

The 12th Annual Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative Organizational Meeting



MISSISSIPPI RIVER CITIES & TOWNS INITIATIVE ANNUAL MEETING BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA, SEPT. 12-14



Agenda

Title Sponsor:

Unless otherwise noted, all sessions and events are open to all mayors and officially invited attendees.
Meeting services are located within the Radisson Country Inn & Suites, 927 Lake Shore Drive, NE, Bemidji, MN 56601.
Check www.mrcti.org frequently for Annual Meeting Agenda updates.

September 12

Registration

10:00am – 6:00pm, Sanford Center, Main Lobby, 1111 Event Cetner Drive, NE

Shuttle from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to Bemidji

1:00pm – 4:30pm, Travel Coach will meet guests and Mayors at main terminal parking for transport to Annual Meeting host hotel. Please RSVP your seat via the Annual Meeting reservation link at www.mrcti.com

Opening Ceremony & Welcome Reception

Opening Ceremonies, *Sponsored by the Red Lake Nation* [Attire: Casual]

6:00pm – 6:30pm, Red Lake Nation Wellness & Event Center, 15525 Mendota Avenue, Redby, MN 56670

For the first time, a portion of the Annual Meeting will be hosted by a First Nation. Join Mayors, federal officials, and the leaders of the Red Lake Nation at their new state-of-the-art event center for a truly immersive experience into the culture and heritage of the headwaters region. This is a no-alcohol event.

Mayors and guests may gather in the Country Inn lobby at 5:20pm to board buses for a 30-minute ride to venue.

Welcome: HON. JORGE PRINCE
Mayor of Bemidji, MN
MRCTI Host City

HON. DARRELL G. SEKI
Chairman, Red Lake Nation
First Nation Host

Opening: HON. JIM STRICKLAND
Mayor of Memphis, TN
MRCTI Co-Chair

HON. ERRICK SIMMONS
Mayor of Greenville, MS
MRCTI Co-Chair

Ceremonies: Grand Entry: Procession of States & Nations

FIRST NATIONS

Entrance of Princesses and Braves

FIRST NATIONS

Presenting of Staffs & Flags

BEMIDJI VFW POST 1260

AMERICAN LEGION, RALPH GRACIE POST #14

Presenting of State Colors

FIRST NATIONS

Music Presentation

Veterans, Exhibition Songs

*Singing of
of National
Anthems:*

BLAKE STAINES

Department of Music

Bemidji State University

FIRST NATIONS

Anthems of the First Nations

Welcome Reception and Dinner, *Sponsored by the Red Lake Nation*

7:00pm – 8:30pm, Red Lake Nation Wellness & Event Center, 15525 Mendota Avenue, Redby, MN 56670
Join Mayor Prince as he and the MRCTI Co-Chairs open the 12th Annual Meeting of the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative by recognizing and celebrating the First Nations of our sacred river and this beloved land.

Opening:

HON. JORGE PRINCE

Mayor of Bemidji, MN

MRCTI Host City

HON. DARRELL G. SEKI

Chairman, Red Lake Nation

First Nation Host

HON. FARON JACKSON, SR.

Chairman, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

First Nation Host

HON. MICHAEL LAROQUE

Secretary Treasurer, White Earth Nation

First Nation Host

Signing:

MRCTI and First Nations Enter into Commitment for the Mississippi River

HON. JORGE PRINCE

Mayor of Bemidji, MN

MRCTI Host City

HON. JIM STRICKLAND

Mayor of Memphis, TN

MRCTI Co-Chair

HON. ERRICK SIMMONS

Mayor of Greenville, MS

MRCTI Co-Chair

HON. DARRELL G. SEKI

Chairman

Red Lake Nation

HON. FARON JACKSON

Chairman

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

HON. MICHAEL LAROQUE

Secretary-Treasurer

White Earth Nation

Introduction:

BRADLEY HARRINGTON

Director of Tribal Relations

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Remarks:

HON. LYNN TRUJILLO

Senior Counselor to Secretary Haaland

United States Department of the Interior

MRCTI Late Night, *Sponsored by Evolve Creative*

9:00pm – 11:00pm, The Tavern on South Shore, 929 Lake Shore Drive, NE, Bemidji, MN 56601

Join MRCTI Co-Chairs and Bemidji hosts for extra celebration of this historic moment for the Mississippi River Corridor, its people, and its future.

September 13

Registration

7:30am – 5:00pm, Sanford Center, Main Lobby, 1111 Event Center Drive, NE

Opening Breakfast Plenary: The Decade of the American City 2025 – 2035, Sponsored by the White Earth Nation [Attire: Outdoor Casual]

8:00am – 9:00am, Lake View A, Sanford Center, 1111 Event Center Drive, NE

Mayors and guests may proceed directly to the morning venue attached to the host hotel

*Presiding: Bob Gallagher, Mayor of Bettendorf, IA, MRCTI Immediate Past Co-Chair
Phil Stang, Mayor of Kimmswick, MO, MRCTI Missouri State Chair*

Welcome: HON. MICHAEL LAROQUE
Secretary-Treasurer
White Earth Nation

Introduction: HON. GEORGE FLAGGS
Mayor of Vicksburg, MS
MRCTI Mississippi State Chair

Keynote: A New Day for Infrastructure in America, If Cities Can Seize It
HON. JOHN ROBERT SMITH
Chairman
Transportation for America

SESSION I: THE STATE OF RESILIENCE ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, ARE WE GAINING GROUND?

9:15am – 10:30am, Lake View A, Sanford Center, 1111 Event Center Drive, NE

*Moderating: Mitch Reynolds, Mayor of La Crosse, WI, MRCTI Wisconsin State Chair
Jerry Koch, Mayor of Coon Rapids, MN*

Presentation: True Resilience Incorporates Multiple Solutions
DAVID GOLDWATER
Vice President, Stantec

Discussion: HON. JAIME PINKHAM
Principal Dept. Asst. Sec. for Civil Works
U.S. Department of Defense

COL. ERIC SWENSON
Commander
St. Paul District, USACE

ANDREW GOODALL, P.E., PMP
NESP Regional Prog. Mgr.
Rock Island District, USACE

Proposal: Developing A Mississippi River Compact
HON. JOHN HOFFMAN
Minnesota State Senate
Chair, Health & Human Services Com

ALEXANDRA CAMPBELL-FERRARI
Executive Director
Center for Water Sec. & Cooperation

Mayors' Press Conference

11:00am – 11:30am, Visit Bemidji Tourist Center, 300 Bemidji Avenue N, Bemidji, MN 56601

Mayor Prince, Mayor Strickland, and Mayor Simmons will convene a press conference to make several announcements regarding corridor-level developments led by MRCTI.

Mayors and guests may board buses to press conference venue at the Sanford Center. Buses will then continue to the headwaters directly from the press conference for the rest of the day.

Presiding: Jim Strickland, Mayor of Memphis, TN, MRCTI Co-Chair
Errick Simmons, Mayor of Greenville, MS, MRCTI Co-Chair

Introduction: HON. JORGE PRINCE
Mayor of Bemidji, MN
MRCTI Host City

Remarks: RAFAEL PERALTA
North America Director
United Nations Environmental Programme

Announcement of Partnership: MARK ARMEN
Founder and CEO
Replenish: Enterprise Circularity Platform

<i>Announcement of Agreement:</i>	HON. DARRELL G. SEKI Chairman Red Lake Nation	HON. FARON JACKSON Chairman Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	HON. MICHAEL LAROQUE Secretary-Treasurer White Earth Nation
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Persistent Drought: HON. MITCH REYNOLDS
Mayor of La Crosse, WI

Bemidji Shows Us the Mississippi From the Top

MOST INCREDIBLE SIGHTS IN NORTH AMERICA—Experience some of the best outdoor destinations our nation has to offer at the powerful and awe-inspiring birthplace of the mighty Mississippi. Rediscover why we put our mind, body, and strength into this work.

Lunch Plenary: States and Cities Working Together to Leverage Jobs Act/IRA Funding, Sponsored by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

12:45pm – 1:50pm, Lake Itasca Amphitheater and Outdoor Banquet Area [Attire: Outdoor Casual]

Mayors and guests will board buses from the press conference to Lake Itasca State Park. Buses will not return to the host hotel until later afternoon. Formal program at amphitheater will follow lunch.

Presiding: Sharon West Broome, Mayor of Baton Rouge, LA

Welcome: HON. FARON JACKSON, SR.
Chairman, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Introduction: HON. MARK KUZMA
Mayor of Ramsey, MN

Presentation: State & Cities Working Together to Leverage Historic Funding
HON. SARAH STROMMEN
Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources
State of Minnesota

Introduction: HON. BELINDA CONSTANT
Mayor of Gretna, LA
MRCTI Louisiana State Chair

Presentation: The Importance of Subnational Work on the Global Stage
AMBASSADOR NINA HACHIGIAN
Special Representative for City and State Diplomacy
U.S Department of State, Office of Global Partnerships

Tour of the Mississippi River Headwaters

2:00pm – 3:15pm, Mary Gibbs Mississippi Headwaters Center, Shevlin, MN 56676

Mayor Prince, leaders of First Nations, and Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources invite Mayors and guests to experience one of the most powerful and iconic natural marvels of the world – the beginning of the Mississippi.

SESSION II: A NEW ERA FOR WATERSHED-SCALE CITY PARTNERSHIPS

3:30pm – 4:45pm, University of Minnesota Lake Itasca Biological Station, Shevlin, MN 56676

Moderating: Mayor Melisa Logan, Mayor of Blytheville, AR
Mayor Brad Bark, Mayor of Muscatine, IA

Welcome: JEFF ETTINGER
President
University of Minnesota System

Jobs Act, IRA ELIZABETH “NENA” SHAW
Guidance: Director, Resource Conservation and Sustainability Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Announcement: New SRF Technical Assistance Partnership with Quantified Ventures
BECCA TRUEMAN
SRF Watershed Coordinator, Mississippi River Basin
Quantified Ventures

Introduction: RAFAEL PERALTA JENNEY WENDT
North America Director Plastic Waste Reduction Campaign Manager
United Nations Environmental Programme Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative

Presentation: Final Report of First Plastic Pollution Initiative Data Collection Round
PROFESSOR JENNA JAMBECK, PHD
New Materials Institute, Circularity Informatics Lab
College of Engineering, University of Georgia
Morgan Stanley Plastic Waste Resolution Senior Researcher

Announcement: Equipping Cities with Tools They Need for Waste Management Infrastructure
MARK ARMEN
Founder & CEO
Replenish: Enterprise Circularity Platform

Host City Dinner: AN EVENING AT THE TOP OF THE RIVER, *Sponsored by Sanford Health, Paul Bunyan Communications* [Attire: Casual, Business Casual Optional]

6:30pm – 8:00pm, Lake Side Ballroom, Sanford Center, 1111 Event Center Drive, NE

The City of Bemidji, partnering First Nations, and the State of Minnesota invite Mayors of the Mississippi River to gather for an incredible host city showcase dinner where guests will sample timeless local dishes.

Presiding: *Jim Strickland, Mayor of Memphis, TN, MRCTI Co-Chair*
 Errick Simmons, Mayor of Greenville, MS, MRCTI Co-Chair
 Jorge Prince, Mayor of Bemidji, MN, MRCTI Annual Meeting Host City

<i>Welcome:</i>	GARY JOHNSON	TIM TERRILL
	Incoming CEO	Executive Director
	Paul Bunyan Communications	Mississippi Headwaters Board

Announcement: SASKIA PARDAANS
 Senior Advisor
 Infrastructure & Water
 Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Showcase: City of Bemidji Transformative Project
 SAM ANDERSON, PE
 City Engineer, Director of Public Works
 City of Bemidji

MRCI 2021-23 Executive Committee Awards

8:00pm – 9:00pm, Lake Side Ballroom, Sanford Center, 1111 Event Center Drive, NE

VISION, LEADERSHIP, RESULTS are the hallmarks of MRCTI member mayors. Join us in recognizing our best.

2024 Annual HON. SHARON WESTON BROOME
Mtg Preview: Mayor of Baton Rouge, LA
 Immediate Past MRCTI Co-Chair

Special HON. SARAH STROMMEN
Recognition: Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources
 State of Minnesota

<i>Recognition</i>	HON. JIM STRICKLAND	HON. ERRICK SIMMONS	COLIN WELLENKAMP
<i>of 2021-23</i>	Mayor of Memphis, TN	Mayor of Greenville, MS	Executive Director
<i>Exec Comm:</i>	MRCTI Co-Chair	MRCTI Co-Chair	MRCTI

September 14

Registration

7:30am – 10:30am, Sanford Center, Main Lobby, 1111 Event Cetner Drive, NE

Corporate Advisory Board Breakfast, *Sponsored by Stantec, Otter Tail Power Company*

8:00am – 10:00am, Concordia Language Village, Korean Activity Building, Sup sogŭi Hosu, 11380 Turtle River Lake Rd NE [Attire: Casual, Business Casual Optional]

Buses will begin loading at Country Inn & Suites at 7:30am to transport mayors and guests to breakfast venue.

Presiding: Belinda Constant, Mayor of Gretna, LA
Laurie Elliot, Mayor of Newport, MN

Welcome: MARY MAUS KOSIR
Executive Director
Concordia Language Village

<i>Greetings:</i>	DAVID GOLDWATER Vice President Stantec Corporation	TIMOTHY J. ROGELSTAD President Otter Tail Power Company
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<i>Presentation:</i>	<u>Corn Belt Ports – Federal and State Designation Achieved: How Can Cities Benefit</u>	
	ROBERT SINKLER Founder & CEO Riverside Global	HON. MIKE HALPIN State Senator (IL) 72 nd Senate District of Illinois

<i>Announcement:</i>	<u>Chair, Vice Chair, and New Members of MRCTI Corporate Advisory Board</u>	
<i>Transition:</i>	MARK BINSFELD Vice President J.F. Brennan Company Inc. MRCTI CAB Chair	NORA CORLEY Elkay Incoming MRCTI CAB Chair

Remarks: TIM HIGHTOWER
President & CEO
Deconstruction Development Partners

Break, 10:00am – 10:15am

MRCTI Business Meeting

10:15am – 12:00pm, Concordia Language Village, Korean Activity Building, Sup sogŭi Hosu, 11380 Turtle River Lake Rd NE [Attire: Casual, Business Casual Optional]

Mayors will meet in an open-door session to discuss new business brought before the Association. Mayors interested in hosting an annual meeting may also officially list their city as a candidate for the 2026 meeting.

Presiding: Jim Strickland, Mayor of Memphis, TN, MRCTI Co-Chair

Remarks: PROFESSOR BRENDA CHILD
Northrop Professor of American Studies
University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts

Revised Bylaws: Adoption of Bylaw Changes Proposed by Executive Committee

Motion: Enactment of Formal Effort to Pursue Mississippi River Compact
MRCTI membership will entertain a motion to formalize an effort to pursue a Mississippi River Compact for the ten-state corridor that will protect the freshwater resources of the Main Stem and sustain the environmental services provided by such resources.

Introduction: Large-Scale, Multi-City River Cruise Terminal Facility Buildout
MRCTI Mayors will engage in a discussion to use Jobs Act funds available from the Delta Regional Authority and U.S. DOT to plan and implement new cruise terminal and multi-use facilities for our more economically distressed communities.

Elections: MRCTI CO-CHAIRS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Remarks: NEWLY ELECTED MRCTI CO-CHAIRS

Nominations: MRCTI 2026 Annual Meeting Host City Candidates
Nominations will be accepted for a lower stem city to host the 2026 Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee will vote the winning candidate city in February 2024.

Meeting Adjournment

12:00pm

Concordia Bus Tour

12:15pm – 12:40pm, Concordia Language Village Campus

Mayors and guests remaining in Bemidji, for the afternoon as well as those going on the excursion can enjoy a brief bus tour of the Concordia Village campus on their way back to the host hotel. This tour does not require any stops or exits from the bus.

Shuttle to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

12:15pm, Concordia Language Village, Korean Activity Building, Sup sogŭi Hosu, 11380 Turtle River Lake Rd NE

Excursion: Private Boat Tour of Lake Bemidji, Destination Ruttger's Historic Resort, Sponsored by First National Bank of Bemidji, Bemidji Chamber of Commerce [Attire: Outdoor Casual; RSVP to tlumas@mrcti.org]

2:30pm – 7:00pm, Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort, 7598 Bemidji Road, NE, Bemidji, MN 56601



Imagine this spot and this view being your 'finish-line' to an already tremendous experience. Join Mayor Prince as your exclusive guide on-board a private chartered vessel across Lake Bemidji to one of the best kept secrets in the Mississippi River Corridor – Ruttger's historic resort. You will be treated to pre-dinner drinks and snacks before enjoying dinner all while taking-in sweeping vistas like the one above. Mayors and their plus-one only, please. RSVP to Tiara Lumas, MRCTI Operations Manager at tlumas@mrcti.org.

Mayors and their guest will meet in the Country Inn Lobby at 2:00pm to proceed to chartered vessel.