



**GREAT LAKES AND
ST. LAWRENCE**
CITIES INITIATIVE



2022 INITIATIVES CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

REPORT CARD

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative has been active over the past year in promoting the environmental, social and economic vitality of our member cities. This report card reviews our progress in critical areas and grades us on our success in generating tangible achievements for cities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.

REPORT CARD

Secured Substantial Resources for Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Cities



The Cities Initiative has been an effective force in securing resources for Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin cities. Key successes in Canada and the United States include:

Canada:

- Helped secure more than \$50 million in additional freshwater investments for 2022, including:
 - A five-year commitment of \$44 million and \$9 million ongoing to create the new Canada Water Agency;
 - \$20 million to sustain the Freshwater Action Plan to support clean-up efforts in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin; and
 - \$45 million over five years and \$9 million ongoing to fund the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.
- Accelerated the deadline for provinces to submit their priority projects under the federal infrastructure program to expedite the delivery of needed funds.

United States:

- Influenced the climate provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act, including:
 - \$27 billion for a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund;
 - \$5 billion for Climate Pollution Reduction Grants; and
 - \$2.6 billion for Coastal Communities and Climate Resilience.
- Called for billions in annual federal appropriations for coastal resilience and water infrastructure to supplement the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Strengthened Government Support for Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Restoration and Protection



The Cities Initiative has advanced key priorities for restoring and protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. Key successes in Canada and the United States include:

Canada:

- Renewed commitments to launching the Canada Water Agency and significantly increasing Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin investments by the federal government;
- Helped advance funding commitments by Ottawa in Budget 2021 for a Natural Infrastructure Fund was made available to smaller communities through a call for project proposals; and
- Secured commitments from the Ontario and Quebec governments around source water protection and water royalties from private companies, respectively.

United States:

- Sustained support for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative on Capitol Hill;
- Increased funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study; and
- Advocated for a more equitable federal-local cost share to be authorized via the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Brandon Road Interbasin Project to prevent an established presence of invasive carp in the Great Lakes.

Elevated Mayors' Voices in Ottawa and Washington



The Cities Initiative increased its relevance as a leading voice in Ottawa and Washington for Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin mayors. Key successes in Canada and the United States include:

- Featured remarks from Michael Regan, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Terry Duguid, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of

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Environment and Climate Change; and Tammy Duckworth, U.S. Senator from Illinois at our Annual General Meeting in St. Catharines, Ontario;

- Continued to work closely with the Congressional Great Lakes Task Force and the Parliamentary Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Task Force – and collaborated with the Great Lakes Commission, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and other partners – to elevate our federal policy priorities in both capitals and secure federal funding for our communities; and
- Held our first Ottawa Day since 2019, in conjunction with national and regional partners, where member mayors met with MPs and Senators to advance federal policy priorities.

Became a Partner for Change on Coastal Resilience



In 2022, the Cities Initiative completed a pilot of the Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative in Wisconsin and launched the program in three additional regions.

Key successes in Canada and the United States include:

- Piloted a technical assistance and funding support program in Wisconsin Lake Michigan communities resulting in project advancement in eight communities ranging from southeast (Kenosha) to northeast (Green Bay) Wisconsin;
- Launched the program in Southeast Michigan (Lake St. Clair and Detroit River), West Michigan, and Indiana, engaging with over 25 communities in total;
- Secured a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to develop a Shoreline Plan for the Illinois North Shore in 2023 that will compliment technical-assistance efforts to advance coastal-resilience projects in North Shore communities;
- Applied for \$1.5 million in additional funds to expand the program to the remaining Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin communities in the United States; and
- Applied for CAN \$1 million in additional funds to expand the program to shoreline communities in Ontario and Quebec.

Positioned Mayoral Commissions to Deliver Policy Results



The Cities Initiative's mayoral commissions continued to build policy influence and contribute to policy change at all levels. Key successes in Canada and the United States include:

- Hosted a Mayors Commission on Water Equity Field Hearing on Equitable Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act at the One Water Summit in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Twelve Great Lakes mayors delivered testimony on lead service line replacement, urban flooding, and other water-equity priorities to senior officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state agencies;
- Selected Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Mayor Justin Bibb of Cleveland, Ohio, as Co-Chairs of the Mayors Commission on Water Equity; and
- Continued to work with the Mayors Advisory Council on Coastal Resilience to develop action plans and refine policy priorities after a successful first year. Major policy engagements with Environment and Climate Change Canada; Infrastructure Canada; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, among others, on green infrastructure and other topics are anticipated in the year ahead.

OVERALL GRADE: A-

We are pleased to report that the Cities Initiative is in a healthy position and we look forward to building on our accomplishments in 2023.



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