



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor Kevin Ashe of Pickering Joins the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

Toronto, ON – June 8, 2026 – The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) is pleased to welcome Mayor Kevin Ashe and the City of Pickering, ON to its growing coalition of more than 425 local government leaders working to advance economic prosperity across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region while protecting the globally significant freshwater resources that sustain our quality of life.

As a member of the Cities Initiative, Mayor Ashe and Pickering will work collaboratively with members from across the region in Canada and the United States to support healthy lakes and rivers, safe and affordable water for all residents, climate resilient communities, and economic transformation to build the Fresh Coast Economic Corridor from Lake Superior to the Gulf of the St. Lawrence.

Mayor Kevin Ashe of Pickering, ON: “Joining the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is an important step for Pickering as we continue to grow as a dynamic, connected community on the eastern GTA waterfront. As a city that values both economic opportunity and environmental stewardship, we know our future is closely tied to the health of our natural surroundings, especially our waterfront and treasured Frenchman’s Bay – the shimmering jewel of our city. By working alongside municipal leaders across the region, we can help protect vital freshwater resources while ensuring our waterfront remains vibrant, resilient, and accessible for generations to come.”

As the gateway to the east Greater Toronto Area, Pickering (population 118,000) is strategically located where Toronto, York and Durham Regions meet. An award-winning municipality, Pickering is slated for significant economic and residential growth, offering an unparalleled quality of life for those who live, work, and play here. Its dynamic City Centre has been designated by the Province of Ontario as both an Urban Growth Centre and Mobility Hub, and continues to evolve as a preferred destination for creative learning, memorable events, and unique experiences at the heart of a vibrant, connected, and engaged community.

Mayor Mat Siscoe of St. Catharines, ON, Canadian Chair of the of the Cities Initiative: “The Cities Initiative plays an important role in uniting community leaders to strengthen the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region. We’re pleased to welcome Mayor Ashe and Pickering to our growing coalition of local and First Nation governments. At a time of rapid economic and environmental change, collaboration is essential to safeguarding our region’s vital lakes and rivers and ensuring that our region remains a global economic leader. Together, we are advancing the Fresh Coast



Economic Corridor to create new opportunities for our communities and residents and improve the health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.”

Every new member of the Cities Initiative is a testament to the importance that municipal, First Nation, and Tribal governments place on protecting the region’s globally significant watersheds, preparing communities for extreme weather, modernizing aging water infrastructure, and position our CA\$12.72-billion economy to be among the fastest growing in North America.

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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. The Cities Initiative is comprised of a U.S. organization and a Canadian organization. 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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