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## **Inaugural Richard M. Daley Water Equity Community Award Presented to Five Communities at the Cities Initiative Annual General Meeting in Chicago**

*Award will assist communities in obtaining federal funds for the removal of lead lines and the modernization of water infrastructure.*

**Chicago – June 9, 2023** – The **Richard M. Daley Water Equity Community Award**, which will help provide support to disadvantaged communities who are working to remove lead lines and modernize water infrastructure, was presented to five cities at the conclusion of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative’s Annual General Meeting yesterday evening. Former Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, now Senior Counsel at the Chicago-based law firm, Katten, was in attendance, along with Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson.

Benton Harbor, Michigan; East Chicago, Indiana; Richmond Heights, Ohio; Dunkirk, New York; and Mount Vernon, New York were selected as the five inaugural communities receiving the award, which will assist in facilitating access to current and newly offered public funding.

This includes professional consulting assistance to apply for grants and gain access to federal funding for lead service line replacement and other water-infrastructure projects; referrals to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmental Finance Center network and other technical-assistance providers; strategic advice and best practices for equitable lead service line replacement; and regular opportunities to advance water-equity policy priorities via the Mayors Commission on Water Equity.

“I am thrilled that five communities that have been burdened with lead service lines and other water equity issues impacting residents’ quality of life have been selected as the inaugural recipients of the Richard M. Daley Water Equity Community Award,” said former Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, now Senior Counsel at the Chicago-based law firm, Katten. “This annual award will help ensure the Cities Initiative remains both representative and beneficial to communities across the entire basin for years to come.”

The award winners will also become members of the Cities Initiative, allowing them to work together with other member cities to advance water-equity priorities.

The Cities Initiative also announced that Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer, the Grand Chief of Kahnawake (Mohawk Nation), will be joining its Board of Directors as the organization seeks to extend the award to First Nations and Indigenous peoples next year.

### **About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative**

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational, mayor-led coalition of U.S. and Canadian cities dedicated to the environmental and socioeconomic health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. With more than 230 member cities, the Cities Initiative is the largest municipally-driven organization in the basin focused on these issues.

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