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Deputy Mayor Paul Ainslie Recognized by Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative with the Impact Award

HAMILTON, Ontario — May 8, 2026 — The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative/Alliance des villes des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent (Cities Initiative) announced that Deputy Mayor Paul Ainslie of Toronto, Ontario has received the Impact Awards in recognition of his outstanding leadership and contributions to advancing Great Lakes protection, championing waterfront revitalization and resilience, and strengthening municipal collaboration and economic transformation across the region.

Deputy Mayor Ainslie was honoured during the Cities Initiative's awards gala at its 2026 Annual Conference, held May 6–8 in Hamilton, Ontario.

"I am truly honored to receive the Impact Award," said Deputy Mayor Ainslie. "Protecting our freshwater resources and building resilient waterfronts is vital for the long-term prosperity of our region. This recognition reflects our shared commitment to collaboration and environmental stewardship across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River System"

This year's conference brought together nearly 300 municipal, Indigenous, industry, and environmental leaders to explore the development of the *Fresh Coast Economic Corridor*, an ambitious vision to position the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region as one of the fastest-growing economic regions in North America.

Throughout the conference, participants discussed how communities can build a strong regional economy by attracting responsible water-centered investment and industry and advancing innovative solutions that improve water quality and enhance climate resilience. The region is home to approximately 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater and provides drinking water to more than 40 million people, making its protection and responsible use central to long-term prosperity.

About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence 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 in our communities and protect our fresh water for the benefit of current and future generations. With more than 425 communities represented, the Cities Initiative is leading the way in advancing the environmental, economic, and social health of the region by addressing issues impacting its residents. In September 2025, the Cities Initiative launched its *Economic Transformation Action Plan: A Blueprint for Economic Growth and Freshwater Stewardship* in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region.

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