



For Immediate Release

**CONTACT: BARBARA BRANCACCIO
(917) 913-3582**

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY LAUNCHES \$8.8 MILLION HOME
ELEVATION PILOT PROGRAM**

NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program's (NYRCR) Project Uplift increases resiliency and provides elevation option for low-to-moderate income homeowners in the 100-year floodplain in Southern Staten Island, as well as Gerritsen Beach and Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn.

Pre-applications are currently being accepted.

New York, NY (April 12, 2016) – The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced Project Uplift, an \$8.8 million home elevation pilot program, which funds elevation costs for eligible low-to-moderate income homeowners in the 100-year floodplain who suffered damage during Superstorm Sandy and are not currently eligible for elevation assistance through other programs. With many such households comprised of families or seniors, the program offers an enduring way to protect life and property while stabilizing flood insurance premiums.

Project Uplift will also demonstrate successful elevation of challenging housing types—including semi-attached homes and weatherized bungalows. The program, which was developed by the NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Program's Staten Island and Gerritsen Beach and Sheepshead Bay Planning Committees, aims to mitigate the impacts of future storms and promote the resiliency of storm-impacted homes in Southern Staten Island, as well as Gerritsen Beach and Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn.

"Home elevation has been an incredibly valuable tool for increasing the resiliency of homes and our coastal communities," said GOSR Executive Director, Lisa Bova-Hiatt. "Through this pilot program, we can explore ways to elevate non-traditional housing structures, while closing a gap in services for low-to-moderate households who are not eligible for assistance through other means."

Project Uplift will be implemented by the St. Bernard Project, a national nonprofit construction management organization that specializes in housing reconstruction that is both affordable and accessible. The organization's work incorporates the dedication and talents of AmeriCorps volunteers from across the country, utilizing these members as client case managers, volunteer coordinators, and construction site supervisors.

Interested homeowners may now file a pre-application with the St. Bernard Project. Program information and applications can be found at: <http://www.stbernardproject.org/project-uplift.html>

Participation in Project Uplift is strictly voluntary. Neither application to the program nor on-site assessment guarantees acceptance and participation.

"We are proud to partner with the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery on this pilot project to elevate homes in Staten Island and Brooklyn," said Thomas Corley, Director of Project Uplift at the St. Bernard Project. "As an organization, St. Bernard Project's mission is to shorten the time between disaster and recovery. Through our post disaster recovery work and our pre-disaster resilience programs across the country—and this home elevation program in particular—our aim is to ensure that fewer properties and lives are damaged or destroyed by future flood events. We look forward to working with the Governor's Office and the residents of Staten Island, Gerritsen Beach and Sheepshead Bay to help make those communities more resilient."

In addition to the \$8.8 million committed to Project Uplift by GOSR, the Board of the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC), has approved a grant of \$1.32 million to elevate additional storm-impacted homes in Staten Island. As the grantee, the Staten Island-based non-profit, Northfield Community Local Development Corporation, Inc., will partner with Project Uplift and assist in elevating additional homes throughout the borough. AHC funds are being made available through the Affordable Home Ownership Development Program.

"Knowing that so many of our fellow Staten Islanders did not have the resources to prepare for future storm risk, elevate their homes and be able to afford the flood insurance necessary to remain in their homes, Northfield LDC sought to meet these needs by working with the NYS Affordable Housing Corporation, the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery and the St. Bernard Project, Inc.," said Michael Giordano, Chair of Northfield Community LDC of Staten Island, Inc. "We are grateful that Northfield LDC can leverage additional resources and, by all of us working together, ensure more Staten Island residents obtain housing stability after the storm."

NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program

Announced by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in April 2013, the NYRCR Program seeks to empower storm-impacted communities throughout the State, helping them to build back better and stronger than before. Altogether, more than 650 New Yorkers served on 66 NYRCR Committees, which have collectively proposed approximately 700 locally-oriented projects. Throughout the eight-month planning process, the program has held more than 650 Planning Committee meetings and more than 250 large scale Public Engagement Events. Funding for both planning and project implementation comes from HUD's CDBG-DR Program.

Established in June 2013, GOSR coordinates Statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its NYRCR Program— as well as its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business and Infrastructure programs— GOSR invests \$4.4 billion made available through HUD's CDBG-DR Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events.

St. Bernard Project

St. Bernard Project's mission is to shorten the time between disaster and recovery by ensuring that disaster-impacted citizens and communities recover in a prompt, efficient and predictable manner. Since its founding in 2006 in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana following the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, SBP has rebuilt homes for more than 1,000 families with the help of 100,000 volunteers in New Orleans; Joplin, MO; Staten Island, NY; Rockaway, NY; Monmouth and Ocean Counties, NJ; San Marcos, TX and Columbia, SC. SBP is deeply

supported by AmeriCorps, which provides 140 members annually to manage worksites and clients, and train the organization's volunteers nationally.

Through its Disaster Resilience and Recovery Lab, St. Bernard Project works to share lessons learned, prevent common barriers to recovery and help communities utilize its standardized, repeatable and proven-effective model to understand and mitigate risks before disaster and recover predictably.

Northfield Community Local Development Corporation, Inc.

Founded in 1978, Northfield Community Local Development Corporation, Inc. of Staten Island strives to improve and advocate for communities— at the business level and beyond. Taking a holistic approach to community development, the organization is focused on the needs of residents and embodies the phrase, “serving the Staten Island community.” Today, Northfield Community Local Development Community serves the entire borough through a wide-array of services.

###