

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

BETWEEN:

GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE,
incorporated under the *Canada Corporations Act*,

AND

THE ONTARIO FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

WHEREAS the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (the “Cities Initiative”) and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (“OFA”) share the vision of a healthy, prosperous and sustainable Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem;

AND WHEREAS the Cities Initiative and OFA Ontario recognize the prime importance of agriculture and urban areas to the economy of Ontario and the livelihoods of Ontarians;

AND WHEREAS the Cities Initiative and OFA recognize that phosphorous from municipal and agricultural sources, among others, are contributing to elevated levels of phosphorus in the Thames River Basin and Lake Erie, contributing to algae growth and the presence of microcystin bacteria;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario, and the states of Michigan and Ohio have committed to 40% reduction of phosphorus loadings into the western basin of Lake Erie through the Western Lake Erie Collaborative Agreement, and Canada is committed to phosphorus targets agreed to under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and the Province of Ontario has committed to targets to reduce algae in the Great Lakes under the Great Lake Protection Act;

AND WHEREAS the Governments of Canada and the United States have identified the Thames River as a priority tributary contributing to phosphorus loadings entering Lake Erie and contributing to localized algae blooms;

AND WHEREAS the Cities Initiative and OFA recognize that municipalities and agricultural interests each play an important role in restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem, and seek to contribute to the attainment of binational and domestic phosphorus reduction targets;

AND WHEREAS municipalities and agricultural interests share responsibility for water management and drainage which contributes to phosphorus loadings into the Thames River Basin and its tributaries;

AND WHEREAS the Cities Initiative and the OFA recognize the First Nations territories within the Thames River Basin and the interests of First Nations in farmland drainage as it relates to their territory;

AND WHEREAS the Cities Initiative and OFA are united in their view that it is through a collaborative, voluntary approach that interested stakeholders can best work together to support improved water management and drainage practices to reduce phosphorus loss from urban landscapes and farmland;

AND WHEREAS such a collaborative and voluntary approach requires transparency and measureable results;

NOW THEREFORE the Cities Initiative and OFA have agreed as follows:

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Cooperation ("MOC") is to outline the collaborative partnership between the Cities Initiative and OFA in developing and implementing a strategy to reduce phosphorus loss through water management and drainage associated with urban areas and farmland in the Thames River Basin.

2. GOALS

- To develop a strategy to reduce phosphorus loss through water management and drainage associated with urban areas and farmland in the Thames River Basin, in collaboration with other implementer stakeholders that contributes to the overall 40% phosphorus reduction target set by the Province.
- To implement a strategy to reduce phosphorus loss through water management and drainage associated with urban areas and farmland in the Thames River Basin, in collaboration with other implementer stakeholders, that contributes to the overall 40% phosphorus reduction target set by the Province.
- That the strategy include a verification mechanism so that, once implemented, measureable results in reducing phosphorus loss from urban areas and farmland can be demonstrated in a transparent way, thus contributing to the overall 40% phosphorus reduction target set by the Province.

3. COMMITMENTS OF THE PARTIES

General

- The Cities Initiative and OFA will develop a workplan for developing and implementing a strategy to reduce phosphorus loss through water management

and drainage associated with urban areas and farmland in the Thames River Basin

- The Cities Initiative will engage its members as well as members of the broader municipal sector, including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, in developing and implementing the strategy.
- The OFA will engage its members as well as members of the broader agricultural sector in developing and implementing the strategy.
- The Cities Initiative and OFA will develop a fundraising strategy and seek funding to finance the development and implementation of the strategy.

Timeline

The Cities Initiative and OFA will

1. develop a fundraising strategy	End of February 2016
2. develop a workplan	End of February 2016
3. submit funding applications	February - June, 2016
4. schedule monthly steering committee meetings	Beginning February 2016
5. schedule regular implementer advisory committee meetings (contingent on funding)	Beginning March 2016
6. complete development of strategy	June 2016
7. begin implementation of strategy	September 2017

Elements of a Strategy

The strategy may include, but not be limited to:

- i. a collaborative, voluntary approach
- ii. a verification mechanism that can demonstrate progress in reducing phosphorus loss from farmland drainage, urban landscape drainage and sewage treatment plant discharge
- iii. integration with other related phosphorus reduction initiatives, including 4Rs certification and nutrient management;
- iv. a geographic focus on the Thames River Basin;
- v. both surface and subsurface drainage and water management;
- vi. a targeted approach that particularly addresses winter and spring water management and drainage measures,
- vii. prioritized areas based on data that indicates elevated phosphorus loadings or in areas that engage in practices that may result in elevated phosphorus loadings;
- viii. the promotion of validated water management and drainage BMPs,
- ix. more targeted training, education and awareness raising
- x. improved drainage technology and innovation
- xi. recommended improvements to municipal and provincial policy and practices with respect to drainage;
- xii. lessons learned from the experience of other phosphorus reduction projects in Ontario and other jurisdictions;
- xiii. recognition of the impact of drainage on First Nations territory in the Thames River Basin.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF MOC

The Cities Initiative and OFA will establish a steering committee made up of representatives from OFA, Cities Initiative and DSAO, and an implementer advisory committee made up of representatives of First Nations, drainage superintendants and engineers, licensed contractors, Ontario agribusinesses, crop advisors, other farm associations, Conservation Authorities, Association of Municipalities of Ontario and provincial authorities, among others;

The Parties will work together to organize regular (e.g.monthly) meetings of the Steering Committee and the Implementer advisory committee to discuss the implementation of the commitments under the MOC.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Neither the OFA nor the Cities Initiative assume any financial responsibility under this MOC. Collaboration under this MOC is contingent on the Parties' ability to finance their activities through fundraising.

8. TERM OF MOC

The MOC takes effect on the 1st day of January, 2016 and expires on the 31th day of December, 2018. The term of the MOC may be extended with the consent of both Parties.

9. AMENDMENTS

The MOC may be amended in writing with the consent of both Parties.

10. TERMINATION

Either of the Parties can terminate participation in the MOC by providing not less than thirty days written notice to each of the other signatories.

11. NOT LEGALLY BINDING

The MOC does not create legally binding obligations on either Party.

Date: February 19, 2016

On behalf of the Cities Initiative:



Mayor Mitch Twolan
Township of Huron-Kinloss
Chair, Great Lakes and
St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

And by OFA:



Don McCabe
President
Ontario Federation of Agriculture