



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor Cory Mason Recognized by Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative with U.S. Member of the Year Award

HAMILTON, Ontario — May 8, 2026 — The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) announced that Mayor Cory Mason of Racine, Wisconsin, has received the U.S. Member of the Year Award in recognition of his outstanding leadership and contributions to the organization’s mission of advancing economic prosperity and protecting freshwater resources across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region.

Mayor Mason was honored during the Cities Initiative’s awards gala at its 2026 Annual Conference, held May 6–8 in Hamilton, Ontario.

“This recognition is truly meaningful because it reflects the collaborative work happening across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region,” said Mayor Cory Mason of Racine, WI. “In Racine, we see every day how closely our economy, quality of life, and identity are tied to Lake Michigan. From supporting industry and maritime commerce to protecting water quality and strengthening resilience, this work matters deeply to our community and to the future of the entire region.”

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.

For more information, please contact:

Christine Maydossian | Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative | cmaydossian@mercure.ca