



Working together towards improving Ontario's beaches and coasts

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Great Lakes and St. Lawrence

Cities Initiative

Why Do Beaches and Coasts Matter?



- Environmentally
- Socially
- Economically

Environmentally

- Beaches are important habitat for many species: plants, fish and animals
- Link in chain of coastal processes



Photo credit: Ministry of
Natural Resources

Socially

- Beaches and coasts important in defining “sense of place”
- Source of community pride and “personality”
- Democratic, multi-generational, multi-cultural
- Encourage recreation, sports and activity
- Key public perception measure of environmental quality of Great Lakes



How many people go to the beach ?



- Estimated number of Great Lakes US beach swimmers = 8 million people per year, 80 million swimming days per year
- Wasaga Beach, 2 million visitors per year
- Chicago beaches, 27 million visitors per year



Economically



- Recreational value of Ontario's Great Lakes beaches \$200 to \$250 million (Krantzberg, 2008)
- Value of US Great Lakes beaches range \$1.1 to \$1.4 billion (Saikh, 2004)
- Average day at the beach estimated at \$30- \$50 per person

Powerful local economic engine



- Large local spinoffs to community
- Total economic impact of beach visitors on Wasaga Beach local and region - estimated \$80- 100 million and 890 jobs and \$25 million in tax revenues (Tourism Strategy, 2007)

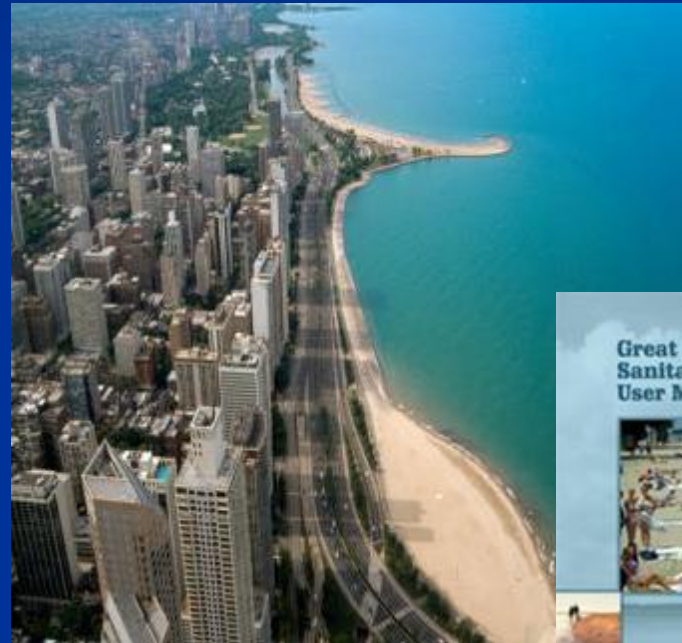
Investing in Beach Improvements is good business



- Ontario estimated mean cost of 1 person getting sick from gastro enteritis approx \$1,089 (Majowicz, 2006)
- Willingness to pay for 20% reduction in beach closures/postings is \$2.74 per person per visit = \$2-3 billion dollar benefit to improve our beaches (Austin, 2007)
- Other co-benefits from increased property values = approx \$2 billion (Austin, 2007)

What can we learn from others ?

- Beaches programs in US and globally: Chicago, Racine, Presque Isle etc.
- Increasing funding of BEACH Act in US
- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative- 100 beach proposals, \$20 million
- Sanitary survey
- Dune acquisition
- Great Lakes Beach Association



Challenges



Challenges:

- Water Quality
- Climate Change
- Increasing population pressure
- Beach and Coast Management
- Coordination
- Communication
- Making a business case for investment



Photo credit: Ministry of Environment

How can we work together to improve Ontario's Beaches and Coasts



- Build on what we already have:

- Many exciting projects underway
- Established partnerships in some areas
- Increasing interest in nearshore science
- Increasing public pressure to improve conditions



Identify Gaps



Analyse what we are missing:

- Recognition that beaches and coasts are treasures
- Beach and coast vision
- Good business case for investment
- Stable source of funding
- Common understanding of sources and nature of challenges and solutions
- Integrated, nested multi- jurisdictional strategy
- Effective communication and coordination

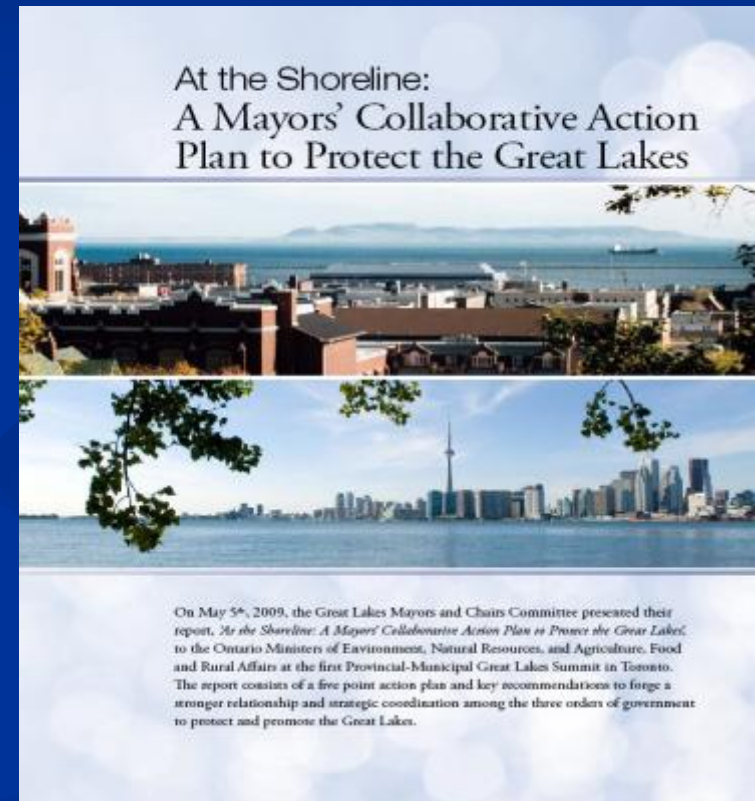


Together Move Forward



Together plan a new path forward:

- Creation of a provincial beach hub
- Discussion of a beach strategy for Ontario: monitoring, management, collaboration, communication



For more information...



- ❑ GLSLCI website: www.glslcities.org
- ❑ Conference Milwaukee June 16-18, 2010
- ❑ Contact GLSLCI:

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