



For Immediate Release

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**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY ANNOUNCES \$100,000 FROM
HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM ADVANCING SEA GATE BULKHEAD**

*NY Rising Community Reconstruction Committee proposed project receives critical FEMA funds
to protect homes in Sea Gate and Coney Island*

New York, NY (March 25, 2015) – The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced the approval of \$100,000 in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds for the reconstruction of the bulkhead and sea wall destroyed by Superstorm Sandy in the community of Sea Gate, Brooklyn. HMGP funding for Phase I of the Sea Gate bulkhead project will cover costs for engineering, design and permitting. Upon successful completion of Phase I, \$2.7 million in HMGP funding is available through Phase 2 of the project for construction and improvement activities. The bulkhead project was developed by the local NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Planning Committee in Brighton Beach, Coney Island, Manhattan Beach, and Sea Gate and is part of a suite of integrated storm mitigation improvements proposed by the NYRCR Planning Committee to help the community recover and become more resilient in the face of increasingly-frequent extreme weather events. The project complements adjacent coastal erosion efforts the State is undertaking in collaboration with the City of New York and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"The approval of this project is another important milestone, as we continue to implement locally-oriented resiliency strategies through the Community Reconstruction Program," said GOSR Executive Director, Jamie Rubin. "As a result of this undertaking, the communities of Sea Gate and Coney Island will be better equipped to withstand the impacts of future storms, thereby making them better and stronger than ever before."

As part of the proposal, Sea Gate seeks to repair and rebuild its bulkhead and sea wall, which suffered severe damage from Superstorm Sandy in October 2012. Once serving as the main form of protection against erosion, flooding, and storm surges to nearby homes, the infrastructure now faces multiple breaches and breaks, centrifugal cracks, heavy separation of joints, concentric misalignments, and the intrusion of sand and debris throughout the streets, homes, and sewer systems. In most areas, the bulkhead that previously safeguarded the community has been completely destroyed, putting parts of Coney Island and other surrounding neighborhoods at-risk.

Severe flooding and wind damage during Superstorm Sandy left the Sea Gate community without gas and electricity for more than six weeks. The Sea Gate Police Department and Administration buildings were both destroyed, sewer systems and roads were compromised, and nearly 750 homes were damaged, with seven homes needing to be torn down after the storm. The Sea Gate community faced more than \$45 million in damage from the storm.

In June 2013, Governor Cuomo announced a call for HMGP projects that could assist local governments and non-profits to rebuild stronger, more sustainable communities. Authorized by FEMA, and administered by GOSR and New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), the program aims to increase resiliency, mitigate the risks of loss and damage associated with future disasters, and reduce hardship.

To address these issues, Sea Gate strives to implement a system that will fend off surges caused by intense winds (up to 120 miles per hour) for the next 50 years. Known as a Navy Wall System, the network would consist of a large timber and pile wall with interlocking heavy vinyl sheeting to retain and shield land and property. The timber piles would penetrate 15 feet into the ground and would project 10 feet or more above the surface, offering maximum stability. Not only has this system been engineered to resist erosion from severe weather events, but its inclusion of vinyl sheeting is also cost-effective when compared to steel. Above all, it would introduce a better and more effective system to keep nearby residents and community facilities safe.

As one of 45 Round I NYRCR communities, the NYRCR Planning Committee, comprising 14 local residents, business and non-profit leaders, additionally represents the areas of Brighton Beach, Coney Island, and Manhattan Beach. The State has committed up to \$22.3 million in federal Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding to implement eligible projects developed by the Brighton Beach, Coney Island, Manhattan Beach, Sea Gate NYRCR Planning Committee through the State's bottom-up planning process.

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-driven 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.

New York City Councilman Mark Treyger said, "The devastating impact of Superstorm Sandy showed the urgent need to fortify Sea Gate's waterfront and protect homes along the entire peninsula. This multi-million dollar bulkhead project is a vital piece of the City's and State's efforts to ensure that all New Yorkers, especially those in vulnerable waterfront areas, are better prepared for the next major storm. We watched during Sandy as storm waters entered Sea Gate before causing widespread damage across the peninsula, making this project vital to families and residents in neighborhoods across southern Brooklyn. My thanks to the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery for working diligently with local officials and residents to move this important project forward."

David Wynn, President of the Sea Gate Association and NYRCR Brighton Beach, Coney Island, Manhattan Beach, and Sea Gate Committee Member said, "The announcement of \$100,000 for Phase I FEMA funding for the Sea Gate Bulkhead proves how the NY Rising program has responded to the residents of Southern Brooklyn. Superstorm Sandy showed how vulnerable the entire peninsula is and now Governor Cuomo has responded by showing his commitment to the residents of the Southern Brooklyn Peninsula. We applaud and thank the Governor and NY Rising staff for their ongoing support."

Following a Presidential Disaster Declaration, as in the case of Sandy, FEMA provides HMGP funds for states to administer grant programs that support local hazard mitigation planning and

long-term hazard mitigation measures to reduce the loss of life and damage to improved property from natural disasters.

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 the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development’s (HUD) CDBG-DR Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events.

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