



STATE OF OREGON



Executive Summary

Phase 1 Application – Oregon Rural Resilience Incubator

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development National Disaster Resilience Competition (HUD NDRC)

Submitted March 27, 2015

For more on this application, see Governor's Office link at: www.oregon.gov/gov/Pages/HUD_NRDC_APPLICATION.aspx

Exhibit A: Executive Summary: Every year Oregon experiences “chronic” natural hazard events; flooding, landslides and storms loom large during the winter and the summer-time fire season has been starting earlier and ending later. These chronic hazards have resulted in 19 major disaster declarations in the last 25 years with 40 Federal Emergency Management Agency fire declarations during the same time period. From 2011 to 2013, Oregon experienced three major disaster declarations: two severe storms with flooding and landslides, and one tsunami disaster. Our rural communities, many of which are economically distressed with a high percentage of low and moderate income people, bear the brunt of these reoccurring disaster threats. The more subtle effects from climate change are increasing the flood and wildfire risks in parts of the state, and sea level rise is presenting new risks of coastal flooding. Perhaps more importantly than the chronic natural hazards, Oregon faces an overwhelming risk to future catastrophic hazard events. Oregon will inevitably suffer from a magnitude 9 earthquake triggered by the Cascadia Subduction Zone fault (CSZ) located just 30 to 60 miles off its coast. This offshore earthquake will generate five minutes of strong shaking followed by a powerful tsunami causing extreme damage and loss.

It is for these reasons that Oregon is applying for HUD National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) funds. There is a great need—as well as strong motivation and support—within Oregon for a focused effort that brings together Oregon’s state and local organizations to develop a resiliency strategy for coastal areas. Oregon is known for its strong sense of community and grassroots-style initiatives. These characteristics make for an engaged network of community-based non-profit groups and philanthropic organizations. To date however, there has not been funding or a focused program to strengthen partnerships among these players and

steer them under a unified mission of coastal resiliency. HUD's NDRC provides a perfect opportunity to fill this need for a focused and cohesive coastal resilience program.

If awarded CDBG-NDR funding, Oregon will utilize the Governor's Regional Solutions framework to identify the best and most effective projects to implement a coordinated resiliency strategy, which will be called the *Oregon Rural Resilience Incubator*. Regional Solutions is a public/private planning initiative established in 2011. Comprised of representatives from state government, local agencies and Oregon universities, it aims to solve local community problems through projects that advance economic health, efficient infrastructure systems, resilience, secure housing, and community priorities. This framework will help ensure communities are effectively engaged, and that expertise and other funding resources throughout the state are successfully leveraged.

The *Oregon Rural Resilience Incubator* will be pilot tested in the coastal communities of Brookings and Reedsport. Not only are these communities suffering from the long term impacts of economic divestment due to the decline of Oregon's timber industry, both are also still grappling with the impacts of recent natural disasters. Tsunami wave surges in 2011 and a severe winter storm with flooding and landslides in 2012 caused significant damage in Brookings, particularly to the community's port, sewer system and to residential properties located along a bluff that failed. Major repairs are still needed, but sufficient resources are lacking. Meanwhile, sea level rise is increasing the community's vulnerability to storm surge events, coastal flooding and salt water contamination of its water supply. Reedsport has been devastated by qualifying flood events in recent years. Located just 3 miles inland from the Pacific coast, at the confluence of the Umpqua, Smith and Scholfield rivers, this community has experienced repeated flooding events. Commercial and residential properties have been damaged by these floods, and owners

have been unable to fully repair the substantial damage. The City's limited flood control infrastructure has not been adequate in recent events, raising the concern about more severe damage as the intensity and frequency of heavy rain events increase, and the sea level rise, due to climate change.

Oregon has all of the key elements that will make the *Oregon Rural Resilience Incubator* highly successful. Besides the tried-and-true Regional Solutions framework, the Governor recently formed a Resilience Cabinet to set and guide statewide policy to coordinate resources for disaster resiliency, demonstrating that resiliency is a priority for the state. Meanwhile, the communities of Brookings and Reedsport are enthusiastic, have very clear need and desire to increase their community resilience and have already shown themselves to be highly engaged partners. The NDRC grant would provide much needed resources to these communities, and the communities are prepared to support the program with local participation and other resources.

The *Oregon Rural Resilience Incubator* will allow our target areas to frame their needs and then work closely with partners to identify and implement the most impactful CDBG-NDR eligible projects. Moreover, our rural communities, with their smaller scale, will allow for comparatively rapid prototyping and execution of resilience strategies that can then be successfully replicated for future resilience projects throughout Oregon and elsewhere. The Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD), which has a long history of successfully stewarding HUD CDBG funding to implement infrastructure and housing projects, would be the administering agency ensuring that CDBG-NDR funding is used in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations. CDBG-NDR funds are critical to the physical, social and economic resilience of our rural coastal communities that have and will continue to suffer disproportionately from increasingly extreme disasters.