

One City, Rebuilding Together–Progress Update

Office of Recovery and Resiliency | Office of Housing Recovery Operations



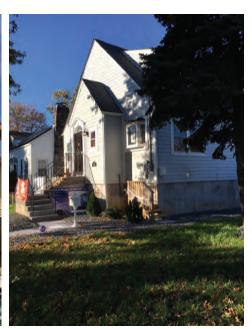


Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery Operations

Introduction







As a result of Mayor de Blasio's overhaul, the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery Operations (HRO) and partners have improved the Build It Back program while moving relief dollars to homeowners and multifamily property owners, expanding eligibility, and ensuring compliance with Federal, State, and City requirements.

This report looks at the progress since Mayor de Blasio's overhaul of Build It Back, the impact of the recommendations outlined in *One City Rebuilding Together*, and the City's plans to complete the Build It Back program.

In spring 2014, Mayor de Blasio overhauled Build It Back, taking a program weighed down by bureaucracy and implementing creative solutions to get relief to homeowners. The City took over direct management of Build It Back centers. It eliminated priority levels. It greatly increased its community presence. By the second anniversary of the storm, the effects of the overhaul were already being felt: 789 homes had started construction and 1,188 had received reimbursement checks.

One year later, the pace of recovery is stronger than ever. Over 60 percent of all homeowners have received a check or are in construction with:

- 1,837 construction starts compared to none at the start of 2014; and
- 5,272 reimbursement checks also compared to none at the start of 2014 valued at over \$100 million.

The City completed our 1,000th construction project on September 14th and we have now completed 1,156 projects.

Key Build it Back Metrics (end of 2013 to present)				
Single Family Homeowners and Co-Op/Condo Owners				
As of	Design Starts	Reimbursement Checks	Construction Stars	Construction Completions
12/31/2013	0	0	0	
4/17/2014	194	30 (totaling \$560K)	9	
10/29/2014	1,606	1,188 (totaling \$20M)	789	182
10/22/2015	4,943	5,272 (totaling \$103M)	1,837	1,156

The progress is the result of many ambitious and creative policy solutions this administration has put forward. Since the overhaul, the City:

- Secured relief for all eligible Sandy impacted residents through \$839 million in additional funding, including a City reallocation of \$200 million, enabling the City to ensure that all homes will be fully repaired, elevated, or rebuilt:
- Restructured case management to focus on customer service, performance, and accountability;
- Expanded access to the program through partnerships with local elected officials, civic associations, and community based organizations including embedding Build It Back staff at the offices of local elected officials:
- Increased flexibility to help homeowners get to "yes" resulting in over 8,700 homeowners deciding how they want to move forward and selecting their program option;
- Launched a temporary relocation assistance program to help applicants pay for housing costs while repairs are being performed; and
- Launched Sandy Recovery Workforce1, in partnership with NYC Department of Small Business Services, dedicating \$3 million to ensure Sandy impacted residents participate in the rebuilding.

In the last year, the City has focused on efforts to accelerate construction. Build It Back is transitioning from application processing to design and construction services. We have quadrupled our design and construction capacity and undertaken several inter-agency initiatives to streamline the construction process. We have brought on three major construction management firms and added the New York City Department of Design and Construction's (DDC) construction management expertise. With this new capacity we began hundreds of elevation designs over the summer and are now in position to move hundreds of more homes into construction.

Getting Homeowners to "Yes"



After the overhaul, our first priority was getting homeowners through the option selection process. Virtually no homeowners selected an option in 2013, despite over six months of an active program. Homeowners repeatedly heard "no" when trying to move through the process and find the right option for their unique situation. Today, owing to the City's direct takeover of the intake and eligibility process and to increased flexibility for homeowners, over 8,700 homeowners have selected an option. Increasing our visibility in our communities has been vital to engaging homeowners. Through partnerships with elected officials and civic organizations, we have conducted extensive outreach in all neighborhoods. Our ability to get homeowners to "yes" has relied on embedding Build It Back case workers in the offices of local elected officials and partnering with non-profits and community organizations to help homeowners move forward in the Build It Back process. Highlights include:

- Conducting Outreach
 - Held over 450 community "embed" sessions in Build It Back satellite centers.
 - Conducted on-the-ground outreach to ensure that any applicant who wanted help could receive it, knocking on over 2,300 doors, making over 1,300 calls, and holding nearly 50 community events.

- Forging Public-Private Partnerships:
 - Provided free legal and financial counseling to over 2,300 homeowners in partnership with the Center for NYC Neighborhoods.
 - Created new policy to allow homeowners in early stages of foreclosure to continue with the program.
 - Partnered with Disaster Case Managers and the New York Disaster Interfaith Services Unmet Needs Roundtable to help distressed homeowners with financial aid.

Expanding Relief



Moving homeowners through the case management stage to option selection meant making it easier for homeowners to understand the options they had before them, and giving greater flexibility while they make important decisions about their future. Homeowners have had an easier time selecting their option in large part because there are more available. We work closely with the federal government to reform policies and add program options. Highlights include:

- Reforming Federal Regulations
 - Created new policies to help homeowners with SBA loans, allowing homeowners who declined loans to have them dropped from duplication of benefits calculations and increasing the reimbursement amounts eligible for those who accepted the loan.
 - Secured HUD approval to have FEMA flood insurance settlements below \$20,000 waived from duplication of benefits calculations.

Accelerating Reimbursement

- Designed new reimbursement procedures to increase the rate of relief by six times.
- Expanded reimbursement to homeowners who rebuilt or elevated on their own and to those undergoing lead remediation or with permitting issues.
- Adding Flexibility for Substantially-Damaged Homes
 - Allowed more applicants with extensive damage to choose between elevation of their current home or complete reconstruction.
 - Made it easier for homeowners who might not have met the threshold of home elevation, but who wanted to elevate their homes, to get this assistance.
 - Gave homeowners opportunities to reevaluate the substantial damage determination for their home by either providing an appraisal, reevaluating the damage assessment, or deferring to a homeowner's own architects and engineers.
 - Introduced a new process for engineers to evaluate homes earlier in the process.
- Developing a Direct Grant
 - Introduced new program option in which Build It Back pays homeowners undertaking moderate repairs to do the work themselves, subject to a final program evaluation once the work is completed.
- Offering Temporary Relocation Assistance
 - Provided financial assistance for housing costs to homeowners displaced by Build It Back construction.
 - Connected homeowners in need of additional move-out assistance with private dollars administered by the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and New York Disaster Interfaith Services.



Implementing New Construction Services

Build It Back is distinct from other disaster relief programs. It delivers completed disaster-resilient homes and multifamily buildings, creating a more resilient and safer community. Housing programs outside of New York City often deliver checks with capped amounts to homeowners to complete the work themselves, the outcome of which is uncertain. Build It Back is designed to avoid the challenges with homeowner-managed construction. Other programs require homeowners to manage site surveys, estimating, zoning analysis, sewer and utility connection, land use approvals, regulatory approvals, title search, and many additional tasks associated with home construction management and coordination, and to pay any costs that exceed a capped grant amount.

By contrast, in Build It Back, the program offers homeowners the option to have all aspects of design, permitting, and construction managed by the City, reducing the risk of work not complying with federal requirements and the potential recoupment of funds from homeowners in the future. Build It Back approves, hires, and manages all contracting firms performing work thereby alleviating the burden on Sandy impacted residents of contractor acquisition, oversight, and management and the risks of contractor fraud, shortcuts, and deficient home quality.

We are pushing more and more homeowners into design and construction each day, aided by increased construction capacity and interagency coordination to improve the construction process. Highlights include:

- Quadrupling Design and Construction Capacity
 - Partnered with Department of Design and Construction to oversee three new Construction Management firms:
 - Selected Construction Managers with specialties in disaster recovery and experience working in their assigned boroughs
 - Doubled the number of design consultations just this summer
- Simplifying Construction Process
 - Worked with City Council to pass a Zoning Text Amendment that eliminates unnecessary zoning restrictions on elevation and resilient building

This summer, the Mayor and First Deputy Mayor convened over a dozen Commissioners to simplify and accelerate the City's pre-construction process for Build It Back projects. The meeting resulted in the "Accelerate Build It Back" initiative, coordinated by the Mayor's Office of Operations, which has already resulted in:

- Conducting soil borings and hydrant flow tests earlier in the process and by block to cover multiple homes;
- Deferral of agency approvals from pre-construction to after construction starts;
- Expedited asbestos permitting;
- Department of Buildings plan reviewers located in the borough; and
- Permission to do off-hour work and inspections.

Multifamily Recovery and Resiliency

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) administers the Multifamily Storm Recovery Program in partnership with three sub-recipients – the Community Preservation Corporation (CPC), the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC). The Multifamily Program provides financial assistance to properties with five or more units. including rental buildings, condominiums, and co-operatives, as well as individual condo and co-op units that sustained damage from Sandy. This financial assistance covers unmet need for repairs and reimbursement as well as comprehensive resiliency improvements in targeted developments.

Over the past year, the Multifamily Program has achieved significant milestones. We have provided assistance to 59 multifamily developments containing more than 7,000 households, more than 60% of which are estimated to be low or moderate income. Overall more than \$37 million in assistance has been committed.

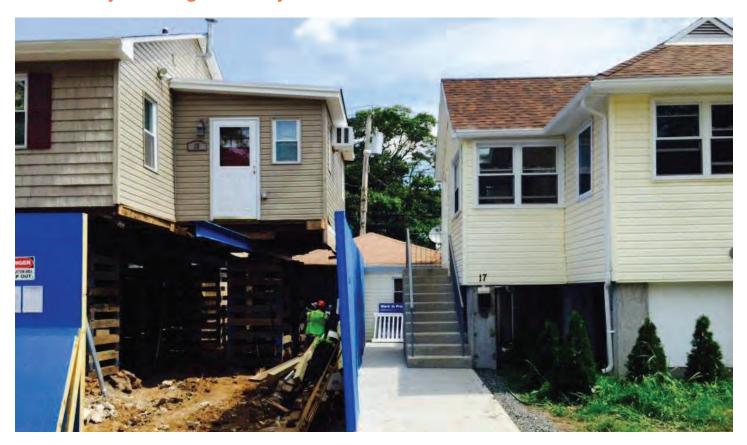
We also have made impactful changes to the Multifamily Storm Recovery Program to increase the pace of assistance. Where bottlenecks occur, we have continually made adjustments to ensure more applicants can be assisted. A few examples of these adjustments include:

- Streamlining closings by eliminating legal hurdles in smaller projects;
- Shortening the timeline for acquiring private insurance information from non-responsive insurance companies; and
- Conducting extensive outreach with unresponsive applicants to ensure they can either move forward or be properly withdrawn from the Program if they are no longer interested in receiving assistance.

In addition, we developed a series of comprehensive guidelines for resiliency retrofits on multifamily developments, which has allowed building owners receiving assistance to move forward more quickly when creating scopes of work. Through the resiliency strategies, we will help protect critical systems in buildings, safeguarding residents and preserving affordable units in more than 40 developments across the city. Resiliency scopes of work include measures such as elevation of utilities, developing flood barriers, and/or installing emergency power measures. These measures were designed in consultation with resiliency engineering experts and provide a comprehensive strategy to protect buildings and residents from future flood events. Because current FEMA guidance does not specifically address retrofit measures for multifamily structures, our resiliency improvements will serve as an important source of data and technical knowledge for New York City's multifamily housing stock located in the floodplain

As of October 2015, we have begun construction on resiliency measures in nine multifamily developments.

Community Housing Recovery



We understand that for recovery to be fully seen in some communities, we need to focus on community housing recovery. In some communities where the housing stock is denser and there are wetland, land use, and infrastructure issues, we need to focus on a block level or a community level approach. To rebuild in these areas requires dynamic engineering and planning solutions. Our new capacity makes this possible. Examples of community-scale recovery include:

- Working on attached homes
 - New construction managers have paid particular attention to this issue, especially in communities like Canarsie, and are developing solutions
 - Facilitated intake where necessary to make attached elevations easier.
- Working in Courts communities
 - New construction managers are developing solutions to construction and infrastructure challenges
 - Created a reworked strategic acquisition program focused on community housing recovery

All of our work is done in partnership with the longer term planning and resiliency efforts led by ORR. DCP, and HPD, including City Planning's Resilient Neighborhoods Studies, ORR's planning for longterm resiliency, and the City's ten-year capital plan for infrastructure projects.

Workforce



Mayor Bill de Blasio attends Sandy Opportunity and Resource Fair in the Rockaways.

Build It Back is committed to providing high-quality employment for New Yorkers, particularly those impacted by Hurricane Sandy. The City invested \$3 million in Sandy recovery workforce development. In March 2015, SBS opened a recovery-dedicated Sandy Recovery Workforce1 Career Center in Coney Island. This past Spring, the City added Sandy Recovery Workforce1 staff at the Far Rockaway and South Shore Staten Island Workforce1 Career Centers. Sandy Recovery Workforce1 matches qualified Sandy-impacted residents to jobs with City agencies and vendors working on recovery efforts, in addition to jobs in the Workforce1 portfolio. Through the Sandy Recovery Hiring Plan contract language, contractors and subcontractors are encouraged to hire 20 percent local residents on recovery projects.

To further incentivize employers to hire local residents, Sandy Recovery Workforce1 offers employment skills training vouchers to Sandy-affected individuals for pre-apprenticeship programs to prepare low and moderate income residents for careers in the unionized construction industry and provide direct entry to construction union apprenticeships.

Build It Back has worked to not only implement contract language that encourages local hiring, but to set up a comprehensive workforce development program that works for both job-seekers and employers. Build It Back recorded our 250th hire from a Sandy-impacted area this summer.

These efforts mean real results for New Yorkers, who we are enabling to take part in our recovery efforts.

As we continue to accelerate Build It Back and get homeowners back in their homes, we are excited to spur not only physical recovery and resilience, but also economic recovery and resilience in New York City's coastal communities.



Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency

Introduction

Hurricane Sandy struck New York City in October 2012, taking the lives of 44 New Yorkers and causing \$19 billion in damages and lost economic activity. It also laid bare pre-existing challenges in our communities and highlighted our vulnerabilities to coastal storms and rising seas.

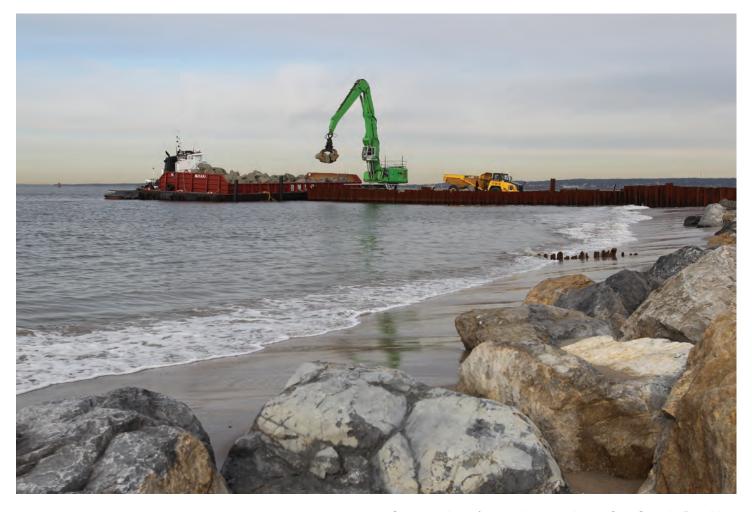
In March 2014, Mayor de Blasio created the Office of Recovery and Resiliency (ORR) to implement a comprehensive \$20 billion resiliency program and prepare the city for the impacts of a changing climate. In April 2015, the office was further strengthened with the release of One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City (OneNYC). OneNYC identified the initiatives necessary to make our neighborhoods, economy, and public services ready to withstand and emerge stronger from the impacts of climate change and other 21st century threats. ORR is actively moving forward on the implementation of this resiliency program with its many partners within and outside of government at all levels.

Hurricane Sandy was a turning point. No longer could we expect that the impacts of climate change would materialize over the next decades. It was clear that we are vulnerable now - and that our risks were growing. We also could not confine ourselves to preparing just for 'the next Sandy.' Our climate vulnerabilities, which extended to increases in heat and precipitation, also exacerbated other challenges, including an increasing population, aging infrastructure, and rising inequality. It is therefore imperative that we not only reduce our own contributions to the causes of climate change, but we also continue to adapt to its inevitable impacts.

Progress Update

The City is safer now than when Sandy hit in 2012. On city beaches in the Rockaways, Coney Island, and Staten Island, we have replenished over 4.2 million cubic yards of sand and installed 9.8 miles of dunes, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and we have rebuilt and upgraded miles of bulkheads across the city. On top of that, the building code has been modified through 16 local laws to improve the resiliency of our buildings. And a range of activity is underway in all five boroughs that are helping us to build a stronger, more resilient New York City. This report presents a sample of that activity.

Strengthening Coastal Defenses



Construction of coastal protection at Sea Gate in Brooklyn.

Hurricane Sandy demonstrated the city's vulnerability to coastal storms. With 520 miles of coastline, New York City has been exposed to these risks since its founding. The City is taking action to protect New Yorkers from coastal storms in these ways:

- Replenished over 4.2 million cubic yards of sand and dunes on city beaches in the Rockaways and Coney Island, in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Constructed 9.8 miles of dunes on Staten Island and in the Rockaways.
- Repaired and upgraded 10,500 linear feet of bulkheads around the city, including in the Rockaways.
- Broke ground on a \$25 million beach nourishment and t-groin project in Sea Gate.
- Rebuilding the Rockaway boardwalk as part of comprehensive coastal protection in the Rockaways.



East Side Coastal Resiliency (Image Credid: Bjarke Ingels Group)

Integral to the City's program is actively engaging communities in adaptation planning. We are actively pursuing funding to implement the city's coastal protection plans outlined here:

- Designing the \$335 million East Side Coastal Resiliency project in Manhattan.
- Awarding a \$100 million contract for the study, design, and implementation for an integrated flood protection system for Red Hook.
- Leveraging \$115 million for coastal resiliency in Lower Manhattan and working to secure more through HUD's National Disaster Resiliance Competition.
- Investing \$580 million on the East Shore of Staten Island, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Securing hundreds of millions in the Rockaways and Jamaica Bay, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Investing \$58 million for the design and implementation for double dune and upland connection system for Breezy Point.
- Evaluating vulnerable shorelines such as bulkheads and revetments for elevation improvements in order to target \$100 million toward the lowest-lying neighborhoods in the city.
- Deploying \$100 million for vulnerable shoreline elevation improvements, such as bulkheads, revetments, targeted toward the lowest-lying neighborhoods in the city.
- Restoring 68 acres of degraded wetlands and piloting an innovative mitigation banking proposal at Saw Mill Creek in Staten Island.
- Supporting long-term resiliency planning at the Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay, a collaboration with the federal government and a CUNY-led consortium of academic institutions.
- Launching planning studies, with community consultation, in Coney Island, Gowanus Canal, Newtown Creek, and New York Harbor for future investments.

Strengthening Emergency Preparation



CERT Volunteer (Photo Credit: NYC Emergency Management Department)

Being prepared for emergencies is a priority for the City. In to better serve New Yorkers, the City has:

- Released new hurricane evacuation maps to better guide hurricane planning.
- Worked closely with hospitals to better prepare for potential evacuations.
- Developed guidance for distribution and fueling of generators.
- Developed new procedures for fueling of critical city fleet vehicles.
- Improving evacuation shelter operations and accessibility.
- Developed new transportation plans that can be activated immediately.
- Developed new pre-written liquid fuels waivers that can be activated immediately.
- Expanded NotifyNYC, ReadyNY, and Know Your Zone campaigns for better public risk awareness.
- Coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other federal resources for quicker response and data collection pre- and post-event.

Strengthening Communities

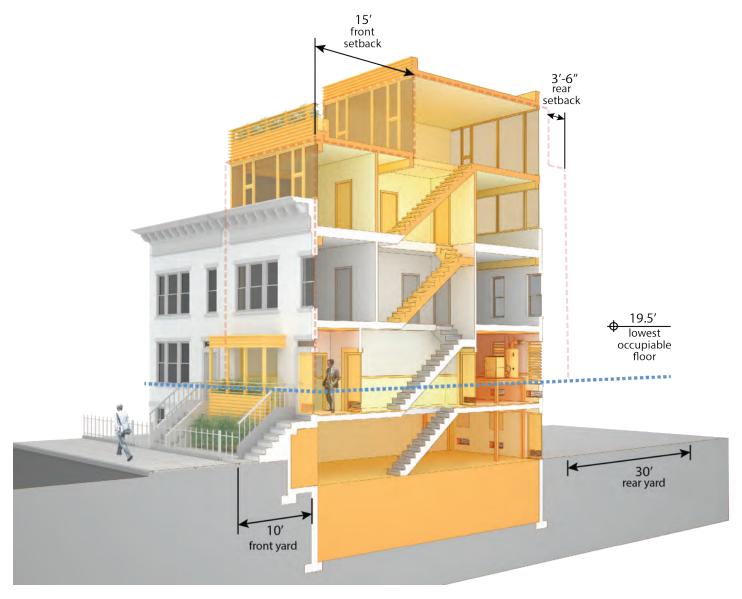


A small business on the North Shore of Staten Island.

The strengthening of social capital and neighborhood planning within a community are also critical to enhancing resiliency. The City is committed to strengthening communities and has:

- Released new climate projections with the New York City Panel on Climate Change to better plan for adaptive climate resiliency measures.
- Developed new hazard mitigation plan to better secure federal funds post-disaster.
- Developed ten Resilient Neighborhood studies to evaluate land use as a tool for promoting neighborhood resiliency.
- Launched resilient retail and resilient industry studies to identify operational and physical measures and zoning tools to promote business resiliency.
- · Secured reforms to the National Flood Insurance Program, and launched two flood insurance affordability studies.
- Provided grants and loans to over hundreds of businesses through the Hurricane Sandy Loan and Grant Program, in addition to the \$28 million in loan and grant assistance to more than 650 businesses through relief programs immediately following Sandy.
- Selecting 11 winning technologies through NYC: Rise, a resiliency technology competition to match innovative technologies with small businesses to ensure their structure and operations are resilient.
- Established NYC Citizen Corps to bring together volunteer programs, community-based organizations, the private sector, and government to promote preparedness at the local level.
- Organized a task force to evaluate how to better involve community-based organizations and houses of worship into long-term resiliency planning.

Upgrading Buildings



Retrofit Strategy for an Attached Home (Image Credit: @ NYC Department of City Planning)

Buildings across the city are subject to ongoing climate risks, particularly the flooding associated with storm surge and sea level rise, as well as wind, rain, and heat. The City has advanced the resiliency of buildings by:

- Securing \$3 billion for resiliency investments in public housing, which are being implemented citywide.
- Implementing a \$60 million multi-family building resiliency program across the city.
- Updating the city's building codes, including 16 new local laws to account for vulnerabilities related to extreme weather and climate change.
- Supporting the Housing Recovery Office, which is rebuilding and elevating thousands of homes across the city.
- Publishing Retrofitting for Flood Risk, a guide by the Department of City Planning for building owners grappling with new building codes, zoning guidance, and changing flood insurance realities.
- Selecting11 winning technologies through NYC : RISE, a resiliency technology competition to match innovative technologies with small businesses to ensure their structure and operations are resilient.

Protecting Infrastructure



Cortlandt Street Tunnel (Photo Credit: @ Metropolitan Transit Authoirty / Marc A. Hermann)

The risks from climate change and other 21st century threats will further challenge the resiliency of the city's aging infrastructure for years to come. The City aims to adapt infrastructure systems in the city and across the region to withstand the impacts of climate change, to ensure the continuity of critical services in an emergency, and to recover more quickly from service outages. To do this, the City has:

- Secured \$1.7 billion for public hospital resiliency investments, which are being aggressively implemented citywide.
- Awarded \$28 million to Staten Island University Hospital for resiliency upgrades at their north and south campus.
- Reopened Ida G. Israel Community Health Center in Coney Island.
- Installed flood upgrades to the Newtown Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant others being planned.
- Rebuilt 128.3 miles of streets in the Sandy-impacted areas.
- Supported the Metropolitan Transit Authority and Port Authority of New York and New Jersey in their efforts to protect our regional transportation assets.
- Engaged the South Bronx community on \$45 million of investments at the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center.
- Initiating the first-ever, comprehensive regional resiliency analysis of New York City's food supply chain network., in collaboration with the New York City Economic Development Corporation
- Reconvened the Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, a regional group of public and private infrastructure operators.

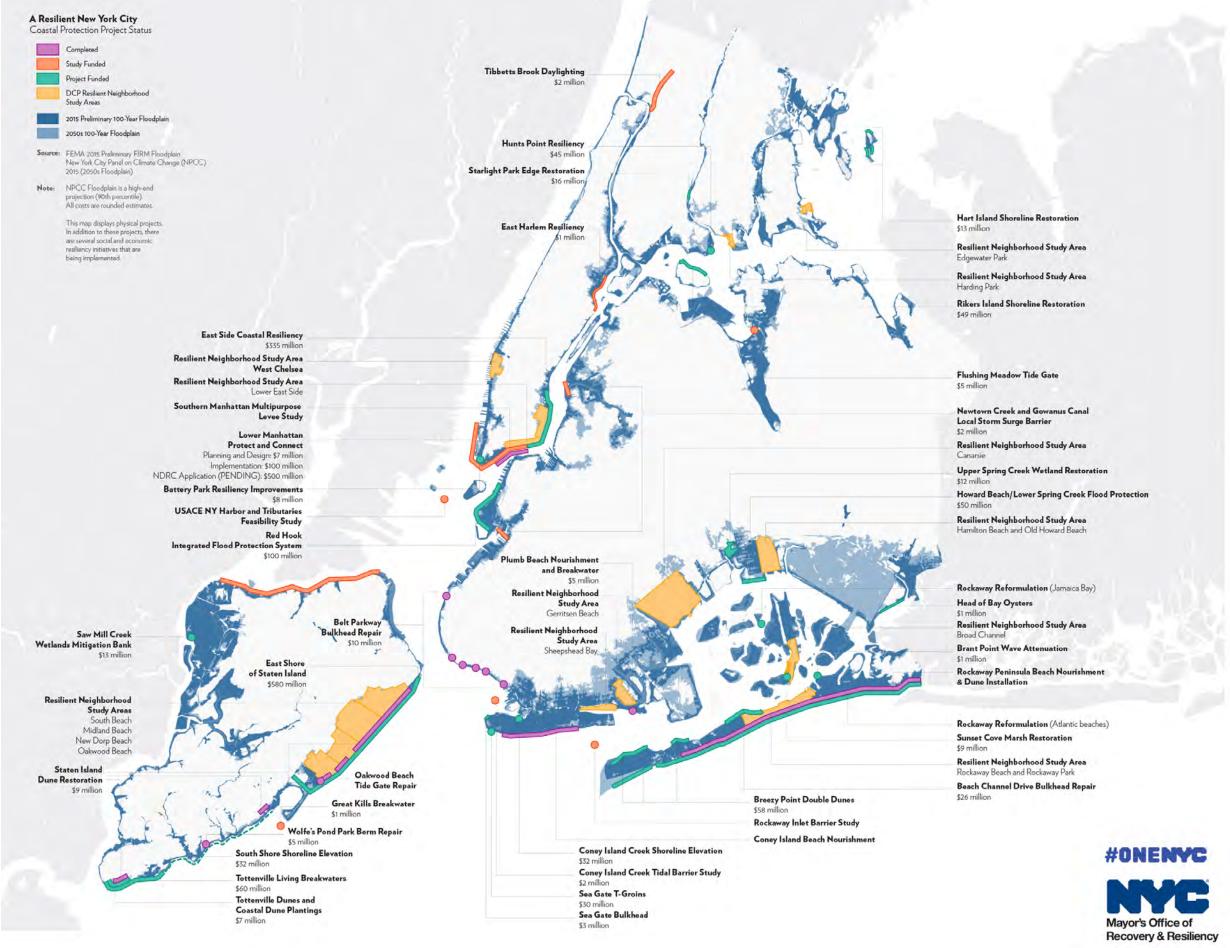
- Reached an agreement with ConEdison to ensure that \$1 billion in resiliency investments are made to protect critical system assets from future climate change impacts.
- Advocated for the Long Island Power Authority to make investments in climate resiliency in the Rockaways.
- Partnered with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to secure funding for two Regional Resiliency Assessments focused on New York City's critical supply chains related to freight infrastructure and the State and City's petroleum supply chain.
- Convened a regional liquid fuels roundtable, with support from the Columbia Center for Global Energy Policy, bringing together partners in government and the private sector to evaluate opportunities to strengthen regional resiliency in the liquid fuels supply chain.
- Invested in green infrastructure, stormwater management and bluebelts across the city to reduce flooding impacts and protect water quality
- Initiated an innovative knowledge sharing agreement with Copenhagen to address intense rainfall events currently causing localized flooding events in each city.

Conclusion

From its earliest days as New Amsterdam to today, New York City has enjoyed its global position due in no small part to its status as a port city and a gateway to America. Hurricane Sandy brought a realization that we needed a new approach to engaging with our 520 miles of waterfront, and that we needed to look beyond Sandy to build our physical, economic, and social resiliency against a range of risks, enhancing the city's capacity to withstand and emerge stronger from the impacts of climate change in all of our neighborhoods.

From our experience, there is no quick fix—no silver bullet—to the risks we face. OneNYC shows this quite clearly. Instead, the solutions we need will come through effective design as well as collaboration with affected residents who call our city home.

The City continues to build on this strong legacy and take the critical steps necessary to build a stronger, more resilient New York.



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