MAKING WAVES

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

Announcement of Wege Winner

Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award: The world's largest source of surface freshwater is in peril and needs leadership to protect it. While large cities often have more resources to act, small cities – with populations under 100,000 – often do not. The Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award program awards $5,000 to one small Cities Initiative member city in the U.S. or Canada working to protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River and improve the quality of the water resource for future generations.

This award was originated by the host of the Cities Initiative's 2007 annual meeting, the City of Grand Rapids, with support from the Wege Foundation. The Cities Initiative, in partnership with the Wege Foundation, is proud to continue the tradition of this annual award to encourage environmental stewardship and recognize effort and results.

This year's winner is the City of Marquette, Michigan. The city submitted a proposal for their Lakeshore Boulevard Project that is revitalizing one mile of coastline that will protect vital infrastructure, restore the environment and create both permanent and temporary employment opportunities. In addition, this coastal resiliency project serves as a step-by-step recovery model for other Great Lakes' communities facing record high water levels, shoreline erosion, infrastructure damage and other economic impacts. The city expects to use the funding to construct two ADA accessible boardwalks that will offer improved views and access to Lake Superior.

The former industrial site is being transformed into a naturalized coastal area that will improve the resiliency of the Lake Superior shoreline, protect critical infrastructure, and restore public access to nearly a mile of waterfront while creating 20 acres of public green space. It will also create or restore aquatic and terrestrial habitat that will support numerous fish and wildlife species. The City of Marquette was founded, formed, and defined by its relationship to the lake.

"The City of Marquette is grateful to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative for the $5,000 Wege Award. Our Lakeshore Boulevard reconstruction project along Lake Superior improves vital infrastructure, accessibility of the shoreline, and restoration of the environment. Specifically, these funds are planned to be used towards the construction of two ADA accessible boardwalks in Phase 2 of the project." - Mayor Jenna Smith, City of Marquette

Michael Vandersteen, Chair of the Cities Initiative congratulates the City of Marquette. "The proposal we received is exactly the type of project the Wege Award was meant to support," said Vandersteen. "We look forward to presenting this award formally to Mayor Smith and her team at the AGM."

Congratulations Marquette!