



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

From Industrial Heartland to a Blue-Green Economic Corridor *Transforming the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin*

We, the undersigned communities of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, pledge to collaborate closely with the Cities Initiative to promote the economic transformation of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin into a thriving blue-green economic corridor.

The basin forms the largest freshwater ecosystem in the world, providing drinking water to more than 40 million people and serving as the foundation of our communities' economic prosperity. Collectively, basin communities comprise the world's third largest economy, generating \$6 trillion in economic output annually. Throughout the basin's history, we have been the industrial heartland of North America. As the world changes and new economic opportunities arise, we must adapt our industrial base to keep our economy growing while safeguarding our natural resources.

Maintaining our status as a global economic powerhouse and protecting our abundant freshwater resources amid a changing climate requires a bold new vision and dedicated, multinational leadership to foster transformative, sustainable and inclusive economic development for the benefit of current and future generations. We must attract blue and green industries to our communities; build clean, accessible waterfronts; implement clean and renewable energy sources and expand sustainable, integrated, water-borne commerce, mobility and tourism. Our goal is to become a world-leading blue-green economic corridor where the next generation of business will come to manufacture, build headquarters and sell and residents will continue to live, work and play.

Therefore, we are proud today to launch the Cities Initiative's Mayors Commission on Economic Transformation. Further, we look forward to working together on the development of the *Action Plan for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Economic Transformation, 2025-2035*, a roadmap for basin communities seeking to seize this historic opportunity for economic transformation and freshwater preservation.