

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

Alliance des villes des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent

### Position Announcement

President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The Opportunity: The Board of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative), a non-profit organization with offices in Canada and the United States, seeks an innovative President/CEO who will work with Mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Mayors to implement their newly completed Strategic Plan, build sustainability and expand the Mayors reach into Washington D.C. And Ottawa, Canada. The President/CEO operates out of the Chicago office.

### **Background**

Freshwater is a major global resource. The Mayors on the shores of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River recognize this asset and understand the importance of protecting it. With challenges to the GLSL increasing, the work of the organization and the Mayors is growing in importance daily. The GLSLCI region comprises the 3rd largest economy in the world and contains over 20% of the world's surface freshwater and is the primary water source for over 40 million people.

Formed in 2003, the Cities Initiative evolved from the blending of the Canadian-based International Association of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Mayors and the United States-based Great Lakes Cities Initiative. The merger created a single, stronger presence for local governments at the international, federal, state, tribal and provincial decision-making tables for a broad range of issues affecting the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River and Georgian Bay.

The Mayors see the Lakes and River, and related watersheds, as central to the economic well-being of their cities and the quality of life for citizens across the region. The Cities Initiative advances water quality, water quantity, and waterfront vitality through a wide range of activities, including education, best practices, cooperation, leadership, and action. The Cities Initiative's current membership includes nearly 100 mayors and local leaders from the eight US states and two Canadian provinces that surround

the Lakes and River. A Board of 16 Mayors govern the organization that is staffed by 5 professionals located in Canada and the US. The Cities Initiative is headquartered in Chicago, with consultants in Quebec and Ontario.

The Cities Initiative is currently engaged on many fronts across the region including: lead in drinking water, working with the agricultural sector to address nutrients that cause harmful algal blooms, water diversion, Asian carp, and joining the Compact of Mayors to help cities reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the municipal contribution to climate change. The new President/CEO will be charged with helping the Mayors strategically focus human and financial resources for highest positive impact. The current annual operating budget for the Cities Initiative is approximately \$600,000+.

### **Key Responsibilities and Roles**

Coalescing the diverse interests and priorities of a bi-national association of municipalities requires highly developed coalition building and collaboration skills. In addition, the Cities Initiative requires a President/CEO that has familiarity with the workings of Washington D.C., or has experience in advocacy in state or local government.

The President/CEO will be a skilled leader with an understanding or related background in raising funds to support the organization and drive their agenda forward. The President/CEO will have the skills needed to run a non-profit organization and facilitate strong board leadership. He/She must be confident managing remote staff in Canada and the United States and overseeing operating budgets.

### Core Competencies and Attributes

#### ❖ Knowledgeable and Effective Fresh Water Advocate

- o Deep appreciation for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River as global resources
- o Knowledge of policies that impact fresh water

#### ❖ A seasoned networker

- o Has strong networks that will enhance the work of the Cities Initiative

- o Experience building alliances toward a common cause
- o Skilled collaborator
  
- ❖ Knowledgeable about municipal government
- o Skilled at understanding how municipal governments can best leverage collective change
- o Skilled at seeing opportunities for municipal governments to model programs that improve the Lakes and River while benefiting their communities
- o Proven capacity to facilitate Board leadership on region wide issues
  
- ❖ Effective at managing a non-profit
- o Skilled at managing a professional staff and deploying staff talents in the most effective and efficient manner
- o Experienced at building and supporting board leadership
- o Experienced and successful with raising money and resources
- o Experienced with establishing and implementing strategic plans
  
- ❖ Skilled communicator
- o Great political instincts with respect to messaging
- o Confident spokesperson
- o Comfortable using all types of communication platforms, including social media

#### Requirements

- As a bi-national organization, regular international travel is required
- Non-profit administration, management and fundraising experience
- Politically savvy with government experience
- Skilled communicator
- Proven leadership abilities
- Clear and strategic thinker
- Naturally optimistic and collaborative

Application Process: Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and interested parties are encouraged to apply early. The Mayors strongly value diversity and earnestly invite a diverse pool of applicants. Applications must include:

✓ A cover letter that outlines your interest in this position and the experience that prepares you for the role as outlined.

✓ A resume

Applications should be sent via e-mail to the following address, [john.dickert@glslcities.org](mailto:john.dickert@glslcities.org) with only YOUR NAME in the subject line:

#### Transition timetable

June 3 release announcement and application request

June 3- June 17 Acceptance of resumes

June 17-21 Board search committee review applicants

June 21-28 Applicants are interviewed via skype

July 1-5. Board determines second round of interviews

July 8-12 Second round of interviews

July 15-18 Board determines if they have a final candidate or wish to reopen the search.

July 22 Board makes offer to candidate if possible.

Start dates - August preferred.