



June 11, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the City of Portland, we are excited to apply for membership to the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities. As the Mayor of Portland, I recognize the importance of creating a city that is friendly to those of all ages and abilities. Together, we can prepare Portland for a demographic shift that is resulting in the unprecedented aging of our city and throughout the world.

The City of Portland's commitment to undertake the required steps outlined within the application for the Network will be satisfied by the relationship between Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), the Institute on Aging (IOA) at Portland State University (PSU), and other relevant government offices, including my own. The City and other public jurisdictions within the city of Portland are currently engaged in an extensive revision of the Portland Plan, a 25 year plan that will shape Portland's future. This opportunity to join the WHO's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities is timely and will be synergistic with the Portland Plan's development as we prepare Portland for a burgeoning proportion of older adults.

The following steps will be completed to fulfill the Network's requirements:

1. Establish mechanisms to involve older people in all stages of the Age-Friendly Cities (AFC) process

The City is hosting a series of public meetings, widely attended by people of all ages, aimed at providing guidance to staff in the development of the Portland Plan. In addition, the City provides funding to Elders in Action, an advocacy organization composed of older adults and that includes a commission that advises local officials on aging-related issues. A Commission member from Elders in Action, as well as other older adults, will be asked to serve on the IOA's advisory committee to be formed as part of our commitment to the Network. Through the Portland Plan and the enhanced assessment that will be conducted as a part of the Network (see below), we will continue to reach out to older individuals and persons with disabilities to understand our city from their daily experiences and find ways to enhance the City's livability from their perspective. Public participation is one of Portland's core values, and we will ensure the involvement of citizens who are older and represent the needs, and assets, of older people.

2. Develop a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the city

We feel that we have a distinct advantage in meeting this requirement, as we will be able to build on the original baseline assessment that was conducted by the IOA during the

original Age-Friendly Cities project. Since October 1, 2007 – the launch of the original findings – the City of Portland has used these findings to inform our planning and development efforts. The IOA will continue to partner with pertinent City Bureaus and move forward in conducting additional research at the neighborhood level that utilizes the Age-Friendly Cities basic protocol and framework.

3. Develop a 3-year city-wide action plan based on the findings of this assessment

The development of a 3-year city-wide action plan will occur in conjunction with the Portland Plan. In addition, IOA staff members are currently providing input as members of my Portland Plan Advisory Group. By mid-2011, Portland will develop several “Quick Start” components in the Action Plan aimed to address important issues in our city (e.g., neighborhoods and housing, transportation); these steps will be adopted as part of the Portland Plan by City Council and will serve as the initial direction for improving Portland’s environment (natural and built), economy, and social equity efforts. In conjunction with the IOA, we will develop a specific action plan with “quick start” steps aimed at “Embracing an Aging Portland,” which will focus on important aspects of planning, development, and implementation efforts. This action plan will connect the various efforts and City Bureaus in an attempt to best serve our aging population.

4. Identify indicators to monitor progress against this plan

The City of Portland is aware of the importance of developing indicators and monitoring progress as a way of benchmarking success and making incremental improvements over time. The advisory group to be convened and the research to be conducted by the IOA will assist the City in developing appropriate indicators and monitoring activities. The indicators will allow us to track progress as part of an iterative process of continual improvement in Portland.

The City of Portland is prepared to partner with the IOA at PSU and join the WHO’s Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities in an attempt to make our city a better place for persons of all ages and abilities. We feel that we are in an excellent position to move forward with a synergistic partnership. We look forward to a relationship with the WHO and the other cities within the Network.

Sincerely,



Sam Adams

Mayor, City of Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.