

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor Dana Williams Joins 45 Mayors and County Leaders Nationwide in Pledge to Create More Resilient Cities

National campaign highlights Park City's leadership and commitment in response to growing extreme weather and energy challenges.

Park City, Utah – June 24, 2013

Mayor Dana Williams has joined 45 mayors and county officials from around the country who have committed to creating more resilient cities, towns, and counties in response to our nation's growing extreme weather and energy challenges. As an Inaugural Signatory of the Resilient Communities for America campaign, Mayor Williams is among the first local elected officials in the nation to showcase his leadership on these key issues testing America's communities.

The national campaign, which launched this month, recognizes that local governments like Park City Municipal Corporation are on the front lines of responding to increasing disasters and disruptions fueled by a changing climate. An unprecedented increase in heat waves, droughts, floods, severe storms, and wildfires have devastated communities nationwide over the past two years and cost America \$188 billion in damages. Communities are also put at risk by unreliable and costly energy, thanks to volatile global prices and aging infrastructure taxed by extreme weather.

"Local governments have a history of taking the lead on climate change action in the U.S.," commented Mayor Dana Williams. "Along with mitigating the degree to which our planet warms, building resilience is a sensible step for communities intent on addressing the challenges we face in the 21st century. Through proactive measures Park City can make prudent investments in resiliency strategies that strengthen our economy, diminish the likelihood and impacts of natural disasters, and maintain the strong social ties that already exist."

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The Resilient Communities for America campaign (www.resilientamerica.org) seeks to champion the work of Mayor Williams and other local elected officials and local governments at the forefront of the emerging national movement to build resilience—and to inspire hundreds more to follow their lead. Local governments can take a wide range of actions to prepare and protect community members, businesses, infrastructure, and natural resources, and allow communities to bounce back faster from disruptions and disasters. Every \$1 spent on disaster risk reduction can save \$4 in recovery and emergency response costs—making resilience efforts a sound investment for our community.

Park City is among the many communities that are immediately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Utah has already experienced observed degradation in snow coverage and snow depth, along with an increase in the percent of precipitation falling as rain instead of snow in recent decades. As local temperatures continue to rise, we risk not only economic losses related to winter sports activities, but it also places much of our cultural identity on the line. Additional climate-related threats for Park City include extreme weather events, heightened risks of wildfire, and impacts to water availability that collectively threaten infrastructure and local quality of life.

In response to these challenges, Park City has already taken a range of cost-effective actions that increase our resilience:

- A standing commitment to sustainability has embedded triple bottom line thinking into how we function as a local government. By understanding the competing demands and converging opportunities that exist across the areas of economic, environmental, and community priorities Park City has embraced holistic decision-making that trends toward resilient policy and project outcomes;
- Avoiding the most severe impacts of climate change is a good place to start for ensuring resiliency. To that end, we are committed to mitigating carbon emissions within our local government operations and also at a community level. From alternative transportation to energy efficiency to solar power, Park City has deployed a variety of measures to decrease our dependence on finite resources and reduce planet-warming greenhouse gases;
- Park City is among a group of local governments in the Intermountain West that is collectively working to understand and prepare for the regional impacts of climate change. Our work in the Western Adaptation Alliance has led to an assessment of local vulnerabilities while also providing exposure to best practices for efficiently building resilience in cost-effective ways.

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In signing the Resilient Communities for America Agreement, Mayor Williams joins 45 leading mayors and county leaders from across the country, including Mayor Vincent Gray of Washington DC; Mayor Kevin Johnson of Sacramento, CA; Mayor John Cook of El Paso, TX; Mayor Dawn Zimmer of Hoboken, NJ; Mayor Kristin Jacobs of Broward County, FL and Mayor Ralph Becker of Salt Lake City, UT.

The campaign Agreement letter they signed lays out three commitments for local elected officials:

- To urge state and federal leaders to support local resilience initiatives and to take meaningful steps to build resilience and security throughout the nation;
- To build community resilience through their own self-defined local actions and goals (emphasizing actions that address climate change, energy security, infrastructure renewal, and economic recovery);
- To share their solutions and success stories with other local governments to help accelerate their progress on resilience.

The Resilient Communities for America campaign is being coordinated by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability USA, the National League of Cities, the U.S. Green Building Council, and the World Wildlife Fund. Learn more at www.resilientamerica.org.

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