

Board of Directors Approves 2022 U.S. Federal Policy Priorities

During its mid-year meeting in early February, the Cities Initiative Board of Directors adopted its 2022 U.S. federal priorities, which set the agenda for our outreach to Congress and federal agencies over the course of the year. This includes a suite of specific funding and policy priorities organized in seven categories:

- Remove Obstacles and Ensure the Efficient Administration of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Pass the Build Back Better Act with $550 Billion to Address Climate Change and Other Priorities.
- Safeguard Drinking Water and Advance Equity in Water Services.
- Sustain Great Lakes Restoration and Revitalization.
- Help Great Lakes Cities Strengthen Coastal Resilience and Respond to Impacts from Climate Change.
- Protect the Great Lakes from Asian Carp and other Destructive Invasive Species.
- Strengthen the Great Lakes Navigation System.

The document calls on Congress and the Biden Administration to support priorities that sustain economic recovery and catalyze long-term revitalization of Great Lakes cities. It emphasizes that investing in Great Lakes restoration, water infrastructure modernization, and coastal resilience will help shoreline communities safeguard drinking water, respond to impacts from climate change, revitalize waterfront areas, and accelerate economic growth. The complete document is available on the Cities Initiative website here.

The Board of Directors also approved signing on to a joint statement of common priorities with nine other regional Great Lakes agencies and organizations. The annual statement, online here, presents a powerful, unified voice from diverse groups representing Great Lakes states, cities, conservation and environmental groups, business and industry, tribes and ports and commercial vessel operators.

The Cities Initiative's priorities will be formally released prior to Great Lakes Week in Washington—February 28-March 4—which includes the annual Great Lakes Day Congressional Breakfast Reception (being held virtually again this year) and a series of "coffee hour" sessions each morning focused on Great Lakes priorities and featuring remarks from Members of Congress and administration officials. The Cities Initiative is collaborating on the March 4 session focused on building climate resiliency in Great Lakes coastal communities. To register for the Great Lakes week events, visit the Great Lakes Commission's website here.