



For Immediate Release

Governor's Office of Storm Recovery Applauds Exceptional Recovery and Resiliency Proposals

Southern Brooklyn Peninsula Lauded for Best Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations during Planning Process



New York, NY (May 14, 2014) – The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today highlighted the efforts of the Southern Brooklyn Peninsula for its exceptional participation in the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program.

Last month, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo named the community (comprised of Brighton Beach, Coney Island, Manhattan Beach and Sea Gate neighborhoods) a winner of the NY Rising to the Top competition– a contest that encouraged storm-impacted communities to develop innovative and effective resiliency plans. Demonstrating the “Best Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations,” the community and the other seven winners will each receive an additional \$3 million to implement components of their proposals. This award is on top of the funding (anywhere between \$3 million and \$25 million) being offered as part of the Community Reconstruction Program.

“The NY Rising to the Top competition embodies the great spirit of communities throughout the State as they work to come back better and stronger than before,” said State Director of Storm Recovery, Jamie Rubin. “Through the Community Reconstruction Program, we employ a community-driven, bottom-up approach that allows us to meet the unique and pressing local needs of New York’s diverse municipalities.”

For the past eight months, a total of 50 communities representing 102 localities throughout the State have been working alongside GOSR, local leaders, State planners and world-class planning firms to devise a series of grassroots proposals that promote recovery and resiliency.

Governor Cuomo announced the competition winners at the 2014 NY Rising Community Reconstruction Conference, which was held on Wednesday, April 23 in Albany. Bringing together hundreds of New Yorkers, the conference publically unveiled the proposed community plans, which were submitted to the State for consideration on Monday, March 31.

“Rebuilding our communities is something that we cannot do from Albany or Washington, rather, we have to do it community by community across the state,” Governor Cuomo said at the time of the conference. “There are certain things that government should do on a top-down, macro level—and we have been doing exhaustive systems redevelopment and are actively preparing citizens across the state by holding emergency preparedness training events and opening the College of Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security. But the way to really build New York back was to go to affected communities and ask them to come together and figure out a plan for what their specific community needed, so that we could fund their vision. Every community felt the storm, but they all felt it differently. The differences, though seemingly minor, can make all the difference in the world. Funding community visions is something that's never been done before and New York has done it amazingly well, tightening the bonds and fabric of communities across the state and better preparing for the reality of the next severe weather event.”

As one of two New York City-regions named a NY Rising to the Top winner, the Brooklyn-based neighborhoods are well-known for their diverse cultures, religions, languages, housing types and economies. Employing a laser-focus on the concept of inclusion, the neighborhoods rallied together with the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program to develop a plan that meets the unique needs and opportunities of the Southern Brooklyn Peninsula. As part of this process, the community aimed to ensure that residents of all ages, income levels and backgrounds would be protected from future storms.

Taking the first steps to achieve this goal, the communities proposed to launch a vocational high school, which would focus heavily on skills needed for the fields of resiliency, sustainability and emergency preparedness. Along with the application of lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy, the school would promote subjects that would better prepare the Brooklyn neighborhoods for changing weather patterns and increasing risks of extreme weather events.

Established in April 2013, the Community Reconstruction Program is funded almost entirely by more than \$600 million of federal funds through the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery program. With Round two of the program now beginning, more storm-impacted communities will embark on the planning process.

The Community Reconstruction Plan for the communities of Brighton Beach, Coney Island, Manhattan Beach and Sea Gate can be found here:

http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/brightonbeach-coneyisland-manhattanbeach-sea_gate_nyrcr_plan.pdf

For more information about New York's Storm Recovery efforts, visit <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov>.

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