



**NY Rising:**

**2012-2015**

**A Report from the  
Governor's Office of Storm Recovery**







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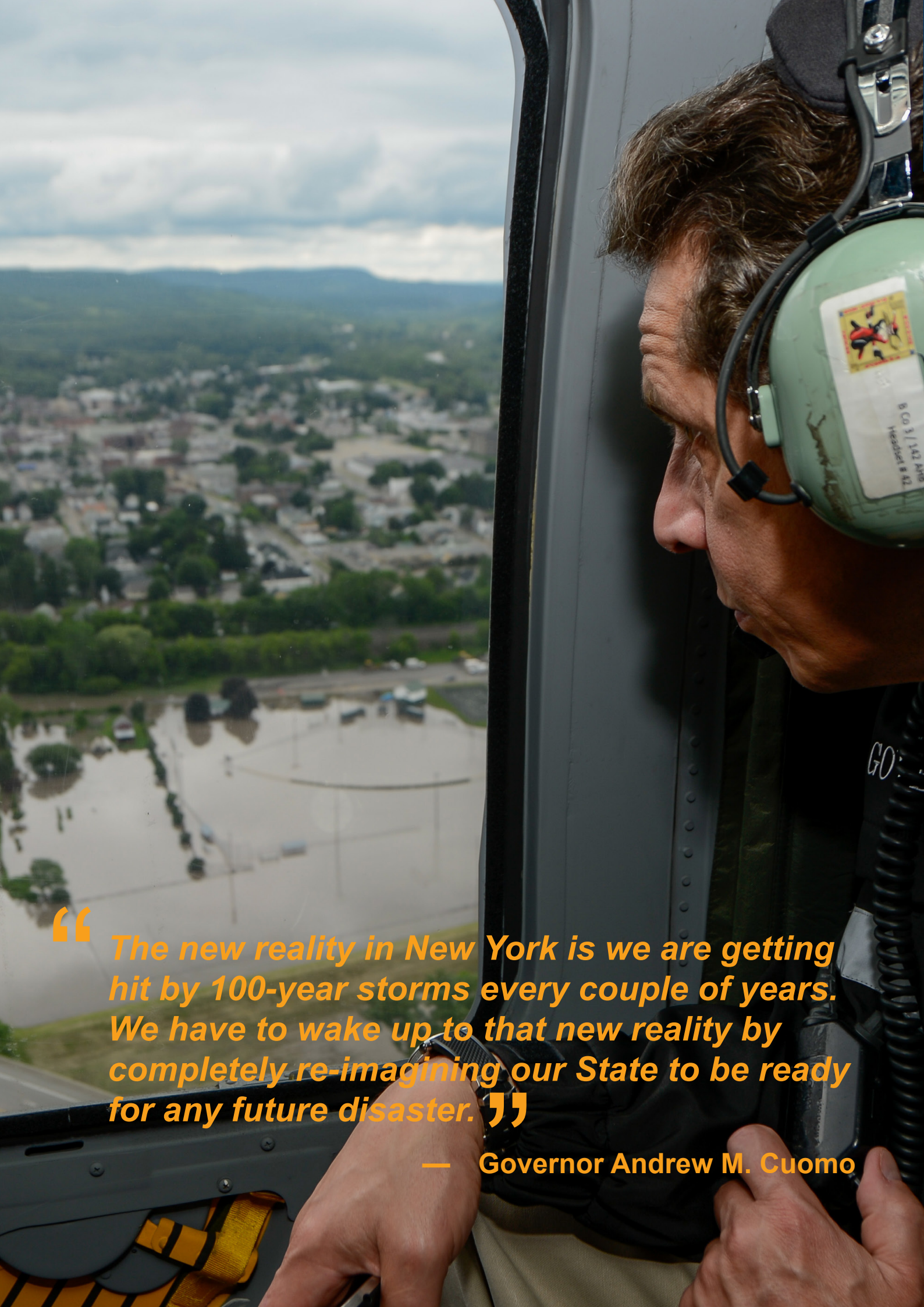
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# Introduction

Established in June 2013, the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) coordinates Statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its comprehensive portfolio of NY Rising programs, GOSR invests \$4.4 billion provided through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events.

From the outset of the State's recovery, GOSR has remained laser-focused on satisfying immediate rebuilding needs, while simultaneously taking steps to facilitate long-term resiliency. Partnering with a number of agencies on the local, State and federal levels, GOSR seeks to leverage all available resources and identify innovative strategies— thereby maximizing benefit to the communities being served.

As a guiding principle of its work, GOSR believes that meaningful recovery must reflect the realities of increasing storms, rising sea levels and climate change. Experiencing multiple federally-declared disasters within a few short years, the State demonstrates a primary commitment to the preservation of homes, the development of stronger infrastructure and the implementation of mitigation measures, whenever possible. Supporting its holistic vision of a more resilient future, the State integrates five overarching themes that distinguish New York's efforts as a new model for emergency response and recovery. The themes, which often strike a balance between urgent action and long-term planning, include: **1) Addressing immediate needs while focusing on the future; 2) Cutting red tape; 3) Coming back stronger than before; 4) Taking a community-wide**

**and regional perspective; and 5) Using a ground-up approach.**

To date, GOSR's efforts have achieved:

- **Assisting 10,100 households with rebuilding and repairs;**
- **Providing \$41.3 million in grants to small businesses;**
- **Helping communities propose 700 projects through the NYRCR Program.**

Through the execution of its NY Rising programs, GOSR invests in four primary areas:

**Housing Recovery**

**Small Business**

**Community Reconstruction**

**Infrastructure**

These efforts, which drive recovery and resiliency on both a micro and macro level, are detailed below.

**“The new reality in New York is we are getting hit by 100-year storms every couple of years. We have to wake up to that new reality by completely re-imagining our State to be ready for any future disaster.”**

**— Governor Andrew M. Cuomo**



# Housing Recovery

As a cornerstone of the State's efforts to assist storm-impacted New Yorkers, GOSR operates the NY Rising Housing Recovery Program to address the pressing and varied needs of homeowners throughout the State. With up to 300,000 units of housing damaged or destroyed as a result of Superstorm Sandy, the State—from the very early stages—made fundamental decisions to speed up the distribution of funds, empower individuals in the recovery process, and provide opportunities to pursue optional resiliency measures. Above all else, through its efforts, GOSR has recognized the extreme importance of balancing two competing priorities: the first, to get families back in their homes as quickly as possible, and the second, to ensure compliance with HUD requirements while providing proper oversight of precious federal resources.

To date, the Housing Recovery Program has awarded 10,100 households with \$543 million to facilitate reconstruction and repairs in single-family homes. Since February 2014, the State has also disseminated \$16.67 million in payments through the Interim Mortgage Assistance (IMA), thereby aiming to supplement funding for families who have accrued further housing costs. Adjusting the program to meet the diverse needs and circumstances of New Yorkers, the Housing Recovery Program also entails the following:

## Elevation Initiative

Incorporating resiliency into every facet of the State's recovery, Governor Cuomo has pledged to not only build back, but build back better and stronger before. This same approach has been applied to Housing Recovery, encouraging homeowners to prepare for the new realities of extreme weather by completing elevation and mitigation projects. To date, GOSR has awarded \$73.4 million for optional elevation purposes. Assistance through the Elevation Initiative comes on top of the other offerings available to single family homeowners, and provides enduring, long-term solutions for New Yorkers residing in storm-impacted areas.

## Buyout & Acquisition Programs

The Housing Recovery Program also manages the State's voluntary Buyout and Acquisition Programs, which were established to purchase the properties of interested homeowners and mitigate areas that regularly put homes, residents and emergency responders at risk. Operating in select neighborhoods on Long Island and Staten Island, the Buyout and Acquisition Programs also improve the resiliency of the larger community by transforming parcels into natural coastal buffers or into more resilient structures, respectively. In the Spring of 2015, the State successfully began bringing such properties to auction, marking a defining moment in the program's evolution. The Buyout & Acquisition Programs have sent 1,198 purchase offers, totaling \$447,895,596 and 868 closings, totaling \$341,167,047.

The Buyout Program has completed 108 demolitions, turning land, which is of high risk to flooding, back to nature. The Acquisition Program sold 134 properties at auction to purchasers for redevelopment and elevation. In addition, seven properties were sold to municipalities to be used as open space. These transactions brought in \$20,730,470 in program income, which will be used for other NY Rising projects.

## Co-Op & Condo Program/ Rental Properties Program

Additional programs are available for the owners of rental properties, and for condominium associations, cooperative boards and individual unit owners. Launched in April 2014, the Rental Properties and Co-op and Condo Programs not only seek to benefit property owners, but also generates essential and affordable housing resources to New Yorkers in need. Since its 2014 launch, the Rental Properties Program has made \$18 million in awards to over 450 applicants, benefitting over 800 rental units. The Rental Program

seeks to benefit both property owners and rental tenants. Specifically, the Rental Program maintains a commitment to assist low-to-moderate income tenants, and has funded the repair and reconstruction of over 200 affordable rental units throughout New York State.



By the Numbers: Housing Recovery

**10,100** households assisted for rebuilding and repairs

**750** households have received \$16.67 million in mortgage assistance

**\$543** million disbursed to single-family homeowners

**134** properties sold at auction as part of NY Rising Acquisition Program.



# Small Business

To date, GOSR has provided \$41.3 million to 945 small businesses, thereby helping them to retain 6,100 positions. Comprising 98 percent of all businesses in New York, small businesses are often at the heart of local communities, providing a source of jobs and contributing to a stronger civic spirit/ identity. Yet, with many mom-and-pop shops lacking the necessary capital to recover from recent storms, these establishments are especially vulnerable to the impacts of manmade and/ or natural disasters. Aiming to get businesses up and running as quickly as possible, the NY Rising Small Business Program renders grants of \$50,000 or more to help replace essential equipment/ inventory, renovate facilities, or provide working capital. Recognizing the tremendous diversity of these businesses (everything from laundromats to ice cream shops, clothing stores, medical offices , marinas and more), GOSR works to provide tailored assistance to help them rebuild and thrive.

Additionally, through Business Mentor NY, the State connects small business owners with mentors representing a cross-section of sectors and industries. To date, more than 2,190 small businesses and 923 mentors are participating in the innovative program, having held 897 engagements and providing one-on-one counsel and guidance for establishments in need.

## By the Numbers: Small Business

**\$41.3** million in grants awarded to 945 small businesses

**2,190** registered small businesses in Business Mentor NY

**6,100** positions retained at businesses as a result of aid

**897** or more mentoring engagements held to date





# Community Reconstruction

In April 2013, Governor Cuomo announced the NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Program— a first-of-its kind participatory program which has grown to assist 124 storm-damaged communities. Recognizing that top-down recovery efforts must be balanced by an assortment of bottom-up strategies, the more than \$700 million program empowers communities to identify local needs and assets, and develop projects through an intensive planning and implementation process.

Across New York State, more than 650 New Yorkers have represented their communities by serving on NYRCR Planning Committees— hosting more than 650 planning meetings and 250 large-scale public engagement events. With an ultimate goal of making communities physically, economically and socially more resilient, the program matches community stakeholders with a team of State experts and planners who can lend support and guidance. The NYRCR Program's outreach has included communities that are traditionally underrepresented, such as immigrant populations and students.

Following two rounds of planning (with the second culminating in March of 2015), the NYRCR Program is now working with local partners to implement recovery and resiliency projects proposed in the final plans. In most cases, projects will be implemented by local governments and qualified nonprofit organizations, with support and technical assistance provided by GOSR.

More than 150 NYRCR projects are now in different stages of implementation, and additional projects proposed in the NYRCR plans will be moved into this phase on a rolling basis. Projects from each of the program's three regions are highlighted below.

## Upstate Amsterdam Generator Project

Working together to increase resilience during future storm events, the City and Town of Amsterdam are seeking to provide emergency power to essential public facilities and shelters through a community-wide backup generator program. In addition to GOSR, the City and Town of Amsterdam are also partnering with the Greater Amsterdam School District and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York to carry out the critical undertaking.

Located on the banks of the Mohawk River, the City and Town of Amsterdam have been repeatedly inundated by flooding, and as a result, accompanying power failures. This was the case when Hurricane Irene devastated parts of upstate New York in 2011— thereby delaying response times and complicating evacuation and rescue activities. Garage doors at the public works facility stopped operating due to the lack of power, making first responders unable to access necessary equipment and supplies. Additionally, the neighborhoods in closest

proximity to the river also suffered damage to homes, creating a need for alternative housing options, including shelters. This situation was compounded by the fact that the neighborhood demonstrates tremendous financial need, with more than 50 percent of the population having low-to-moderate incomes.

The Amsterdam Generator Project will install emergency standby generators at up to three schools, which will function as shelters on both sides of the Mohawk River. The American Red Cross and Montgomery County Office of Emergency Services were consulted regarding the selection of these sites. In addition, the project will install emergency backup generators at the City and Town halls and Department of Public Works facility. The design of this project and environmental review were completed in October 2015 with construction anticipated in Spring 2016. The estimated cost of this project is \$1,800,000 with all funding coming from the NYRCR Program.

## New York City Metropolitan Area NY Rising Community Center Program

GOSR is partnering with community-based facilities and nonprofit recovery service providers to create a network of resilient community-run, neighborhood-based recovery centers where local residents may access ongoing services, as well as gather and obtain information after disasters. The NY Rising Community Center Program has been created at the direct request of storm-impacted communities, through the extensive community engagement of the NYRCR Program. GOSR will fund resiliency improvements at the selected sites, and will provide capacity-building funds to the service providers to ensure the Centers remain connected and respond when needed. The services to be provided at these sites are scheduled to begin in early 2016, and fall into four categories: 1) Response and Recovery Workshops to Address Gaps in Services; 2) Case Management Services; 3) Housing Counseling Services; and 4)

Educational and Counseling Services.

NY Rising Community Centers are not evacuation shelters, nor are they designed to take the place of municipal emergency management response. Community capacity will be built through the NY Rising Community Center Program, to enable neighborhood-based plans and preparedness, which complements official emergency management protocol at the City, State, and federal levels. The selections were made through a competitive Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process announced 2015, based on the specific and unique needs of each participating community as identified in the individual NYRCR Plans, available online at: <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/nyrcr/final-plans>. GOSR intends to do further outreach in select communities to designate additional facilities and service providers.

## Long Island Copiague American Venice Bridges Project

This project will replace two bridges in the American Venice neighborhood of the hamlet of Copiague. The bridges (at East and West Riviera Drive) are the only means of vehicular access to the 600 homes within Copiague Neck, a peninsula that was laid out in 1925 and that contains approximately 363 acres of land. Built one year later in 1926, the bridges currently have a roadway dimension of 19.5 feet and a span dimension over the canals of 38 feet; however, with a load rating of 12 tons, they are incapable of supporting use by certain heavy emergency and rescue vehicles. As a result, first responders were unable to access the neighborhood during Superstorm Sandy, with subsequent recovery efforts continuing to be challenged.

As part of the Copiague American Venice Bridges Project, the bridges— which span the Santa Barbara canal— will be upgraded to a 20-ton load rating for an

estimated cost of \$8 million (provided by the NYRCR Program). Conceived over an eight-month planning process, the project includes input from local residents and neighbors, with more than 300 local residents attracting one such engagement event.

With the American Venice neighborhood located in an extreme and high-risk assessment area, the project aims to increase its future resiliency and provide first responders with unrestricted access during times of disaster. Because of the unique design of the bridges— which were built to resemble those of Venice, Italy— GOSR and the town will continue closely with the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to uphold of their defining characteristics and distinctive railing motif. The Town of Babylon serves as the subrecipient for this project.



# BUILDING BACK BETTER



NY Rising Communities  
Spring Conference

REIMAGINING NEW YORK  
NY RISING COMMUNITIES SPRING CONFERENCE

## By the Numbers: Community Reconstruction

**66** completed Community  
Reconstruction Plans

**650** planning meetings held

**650** planning committee  
members

**250** public engagement  
meetings held



# Infrastructure

New York's transportation, water and energy networks directly impact quality-of-life and economic vitality of the entire State. Leveraging local resources and investing in a range of projects to address key vulnerabilities, the NY Rising Infrastructure Program repairs and transforms the State's most critical systems by reimagining them for a more resilient future, while ensuring that publically held assets are restored with federal funds.

With an enormous scale and both complex and overlapping jurisdictional relationships at play, enhancing the State's infrastructure and addressing damages to public assets is a feat that requires a strong and clear objectives- and leadership- from government. Through the Infrastructure Program, the State allocates funds to address both short-term and long-term recovery needs, with an ultimate goal of making public infrastructure networks better able to withstand extreme weather events. As it works to achieve this goal, GOSR partners with other state agencies and authorities, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Environmental Facilities Corporation (NYSEFC), Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and Federal partners like Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in addition to local, county and municipal governments.

Through close coordination with State and federal agencies, ground-up input from impacted communities and consistency with both an established vision and ongoing planning efforts, GOSR's Infrastructure Program is working to advance projects that will restore New York's critical systems, harden them against future storms, ensure that local and county governments that were storm impacted have recovered these events and generate meaningful economic and quality-of-life improvements for citizens.

**The NY Rising Infrastructure Program encompasses the following:**

## Non-Federal Share “Match Program”

Federal disaster recovery programs require that states and impacted localities pay for a portion of the repair costs for their grant award as a condition of receiving funds. This is known as local match. Following a disaster, the size of the matching funds can exceed a locality's available budget, thereby slowing recovery and stopping localities from undertaking restoration and resiliency projects. While more than 12,000 recovery projects have been approved by FEMA in New York (with approximately 2,000 eligible applicants), many of applicants have few options to cover the local match requirement.

In most cases, federal funds cannot be used to provide a source of local matching funds. However, the U.S. Congress allows HUD to use CDBG-DR funds as a local community's share of the required non-federal match. The FEMA-Public Assistance (PA) Match Program assists governments in New York by providing the non-federal share that eligible applicants (such as local governments and public entities) receive through the FEMA-PA program. By providing the match to address

recovery costs associated with damage sustained as a result of Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee, the NY Rising Match Program helps entities speed the pace of recovery, while maximizing federal resources and minimizing the financial impact of disaster recovery on localities.

The FEMA-PA program is forecast to account for more than \$14 billion in investment in New York State (including local matches). Transportation will likely account for almost 14 percent of that total, with health and hospital investments accounting for another 17 percent, water and wastewater for 12 percent, energy (including investments in the Long Island Power Authority) for more than 21 percent, education almost 3 percent and coastal protection and flood control for more than 10 percent. The remaining funds are provided for other government and community support functions. The local match program is expecting to provide approximately \$350 million for match for entities across New York.

## Critical Infrastructure Program

The Critical Infrastructure Program focuses on investing in a range of projects that will repair, rebuild and mitigate key infrastructure assets in New York, including addressing key coastal protection, transportation, water and wastewater treatment, natural and open space resources and energy systems.

The projects and programs funded by the Critical Infrastructure Program embody all of the overarching themes of NY Rising. They address both short-term recovery needs and long-term resiliency initiatives, and are designed to provide tangible benefits to residents, businesses and communities. These projects are combined with economic development initiatives and Federal and State programs to build communities' social and institutional storm-preparedness capacity. Many projects are regional in nature, as large infrastructure assets often crosses municipal boundaries and serves entire communities or areas. The projects selected also are community-driven, resulting from direct coordination with local stakeholders through the Community Reconstruction Program or through outreach and dialogue with federal, State, and local partners.

GOSR-funded infrastructure projects also incorporate the findings and recommendations of Governor Cuomo's NYS 2100 Commission, which was convened in the weeks after Superstorm Sandy to address long-term climate change. Specific recommendations that drive GOSR's funding for infrastructure projects come from this report and include strengthening existing transportation networks against future hazards; reinforcing critical energy and wastewater infrastructure; and protecting critical coastal assets that act as first lines of defense through measures such as dune, marsh grass and barrier island restoration and bulkhead repairs.

To complement our efforts, GOSR partners with State and federal agencies to facilitate recovery and resiliency programs, including FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the EPA's Sandy Mitigation Loan Program. These projects reflect the same themes as those undertaken under the NY Rising umbrella, and strike a balance between short-term recovery and long-term resilience. The overall approach by these agencies, working together with GOSR, is to provide for immediate recovery and repair of critical systems while implementing strategies that will have an effective, long-lasting

impact on New York's ability to withstand future severe weather events.

Recovery and resilience projects undertaken by State and federal agencies range from large-scale regional initiatives (such as measures to protect a commuter rail line against future storms) to strategies with a more localized impact (such as improving the stormwater management system on a downtown corridor). They are being undertaken across agencies and in close collaboration with local governments, leveraging a variety of funding sources.

For example, NYSDOT completed in 2013 a \$2 million restoration of the entrance roadway to Orient State Park, including reconstruction of undermined pavement and the roadside, replacement of conduits and installation of plantings and dune fencing to protect from future erosion.

In the fall of 2014, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers expects to award a contract to stabilize the Coney Island Public Beach with re-nourishment and construction of groin structures to prevent beach loss. The \$24 million project is being led by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and coordinated with the Sea Gate seawall repair project funded through FEMA.

Looking ahead, Governor Cuomo has announced a \$4.9 billion coordinated transportation resiliency program to enhance the public transportation network's long-term reliability and strength it through priority projects identified by a comprehensive inventory and risk assessment. Projects were developed by the MTA, PANYNJ and the Moynihan Station Development Corporation (MSDC), and will be coordinated with other regional priorities. Key elements include fortifying New York Penn Station's railroad service and providing alternatives for Metro-North users to enter Midtown Manhattan in the event of service disruptions in the Bronx; flood protection of East River tunnels which is used by the Long Island Rail Road, Amtrak and NJ Transit; and mitigation of flood risks at New York City Transit subway yards and bus depots. The FTA awarded the State more than \$1.9 billion in September 2014 to support resiliency projects by the MTA, PANYNJ and New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDO).



Bridge Scour Program

New York’s bridges serve a crucial role in economic development, emergency evacuation, quality-of-life, and help people get to jobs, schools and important day-to-day activities. But many of these bridges were not built to withstand the recent and unanticipated extreme weather events that Sandy, Irene and Lee have created. A particular problem is bridge scour, which is caused by swiftly moving water that removes foundation materials such as sand and rocks from around and beneath bridge abutments, piers, foundations and embankments, compromising structural integrity and making these bridges less safe.

In June 2013, Governor Cuomo called for projects to be funded by FEMA’s HMGP to assist local governments and nonprofit organizations that needed assistance in maintaining these bridges safer, and as a result, rebuilt stronger and more resilient communities. The bridge scour program is the product of a collaboration among the State’s Department of Transportation

(NYSDOT), Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) and GOSR, as well as dozens of local governments across New York.

NYSDOT identified 105 bridges in 78 communities throughout New York that are most vulnerable to repeated instances of flooding. Upgrading these bridges will ensure access to emergency services during and after flood events, and reduce the risk of flooding where bridge openings cause rivers and streams to back up.

In addition to the bridge scour program, GOSR has recommended that an additional \$711.5 million be invested in the HMGP with a focus on making more resilient critical infrastructure assets and restoring natural systems that can make NY safer to future events. \$128 million of this match is being paid through the NY Rising local match program so that local governments do not need to shoulder this financial burden.

Bay Park Wastewater Treatment Facility

The Bay Park Plant is the largest wastewater treatment facility in Nassau County, treating 58 million gallons a day and serving more than 550,000 residents, or 40 percent of the county’s population. During Sandy, engines for the plant’s main pumping system were flooded by nine feet of water, and sewage began to back up and overflow into the streets and basements of some homes in the area. The facility shut down for more than two days, and about 200 million gallons of raw sewage flowed into channels and waterways. Flooding destroyed the plant’s electrical system and compromised other critical systems.

To ensure Nassau County could proceed with urgent repairs to the Bay Park facility, Governor Cuomo announced in October 2013 that the State would provide \$455 million from various federal sources. In January 2014, FEMA approved its largest post-Sandy infrastructure award at the time, \$810 million in

funding to repair and mitigate the plant. The project includes construction of a berm around the entire facility to protect against a 500-year storm and account for predicted sea level rise, as well as elevating and hardening systems and replacing damaged equipment. GOSR will provide the 10 percent match percent for the FEMA PA assistance award and provide an additional \$20 million for a generator for the plant, contributing a total of \$101.6 million to the project. This match combined with the back up generation capacity should ensure that power outages and sewage discharges like those seen after Sandy will not take place again. Work on the perimeter flood protection — which will allow the construction of elevated athletic fields and better stormwater management infrastructure — began in July 2014 and is nearly completed work to provide the electrical and back generator capacity is expected to start this fall.

Local Government Public Infrastructure Program

While most of the large-scale costs of rebuilding are covered by FEMA-PA and other federal programs, local governments in the most impacted counties continue to face unmet recovery needs. Through the Local Government Program, GOSR provides funds to county governments to address unmet recovery needs and/

or to make essential services more resilient. Consequently, GOSR’s Local Government Program aims to ensure that the most critically storm-impacted counties have the support needed to fully recover from recent storm events.

Rebuild By Design

As part of the third tranche of CDBG-DR funding received in 2015, GOSR will be implementing two projects that came from the Rebuild by Design (RBD) Competition. The competition was developed as a result of recommendations made by President Obama’s Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, which identified a need for recovery to develop innovative ways to improve the physical, ecological and economic resilience of coastal areas. The yearlong competition connected world-class researchers and designers with businesses, policymakers and local stakeholders in Sandy-affected areas, and allowed them to better understand how to redevelop their communities using natural means that would strengthen environmental and economic assets and enhance community resiliency from future storms. In June 2014, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan announced the award of \$930 million to the six winning proposals for transforming infrastructure across the New York metropolitan region, two of the projects located off Staten Island and in Nassau County total \$185 million are being implemented by GOSR.

The RBD Competition was administered by HUD, in partnership with the Municipal Art Society, New York University’s Institute for Public Knowledge, the Regional Plan Association and the Van Alen Institute. Lead funding for the effort was from the Rockefeller Foundation, with support from the JPB Foundation, the Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation, the Hearst Foundation, the Surdna Foundation and the New Jersey Recovery Fund.

Living with the Bay: This winning proposal presented a range of integrated solutions that would allow Nassau County residents who live along the Mill River to better address storm water management and live safer along the river, while adding to the economic, ecological and social quality of the region. A total of \$125 million in CDBG-DR funds will be used to implement the “Slow Streams” element of the design which will take place from Hempstead Lake State Park to Hewlett Bay just south Bay Park. The areas around Southern Nassau’s north-south tributaries are threatened both by surge water flooding and stormwater inundation. The winning proposal addresses these threats through a set of interconnected interventions, transforming the Mill River into a green-blue corridor that stores and filters water, provides public space and creates room for new urban development while repairing and restoring marsh and barrier islands that will use natural means to slow wave action and storm surge. These river corridor improvements have co-benefits

that address other challenges, such as water quality, ecological recovery and aquifer recharge.

Living Breakwaters: This winning proposal with a \$60 million in funding for the SCAPE/ Landscape Architecture proposal will build a living breakwater system off of Staten Island using innovative design techniques and oyster reefs. Located near the Tottenville coastline along Staten Island’s South Shore, the breakwaters — rocky sloped walls placed within the water column— can drastically dissipate destructive wave energy will protect communities. The Living Breakwaters proposal uses man-made oyster reefs to help strengthen the breakwaters and break waves, while acting as a filtration system for oceans and providing habitat for finfish, shellfish and lobsters. The project incorporates a collaboration with the Billion Oyster Project (BOP) located at the Harbor School in Governor’s Island. The BOP is a long-term, large-scale plan to restore one billion live oysters to New York Harbor over the next 20 years and to educate thousands of students in New York City about the ecology and economy of their local marine environment.

Although Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee caused widespread destruction and heartache, the events also introduced a fundamental paradigm shift in the way New Yorkers think about, prepare for, and respond to extreme weather. Spearheading a massive recovery with little precedent, New York State set out to institute large-scale coordination among diverse agencies, promote the sharing of critical data, and develop a new model for enhanced storm preparedness and response that could be utilized across the nation.

Three years after Sandy, the State continues to help communities recover, while taking every opportunity to apply lessons learned from recent storms. In the year ahead, as more and more home and small business owners continue to close out of the program, New York intensifies its focus on comprehensive improvements to core systems through the NYRCR and Infrastructure Programs.

Every day, GOSR stands by the pledge to not just get the State back to where it once was, but to help it become even greater. While Mother Nature offers an incredibly majestic beauty, we cannot underestimate the extent of her force. With increasing instances of extreme weather occurring, today is the time to secure New York’s tomorrow.



## Infrastructure (continued)

### LIPA Network Recovery and Resilience

The Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) provides electric service to more than 95 percent of the Long Island and is used by 1.1 million customers in Nassau and Suffolk Counties and the Rockaway Peninsula in Queens. In the aftermath of Sandy, thousands of those customers were left without power for weeks. All 12 of LIPA's substations on the South Shore of Long Island suffered flood damage. Following this outage, under the Governor's leadership, LIPA negotiated a \$1.43 billion settlement with FEMA, at the time the largest award in FEMA Public Assistance history.

Since the storm, LIPA has undertaken substantial repair, recovery and resilience efforts. For example, it has implemented storm hardening measures, installed flood prevention barriers, elevated equipment and made adjustments to switching systems at substations in eastern Queens and Long Island.

For LIPA's future efforts, GOSR has already provided \$80 million in matching funds and is committed to assisting LIPA and its Long Island customers address recovery needs that are tied to FEMA's \$1.43 billion settlement so that funds used to upgrade LIPA's network and result in greater post-storm reliability for the region without rate increases. Planned improvements include a new outage management system and other technology upgrades to identify power outages and restore power faster. Funding will also be used to repair substations and electronic distribution systems.

LIPA plans to spend more than 46 percent, or \$766 million, of its total FEMA award on mitigation measures to protect against future storms, such as strengthening lines, elevating equipment and installing resiliency vegetation.

### Roberto Clemente State Park

Positioned along the Harlem River in the Bronx, the 25-acre Roberto Clemente State Park attracts some 1.3 million visitors a year, offering facilities including a multi-purpose recreation building, pool complex, ball fields, basketball courts, picnic areas and playgrounds. Its 2,200-foot steel bulkhead also provides coastal protection for the adjacent RiverPark Towers residential complex housing for 5,000 people; two public school buildings serving 650 students; a Metro-North Railroad line and a major power transmission line.

During Sandy, Roberto Clemente experienced three feet of flooding, causing severe corrosion of the 40-year-old steel seawall and loss of backfill beneath the park esplanade. Sandy's surge and water made the park unsafe taking away not only recreational areas from residents but leaving the area susceptible to future storms. Portions of the park remain closed, including

sections of the esplanade used by emergency vehicles to respond to calls at RiverPark Towers and on the Harlem River.

In June 2014, the State announced that it would provide up to \$46.5 million in CDBG-DR funds to rebuild the bulkhead with a more resilient design providing better flood protection, storm resilience and green infrastructure that would make the park more natural. That work began this fall and went it is completed it will include a park re-design that improves water access, enhance views and adds recreational facilities. "This project is a reminder that parkland is important for providing places for fun and recreation, but — especially in urban areas — serves as an essential buffer for our communities, providing much-needed open space and often absorbing and mitigating the impact of stronger and more frequent storms," said State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey.



Roberto Clemente State Park  
**Esplanade – Overlook**



## Closing Message from Lisa Bova-Hiatt, Interim Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR)

Three years ago— on October 29, 2012— Superstorm Sandy proved to be a defining moment in the lives of so many New Yorkers. However, out of the loss, hardship and heartache also came a story of great resilience— one that is clearly characterized by the perseverance and vibrant spirit of our State.

Every day, through our comprehensive portfolio of NY Rising programs, the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) works to create a better, stronger New York. Since its founding in June 2013, the agency has made tremendous progress in helping homeowners, small businesses and entire communities to remember, rebuild, and reimagine. And this is just the beginning.

Pursuing two simultaneous tracks, GOSR has effectively stabilized impacted communities and presented solutions to their most pressing and immediate needs. At the same time, we have planned and invested in the long-term resiliency of the State— applying lessons learned from recent storms and moving ahead with a heightened sense of awareness and valuable insight.

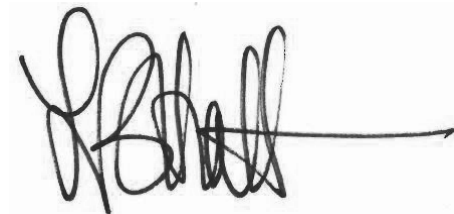
Having received the third tranche of federal money— \$600 million in Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding— in the last year, GOSR remains committed to a future that actively confronts, and prepares for, the new realities of extreme weather. Advancing these aims, we will not settle for simply getting back to where we once were; instead, we need to be even greater.

This means continuing to help eligible homeowners rebuild, make repairs, and institute other required and optional elevation/mitigation measures. It means the innovative disposition of storm-damaged properties through the State's pioneering Acquisition Program. And it means extending continued assistance to small businesses—establishments that have long served as hallmarks of local economies and key sources of jobs.

On a macro-level, our strategy involves thinking critically about infrastructure— whether it be hardening networks to safeguard essential utilities, or implementing green resiliency measures to naturally protect our exquisite shorelines. It entails the utilization of all available resources, including those offered through the federal government's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), to leverage CDBG-DR dollars, reduce risk, and yield more sustainable communities. And it means the implementation of hundreds of outstanding proposals generated through the grassroots NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Program.

Employing a mix of top-down directives with bottom-up strategies, GOSR strives to meet the specific needs of each region, while empowering communities to actively participate in the recovery and resiliency process. Using NYRCR projects to complement other substantial undertakings— such as the NYRCR-proposed dunes project, which will be implemented alongside the Rebuild By Design (RBD) Living Breakwaters Project— we can (and will) use this unprecedented opportunity to embark on new partnerships, increase public awareness, and invest federal resources in a prudent and responsible manner.

Under the continued leadership of Governor Cuomo, New York is transitioning into a more robust State. I can speak for all of us at GOSR when I say that we are enormously proud of what has been accomplished, dedicated to the work still ahead, and incredibly grateful to all those who are helping us realize a more resilient tomorrow.



Lisa Bova-Hiatt  
Interim Executive Director of GOSR





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