



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE MAYORS CONVENE IN TROIS-RIVIÈRES ***Grand Rapids Mayor Elected Chair of Cities Initiative***

Trois-Rivières, Québec (June 19, 2008) – Mayors from nearly fifty local governments in Canada and the United States joined host Mayor Yves Lévesque for the sixth Annual Member Meeting and Conference of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. The mayors selected a new Chair of the organization, called for a new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement with local government involvement in the negotiation and implementation, launched the *Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products Framework*, and passed a number of important policy resolutions at the meeting.

Mayor George Heartwell of Grand Rapids was elected as the 2009/2010 Chair of the organization. Mayor Denis Lapointe of Salaberry de Valleyfield was elected Vice Chair.

“I am looking forward to the year ahead,” said Mayor Heartwell. “Mayor Peterson did some amazing work during her tenure as Chair and I am eager to continue the momentum to advance the Cities Initiative mission.”

During Mayor Lynn Peterson’s term as Chair, the Cities Initiative represented Ontario municipalities to inform the provincial negotiating position for the 2010 Canada Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA). The first ever Great Lakes Summit was held in Toronto on May 5, 2009 where Ontario mayors presented a five-point action plan for collaboration on Great Lakes protection and restoration with the Canadian federal and Ontario governments. Over the last year, Mayor Peterson also led the Cities Initiative in expanding water conservation efforts in a number of cities.

“It has been a very successful year,” said Mayor Peterson of Thunder Bay. “The COA Memorandum of Cooperation process was a huge success and we look forward to continuing to work with our federal, provincial and state partners to ensure the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.”

At the Annual Meeting, the City of Sheffield Lake received the third annual Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award. The award is given to a community with a population of less than 100,000 as seed money for a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence protection and restoration project that balances economic, social, and environmental aspects within the community and that can be used as a best practice in other municipalities. Sheffield Lake received this year’s Wege Award for the City’s work to better manage stormwater and to develop a rain barrel program for its citizens.

Two cities participating in the Cities Initiative *Water Conservation Framework* were also recognized for their outstanding work on water conservation. The City of Kingston was

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Lynn Peterson, Mayor of Thunder Bay, Chair

Richard M. Daley, Mayor of Chicago, Founding United States Chair

David Miller, Mayor of Toronto, Founding Canadian Chair



recognized for innovation on water conservation, and the City of Grand Rapids was recognized for its progress on water conservation. Through the Framework, which was launched in 2007, cities have committed to working towards a 15 percent reduction below year 2000 water use levels by the year 2015. Participants are well on their way towards the 15 percent target, having conserved 82 billion gallons of water since the year 2000.

“It was a great privilege to host this year’s Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative annual conference during our city’s 375th anniversary celebrations,” said Mayor Yves Lévesque. “The mayors’ commitment to the protection of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence is inspiring.”

The 2009 Annual Member Meeting and Conference concluded with a presentation and invitation from Mayor Tom Barrett to the 2010 Cities Initiative meeting and conference in Milwaukee, WI.

For more information on the proceedings from the 2009 meeting and conference, including detail on the Wege Award and Water Conservation Framework recognition, please visit www.glslcities.org/annual2009.htm.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational coalition of 64 mayors and other local officials that works actively with federal, state, provincial, tribal, and first nation governments and other stakeholders to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. For more information, please visit www.glslcities.org.

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