



*For Immediate Release*

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

*Oakdale and West Sayville Lauded for Innovative and Cost-Effective Financing*



New York, NY (May 14, 2014) – The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today highlighted the efforts of Oakdale and West Sayville for their exceptional participation in the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program.

Last month, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo named the hamlets 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 Innovative and Cost-Effective Financing,” 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."

Located along the South Shore of Long Island, the communities of Oakdale and West Sayville experienced considerable amounts of flooding as a result of Superstorm Sandy. Aiming to institute more stringent resiliency measures, the Suffolk County hamlets have proposed improvements to the Grand Canal Levee that would better protect local residents, visitors and businesses.

"Oakdale and West Sayville will be communities with a 'greener' and more sustainable future with hazard resistant buildings and infrastructure and well-functioning natural systems that can prevent or minimize damage to life and property and the disruption of critical services," states the community vision plan. "The rich history of the communities, the spectacular public and private spaces, emphasizing the importance of the health of our waterways and coastal proximity will guide future development with downtown identities which will focus on the essential character and charm of Oakdale and West Sayville."

Proposing to create a "greener" and more sustainable future, the hamlets hope to draw on a series of public-private partnerships that could leverage public funds to secure private investments. Taking on collaborations such as a bike share, water taxi and a trolley, Oakdale and West Sayville wish to augment the local economy, create a revitalized downtown neighborhood, and restore the waterfront as a recreational and economic asset that is compatible to surrounding land uses and to the natural environment.

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 Oakdale and West Sayville can be found here: [http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/oakdale-westsayville\\_nyrcr\\_plan.pdf](http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/oakdale-westsayville_nyrcr_plan.pdf)

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

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