Resolution 8 – 2012M

Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

WHEREAS, the Canadian and U.S. federal governments are nearing the end of their renegotiation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (WQA), the principal agreement guiding Canadian and US collaboration for Great Lakes protection; and

WHEREAS, signing of the agreement by the two Parties could occur as early as mid-April. It is expected no later than the end of June, as that is when all attention on the US side will be directed to their fall Federal election; and

WHEREAS, a Cities Initiative representative participated on an Environment Canada WQA Advisory Panel over the last two years, and has provided comment on confidential information presented to the panel by Environment Canada staff throughout the negotiations; and

WHEREAS, based on public consultations to date, it is known that the agreement covers similar issues as previous versions, through its annexes on toxics, areas of concern, lake-wide areas management plans, nutrients, habitat and species, groundwater, and maritime shipping pollution from vessels, research and science. In addition, several new annexes are expected, including ones on aquatic invasive species, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Cities Initiative has pushed hard for a formal role for municipalities within the governance structure for the implementation of the agreement. Currently, the Cities Initiative is invited as an observer to the Canada-US Binational Executive Committee that oversees the implementation of the agreement for the two Parties;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the members of the Cities Initiative welcome the impending signing of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between Canada and the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cities Initiative continue to seek a direct, formal role in the governance of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, to provide cities with a strong voice at the WQA table, and is ready to meet with the Parties to discuss how to achieve this objective; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that both parties to the agreement, cooperating state, provincial, tribal, first nation, and local governments, along with the stakeholder community, put
strong emphasis and effort on full, effective, appropriately resourced and timely implementation of the WQA.

Signed this 27th day of June, 2012

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Brian McMullan, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor of St. Catharines