



For Immediate Release

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

Southern Tier Lauded for Outstanding Regional Collaboration during Planning Process



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

Last month, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo named the Southern Tier (comprised of Broome County, Tioga County and Sidney) 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 Regional Collaboration,” 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.”

Sitting along the Pennsylvania border, the Southern Tier includes cities such as Elmira, Ithaca, Corning and Binghamton. Banding together to rebuild in a more robust way, the community held a Regional Resiliency Summit in November 2013.

The summit, which provided a platform to teach residents about storm preparedness, recovery and resiliency efforts, featured leading experts in regional mitigation and floodplain management. Throughout the course of the one-day event, attendees had the opportunity to listen to panel discussions, interact with members of the Community Reconstruction team, and learn about the dangers of changing weather patterns.

The counties carried this interactive and collaborative spirit through each stage of the planning process, striving to transform the diverse urban, suburban and rural counties into safe and economically vibrant communities for all residents. By acknowledging and embracing the values, assets and challenges associated with the region’s rivers and tributaries, the Southern Tier can maximize its potential and promote long-term stability and growth.

From computer modeling and stream management in the Susquehanna River Basin to widespread watershed educational efforts, the communities seek to apply lessons learned from previous storms.

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 Southern Tier communities can be found here:

Broome County

http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/broomecounty_nyrer_plan.pdf

Tioga County

http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/tiogacounty_nyrer_plan.pdf

Sidney http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/sidney_nyrer_plan.pdf

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

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