



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor Spebar of Whiting Joins the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

Chicago, IL – February 20, 2024 – The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is pleased to welcome Mayor Steve Spebar of Whiting, IN to its growing coalition of more than 250 mayors and top elected local leaders working to advance the environmental, economic, and social health of communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.

As a member of the Cities Initiative, Mayor Spebar will work collaboratively with member mayors across the basin in United States and Canada to support ecosystem and source water protection in the basin, ensure that every resident has access to clean, safe and affordable water, better prepare communities for the impacts of climate change and set the path for economic transformation of the basin as both countries shift to a low-carbon economy and look at new ways to leverage our waters in a responsible and sustainable manner.

“The City of Whiting is excited to join this initiative to enhance and preserve what we believe is our most valuable natural resource – Lake Michigan,” Mayor Spebar stated.

Whiting is a small city of approximately 4500 people which values quality of life and place. Over the past ten years, it has spent over \$42 million dollars to preserve, improve and enhance its shoreline access to the lake. Whiting is also home to the BP Refinery Whiting Business Unit, the largest oil refinery in the Midwest. It has an excellent working relationship with the company and is acutely aware of the delicate balance between the economy and the environment.

“Our organization is delighted to welcome Mayor Spebar to our team,” said Gino Moretti, Mayor of Saint-Anicet, QC and Chair of the Cities Initiative. “Cities and local governments are on the frontlines of the biggest challenges facing communities in the basin. Working together, we can better prepare our communities for climate change, tap into new economic opportunities for our region and avert the water crises and conflicts impacting other regions of North America and the world.”

Every new member of the Cities Initiative is a testament to the importance that local governments in this globally significant basin place on preserving our freshwater resources, preparing our communities for the impacts of climate change, improving our aging water infrastructure and building sustainable local economies that leverage environmental initiatives to attract new jobs.

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 communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. With more than 250 member cities, the Cities Initiative is the largest municipally driven organization in the basin focused on issues impacting their residents.



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