



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

****PRESS RELEASE****

Contact: Paul Leonard (212) 788-7259; pleonard@council.nyc.gov [CM Chin]
Andrew Goldston (212) 669-3539; AGoldston@manhattanbp.nyc.gov [BP Brewer]

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LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS URGE FEDS TO AWARD STORM RESILIENCY FUNDING

Resolution introduced today calls on federal government to release \$500 million to help protect vulnerable neighborhoods in Lower Manhattan from flooding

CITY HALL – Council Member Margaret Chin joined Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Council Member Mark Treyger, chairman of the Council’s Committee on Recovery and Resiliency, in support of the city’s application for badly needed federal funding to reinforce Lower Manhattan’s defenses against catastrophic flooding.

The city is seeking \$500 million as part of the National Disaster Resiliency Competition – a two-phase process that will conclude with the awarding of nearly \$1 billion in funds to successful applicants.

Initially, the city’s application covered Two Bridges and Lower Manhattan south of Montgomery Street, but was recently expanded to include the flood-prone areas of Battery Park City and TriBeCa.

Today, Council Member Chin introduced a resolution calling on the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development to accept the city’s application and fully award the funding to design and build resiliency measures to protect these low-lying neighborhoods.

“Residents and business owners still struggling to recover from Sandy’s wrath should not have to wait until the next big storm for the necessary funding to protect our city’s vulnerable coastal communities,” **said Council Member Margaret S. Chin.** “Our city needs this funding immediately if we are to expand and enhance our system of flood protection to save lives, property, and vital infrastructure concentrated in Lower Manhattan. I thank Borough President Brewer, Council Member Treyger and Recovery and Resiliency Director Zarrilli for stepping up on behalf of New Yorkers in the path of future storms.”

“The Lower Manhattan Protect and Connect plan can help us build a more resilient city through integrated coastal protection, enhanced stormwater management, and improved urban design,” **said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “Lower Manhattan is the nerve center of our city. It’s the headquarters of our government, a nexus of commerce and finance, a crucial crossroads for our transit network, and the home of some of our city’s most important historic and cultural sites. Protecting, strengthening, and investing in Lower Manhattan will be a win-win for our city, our state, and the country as a whole.”

“Residents of this city’s coastal communities should not have to wait as long as they already have for the federal government to take the kind of measures necessary to ensure safety and security in the event of another superstorm or extreme weather event. I am troubled by how much time it takes all levels of government to act on a potentially life-and-death issue like resiliency against extreme weather,” **said Council Member Mark Treyger, chair of the Council’s Committee on Recovery and Resiliency**. “We are long past the point of simply talking about these projects. The urgent need to design and build these resiliency measures cannot be overstated, and continuing to wait is not an option. I proudly stand with Council Member Chin and Borough President Brewer in calling for funding to protect lower Manhattan. All of New York City’s most vulnerable areas, including southern Brooklyn, lower Manhattan, southern Queens, the southern part of the Bronx, and across Staten Island, must be fortified against the possibility of another Sandy-like storm.”

"Hurricane Sandy highlighted the city's vulnerabilities to coastal storms and sea level rise. Climate change will only increase our risk," **said Daniel Zarrilli, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Recovery and Resiliency**. "That's why Mayor de Blasio continues to advance the OneNYC resiliency program to prepare for the impacts of climate change and other 21st century threats. To further this program, the city's National Disaster Resilience Competition application presents a compelling and comprehensive vision for resiliency in Lower Manhattan and Two Bridges. In collaboration with the City Council and community residents and stakeholders, we are calling on HUD to continue its close partnership with the city and fund this \$500 million game-changing application, which will help ensure that Sandy funds stay in our region."

“Urgent action is needed if we are going to hold back the worst effects of climate change and rising sea levels. The future of Lower Manhattan depends on our ability to make long term plans and invest sensibly before it is too late,” **said Manhattan Community Board 1 chair Catherine McVay Hughes**. “Manhattan Community Board 1 emphatically supports the efforts of Council Member Chin and Borough President Brewer in support of the City's Natural Disaster Recovery Competition application.”

“During Superstorm Sandy, many of CB 3's 160,000 residents experienced extreme flooding and financial damage. There are also eight major New York City Housing Authority developments directly on the waterfront, putting our most vulnerable residents within the immediate flood zone,” **said Manhattan Community Board 3 chair Gigi Li**. “Currently, there is substantial resiliency planning from Montgomery St. to 23rd Street, but no comprehensive planning for below Montgomery St. CB 3 supports the city’s application to NDRC, which would leverage the city's

funding to fully address the resiliency and recovery challenges of Manhattan's downtown east side waterfront.”

The catastrophic surge from Superstorm Sandy flooded thousands of buildings, businesses and subway tunnels in Lower Manhattan and in other vulnerable coastal neighborhoods. The historic flooding resulted in the deaths of 44 New Yorkers, caused \$19 billion in damages, and left 2 million residents without power for weeks.

The New York City Panel on Climate Change projects that by 2050, coastal flooding is likely to increase in frequency, extent, and height. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, the city’s Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency released a comprehensive plan to rebuild communities and increase resilience citywide in order to prepare for future severe weather events.

According to HUD, applicants to the NDRC are required to submit a detailed proposal for a “resilience-enhancing disaster recovery or revitalization project or program that addresses their identified risks, vulnerabilities, and community development opportunities.”

HUD is expected to announce the successful proposals in January 2016.

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