board of Directors
- Ontario Regional Advisory Council
- Industry Leaders Circle



MAYORS COMMISSIONS

COMMISSIONS

- Water Access
- Community Resilience
- Economic Transformation

CORE FUNCTIONS

- Policy Development
- Advocacy
- Regional Collaboration
- Media Engagement



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MAYORS COMMISSIONS

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



Help municipalities plan for, and take action to strengthen their **resiliency to impacts from climate change**

WATER ACCESS



Promote equitable access to **safe and affordable water** for all residents of our region

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



Transform our region into a thriving **Fresh Coast Economic Corridor** by promoting sustainable, inclusive, and resilient economic development and freshwater stewardship



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OTHER MEMBER BENEFITS

- **REGION-WIDE COLLABORATION** – Build relationships with local leaders from ON, QC and the US
- **DIRECT ADVOCACY** – Help move forward your priorities with provincial and federal officials
- **PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP** – We are always on the lookout for willing members to partner with us on innovative projects
- **WEGE AWARD** – Annual prize of up to \$7,500 for communities with populations under 100,000 that advance innovative water solutions
- **STAFF AND COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT** – Staff and council members are encouraged to participate in Cities Initiative events
- **PUBLIC RELATIONS** – Your work with us gets covered



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **November 13 – Ontario Water Leaders Summit – Oakville, ON**
- **December 8 – Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Day on the Hill – Ottawa, ON**
- **March 2026 – Great Lakes Day – Washington, DC**
- **May 6- 8, 2026 – 2026 Annual Conference – Hamilton, ON**



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2025 Ontario Water Leaders Summit



Hosted by:



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
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*Scan to register for the Ontario
Water Leaders Summit*

Thank You! Questions?

Phil Murphy-Rhéaume

COO / Canadian Managing Director

phillipe.murphy-rheaume@glslcities.org



ANNEX – MAYORS COMMISSIONS



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
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MAYORS COMMISSION ON WATER ACCESS

Leadership in Canada: Grey County (ON), Repentigny (QC)

Mission Statement: *Ensuring access to safe, secure and affordable drinking water; and safekeeping the water quality and ecosystems health of our lakes and rivers.*

Priority areas:

- Ensure dedicated **long-term, predictable funding for water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure** that is not in competition with other needs. (mix of shovel-ready and other projects)
- Supporting the implementation of historic **freshwater funding** from the federal government, including direct funding in municipal projects.
- Working towards better **public access** to water assets in our regions
- Tackling **emerging pollutants and invasive aquatic species** through better monitoring, adapted standards and increased enforcement
- Supporting the **bi-national legal framework** protecting Great Lakes water quality

MAYORS COMMISSION – COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Leadership in Canada: Tecumseh (ON), Contrecoeur (QC)

Mission Statement: *Supporting our communities in their adaptation to climate change, striving for resilience of the municipalities and their infrastructure against erosion, urban flooding.*

Priority areas:

- Securing appropriate **funding for municipal resilience programs**, especially through the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund – Advocacy through the Climate Proof Coalition.
- Building **municipal capacity** through resilience programming, best practices and federal programs such as the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program
- Re-establishing the **shoreline erosion funding** that had been canceled in 1997.

MAYORS COMMISSION – ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Leadership in Canada: Cobourg (ON), Montréal (QC), Québec City (QC)

Mission Statement: *Charting a roadmap for the region and our cities to ensure that economic development goes hand in hand with climate action and social equity.*

Priority areas:

- Attracting **new sustainable jobs and industries** in the region, as well as supporting the creation of new regional industrial champions.
- Supporting the development of a **decarbonised energy grid** and the decarbonisation of municipal energy utilities.
- Expanding **decarbonised shipping**, supporting a modal shift to maritime/rail shipping, with better integration of the cities and their ports.
- **Redeveloping our waterfronts** to foster resilience, multi-use and publicly accessible areas in the city that support increased life quality, new developments and public access.

