

# 2025 CANADIAN FEDERAL PRIORITIES FOR GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE RIVER REGION COMMUNITIES

March 2025



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

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative calls on the Government of Canada (GC) to support the following priorities to safeguard the economic prosperity and environmental health of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region communities:

## Promote Healthy Lakes and Rivers and Vibrant Freshwater Economy

- ✓ Build upon the historic **freshwater investments of C\$ 650 million – including the C\$ 420M for the Great lakes – to promote local economic** activity and traditional Canadian recreational activities like fishing and hunting, working in close collaboration with local governments to implement these funds over the next 10 years
- ✓ Continue to expand which **pollutants are tested** for and measured in Canada’s environment and ensure seamless access to the data for local governments. Pollutants for which more testing and data is needed include **untreated sewage, phosphorous, microplastics/fibers, and PFAS/PFOA**
- ✓ Fully fund region-wide programs and initiatives that address **invasive species and protect indigenous species’ healthy populations**



## Ensure the Sustainable Economic Prosperity of Region Communities

- ✓ Leverage the **bi-national network** of the Cities Initiative to **advocate against the imposition of across-the-board tariffs** on Canadian goods and strengthen the bilateral trade relationship with the United States
- ✓ Leverage federal infrastructure to **implement a blue-green economic corridor** by investing in needed infrastructure over the next infrastructure programming cycles
- ✓ Work with all governments on facilitating a regulatory environment to spur **sustainable economic growth**
- ✓ Collaborate with all governments to develop local and regional policy and funding opportunities to **harness clean, accessible waterfronts, implement clean and renewable energy sources and support innovative blue-green industries** – all while protecting the basin’s freshwater ecosystem
- ✓ Support the **development of shipping and train infrastructure** to alleviate congestion and strengthen supply chains



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CITIES INITIATIVE  
**L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES**  
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

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## Protect Communities, Businesses and Housing through Climate Adaptation

- ✓ Reinststate the federal funding for **shoreline erosion infrastructure** – as was unanimously recommended by the **TRAN Committee** in Fall 2024 – to support critical projects to protect communities along Canada’s freshwater coasts
- ✓ Engage with the **Climate Proof Canada** coalition to guide the next generation of programming, policy and funding. Specifically, the coalition calls on the GC to:
  - Increase federal support for resilience efforts through a **C\$ 2 billion** top-up of the **Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund** in 2025, followed by **C\$ 1 billion** annually thereafter
  - Maintain and expand the **Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program** and establish a dedicated expert centre on freshwater coastal erosion to ensure evidence-based policymaking that supports community resilience
  - Protect **Canadians’ homes, assets and financial security** by establishing a publicly-funded flood insurance program to safeguard against the growing risks of flooding and maintain access to mortgages
- ✓ Harness private capital to enhance resilience funding by tasking government agencies with **developing innovative funding models that leverage partnerships with the private sector**



Lake Erie, ON, Canada

## Invest in Water Infrastructure to Ensure Growth Capacity for Communities, Businesses and Housing

- ✓ Ensure **dedicated, long-term and predictable funding for water**, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure that is not in competition with other needs
- ✓ Provide local governments with **new revenue streams** to make necessary water-infrastructure investments through a new fiscal framework
- ✓ Design federal funding programs so that they cater to a **mix of shovel-ready and longer-term projects** to best address the most pressing needs of local governments
- ✓ Embed **resilience in the new built** infrastructure to establish networks that will be able to withstand the challenges and demands of future generations



## About the Cities Initiative

The Cities Initiative is a multinational coalition of municipal and Indigenous government executives representing communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region who are working to promote economic prosperity and protect our fresh water for the benefit of current and future generations. For more information, please contact Max Hayet at [mhayet@glslcities.org](mailto:mhayet@glslcities.org)

