

Office of Mayor Charlie Hales City of Portland

October 11, 2013

100 Resilient Cities Challenge Selection Committee:

As the Mayor of the City of Portland, I am pleased to support our City's application to the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities Challenge.

Portland's most significant risk is from an earthquake but the city is also vulnerable to other natural hazards including floods, landslides and urban wildland fire. Extreme heat events threaten personal health and reduce the viability of construction and other outdoor employment. Climate change will make matters worse — Portland's future climate will likely be characterized by hotter, drier summers with more heat waves (increasing the urban heat island effect and wildfires); and warmer, wetter winters (increasing the incidence of flooding and landslides).

Portland uses infrastructure investments and land use planning policies as part of a long-term strategy to mitigate risk. Portland is focusing growth in neighborhood centers located outside of high risk areas. Where risks can't be avoided, we are using zoning and building codes to require measures that reduce risk. We are also committed to protecting and improving Portland's green infrastructure, including streams, tree canopy and innovative stormwater management systems like ecoroofs, bioswales and green streets. These efforts help minimize risks from flooding and cool the city – reducing the impacts from the urban heat island.

Building complete neighborhoods and bringing nature into the city also help us build neighborhood social networks. We recognize that social capital is also an important resource after an emergency, and a measure of our ability to recover following a disaster. Portland's most vulnerable populations include low-income households, communities of color, renters and older adults. These communities are less able to prepare for and recover from the impacts of natural hazards and climate change. A strong component of our resilience planning going forward must be to engage these communities and support them in owning leadership roles in this work.

Portland is a leader among American cities in many ways: land use planning, urban rail investment, bicycle infrastructure and climate change preparation. I believe these efforts increase our resilience and make it possible for us to lead in resilience planning. The City of Portland is committed to becoming a resilient city. I welcome the

opportunity to engage with other resilience leaders across the world as part of the 100 Resilient Cities Network. Thank you for considering our application.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hales

Mayor of Portland

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