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

Economic Transformation
Tapping into Water for Sustainable Prosperity

GREAT LAKES and ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE
2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Economic Transformation – Tapping into Water for Sustainable Prosperity

Montréal (Tiohtià:ke), QC | May 15-17, 2024
Marriott Chateau Champlain – 1050 Rue De la Gauchetière O

Presented by

Corporation de Gestion de la Voie Maritime du Saint-Laurent
The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation

Official Program

All sessions and activities will be taking place at the Marriott Chateau Champlain, unless otherwise noted

TUESDAY, MAY 14

4:00 pm Registration opens – **until 7:00 pm**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

7:30 am Registration opens

7:30 am Continental breakfast buffet – **until 9:00 am**

Presented by Canada Steamship Lines

8:30 am Cities Initiative Member Meeting ***– restricted to Cities Initiative members***

11:30 am Member Meeting concludes / Free time

1:00 pm 2024 Annual Conference Opening and Welcome

Speakers

- **Kanahsohon Kevin Deer**, Elder, Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory
- **Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer**, Grand Chief, Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

- **Gino Moretti**, Co-Chair, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and Mayor, Saint-Anicet, QC
- **Ryan Sorenseon,** Co-Chair, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and Mayor, Sheboygan, WI
- **Terence F. Bowles**, President and CEO, St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation

1:45 pm Economic Transformation Pledge Signing Ceremony

2:00 pm Plenary #1 – Transforming our Economy

Leading by Example: Showcasing Basin Cities' Progress on Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation

Speakers

- **Valérie Plante**, Mayor, Montréal, QC
- **Brandon Johnson**, Mayor, Chicago, IL
- **Bruno Marchand**, Mayor, Québec, QC
- **Cavalier Johnson**, Mayor, Milwaukee, WI

2:50 pm Break

Presented by the International Joint Commission

3:00 pm Plenary # 2 – Transforming Energy

Local Power: Catalyzing the Transition to Clean and Renewable Energy at the Community Level

From hydropower and nuclear energy to community solar and geothermal, communities and utilities across the basin are pivoting away from fossil fuels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality and seek a cleaner, more resilient energy future. Local governments are leaders in this historic transition, working with regional energy providers, industry partners and community groups to innovate and implement clean and renewable energy. Municipal authorities will also have to balance the energy transition, including grid electrification, with population growth and industry development goals. This session will discuss opportunities for local governments to become energy innovators and help lead the way on local power generation through strategic partnerships, community-led initiatives and innovative financing and procurement tools.

Moderator

- **Mark Allen**, Director General for North America, Global Affairs Canada

Speakers

- **Sarah O'Keeffe**, Director of Sustainability and Climate Justice, Cleveland, OH
- **Maja Vodanovic,** Borough Mayor (Lachine) and Execuitve Committee Member Responsible for Water, Montréal, QC
- **Kate Wright**, Executive Director, Climate Mayors

3:50 pm Special Address

- **Pierre Fitzgibbon**, Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy, Government of Québec

4:10 pm Break

Presented by Nautisme Québec

4:30 pm Concurrent Breakout Sessions – Transforming Energy

I. Transforming Energy: Policy Considerations, Opportunities, and Challenges

Presented by Hydro-Québec

Speakers

- **Vincent Desormeaux,** Manager of Community Relations, Hydro-Québec
- **Ursula Eicker**, Canada Excellence Research Chair in Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Communities and Cities, Concordia University
- **Alexis Laverdiere**, Environmental Sustainability Program Manager, Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO), Milwaukee, WI
- **Scott MacDougall,** Program Director, Electricity, Pembina Institute

II. Transforming Energy: Project Implementation Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Presented by Ducks Unlimited Canada

Speakers

- **Mike Williams**, Manager, Conservation Pro (Ontario), Ducks Unlimited Canada
- **Brad Bradford**, Councillor, Toronto, ON
- **Étienne Champagne**, Vice President, Development and Major Projects, Énergir
- **Leon Rockingham Jr.**, Mayor, North Chicago, IL

5:30 pm Day 1 Closing / Free Time

6:30 pm Biinaagami Great Lakes-St. Lawrence watershed map exploration and photo-opportunity

Port of Montreal Tower – 200 de la Commune St W

7:00 pm Cities Initiative Welcome Reception

Presented by Canada Steamship Lines

In collaboration with the Montreal Port Authority

Port of Montreal Tower – 200 de la Commune St W

Speakers

- **Hon. François-Philippe Champagne**, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Government of Canada
- **Julie Gascon,** President and CEO, Port of Montreal Port Authority
- **Guillaum Dubreuil**, Director, External Affairs & Government Relations, Canada Steamship Lines

THURSDAY, MAY 16

8:00 am Breakfast **– until 8:55 am**

Presented by Canada Steamship Lines and VIA Rail

9:00 am Day 2 Welcome and Opening Session

Speakers

- **Céline Haytayan**, Governmental Assistant to the Minister of International Relations and La Francophonie, Government of Québec
- **David Goldwater**, Vice President, Public Policy, Stantec
- **Vanessa Cherenfant**, Chief Strategy Officer, VIA Rail

9:40 am Plenary # 3 – Transforming Transportation

Sustainable Commerce, Transit and Mobility: Reducing Emissions and Building New Economic Opportunities in Moving Goods and People through Freshwater Waterways and Communities

Sustainable transportation of people and goods across our waterways is at the heart of transforming our regional economy. Governments and the marine industry are working together to decrease pollution and strengthen supply chains across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway. Cruise operators are collaborating to reduce emissions, protect water quality and implement stewardship initiatives at their destinations. Basin communities are also contributing to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by improving transit and micromobility while enhancing the use of waterways, connections between people and places and quality of life. This session will highlight opportunities for local governments to move goods and people more sustainably through our waterways and communities while protecting our freshwater.

Moderator

- **Jean Aubry-Morin,** Vice-President, St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation

Speakers

- **Mat Siscoe**, Mayor, St. Catherines, ON
- **Guillaum Dubreuil,** Director, External Affairs & Government Relations, Canada Steamship Lines
- **Christopher Moyer,** Senior Director, Communications and Public Affairs, Visit Detroit
- **Mathieu Saint-Pierre**, President and CEO, St. Lawrence Economic Development Council (SODES)

10:30 am Break

Presented by HOPA Ports

10:45 am Concurrent Breakout Sessions – Transforming Transportation

I. Transforming Transportation: Policy Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Speakers

- **Patrick Péloquin,** Mayor, Sorel-Tracy, QC
- **Vance Badawey**, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. Government of Canada
- **Philippe Dubé,** Chief Officer, Partners Relations, Montreal Metropolitan Transport Agency
- **Maguessa Morel-Laforce**, Director of Government Relations, Chamber of Marine Commerce
- **Jeffrey Scharf,** Associate Administrator, St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation

II. Transforming Transportation: Project Implementation Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Presented by Algoma Central Corporation

Speakers

- **Hannah Bowlby,** Manager, Corporate Communications, Algoma Central Corporation
- **William Steele**, Mayor, Port Colborne, ON
- **Véronique Trudeau,** Program Manager, Green Marine

11:45 am Lunch

12:15 pm Luncheon/Special Sessions

Special Session #1 – Fireside Chat

Economic Reconciliation in an Era of Transformation

First Nations and Tribal Nations are leading the way in generating innovative industries and initiatives that are helping to tackle the

global climate crisis and better steward our waters. At the same time, those communities and industries continue to face barriers in accessing capital and opportunities for growth. As a region, we lose out when good business ideas originating here can't find the funding, training, and access to markets to flourish. In this keynote session, we will examine the hard truths regarding barriers to economic and business development in First Nations and Tribal communities. We will also explore the role municipal governments and industry can play to foster Economic Reconciliation by opening up pathways to support Tribal and First Nations-led business growth and build stronger relations to tackle our shared challenges together.

Moderator

- **Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer**, Grand Chief, Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

Speakers

- **Linda Debassige**, Former Chief, M'Chigeeng First Nation
- **Patrick Madahbee**, Commissioner on Governance, Anishinabek Nation

1:00 pm Special Session #2 – Remarks and Presentations

Speakers

- **David Miller,** Managing Director, C40 Cities
- **Katie Dailinger**, Project Director, Local Infrastructure Hub, National League of Cities
- **Gregg Ruhl,** President and Chief Executive Officer, Algoma Central Corporation

1:35 pm Break

Presented by the Government of Québec

1:50 pm Special Address

- **Jean-François Hould**, Québec Delegate in Chicago

1:55 pm Plenary # 4 – Transforming Industry

A Thriving Blue-Green Economic Corridor: Promoting Freshwater Innovation, Green Businesses and Jobs and Sustainable Industry Practices

Transforming the basin from an industrial heartland into a thriving green-blue economic corridor requires communities to foster freshwater innovation, attract green businesses and jobs and encourage sustainable industry practices. Freshwater innovation hubs are bringing together innovative firms, educational institutions and other stakeholders to create blue jobs and increase economic activity while improving water stewardship. Local governments, including economic development agencies, are playing pivotal roles in the green transition by coordinating with green businesses and crafting workforce development plans. Circular economy and other sustainable practices are increasingly being adopted by industries wanting to improve their bottom line and appeal to environmentally-conscious investors and consumers. This session will explore how local governments and others are working together to nurture blue-green economic transformation at the local and regional levels.

Moderator

- **Mark Fisher**, CEO, Council of the Great Lakes Region

Speakers

- **Martin Damphousse,** Mayor, Varennes, QC and President, Québec Union of Municipalities
- **Alaina Harkness**, Executive Director, Current
- **Michel Leblanc,** President, Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal

2:45 pm Plenary #5 – Transforming Industry

Fresh Ideas for Freshwater in The Municipal Sector: Insights from Three Women Water Tech Entrepreneurs

Presented by AquaAction

Moderator

- **Kariann Aarup,** Vice President, Program Development & Impact, AquaAction

Speakers

- **Marisol Labrecque,** CEO, Ecofixe
- **Isabelle Mongeon**, Executive Vice-President, OClair
- **Naysan Saran**, CEO & Co-Founder, CANN Forecast

3:45 pm Break

Presented by the Government of Ontario

4:00 pm Concurrent Breakout Sessions – Transforming Industry

I. Transforming Industry: Policy Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Presented by The Coca-Cola Company and the Great Lakes Bottlers

Speakers

- **Kathy Murphy**, Vice President, Public Affairs and Communications, Coca-Cola Canada Bottling Limited
- **Andrea Densham,** Senior Strategic Advisor, Alliance for the Great Lakes
- **Dominique Dodier,** Director General, EnviroCompétences
- **Emily Simonson**, Director of Strategic Initiatives, U.S. Water Alliance

II. Transforming Industry: Project Implementation Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Presented by Xylem

Speakers

- **Michele Samuels**, Strategic Accounts Manager, Xylem
- **Gary McNamara,** Mayor of Tecumseh, ON
- **Hugues Paris,** Vice-President, Sustainable Development, Port of Québec City
- **Brenda Scott Henry,** Sustainability Director, Gary, IN

5:00 pm Day 2 Closing / Free time

6:30 pm Cities Initiative Dinner Cocktail Reception

7:15 pm Cities Initiative Annual Awards Dinner

Speakers

- **Madeleine Féquière,** Consul General of Canada in Chicago
- **Daniel Wolfish,** Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment and Climate Change Canada
- **Earl Provost,** Ontario Agent-General in Chicago

FRIDAY, MAY 17

8:00 am Breakfast – **until 8:25 am**

8:30 am Day 3 Welcome

8:35 am Plenary #6 – Transforming Waterfronts

Waterfronts for Everyone: Designing Accessible, Multi-Purpose and Resilient Centers of Environmental and Socioeconomic Revitalization

Freshwater restoration and protection efforts across the basin are elevating waterfronts as centers of environmental, economic and social activity. Basin communities are increasingly designing accessible, multi-purpose waterfronts that effectively balance public access and recreational opportunities with housing and economic development. With increased risks from extreme weather events and the new climate reality, local governments must also create resilient waterfronts that can withstand variable water levels and remain vibrant over time. This session will showcase successful examples of waterfront revitalization from across the basin, with special emphasis on how local governments can develop waterfronts that prioritize the health of our economies and communities – and, of course, our freshwater.

Moderator

- **Christopher Sweetnam-Holmes,** Senior Director, Canadian Lands Company

Speakers

- **Yvonne Hamlin**, Mayor, Collingwood, ON
- **Cory Mason**, Mayor, Racine, WI

- **Catherine Vallières-Roland**, Deputy Mayor, Québec City, QC

9:25 am Special Address

- **Hon. Steven Guilbeault**, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Canada

9:45 am Break

Presented by Conservation Ontario

10:00 am Concurrent Breakout Sessions – Transforming Waterfronts

I. Transforming Waterfronts: Policy Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Presented by the Insurance Bureau of Canada / Climate Proof Canada

Speakers

- **Jason Clark,** National Director, Climate Change Advocacy, Insurance Bureau of Canada
- **Guy Caron**, Mayor, Rimouski, QC
- **Olivier Legault,** Director and Urban Planner, Rues Principales
- **Samantha Nellis,** Water Program Director, Huron Pines

II. Transforming Waterfronts: Project Implementation Considerations, Opportunities and Challenges

Presented by SmithGroup

Speakers

- **Mark Wagstaff,** Principal, Senior Waterfront Engineer, SmithGroup
- **Bridget Brown,** Chief Operations and Programs Officer, Cities Initiative
- **Angela Coleman**, General Manager, Conservation Ontario
- **Sophie Lemire,** Executive Director, Comité ZIP des Seigneuries

11:00 am Annual Conference Closing Ceremony

Speakers

- **Hon. Patty Hajdu**, Minister of Indigenous Services, Government of Canada
- **Kanahsohon Kevin Deer**, Elder, Kahnawá:ke Mohawk Territory

11:30 am Annual Conference Adjourns

***Lunch boxes will be available for those departing on educational tours*

12:00 pm Educational Tours

Option #1 – Visit of the City of Montreal's Jean-R.-Marcotte Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Port of Montréal

Option #2 – Visit of Kahnawá:ke Mohawk Territory

5:00 pm Return to Marriott Chateau Champlain Hotel