



**The Great Lakes
And
St. Lawrence
Cities Initiative
Annual Report
2006/2007**

Introduction

Mayors, cities, towns, regions, elected local officials and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (“GLSLCI”) continue to make waves on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. This past year has been a busy one with many exciting advancements around the Basin and within our communities. GLSLCI kicked off the year with its 2006 Annual Meeting in Parry Sound, Ontario. Located on the pristine Georgian Bay, Parry Sound provided an appropriate backdrop for a meeting focused on protecting and restoring the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. A number of key topics were discussed at the meeting and action was agreed upon regarding issues such as clean water, invasive species, beaches, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, implementation of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Compact, water efficiency, and water levels. The resolutions adopted by member cities at the meeting reaffirmed the organization’s commitment to focus on three target areas regarding the resource – waterfront vitality, water quality, and water conservation – and to protecting and restoring the resource for generations to come.

This report summarizes the accomplishments and advancements made by GLSLCI and its member mayors and cities this past year. Progress in the areas of waterfront vitality, water quality, and water conservation is testament to the fact that mayors have assumed leadership positions on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Highlights from the year, such as Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors’ action to halt United States Coast Guard live-fire weapons training on the Lakes, the development of an effort to quantify municipal spending on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence protection and restoration, and many more chronicled within, demonstrate that local government continues to make a significant difference within the Basin in protecting and restoring this valuable resource.



Waterfront Vitality

Cities treasure their waterfronts as they are vital to industry, recreation, and provide a natural oasis within an urban environment. Enjoying the waterfront and the resource as a whole in a safe and environmentally conscious way is important to Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors. For this reason, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors acted swiftly when the United States Coast Guard began live-fire weapons training on the Lakes and announced a proposal for the creation of thirty-four permanent live-fire weapons training zones in November 2006.



Mayors mobilized quickly to ensure cities were heard on this important safety and environmental issue. A number of Coast Guard-hosted public hearings were held throughout the Basin and mayors, such as Mayor Herb Bergson of Duluth and Mayor George Heartwell of Grand Rapids, were active participants. Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors and city staff also participated on conference calls organized by GLSLCI with Rear Admiral John Crowley Jr., Commander of the Ninth Coast Guard District; these calls ensured that mayors had direct contact with the Coast Guard to express their concern and propose alternative solutions. City efforts were further bolstered by letters sent from mayors, such as Mayor David Miller of Toronto and Mayor Eddie Francis of Windsor, to Prime Minister Harper of Canada, expressing concern over the live-fire training on the Lakes. GLSLCI submitted a position paper and comments on behalf of GLSLCI members urging the Coast Guard to end live-fire weapons training on the Lakes and consider alternative means to train personnel.



Cities were successful in keeping the Lakes safe. Due in large part to the campaign launched by GLSLCI mayors, live-fire weapons training ended on the Lakes and the proposal to establish thirty-four permanent live-fire weapons training zones was withdrawn by the Coast Guard in late December 2006.

Water Quality



Ensuring people can drink the water, eat the fish, and swim at the beaches is a top priority for Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors and cities. For this reason, GLSLCI and participating mayors have been active and vocal in a number of water quality efforts throughout the Basin, including the review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, testimony on the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration and the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act, implementation of Great Lakes Regional Collaboration recommendations, as well as GLSLCI-led efforts regarding recreational water quality and beaches and municipal spending on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence protection and restoration.

Cities made major headway within the Basin when they were recognized as a key partner in the review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement is a bi-national commitment to restore and enhance water quality within the Great Lakes Basin. Thanks to the work of David Ullrich, Executive Director of GLSLCI, and Anna Pace of Toronto, as well as many mayors, GLSLCI has a formal seat on the Agreement Review Committee and local government is recognized by the International Joint Commission as a vital partner in the review and revision of the Agreement. Much of the review and many of the recommendations from the Agreement Review Committee have focused on the need to update the Agreement. Most importantly, the report released by the Committee includes recognition of the "critical role and essential participation" by municipalities in the future development and implementation of the Agreement. Threats to the resource have changed since the Agreement's inception in 1978 and revisions to address new threats to the Great Lakes ecosystem, such as invasive species and toxics, are critical. The report is out for public comment and is expected to be finalized in the fall and then released to the governments of Canada and the United States for action to develop a new Agreement.

The publicity mayors bring to the resource is an effective way to further restoration and protection efforts. The testimony of mayors in Washington D.C. or in Ottawa accomplishes this while also helping to inform other levels of government of the importance of the Lakes and River and the leadership role cities have assumed to protect and restore the resource. Mayor Gary Becker of Racine, Vice Chairman of GLSLCI, testified in September 2006 to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment regarding the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration and



the need for the federal government to help ensure implementation of the Collaboration recommendations. Mayor Becker also testified in March 2007 before the same Subcommittee to urge the federal government to take action on comprehensive invasive species legislation. Mayor Brian McMullan of St. Catharines provided testimony to the Ontario Standing Committee on Justice Policy in May 2007 regarding the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act. Mayor McMullan conveyed the support of GLSLCI mayors and cities for the Water Act which will help implement the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement in Ontario and limit the amount of water that is diverted out of the Basin.

GLSLCI continues to work with federal, state, and tribal officials on the United States side to implement the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy. Although progress has not been what the cities would like to see, there has been some movement forward on rapid response to invasive species, toxics reduction, and wetland protection. GLSLCI also participated in the Habitat Initiative, a project led by the United States Army Corps of Engineers which will help organizations with habitat protection projects find the right programs and funding.



Recreational water quality is paramount to mayors on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Many GLSLCI cities have beaches that are enjoyed year-round by their citizens. The federal governments of Canada and the United States are in the process of reviewing and updating recreational water quality criteria but it has been a slow endeavor. Recreational water quality has a direct impact on cities, and for this reason cities are interested in fast action on this issue. In 2007, the GLSLCI Board of Directors approved a more committed focus for the organization on recreational water quality and beach

issues. GLSLCI is recruiting volunteer cities to better understand their beaches and sources of beach contamination through sanitary surveys. Next year, GLSLCI plans to launch an organization-wide effort to encourage cities to conduct beach sanitary surveys and remediate sources of contamination. Action can occur quickly on the local level to address beach contamination and recreational water quality; cities hope this will help spur federal and provincial recreational water quality revisions.

With funding from the Joyce Foundation and leadership by the Great Lakes Commission, GLSLCI has launched a survey of local governments to document spending on restoration and protection work on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence. Often, federal, state, and provincial expenditures get all the attention. This survey should be a major step toward accounting for the amount of work being done at the local level on protection and restoration. The survey will go out during the summer and a final report is expected by the end of the year.

Water Conservation



The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are the premier freshwater system in the world and provide drinking water for more than thirty-five million Canadian and United States citizens. The resource is precious and it is the responsibility of those that benefit from it to ensure it is used in a sustainable manner. Cities and communities have taken a leadership role in water conservation and have made a positive impact on the resource as a result. Cities like Chicago, St. Catharines, and Toronto, to name a few, all have successful water conservation efforts in place. In 2007, with the help of a working group comprised of city staff from Chicago, Duluth, St. Catharines, Thunder Bay, and Toronto, GLSLCI launched the Water Conservation Framework to highlight the water conservation accomplishments achieved by cities and to help other cities develop water conservation programs.

The Framework, which is focused on water conservation and best practices sharing, urges cities to work towards a water use reduction within their jurisdiction of fifteen percent below year 2000 water consumption levels by the year 2015. GLSLCI will manage the sharing of best practices between cities to disseminate the latest trends in water conservation methods as well as help cities develop and further refine their water conservation programs. Cities that participate in the Framework will reconvene prior to 2015 to establish a new reduction target for 2025. Twenty-nine municipal entities have initially signed onto the effort. Through the GLSLCI Water Conservation Framework, municipalities are working together to ensure local government is proactive about growing demands on a precious and limited resource.



Membership, the Organization and Outreach

GLSLCI experienced a great deal of growth this past year, in terms of membership, outreach and partnerships, and staff expansion. Membership growth was demonstrated not only by the number of joining dues-paying members, but also by the increased participation of mayors and cities on the GLSLCI Board of Directors, at GLSLCI regional meetings, and other events. GLSLCI continued its outreach within the Basin through involvement at key Great Lakes and St. Lawrence events like the International Joint Commission Biennial Meeting in Chicago as well as by tapping into the extensive university community around the Basin. GLSLCI's staff more than doubled this year, ensuring that the organization grows consistently with membership to support the direction of GLSLCI and its members. The strength and growth of the organization has been supported significantly by grants from the Joyce, Mott, and Wege Foundations, and GLSLCI has been able to accomplish a great deal in large part because of their generosity.



GLSLCI is strengthened by its member cities and mayors. This past year was the first year GLSLCI collected dues for membership and the organization was bolstered by the development of a core membership base. Establishing a central group of committed members has helped the organization focus its efforts around key issues throughout the Basin and allowed the organization and cities to be represented at even more Great Lakes and St. Lawrence decision and policy making tables. Cities benefit from membership to GLSLCI as membership

demonstrates leadership on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, creates an opportunity for member mayors to work with each other and other levels of government to protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, and helps ensure that municipal operations are in line with protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence by sharing best practices and experience with fellow member municipalities.

Bringing mayors together throughout the year to review the progress of initiatives and the direction of the organization is vital to GLSLCI's success. Each year, the GLSLCI Board of Directors holds a midwinter meeting to assess the organization's advancement. This year the meeting was held in Toronto and hosted by Mayor Miller and a number of topics pertaining to the policy direction of the organization were discussed at the meeting. Specifically, the Board of Directors agreed upon action regarding the GLSLCI Water Conservation Framework and the GLSLCI-led efforts to encourage federal and provincial revision of recreational water quality criteria, municipal attention to beach contamination, and quantifying the amount municipalities spend on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River protection and restoration. As a result of action taken by the Board, projects on all three of these issues are underway.



In addition to the policy work completed at the meeting, some administrative and operational business was also addressed. Two new board members were elected: Mayor Rudolph Clay of Gary and Mayor McMullan. The Board also honored former Mayors Timothy Rigby (St. Catharines) and Terry Geddes (Collingwood) for their commitment and dedication to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River and the organization. Their work within the organization during their tenures resulted in a strong contingent of leadership in Ontario on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence related issues as well as the addition of many Ontario municipalities as members.

Given the size of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region, it is often advantageous for mayors within the same area to meet in person to work on local issues. Ontario GLSLCI mayors convened in Toronto in May 2007 to address regional Great Lakes and St. Lawrence environmental issues, among other topics. The city of Toronto and Mayor Miller hosted the GLSLCI regional meeting and a number of mayors were in attendance, including Mayor McMullan, Mayor Chris Carrier of Collingwood, Reeve Peter Ketchum of the Township of the Archipelago, Mayor Mike Konoval of Carling Township, Mayor Hazel McCallion of Mississauga, Mayor Ellen Anderson of The Town of the Blue Mountains, and Mayor Vance Badawey of Port Colborne.

GLSLCI members at the meeting agreed upon action regarding the Clean Water Act and the Canada-Ontario Agreement. Based on discussions and decisions made at the meeting, GLSLCI was able to develop a position paper on both the Clean Water Act and the Canada-Ontario Agreement which reflected the shared consensus of the mayors. Regarding the Clean Water Act, GLSLCI and the mayors encourage greater municipal representation as well as the implementation of a Great Lakes specific process for the analysis of intakes and threats located in the Great Lakes. The GLSLCI position regarding the Canada-Ontario Agreement focuses on a greater municipal role within the development and implementation of the Canada-Ontario Agreement as well as securing more funding for Great Lakes infrastructure and projects. At the meeting, mayors also called for action by the Province of Ontario to require water efficient toilets and other water efficient appliances. New staff member and Deputy Director of GLSLCI, Nicola Crawhall, was introduced at the meeting and quickly took on the role of developing the organization's positions on key policy issues under consideration in Canada. Shortly after the meeting, the Board voted to add Mayor Anderson to the Board of Directors.



GLSLCI and a number of mayors were active participants at the International Joint Commission Biennial Meeting and Conference held in Chicago in June 2007. Mayor Becker, Mayor Heartwell, Mayor Deb Shewfelt of Goderich, Mayor Vincenzo Anello of Niagara Falls (NY), Mayor Ted Salci of Niagara Falls (ON), and Councillor Brian McKinnon of Thunder Bay all attended the event with David Ullrich and Nicola Crawhall. Former Mayor John Norquist of Milwaukee kicked off a cities panel, which included Mayors Becker, Heartwell, Shewfelt, and Councillor McKinnon. The importance of cities on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence was effectively conveyed at the conference as staff from Chicago, Milwaukee, the Niagara Region, Sault Ste. Marie, Toledo, and Toronto made presentations on

municipal activities related to the protection and restoration of the resource, including wastewater and storm water management, green infrastructure, comprehensive planning, and financing of infrastructure.



This Biennial meeting is held following every third International Joint Commission biennial report as a means for the governments of Canada and the United States to review the operation and effectiveness of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The release of the 13th Biennial Report in February supports this review. The presentations by local government representatives, especially those by the mayors and councillor, were clearly the highlight of the conference, and served to demonstrate how local leadership is evident across the basin in a very positive way.

In addition to the cities panel, this two-day meeting focused on the current science and issues regarding the health of the Great Lakes and included breakout sessions and specific in-depth discussions on a wide range of topics fundamental to the review of the Agreement and its future. GLSLCI and its attending mayors also has an opportunity to meet informally one evening to discuss the conference and municipal activities on the Lakes and River.

Partnerships fostered by GLSLCI help to strengthen the organization and its mission. The university community is an important resource for the organization and GLSLCI continued its outreach efforts to universities this past year. A number of graduate students contributed significantly to the work of GLSLCI over the course of the year. A group of three public administration graduate students from the University of Illinois at Chicago completed a very helpful project on streamlining federal and state programs on the Great Lakes. Also, two graduated students from the University of Chicago assessed the organizational structure in the United States and Canada responsible for the Great Lakes and have made recommendations for improvement. Finally, this summer, four law students, two each from the University of Western Ontario and Case Western Reserve Law School are doing very helpful legal research for GLSLCI.

As mentioned previously, GLSLCI staff has expanded significantly. The organization hired Nicola Crawhall as Deputy Director in the spring of 2007. Nicola's extensive work experience for the Minister of Environment Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, as well as her expertise in public policy development, government relations, and communications at the local, provincial, national and international levels make her a vital addition to the organization. Melissa Arjomand joined GLSLCI fulltime as a Program Manager after interning at the organization for over a year while she completed her master's degree in Public Policy at the University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy. Prior to graduate school and working at GLSLCI, Melissa worked as a senior financial analyst for a global commercial real estate investment firm in Chicago. The organization will certainly benefit from the breadth of both Nicola and Melissa's experience.

Conclusion

GLSLCI and its member mayors and cities are leading the effort to protect and restore the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Through the concern and swift action of GLSLCI mayors and other local officials, local government is having a positive direct impact on the resource. GLSLCI looks forward to another year of growth, in terms of influence on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River as well as membership to the organization. Mayors and cities are leaders on the Lakes and River and GLSLCI will continue to support them in their efforts to protect and restore these treasures.





***Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
2006-2007 Board of Directors***

Mayor David Miller

Toronto
Chair and Director

Mayor Gary Becker

Racine
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Mayor Eddie Francis

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***Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
2006-2007 Members***

Ajax (Town of) Mayor Steve Parish	Ferrysburg Mayor Ray Tejchma	Racine Mayor Gary Becker
Beaconsfield Mayor Bob Benedetti	Gary Mayor Rudolph Clay	Rochester Mayor Robert J. Duffy
Bécancour Mayor Maurice Richard	Goderich (Town of) Mayor Deb Shewfelt	Salaberry-de-Valleyfield Mayor Denis Lapointe
Blue Mountains (Town of the) Mayor Ellen Anderson	Grand Marais Mayor Evelyn Larsen	Sault St. Marie Mayor John Rowswell
Carling Township Mayor Mike Konoval	Grand Rapids Mayor George K. Heartwell	Sorel-Tracy Mayor Marcel Robert
Châteauguay (Ville de) Mayor Sergio Pavone	Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger	St. Catharines Mayor Brian McMullan
Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley	Highland Park Mayor Michael D. Belsky	Superior Mayor David Ross
Cobourg Mayor Peter Delanty	Kingston Mayor Harvey Rosen	The Archipelago (Township of) Reeve Peter Ketchum
Collingwood Mayor Chris Carrier	Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett	Thunder Bay Mayor Lynn Peterson
Cornwall Mayor Bob Kilger	Montréal Mayor Gerald Tremblay	Toledo Mayor Carleton S. Finkbeiner
Duluth Mayor Herb Bergson	Niagara Falls (ON) Mayor Ted Salci	Toronto Mayor David Miller
Durham Region Regional Chair Roger Anderson	Niagara Region Regional Chair Peter Partington	Trois-Rivières Mayor Yves Lévesque
East Chicago Mayor George Pabey	Parry Sound Mayor Richard Adams	Wasaga Beach (Town of) Mayor Cal Patterson
Erie Mayor Joseph Sinnott	Penetanguishene (Town of) Mayor Anita Dubeau	Waukegan Mayor Richard H. Hyde
Evanston Mayor Lorraine H. Morton	Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey	Whiting Mayor Joseph Stahura
Ferndale Mayor Robert Porter	Québec Metropolitan Community President Andrée Boucher	Windsor Mayor Eddie Francis

For more information please visit www.gslscities.org



**The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Alliance des villes des Grand Lacs et du Saint-Laurent**

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