



NEWS RELEASE

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THUNDER BAY MAYOR LYNN PETERSON CHOSEN CHAIR OF GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE *Town of Ajax wins Sustainability Award*

Toronto (July 18, 2008) – At their 5th Annual Member Meeting & Conference, hosted by Toronto Mayor David Miller, mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) chose Mayor Lynn Peterson of Thunder Bay, Ontario, as the 2008/2009 Chair of the organization. Mayor George K. Heartwell of the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan was selected as Vice Chair and Mayor Denis Lapointe of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Québec is the new Secretary/Treasurer.

"I am honored to have been elected Chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. We have a big year ahead of us, and I am eager to work with my colleagues from around the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin to protect our shared waters and to make the municipal voice heard," said Mayor Peterson.

Mayor Peterson succeeds Mayor Gary Becker of Racine, Wisconsin. During Mayor Becker's term, GLSLCI completed a study which found that local government invests more than \$15 Billion annually in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, spearheaded a U.S. Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Clean Beaches Initiative to find the causes of beach contamination in the region and initiated a rapid municipal response last summer to proposed pollution increases to Lake Michigan by British Petroleum.

"Cities are taking positive actions and investing heavily across the basin to protect the world's largest freshwater system," Peterson said. "I am looking forward to working with all orders of government as equal partners to tackle the challenges that threaten the Lakes and River."

Also during the conference, the Town of Ajax, Ontario received the second annual Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award. The Wege award is given to a community with a population of less than 100,000 as seed money for a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence project that balances economic, social, and environmental aspects and that can be used as a best practice in other communities. Ajax received this year's Wege Award for the Town's outstanding efforts to improve their nearshore water quality.



The thirty-three participants in the GLSLCI Water Conservation Framework were also recognized at the conference. 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. Collectively, nearly half of the participants have already achieved a 7 percent reduction.

The 2008 GLSLCI Annual Member Meeting and Conference concluded with a presentation and invitation from Mayor Yves Lévesque to the 2009 GLSLCI Annual Member Meeting and Conference in Trois-Rivières, Québec.

For more information on the proceedings from the 2008 GLSLCI Annual Member Meeting and Conference, including resolutions passed by GLSLCI membership and detail on the Wege Award, please visit www.gslscities.org.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational coalition of 55 mayors and other local officials that works actively with federal, state, tribal, first nation and provincial governments and other stakeholders to advance the protection, restoration and promotion of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin.

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