

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Haldimand County Joins the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative**

**Toronto, ON – September 29, 2026** – The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) is pleased to welcome Haldimand County, 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, Haldimand County 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 Shelley Ann Bentley of Haldimand County, ON:** Haldimand County is proud to join the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and stand alongside municipalities committed to protecting and enhancing one of the world's most important freshwater systems. As a community with nearly 100 km of Lake Erie waterfront, we recognize both the environmental and economic importance of the Great Lakes. Membership in this organization provides an opportunity to collaborate with municipal leaders across the region, share best practices, and advocate for sustainable policies that protect our water resources for future generations."

**Mayor Mat Siscoe of St. Catharines, ON, Canadian Chair 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 Bentley and Haldimand County 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/Alliance des villes des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent is a multinational coalition of municipal, First Nation, and tribal 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.](#)

### **About Haldimand County**

Haldimand County is a predominantly rural, single-tier municipality on the north shore of Lake Erie, within Ontario's Golden Horseshoe region. With a diverse and growing economy driven by agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and energy generation, it is well-positioned to serve major markets across Southern Ontario and beyond.

Complementing its economic strengths, Haldimand is home to nearly 100 km of Lake Erie shoreline, the Grand River, extensive natural areas, and popular outdoor destinations, making it an attractive place to live, work, invest, and explore.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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