



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

**2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
PARTNERSHIP GUIDE**



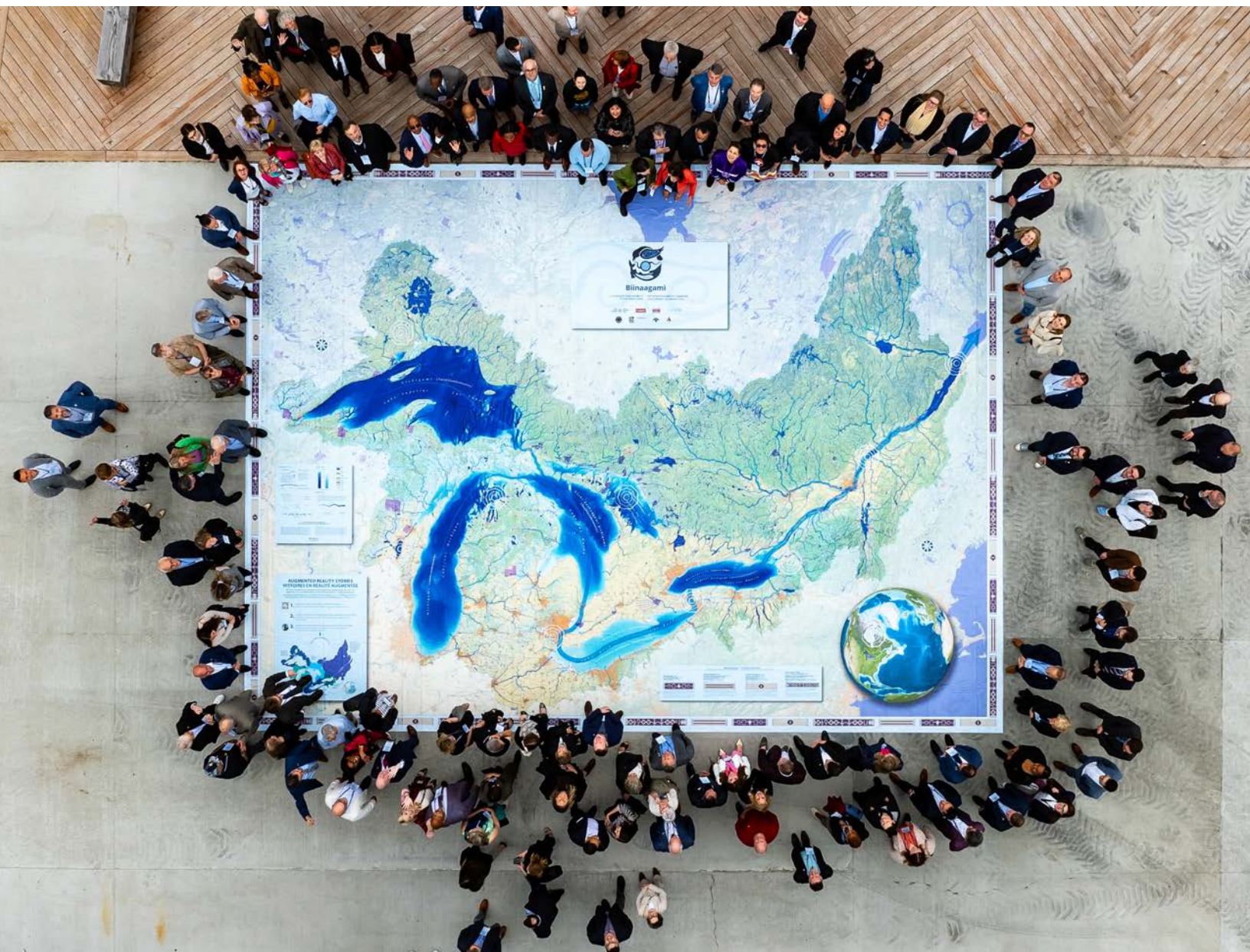
**THE FUTURE OF
FRESH
WATER**

May 14-16, 2025 – Milwaukee, WI

WHO WE ARE

FOUNDED IN 2003, we are an international coalition of local governments, led by more than 260 mayors and chief elected officers, working actively to promote the sustainable development of communities across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. Our member cities represent over 20 million people in the basin, spanning from Duluth, MN to Rimouski, QC.

We are building a stronger, more resilient, and economically vibrant basin by tackling some of the most pressing issues facing our communities today through advocacy, collaboration, and education. We are helping to prepare our cities to face those challenges head-on and leverage some of the unique opportunities that come from being in a basin that contains more than 80% of North America's surface freshwater and represents over \$6 trillion in economic activity annually.





LEADING THE WAY IN AN ERA OF SCARCITY

More than 200 attendees—including members of the Cities Initiative, mayors, government officials, and industry leaders — will come together in Milwaukee, WI to address key topics impacting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin our communities.

As the future of fresh water becomes one of the most pressing challenges, the need for action is clearer than ever. Leading the Way in an Era of Scarcity, we are committed to addressing these urgent issues with innovative solutions and collaborative efforts. Communities across our region are grappling with the urgency of climate change and the growing demand for sustainable water management. These challenges, however, also present significant opportunities for sustainable economic growth and innovation.

At our 2025 Annual Conference, we will explore how local governments across the basin, home to the world's largest reserve of fresh water, can serve as a resilient hub for transforming how we use and manage fresh water. We will focus on driving clean, durable economic development, while tackling climate-related water issues head-on. By leveraging public and private sector action, we can attract new

investments, ensure the health of our freshwater resources, and create a future of sustainable prosperity for generations to come.

THE FUTURE OF FRESH WATER

- Means addressing the emotional, economic and political toll of water scarcity as communities adapt to climate change, population growth, and resource mismanagement.
- Requires investing in sustainable and efficient drinking water and wastewater systems to meet the demands of a growing and changing world.
- It depends on transforming stormwater management to combat urban flooding and coastal erosion through resilient infrastructure and sustainable green planning.
- It lies in fostering innovation to drive technological advancements and economic opportunities.

“Together, we have the power to secure our region’s future by protecting the very foundation of our success – the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.”

Jon Altenberg, President and CEO,
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence
Cities Initiative



In 2025, the Cities Initiative is gathering May 14-16, in Milwaukee, WI, around the theme of The Future of Fresh Water, Leading the Way in an Era of Scarcity.



JOIN THE MOVEMENT FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Become a catalyst for change by partnering with us to protect and sustain the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. This isn't just about support; it's about getting involved, putting forward your solutions, and making a tangible impact. Together, we can transform our region's challenges into opportunities for growth, resilience, and innovation. Let's make waves for a better tomorrow—join us as a partner and be part of the solution!

WHY GET INVOLVED?

As a partner, you're not just contributing—you're actively shaping the future of sustainable development in a region that holds over 20% of the world's freshwater and fuels \$6 trillion in economic activity. Join us in Milwaukee for our signature event, where we'll work together to turn today's pressing freshwater challenges into tomorrow's opportunities. Dive into thought-provoking sessions, connect with leaders, and help drive the future of sustainability in our communities.

BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER: PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We've designed levels for your organization to partner with us that go beyond visibility—they're about engagement, influence, and impact. Each level is an invitation to actively participate in shaping the conversations and actions that matter most. With benefits that offer engagement with local decisionmakers, speaking opportunities, and brand alignment with a cause that resonates deeply, our packages ensure that you're not just seen—you're heard, valued, and involved.

LEVEL	SPONSORSHIP	KEY BENEFITS*	COMP. PASSES
BASIN \$35,000 USD	Presenting Partner	15-minute opening keynote; Breakout sponsorship Logo throughout the conference	15
ST. LAWRENCE \$25,000 USD	Keynote Luncheon	15-minute keynote speaking opportunity;	10
SUPERIOR \$20,000 USD	Dinners	10-minute speaking opportunity	8
HURON \$15,000 USD	Plenary Sessions	10-minute plenary introduction	6
MICHIGAN \$10,000 USD	Breakout Sessions	5-minute breakout introduction	4
ERIE \$7,500 USD	Receptions	Logo placement during sponsored reception	3
ONTARIO \$5,000 USD	Coffee Breaks	Logo placement during sponsored breaks	2
LOCAL CHAMPIONS \$2,500 USD	Milwaukee Tours	Logo placement on transportation to tours	1

* Further details on benefits included on the pages that follow

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BASIN LEVEL

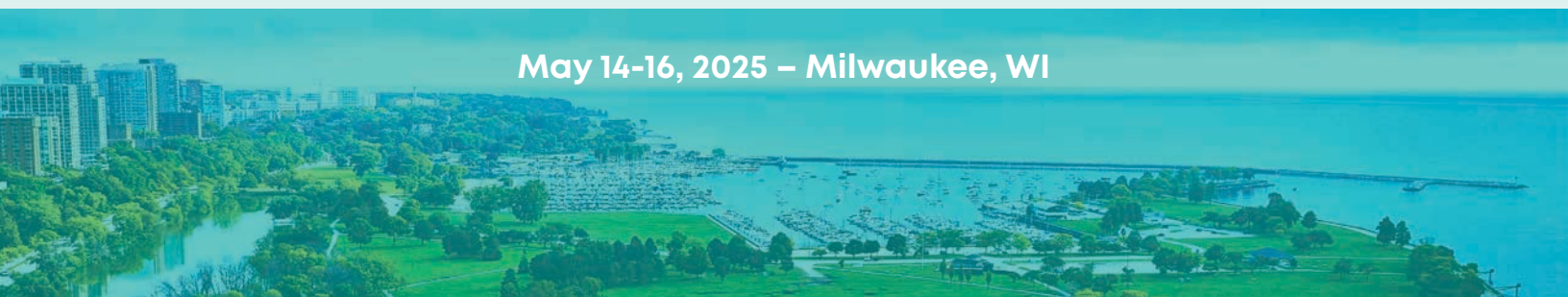
\$35,000 USD
(LIMIT OF 1)

BENEFITS

- **Annual Conference Presenting Partner** – Logo included on main stage backdrop; special signage throughout the conference space
- **Opening keynote opportunity** – 15-minute presentation during the Opening session of the Annual Conference
- **Breakout sponsorship for one (1) session** – Opportunity to co-develop session content and format
- **Co-branding of the Annual Conference exhibitor space**
 - o Designated space for a minimum of ten (10) exhibitors
- **Fifteen (15) complimentary full registrations** to the Annual Conference, luncheons and dinners (including the ten exhibitors)
 - o 50% discount on additional Annual Conference registrations
- **Special email message broadcast to attendees** before and after the event
- **Two (2) invitations to the Board of Directors dinner** at the Annual Conference (May 13, 2025)
- **Opportunity to have sponsor-branded materials handed to participants** as they register (optional; materials to be provided by partner at their expense)
- **Opportunity to co-create one (1) webinar in 2025**, with logo, 5-minute introductory remarks, and provide speaker recommendations
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during morning plenary session on all conference days, during closing remarks and at the Awards Dinner
 - o Logo placement on hotel key cards for conference guests
 - o Top logo placement on conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Top logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference
 - o Top placement on all conference badges
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners
 - o Logo placement on Partners page of Cities Initiative website for 2025
 - o Recognition on Cities Initiative social media channels
- **Invitation to join 2025 Annual Conference Steering Committee**
- **One year membership to the Cities Initiative's new Industry Leaders Circle** – Our new Industry Leaders Circle is an exclusive forum for Mayors and private sector partners to collaborate on the challenges and opportunities cities across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin are facing.
- **Invitations to exclusive virtual and in-person events** throughout the year
- **Special consideration for other opportunities** as they arise



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ST. LAWRENCE LEVEL

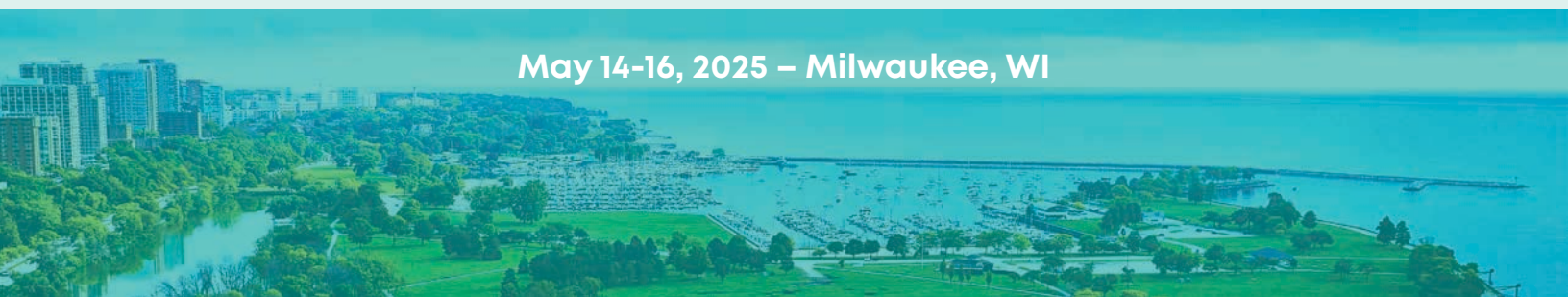
\$25,000 USD
(LIMIT OF 1)

BENEFITS

- **Luncheon sponsorship** – Verbal and visual recognition (for example: logo on menus and on tables, company name on agenda); 15-minute speaking opportunity and introduction of keynote luncheon session
- **Special email message broadcast to attendees** before and after the event
- **Ten (10) complimentary full registrations** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
- **One (1) invitation to Board of Directors dinner** at the annual conference (May 13, 2025)
- **One (1) complimentary exhibitor table**
- **Opportunity to have sponsor-branded materials handed to participants** as they register (optional; materials to be provided by partner at their expense)
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during morning plenary session on all conference days, during closing remarks and at the awards dinner
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference
 - o Logo placement on all annual conference badges
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners
 - o Logo placement on one (1) Cities Initiative webinar in 2025
 - o Recognition on Cities Initiative social media channels
- **Opportunity to co-create one (1) webinar in 2025**, with logo and 5-minute introductory remarks
- **One year membership to the Cities Initiative’s new Industry Leaders Circle** – Our new Industry Leaders Circle is an exclusive forum for Mayors and private sector partners to collaborate on the challenges and opportunities cities across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin are facing.
- **Invitations to exclusive virtual and in-person events** throughout the year
- **Special consideration for other opportunities** as they arise



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SUPERIOR LEVEL

\$20,000 USD
(LIMIT OF 2)

BENEFITS

- **Dinner sponsorship** – Opportunity to be the main sponsor of one of our two signature annual dinners – the Opening Dinner (May 14) and the Annual Awards Dinner (May 15).
 - o Verbal and visual recognition (for example: logo on signage, menus and on tables; company name on agenda; additional branding opportunities during the sponsored dinner possible); 10-minute speaking opportunity
- **Eight (8) complimentary full registrations** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
 - o An additional 10 invitations to the sponsored dinner
- **One (1) invitation to Board of Directors dinner** at the annual conference (May 13, 2025)
- **One (1) complimentary exhibitor table**
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during morning plenary session on all conference days, during closing remarks and at the awards dinner
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners

HURON LEVEL

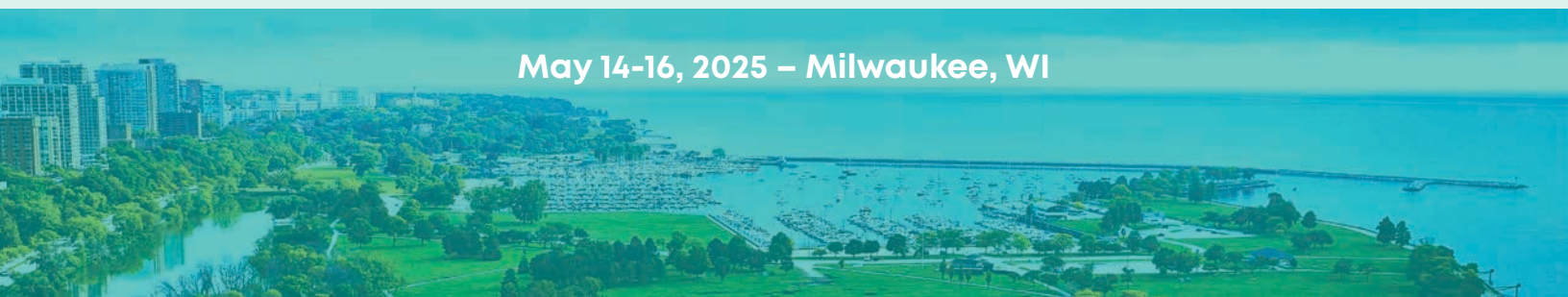
\$15,000 USD
(LIMIT OF 3)

BENEFITS

- **Plenary sponsorship** – Verbal and visual recognition; 10-minute session introduction; company name on agenda and on signage
- **Six (6) complimentary full registrations** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
- **One (1) complimentary exhibitor table**
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during morning plenary session on all conference days, during closing remarks and at the awards dinner
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference



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MICHIGAN LEVEL

\$10,000 USD
(LIMIT OF 5)

BENEFITS

- **Breakout session sponsorship** – Verbal and visual recognition; 10-minute introductory remarks; company name on agenda and signage
- **Four (4) complimentary full registrations** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
- **One (1) complimentary exhibitor table**
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during opening and closing remarks of the conference
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners

ERIE LEVEL

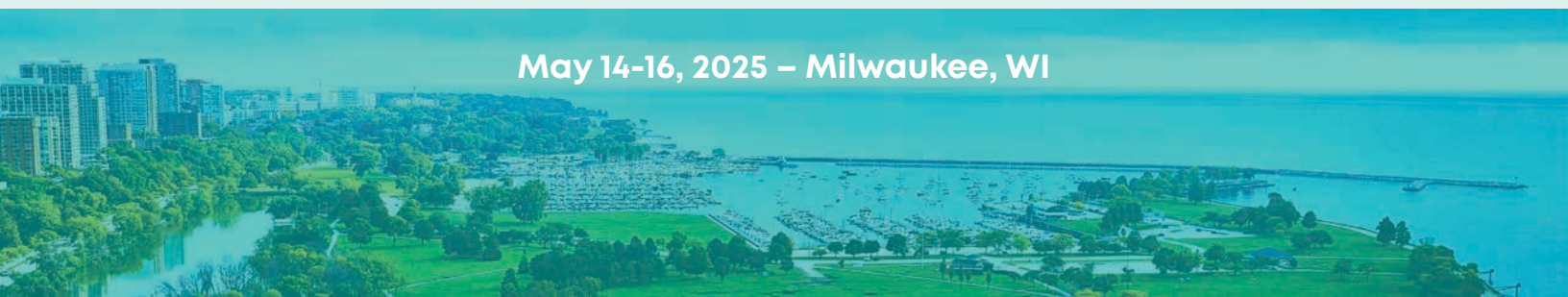
\$7,500 USD

BENEFITS

- **Networking Reception sponsorship** – Opportunity to sponsor one of three networking receptions the Cities Initiative is hosting for our 2025 Conference
 - o Verbal and visual recognition (for example: logo placement on signage, menus and tables)
[Note: receptions may be sponsored by multiple partners]
- **Three (3) complimentary full registrations** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
 - o An additional 10 invitations to attend the sponsored reception
- **One (1) complimentary exhibitor table**
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during opening and closing remarks of the conference
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners



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ONTARIO

\$5,000 USD

BENEFITS

- **Coffee break sponsorship** – Verbal and visual recognition throughout the day of sponsored breaks (for example: logo placement at coffee stations) [Note: breaks may be sponsored by multiple partners]
- **Two (2) complimentary full registrations** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
- **One (1) complimentary exhibitor table**
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during opening and closing plenaries of the annual conference
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference

LOCAL CHAMPIONS

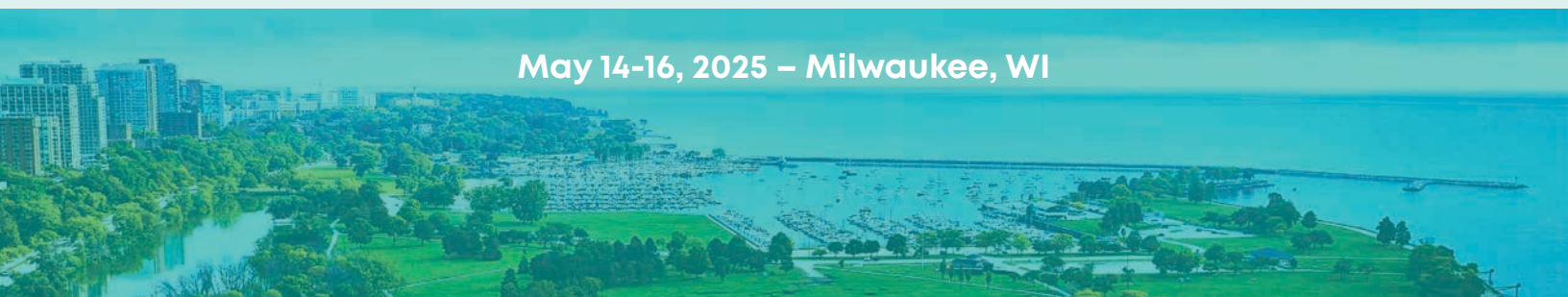
\$2,500 USD

BENEFITS

- **Tour/Transportation sponsorship** – Verbal and visual recognition for the sponsored tour (for example: logo on signage for tours) [Note: tours may be sponsored by multiple partners]
- **One (1) complimentary full registration** to the annual conference, luncheons and dinners
 - o 50% discount on additional annual conference registrations
- **Visibility and recognition:**
 - o Verbal recognition during opening and closing plenaries of the annual conference
 - o Logo placement on-screen thanking partners
 - o Logo placement on annual conference event page of Cities Initiative website
 - o Logo placement in communications to members and guests about the conference



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OUR HOST CITY: MILWAUKEE, WI

Cradled along the western shores of Lake Michigan, Milwaukee is a city where natural beauty meets a rich tapestry of maritime history and diverse cultural heritage. For centuries, this area has been a gathering place for the Potawatomi, Menominee, and Ho-Chunk Nations, whose ancestral ties to the land are honored through local sites and events. Today, Milwaukee is known for its stunning lakefront, which has recently been transformed with vibrant developments like the revitalized Harbor District and the dynamic Deer District, an energetic hub of entertainment surrounding the Fiserv Forum.

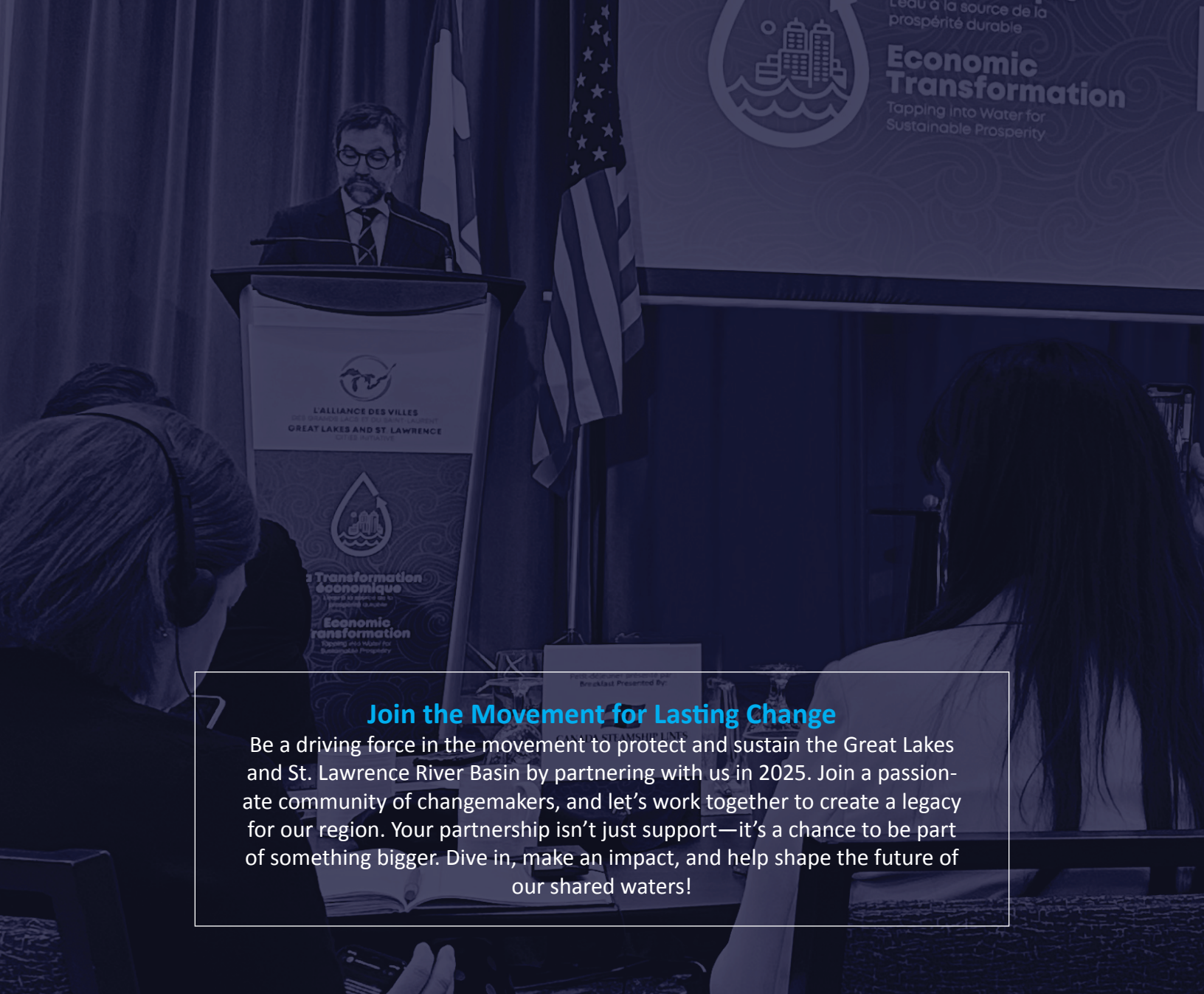
Milwaukee's cityscape offers a seamless blend of scenic beauty and modern innovation, making it an ideal venue for exploring sustainability and progressive ideas. With miles of waterfront trails, lush parks, and iconic cultural landmarks like the Milwaukee Art Museum, the city invites you to unwind, explore, and be inspired.

From its historic neighborhoods to its state-of-the-art attractions, Milwaukee provides endless opportunities to experience the best of both worlds—rooted in history yet constantly evolving for the future.

Beyond its beautiful surroundings, Milwaukee is a city with a warm, welcoming atmosphere that reflects the friendliness of its people. Locals take pride in their city's unique blend of Midwestern hospitality and diverse, cosmopolitan energy. Whether you're exploring the city's thriving brewery scene, dining at innovative farm-to-table restaurants, or catching a festival along the waterfront, you'll find that Milwaukee has a relaxed yet vibrant pace, perfect for making lasting connections.

As a growing hub for green innovation and sustainable development, Milwaukee is not just a destination—it's a place where progressive ideas come to life on the shores of one of the world's most magnificent lakes.





Join the Movement for Lasting Change

Be a driving force in the movement to protect and sustain the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin by partnering with us in 2025. Join a passionate community of changemakers, and let's work together to create a legacy for our region. Your partnership isn't just support—it's a chance to be part of something bigger. Dive in, make an impact, and help shape the future of our shared waters!

For more information please contact:

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