



**For Immediate Release**

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY ANNOUNCES \$4.5 MILLION IN IMPROVEMENTS TO MOTT AVENUE CORRIDOR**

*The project aims to make enhancements with resiliency benefits that attract investment and support retail industry in Far Rockaway, Queens*

New York, NY (November 12, 2014) – The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced a \$4.5 million project, utilizing streetscaping along the Mott Avenue Corridor to seed investment, improve the quality of community public spaces, and spur the local economy.

The project, which was first proposed in the City's comprehensive climate resiliency plan, *A Stronger, More Resilient New York*, and further developed by the Rockaway East NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Planning Committee, has long been identified as an opportunity for economic development and retail expansion in a community working to rebound from the physical and economic impacts of Superstorm Sandy. The corridor's higher elevation makes it an ideal location to serve as a relief hub in future emergencies. Leveraging the area's concentration of transportation facilities and transit services, the project would fund streetscape improvements on primary retail corridors that increase resiliency and create a more inviting atmosphere for both residents and businesses.

"Far Rockaway was dealt a physical and economic blow by Superstorm Sandy," said Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. "Making improvements to this key connector will boost economic development, while making the corridor stronger and more resilient than ever before. This strategic initiative is a win for the Far Rockaway community, and exemplifies what our State's recovery efforts are all about."

"Investing in Mott Avenue means investing in our local community and economy, while ensuring that we're better prepared and better protected next time we need to be," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "We're glad to partner with Governor Cuomo and NY Rising to move this and so many other projects forward, as we speed up recovery and ensure a stronger and more resilient New York City."

Over an eight-month period following Superstorm Sandy, Rockaway East was one of 50 communities (representing more than 100 localities) to participate in the State's \$650 million NYRCR Program. Managed by GOSR, NYRCR is a grassroots planning and implementation

process that strives to empower storm-impacted communities to rebuild, while becoming stronger and more resilient.

Altogether, more than 500 participants serve on NYRCR Committees throughout the State, having proposed approximately 600 projects with an aggregate cost of more than \$800 million. Each participating community was allocated between \$3 million and \$25 million to implement eligible projects that incorporate and capitalize on local needs, strengths, and challenges. This past summer, New York State launched "Round 2" of the program, extending the opportunity to 16 new communities.

"Drawing on the strengths and opportunities of each community, our NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program presents endless opportunities for recovery, resiliency and growth," said Executive Director of Storm Recovery, Jamie Rubin. "The Mott Avenue Corridor Project serves as an example of our efforts, and will serve to improve and strengthen Far Rockaway."

"NY Rising and the City of New York have embarked upon a collaborative effort to make infrastructure and critical improvements to the Mott Avenue Corridor, which is a necessary step towards rebounding from Hurricane Sandy," said Senator James Sanders. "The project will help address issues in our community such as poor drainage and backup power which will make our community both safer and more resilient in the future. I am looking forward to the start of the streetscaping project and the new business opportunities and jobs in the district that this will project will create."

"Mott Avenue has been long overdue for a face-lift," said Councilman Donovan Richards. "Making enhancements which improve the resiliency of the corridor only strengthens the Rockaway Peninsula as a whole. I am glad that NY Rising is taking charge of this initiative with the Rockaway East Plans. This will not only better our infrastructure, but it will attract further investment and economic development."

"This funding will not only help our struggling small businesses in the Mott Avenue Corridor, but it will boost Rockaway's economy and help all neighborhood small-businesses get back on their feet post-Sandy," said Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder. "I commend Governor Cuomo and NYRCR for strongly supporting our local businesses and creating a more attractive and welcoming community for our families and visitors to enjoy for many years to come."

"The Rockaway East NY Rising Committee thanks Governor Cuomo for giving the community the opportunity to advocate and fund this project," said Al Moore, Co-Chair of the Rockaway East NYRCR Committee. "Coupled with the other proposed resiliency projects, such as a network of a recovery centers, these improvements will help our neighborhood build back stronger."

"The Mott Avenue Corridor is so important to the Far Rockaway community," said Rockaway East NYRCR Committee Co-Chair, Linda Plummer. "And we thank Governor Cuomo for helping us ensure the success of this Far Rockaway connector, in partnership with the local community. We look forward to the recovery of our entire Rockaway East Community."

GOSR is working with New York City to develop the final scope and approach of this streetscaping project. Streetscape elements would likely include stormwater drainage improvements that address ongoing ponding that occurs at several intersections. Other improvements could include highly efficient LED streetlights with resilient means of backup power that remain functional in a power outage, unified signage and wayfinding, permeable gutters, bike lanes, benches and bike racks. Retail analysis shows a better quality of street experience in Far Rockaway may help attract new businesses and shoppers, thereby improving the mix and quality of retail in the area. This project is aligned with the primary objective of the New York City Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan to "create a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment" and support small businesses.

The Rockaway East NYCRC Planning Committee's Mott Avenue Corridor Project is one of several community-developed initiatives that will be executed through a collaborative City/State partnership. The State will be providing the City with U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding, as well as technical assistance, to implement select NYRCR projects and programs.

"The City's climate resiliency plan and subsequent work has highlighted the need for further investment in Far Rockaway and along Mott Avenue," said Daniel Zarrilli, Director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency. "This project is an important step to building a more resilient Far Rockaway. We're glad to partner with the State on these streetscape improvements."

Established in June 2013, GOSR coordinates Statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business, Community Reconstruction, and Infrastructure programs, GOSR invests more than \$4 billion made available through the HUD CDBG-DR Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events.

For more information go to [www.stormrecovery.ny.gov](http://www.stormrecovery.ny.gov).

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