



For Immediate Release

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

East and South Shores of Staten Island Lauded for Approach to Resilient Economic Growth



New York, NY (May 14, 2014) – The Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today highlighted the efforts of the East and South Shores of Staten Island for their exceptional participation in the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program.

Last month, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo jointly named the East and South Shores 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 Approach to Resilient Economic Growth,” 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."

Like many New York City communities, the East and South Shores of Staten Island are diverse, yet unified, bringing together a variety of cultures and possessing a uniquely strong identity. Throughout the planning process, the communities have aimed to address key vulnerabilities, while looking toward a more resilient future.

Illustrating this point, Staten Island strives to identify and assist at-risk businesses, surveying those impacted by Superstorm Sandy. Through the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) competition, "Race for Space," the borough has encouraged businesses to open or expand in vacant downtown storefronts. The communities hope to further this goal through the establishment of an East Shore Local Development Corporation (LDC)— an organization that would enhance commercial districts through marketing, a cohesive retail strategy and financing initiatives.

Paired with the New Creek Bluebelt project, the East and South Shores— which were hit especially hard by Superstorm Sandy— are now working to rebuild and reimagine. Realizing their great importance to the overall stability and success of the borough, these communities aim to bolster support for vulnerable populations, create more resilient housing options and improve coordination between health and social services organizations to reach those in need. Above all else, Staten Island is committed to involving residents and business owners, as it creates a more robust community for generations to come.

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 Staten Island can be found here:

http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/statenisland_nyrcr_plan_66mb.pdf

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

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