September 12
Registration
10:00am – 6:00pm, Sanford Center, Main Lobby, 1111 Event Center 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: Business 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**
- BEMIDJI VFW POST
- Presenting of State Colors
- FIRST NATIONS
- Presenting of Staffs & Flags
- FIRST NATIONS
- Entrance of Princesses & Braves
- FIRST NATIONS
- Veterans Song, Exhibition Song

Singing of the National Anthem:
- REPRESENTATIVE
- Department of Music
- 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. FARON JACKSON, Sr.
  - Chairman, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
  - First Nation Host
- HON. DARRELL G. SEKI
  - Chairman, Red Lake Nation
  - First Nation Host
- HON. DARRELL G. SEKI
  - Chairman, Red Lake Nation
  - First Nation Host
- HON. MICHAEL FAIRBANKS
  - Chairman, White Earth Nation
  - First Nation Host

**Greetings:**
- HON. MELVIN CARTER, invited
  - Mayor of St. Paul, MN
  - MRCTI Missouri State Chair

**Signing:**
- MRCTI and First Nations Enter into Commitment for the Mississippi River
  - HON. JORGE PRINCE
    - Mayor of Bemidji, MN
    - MRCTI Host City
  - HON. DARRELL G. SEKI
    - Chairman
    - Red Lake Nation
  - HON. JIM STRICKLAND
    - Mayor of Memphis, TN
    - MRCTI Co-Chair
  - HON. FARON JACKSON, Sr.
    - Chairman
    - Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
  - HON. ERRICK SIMMONS
    - Mayor of Greenville, MS
    - MRCTI Co-Chair
  - HON. MICHAEL FAIRBANKS
    - Chairman
    - White Earth Nation

**Introduction:**

**Remarks:**
- REPRESENTATIVE
  - Office of the Secretary
  - 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, Country Inn & Suites, Main Lobby, 927 Lake Shore Drive, NE

Opening Breakfast Plenary, Sponsored by the White Earth Nation, The Decade of the American City 2025 – 2035 [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

Opening: HON. JACOB FREY, invited
Mayor of Minneapolis

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
HON. MIKE MATSON
Mayor of Davenport, IA

Discussion: DAVID GOLDWATER
Vice President
Stantec

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 Committee

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 global-level developments led by MRCTI for the Mississippi River Corridor. 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
                              Replenysh: Enterprise Circularity Platform

Announcement of Agreement:  HON. DARRELL G. SEKI  HON. FARON JACKSON, SR.  HON. MICHAEL FAIRBANKS
                           Chairman  Chairman  Chairman
                           Red Lake Nation  Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe  White Earth Nation
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 Vehicles
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 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, Shelvin, MN 56676
Moderating: Mayor Melisa Logan, Mayor of Blytheville, AR
            Mayor Scott Maddaison, Mayor Clinton, IA

Welcome: JEFF ETTINGER
President
University of Minnesota System

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

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]

5:00pm – 7:00pm, Lake Side Ballroom, Sanford Center, 1111 Event Center Drive, NE

The City of Bemidji, partnering First Nations, and University 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

Welcome: BILL GASSEN
President & CEO
Sanford Health

GARY JOHNSON
Incoming CEO
Paul Bunyan Communications

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

MRCTI 2021-23 Executive Committee Awards

7:00pm – 8:00pm, 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 Mtg Preview:
HON. SHARON WESTON BROOME
Mayor of Baton Rouge, LA
Immediate Past MRCTI Co-Chair

Recognition of 2021-23 Exec Comm:
HON. JIM STRICKLAND
Mayor of Memphis, TN
MRCTI Co-Chair

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

COLIN WELLENKAMP
Executive Director
MRCTI
September 14

Registration
7:30am – 10:30am, Country Inn & Suites, Main Lobby, 927 Lake Shore 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: Business Casual]
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

Greetings: DAVID GOLDWATER
Vice President
Stantec Corporation
TIMOTHY J. ROGELSTAD
President
Otter Tail Power Company

Presentation: Corn Belt Ports – Federal and State Designation Achieved: How Can Cities Benefit
ROBERT SINKLER
Founder & CEO
Riverside Global
HON. MIKE HALPIN
State Senator (IL)
72nd Senate District of Illinois

Announcement: Chair, Vice Chair, and New Members of MRCTI Corporate Advisory Board

Transition: MARK BINSFELD
Vice President
J.F. Brennan Company Inc.
MRCTI CAB Chair
REPRESENTATIVE
Principal
Elkay
Incoming MRCTI CAB Chair

Remarks: TIM HIGHTOWER
President & CEO
Deconstruction 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: Business Casual]
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
Errick Simmons, Mayor of Greenville, MS, MRCTI Co-Chair

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

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 [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.*