




ANNUAL REPORT 09/10

Great Lakes & St. Lawrence
Cities Initiative

A blue-tinted photograph of a rocky shoreline. In the foreground, dark, jagged rocks are scattered across the frame. A large, dark log lies horizontally across the middle ground. In the background, a forested hill rises on the left, and the calm water of a lake or river extends to the horizon under a pale, overcast sky.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a coalition of U.S. and Canadian mayors and other local officials working to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. By integrating their environmental, economic and social agendas, local governments are helping to sustain a resource that represents approximately 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater supply, provides drinking water for 40 million people, and is the foundation upon which a strong regional economy is based. Members of the Cities Initiative are committed to working together and with other orders of government and stakeholders to improve infrastructure, programs and services and increase investments that protect and restore this globally significant freshwater resource. Only by working together to protect the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence can we preserve and enhance the quality of life and economic well being of the people of the region.

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← Photo by Benjamin Olson

Letter From The Chair



Mayor George K. Heartwell
Chair and Director
Grand Rapids

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

While 2009-2010 may be remembered as the year of the Asian carp, this consuming development masks tremendous achievements by the Cities Initiative.

In the United States, the first installment of President Obama's \$5 billion Great Lakes Restoration Initiative became a reality, and this year's \$475 million investment will be used for shoreline and wetlands preservation projects, decontamination in Areas of Concern, invasive species control (including Asian carp) and many other initiatives that will leave our Great Lakes healthier than they have been for decades. David Ullrich and I recently encouraged Congress to secure a comparable financial commitment in future years.

At our annual meeting in Trois-Rivières, we launched a Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products campaign. Ridding our water supply of pollutants from PPCPs by reducing the volume of such contaminants entering the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence system and encouraging more producer responsibility is an important goal of the Cities Initiative.

We secured a seat at the table – and continue to deliver the “voice of mayors” – by participating in the Canada/U.S. Water Quality Agreement renegotiation discussions. We also encouraged the U.S. Department of the Interior to designate the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River as a National Heritage Area, and we joined with other Great Lakes advocates in drafting a strategy document addressing – you guessed it – Asian carp.

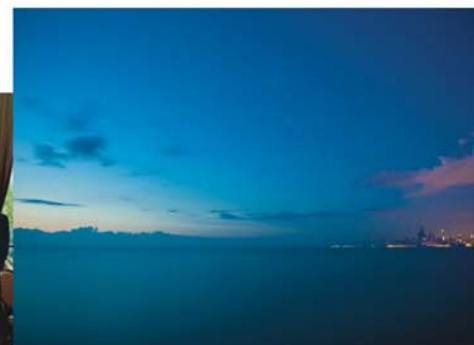
Internally, we honored our commitment to represent the Cities Initiative in Québec by authorizing the addition of two half-time staff – one in Montréal and the other in Québec City. Mayors Tremblay and Labeaume were instrumental in crafting this innovative arrangement, and I greatly appreciate their dedication to the partnership.

Never has the role of cities in the stewardship of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River been more evident. In seven short years, we have emerged from relative invisibility to assume a powerful and persuasive presence on issues ranging from water quality to water quantity, short sea shipping to Coast Guard training, invasive species to renewable energy. Our founding Chairs, Mayors Daley and Miller, envisioned an organization that would carry the message that cities truly matter in protecting and enhancing this natural treasure. Today, we are closer to achieving that deserved recognition.

It has been an honor to serve you this year as Chair. Working with David Ullrich, our Executive Director, has afforded me new insight into the importance of our mission. Experiencing your passion for our work has energized me. I offer my sincere best wishes to Mayor Denis Lapointe as he assumes the Chair and pledge to him my continued best efforts to strengthen our organization.

Sincerely,

Hon. George K. Heartwell, Chair
Mayor of Grand Rapids



Voice Of Mayors

Renegotiation of Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

The Cities Initiative was influential in the decision, announced in June 2009 by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon, to open the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes **Water Quality Agreement (WQA)** for renegotiation. It has been 23 years since the agreement has been changed, and Cities Initiative and the entire Great Lakes community felt that renegotiation was long overdue.

Since 2007, when Executive Director David Ullrich participated on the **Agreement Review Committee (ARC)**, the Cities Initiative has met with Canada's chief negotiator to discuss priorities and process issues related to the renegotiation of the agreement, and Deputy Director Nicola Crawhall was invited by Environment Canada to sit on the WQA Advisory Panel that is providing advice and strategic counsel throughout the negotiations.

The Cities Initiative has also formed a Mayors WQA working group to develop a Cities Initiative position on key issues that form the basis of our formal submissions to the parties. The members of the working group include Grand Rapids, Montréal and Thunder Bay.

Union of Baltic Cities

In September 2009, Mayor Heartwell addressed over 200 delegates to the **Union of Baltic Cities (UBC)** General Conference in Kristiansand, Norway. Similar to the Cities Initiative, UBC is a collaborative effort of over 100 cities from 10 countries that has successfully expanded the role of local governments on the Baltic Sea. David Ullrich joined Mayor Heartwell and visited several UBC member cities to learn about their keys to success.

Great Lakes Days in Washington

Mayor Heartwell and David Ullrich delivered loud and clear the voice of mayors to Washington in late February. During an intense 72-hour period, they met with top White House officials, the Canadian Ambassador, senior executives at the Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency, Commissioners from the International Joint Commission and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, as well as staff at several Congressional offices. They conveyed the importance of the role of cities, the need for funding to match local investments and the imperative of stopping the spread of Asian carp. David Ullrich also testified before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on new governance options for the Great Lakes.

Representing Cities

The Cities Initiative staff continues to represent the interests of local governments in a wide range of organizations that have authority over the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence. Our investment of time and resources ensures that we are able to inform a much broader public about the important role of cities and advocate that decisions made by these organizations more accurately reflect the priorities and concerns of local governments.

Cities Initiative staff represent our members at:

- International Joint Commission
- Great Lakes Fishery Commission
- Great Lakes Commission
- Binational Executive Committee
- United States Policy Committee
- Canadian Advisory Committee on the Water Quality Agreement

Cities Initiative staff and mayors involved with:

- Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- Many Federal, State, and Provincial ministries and agencies

Initiatives

Canada Ontario Agreement – Memorandum of Cooperation

In June 2008, the Cities Initiative, on behalf of all Ontario municipalities, signed an agreement with the Province of Ontario to work together on the **Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA)**, the main agreement between the Province of Ontario and the Canadian federal government to protect Great Lakes water quality on the Canadian side of the Lakes. COA provides an ideal mechanism to increase municipal, provincial and federal collaboration, especially in the nearshore zone.

As part of this work, staff developed a **Mayors' Collaborative Action Plan on the Great Lakes**. Toronto Mayor David Miller, Goderich Mayor Deb Shevfelt, Town of the Blue Mountains Mayor Ellen Anderson, St. Catharines Mayor Brian McMullan, Kingston Mayor Harvey Rosen, Niagara Region Chair Peter Partington, Chatham-Kent Mayor Randy Hope, Thunder Bay Mayor Lynn Peterson and Halton Councillor Alan Johnson (on behalf of Halton Chair Gary Carr) presented the action plan to the province at the inaugural **Ministers and Mayors Great Lakes Summit** in May 2009 in Toronto. This milestone in provincial and municipal relations in Ontario was followed by a second Ministers and Mayors Great Lakes Summit in June 2010, which focused on progress under COA MOC, and signing a two year renewal of the memorandum of cooperation.

In April 2010, the Cities Initiative – represented by Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey and Town of the Blue Mountains Mayor Ellen Anderson – and the province of Ontario jointly

hosted 100 leaders to discuss how to improve Ontario's beaches and coasts. Presentations highlighted many innovative municipal beach projects, and participants emphasized the need for greater communication and coordination of efforts, as well as improved methods for beach monitoring and management, a beach and coastal strategy, improved shoreline stewardship and collaboration on a coastal scale.

Asian Carp

Invasive species have caused extensive environmental and economic damage to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence for many years, but the greatest current threat is posed by Asian carp. The Cities Initiative has been instrumental in working with all concerned parties to stop the further migration of the invasive fish, and to help find the long term solution to the problem.

Several varieties of Asian carp have migrated up the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers to the Chicago Waterway System that links the rivers to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence watershed. When evidence of the carp was found near Lake Michigan, the Board approved a Statement of Unity and Executive Director David Ullrich actively engaged in efforts to implement both short and long-term remedies. The Cities Initiative continues to monitor the situation.

Water Conservation Efforts

In its third year, the **Cities Initiative Water Conservation Framework** continues to lead the way on efforts to conserve water at the municipal level. This year's program was highlighted by recognition of two outstanding achievements in water conservation. At the Annual Meeting and Conference in Trois-Rivières, the Cities Initiative recognized the City of Kingston for their leadership and innovation on efforts to conserve water, and the City of Grand Rapids for their significant progress on water conservation. New programs emerged across the basin from public education campaigns to rain barrel and water-metering installation. The Framework participants continue to forge ahead towards their 15% reduction in water consumption by the year 2015. For more information on the water conservation program, please visit: www.glslcities.org/initiatives/water-conservation.cfm.

In addition to the Framework program, the Cities Initiative joined with the Alliance for Water Efficiency in March 2010 to submit a proposal for a Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Water Conservation project. The proposed project consists of mayor to mayor support for initiating and expanding water conservation measures in municipalities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region.

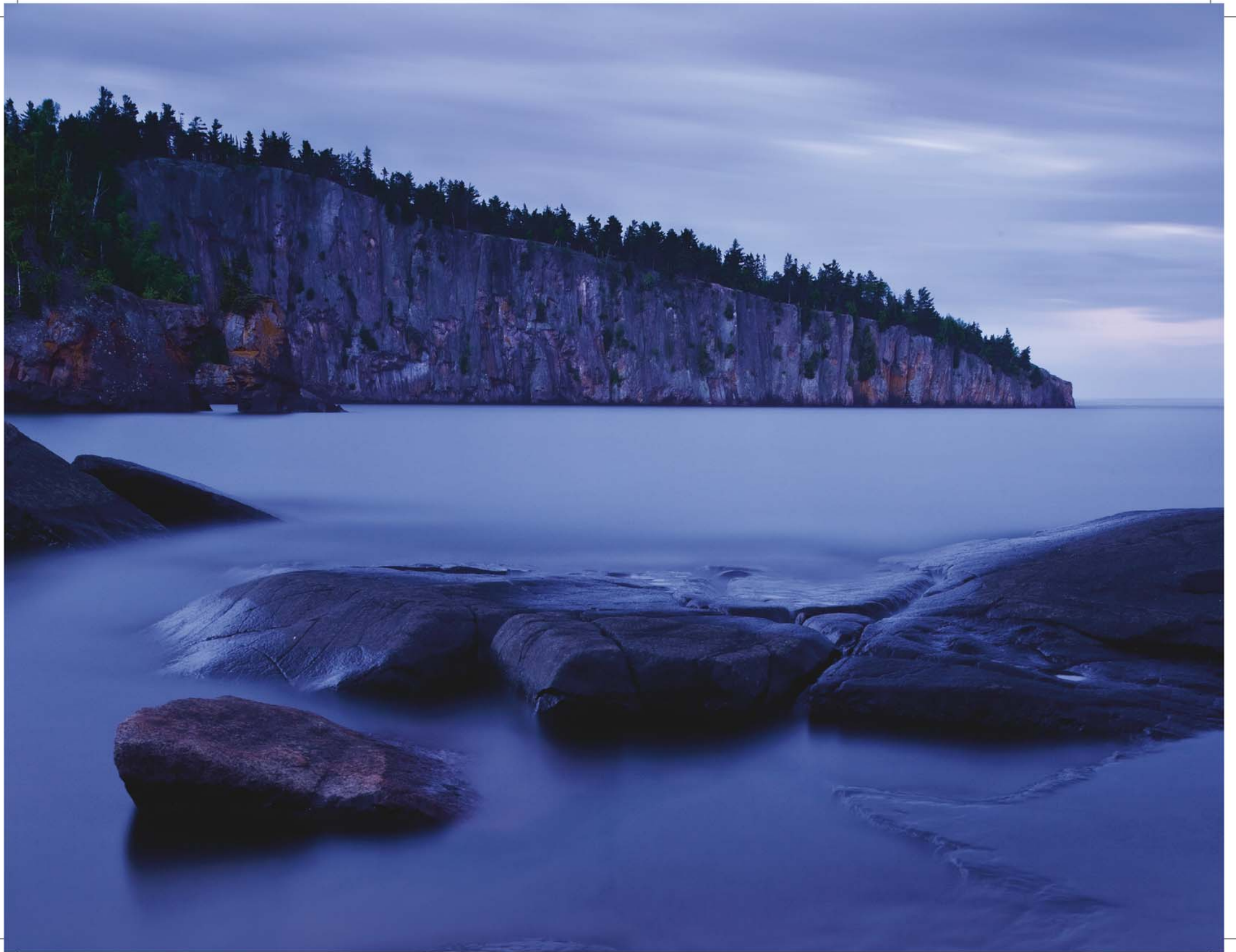
Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products Framework

At the Annual Meeting and Conference in Trois-Rivières last summer, the Cities Initiative launched a **Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products Framework** to address the adverse impact of improper disposal in our waters. This initiative promotes extended producer responsibility and enhanced pharmaceutical collection programs, and allows Cities Initiative members to share best practices to keep toxic products out of our water. In addition, the Cities Initiative aims to push for improved environmental testing measures in industry regulations. To learn more about this very important effort, please visit: www.glslcities.org/initiatives/pharmaceuticals.cfm.

Current members of the Framework include: Ajax, Bruce County, Cobourg, Collingwood, Goderich, Grand Rapids, Niagara Region, Port Colborne, Rochester, Sarnia and Superior.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

The past year, the United States Congress appropriated \$475 million for investment across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin through the **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**. Many federal, state, local and tribal agencies, as well as non-profit groups, requested funding and on-the-ground actions will be underway during the summer of 2010. Cities Initiative members applied for more than \$13 million in total funding to put their projects into action. The Cities Initiative sought direct funding through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for a collaborative project with eight member cities to improve watersheds and nearshore health, but was unsuccessful. However, several projects from member cities have been selected to make final applications.



Management

Staffing Additions

The Cities Initiative took a major step forward this year by adding staff in both Québec City and Montréal. Robert Masson and Phillippe Chenard bring excellent skills and experience to the organization and will help us establish a much stronger presence in Québec. Pam Kaput formally joined the Cities Initiative in January after serving as an intern for nearly a year and has filled in very effectively during Melissa Soline's maternity leave. In addition to the support of several interns sponsored by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the University of Western Ontario, we were very fortunate to have Melanie Rochette-Mercier as an intern sponsored by the Québec Government for six months. Our new presence in Québec, along with current staff in Ottawa, Toronto, and our home office in Chicago, allows us to provide excellent coverage across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin. With three full-time employees and four part-time staff, we are able to represent our cities in a very cost effective way.

Website

The winter marked the launch of the Cities Initiative's new website. Newcomers will find the latest news from Great Lakes and St. Lawrence cities, municipal best practices, grant opportunities, meeting information, an interactive member map and much more. The Cities Initiative hopes to introduce a member's only section in the near future along with the launch of a French version of the site. Check back often at www.glsicities.org for the latest updates.



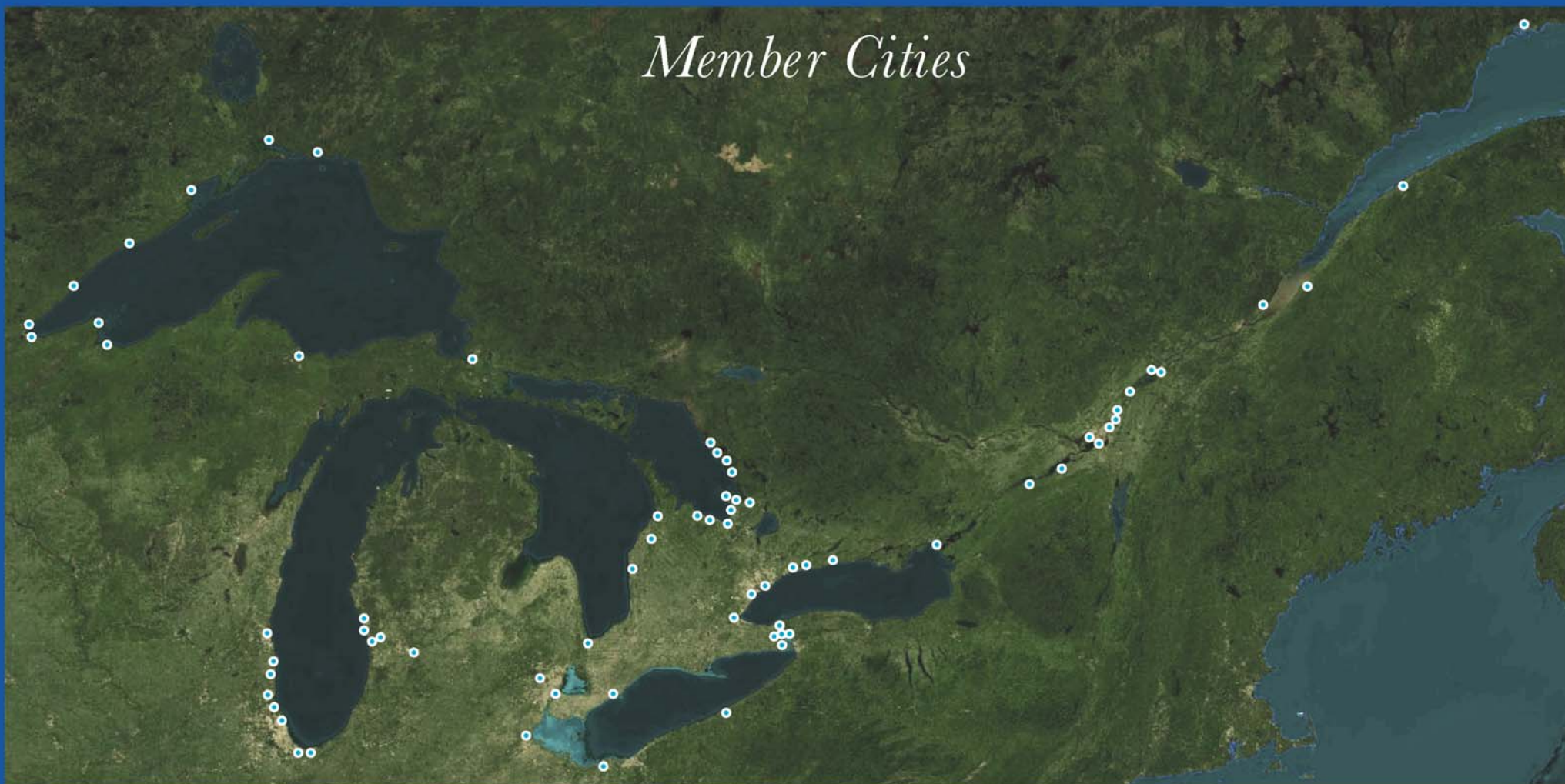
Funding

With the generous help of the Joyce Foundation (www.joycefdn.org), the Cities Initiative has advanced programs on water quality, conservation and regional vitality. The communities of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence offer thanks to the foundation, which has supported us from the start, and whose ideals reflect the importance in preserving these precious resources. We also thank the Wege Foundation (www.wegefoundation.com) for its continued backing of our programs.

The Future

The Cities Initiative has grown in stature every year, and now is a major player at nearly all policy and decision making tables on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence. This will clearly increase with our expanded presence in Québec, and we expect that 2010/2011 will be even more exciting and productive than earlier years.

Member Cities



Ajax	Chatham-Kent	Evanston	Grand Marais	Midland	Nipigon	Rochester	St. Catharines	Town of the Blue Mountains
Ashland	Chicago	Erie	Grand Rapids	Milwaukee	Parry Sound	Salaberry-de-Valleyfield	Superior	Trois-Rivières
The Archipelago	Cobourg	Ferndale	Halton Region	Montmagny	Penetanguishene	Sault Saint Marie	Tay	Two Harbors
Bayfield	Collingwood	Ferrysburg	Hamilton	Montréal	Port Colborne	Sarnia	Terrace Bay	Ville de Châteauguay
Beaconsfield	Cornwall	Gary	Highland Park	Montréal-Est	Québec	Sept-Îles	Tiny	Wasaga Beach
Bécancour	Duluth	Georgian Bay	Huron-Kinloss	Muskegon	Racine	Sheffield Lake	Thunder Bay	Waukegan
Bruce County	Durham Region	Goderich	Kingston	Niagara Falls	Repentigny	Spring Lake	Toledo	Welland
Carling Township	East Chicago	Grand Haven	Marquette	Niagara Region	Rimouski	Sorel-Tracy	Toronto	Windsor

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