



January 17, 2014

Dear Cities Initiative Members,

In May of 2012, the City of Thunder Bay faced a test of its resiliency and I faced the greatest test of my leadership as a result of a flood of epic proportions. Hundreds of homes, businesses and several public buildings were damaged, roads were washed out, and our sewage treatment plant became inoperable when it was submerged in water.

I don't wish this type of storm on any of my fellow mayors. The reality, however, is that these types of storms are going to become more frequent and more extreme around the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region as a result of climate change. After our municipality's experience, I am convinced that investing in adaptation, and building resiliency in all our communities is *the only prudent course of action* given the changes we are seeing in the Great Lakes Region climate.

That is why I am pleased to let you know that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative has launched a **Municipal Adaptation and Resiliency Service** for its member municipalities, to help you and your staff to accelerate and expand your adaptation activities, to be ready for the next storm.

The Municipal Adaptation and Resiliency Service, or MARS, is designed to help municipalities of any size and at any stage of the adaptation process.

By partnering with the Ontario Center for Climate Adaptation and Impacts Resources and the Clean Air Partnership, two organisations with long track records in adaptation, we are benefiting from their expertise and resources. The Cities Initiative gratefully acknowledges financial support from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to support the MARS program.

MARS has five main elements.

1. Call to Action

We want to hear from each and every member municipality. I am asking each of you to make a Call to Action, describing what adaptation efforts your municipality will be

20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 2700, Chicago, Illinois 60606 ~ (312) 201-4516 phone ~ (312) 407-0038 fax
www.glslicities.org

Keith Hobbs, Mayor of Thunder Bay, Chair

Régis Labeaume, President of Québec Metropolitan Community, Vice-Chair

John Dickert, Mayor of Racine, Secretary-Treasurer



undertaking over the next two years. You will find a Call to Action form attached to this message. Simply fill it in and send an electronic version to simon.belisle@glslcities.org.

2. Community of Practice

In partnership with the Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Resources, we have created an interactive, one-stop shop for climate and adaptation information through an Adaptation Community of practice portal.

3. Adaptation Training

The Clean Air Partnership is holding a series of training webinars on adaptation, starting next Thursday, January 22nd, focused on adaptation in municipal operations, and featuring climate experts and municipal staff involved in adaptation efforts.

4. Adaptation Award

Your municipality may be eligible for A Cities Initiative Adaptation Award in 2015.

5. Demonstration Projects

The Cities Initiative is working with select members to secure funding to showcase innovative adaptation projects across the basin.

How to Get Involved

It's easy to get involved in MARS! Simply go to the Cities Initiative website at www.glslcities.org/MARS.cfm for information on:

- how to register into the Community of Practice,
- how to register for upcoming training webinars, and
- how to submit your Call to Action.

Look out for further announcements in the coming months on MARS as more information and resources, particularly specific to American and Quebec members, are added to the program.

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I encourage you to take advantage of what MARS has to offer your municipality, and to formally be a part of the “Call to Action” in this very important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith P. Hobbs". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Keith Hobbs, Mayor
City of Thunder Bay
Chair, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

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