



CITY OF PORTLAND
Executive Department
Jon P. Jennings, City Manager

February 15, 2019

Testimony for Public Hearing - Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
LD 172 "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Invest in Smart City Technology"

To the Members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

I regret that I am not able to be there in person to deliver this testimony during the public hearing, however, please accept this written testimony as a testament to the belief that smart city technologies can make a positive impact on quality of life issues for Maine's cities and towns.

The City of Portland kicked off its first smart city project in January 2018 with the implementation of new LED street lights. This project was made possible by our acquisition of streetlights from Central Maine Power. Portland was the first city in Maine to do this under the provision of state law that was enacted in 2013. Buying the streetlights and converting them to LED is providing us with more than \$1 million in savings annually, and reduces electrical use for street lighting by 2.7 million kWh per year. Since this time, we've fielded inquiries from other Maine cities and towns who are interested in replicating the LED street light effort.

The savings realized from this first project has allowed us to embark on additional smart city technology projects. We've installed smart traffic signals in Morrill's Corner that use artificial intelligence to predict and respond to road conditions in real time. Following a few months of use, data shows a 20% reduction in wait times. We're now in the process of deploying this technology in additional intersection to increase traffic flow and reduce congestion. We've also been able to deploy public WiFi spots and Electric Vehicle charging stations, and we're part of a pilot project that could pave the way for the use of a Highly Autonomous Vehicle shuttle in our downtown.

The City of Portland is working to make our community an innovation hub, a place where data and technology are used to improve people's lives and make interactions with city government more efficient. I truly feel that these efforts will make us a more connected city. A city that is more livable, workable, sustainable, and resilient. I talk a lot about how Portland has a "special sauce" when it comes to our quality of life, and our job is to not mess up that special sauce, but to improve on it. Every Maine city and town has its own special sauce as well, and the exciting thing for me is that there are smart city technologies that can help all of us achieve efficiencies, save money, and improve the quality of life for our taxpayers.

I believe that a \$15 million bond will go far in helping communities in Maine implement smart city technologies, thereby spurring economic growth and improving residents and visitors lives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jon P. Jennings
City Manager