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**A RECOVERY FOR ALL OF US: MAYOR DE BLASIO CELEBRATES
CONSTRUCTION FOR EAST SIDE COASTAL RESILIENCY PROJECT**

Ambitious climate adaptation effort will protect a diverse East Side community, including over 28,000 NYCHA residents

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced the beginning of major construction activities on East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR), a \$1.45 billion climate resiliency project that will extend flood protections and improve open spaces for more than 110,000 New Yorkers – including 28,000 public housing residents – on Manhattan’s East Side, from East 25th Street south to Montgomery Street. These neighborhoods, which were pummeled by Hurricane Sandy in 2012, will now be home to one of the most ambitious infrastructure and climate justice projects in New York City history.

ESCR will include an integrated 2.4-mile system of raised parkland, floodwalls, berms, and movable floodgates to create a continuous line of protection against sea level rise and the growing threat of stronger, more severe coastal storms worsened by climate change. The project involves significant upgrades to public open spaces and amenities, including improved waterfront access through reconstructed bridges and entry points. It will also upgrade existing sewer systems to capture and manage precipitation during storms.

“Building a recovery for all of us means fighting climate change and investing in resilient communities. This project will keep generations of New Yorkers safe from extreme weather, coastal storm, and rising sea levels – all while preserving and improving some of our city’s most iconic open spaces,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “This city will lead the way in preparing for the worst effects of climate change and ensuring we bounce back faster and stronger from the next major storm.”

Construction crews will begin installing an underground wall of structural sheeting in Stuyvesant Cove Park this week and will soon begin pile driving. This work is the first step toward constructing the above-ground floodwall that will protect Stuyvesant Cove Park and ultimately form an integrated flood protection system. Work in East River Park will begin later this year using a phased construction schedule to ensure that roughly half of that park will remain open throughout the duration of the project. Phased construction schedules will be also employed elsewhere to maximize public access to open space and recreational amenities throughout the entire project’s footprint.

“We’re very pleased that we’ve now moved into major construction and are making ESCR a reality,” said **NYC Department of Design and Construction Commissioner Jamie Torres-**

Springer. “At every step through design and approvals we have worked to ensure the constructability of the project while addressing the community’s concerns about access to parkland and construction impacts such as noise and traffic, and the current project achieves that.”

"This project advances climate justice for a diverse, frontline community that is still recovering from the legacy of Hurricane Sandy," said **Jainey Bavishi, Director of the Mayor's Office of Resiliency.** "ESCR is one of the most technically complex resiliency projects anywhere in the world, and its protections will reduce flood risk for 110,000 New Yorkers, including more than 28,000 low-income public housing residents. Years of collaboration among the City, community members, and local leaders have enabled this bold and visionary plan, which integrates flood protections seamlessly into New York City's urban fabric while renewing and strengthening beloved public spaces like East River Park."

“As we look to meet the challenges of climate change, it is vital that we plan for the long-term resilience of our parks and waterfront communities,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP.** “This project will provide lifesaving flood protections for tens of thousands of New Yorkers within a 2.4-mile area while also enhancing parkland along Manhattan’s East Side. Access to quality open space is essential while the ESCR project is underway, and we are happy to deliver new and improved neighborhood park spaces for the community to enjoy.”

The height of the flood protection throughout the project will extend between eight and nine feet above existing grade – a height that will protect the area from future Sandy-like storms for generations to come. The project was designed using future climate projections produced by the New York City Panel on Climate Change (NPCC), an independent body of highly credentialed climate scientists. The project also employs an adaptive design that can accommodate the addition of two more feet of elevation should sea levels in the coming decades rise significantly faster than these projections anticipate.

The City anticipates the project will be complete by 2025. The project is being managed by the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC).

In addition to protecting New Yorkers from coastal storms and sea level rise, the project will also dramatically improve local parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities, including:

East River Park: This 45.88-acre waterfront park will be integrated into the ESCR flood protection system to protect both the park itself and the densely populated neighborhood behind it. The park will be elevated approximately eight feet with new amenities, including upgrades to the amphitheater, ballfields, tennis courts, soccer and multi-use turf fields, track and field, basketball courts, playground, comfort stations and picnic and barbeque areas. Reflecting community input, new passive-use areas will create enhanced spaces with grass and greenery, allowing expanded opportunities for relaxation and reflection along the East River waterfront.

The Tennis House, Track House and 10th Street Comfort Station will be reconstructed. ESCR will also provide new facilities including multipurpose lawns, an additional playground,

additional basketball courts and solar lighting. Enhanced waterfront step-downs and embayments will allow users to better engage with the East River.

New York City worked with local communities to reimagine the entry to the park. Currently, East River Park is primarily accessed by steep, narrow switchback ramps. The Corlears Hook, Delancey Street, and East 10th Street bridges will be replaced with gently sloping entryways that will provide access for all New Yorkers, including those with disabilities. In addition, the Houston Street entry has been redesigned as a gracious, at-grade entry.

Increasing resiliency to climate impacts is a key objective of the project's landscape design. Approximately 2,000 new trees, of fifty different tree species, will be planted in the reconstructed, resilient park. This diverse palette of species were selected for their ability to withstand salt spray, increased precipitation, strong winds and extreme weather.

Corlears Hook Park: This 4.36-acre park is connected to East River Park via the Corlears Hook Bridge. The bridge will be redesigned and reconstructed to accommodate universal access from both sides. Work will include regrading and aligning the shared use path, upgrading utilities, and improving landscaping in the park, including new tree canopy and flowering trees.

Murphy Brothers Playground: This 1.27-acre park will receive updated recreation facilities and be protected from future coastal storms and sea level rise with the installation of flood protection along its edge. Work will include a reconstructed playground, basketball court, new synthetic turf ballfields, a new dog run, a new power source for the Little League scoreboard, and landscaping.

Stuyvesant Cove Park: This 1.9-acre waterfront park will be updated to integrate a combination of floodwalls and floodgates along its western edge. The park's planting beds will be raised where possible to keep tree roots out of the range of future sea level rise. New irrigation systems will be installed. The waterfront esplanade will receive enlarged paving and planting areas as well as new furnishings and energy-efficient LED lights. At the northern end of the park, the Solar One Environmental Education Center will be rebuilt and expanded in a separate project managed by the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

Asser Levy Playground: This 2.44-acre park at the northern end of the project area will be rebuilt with extensive landscaping to incorporate a floodwall along the northern and eastern fence line of the Asser Levy Recreation Center, as well as a floodgate to maintain the connection between the playground and the Asser Levy Recreation Center. The playground and basketball court will also be rebuilt using resilient materials.

The City will also reconstruct the Manhattan Greenway that runs along the western edges of East River Park and Stuyvesant Cove Park. Within East River Park, the Greenway will be a 22-foot wide shared path that includes an asphalt bike lane and a concrete pedestrian lane. Within Stuyvesant Cove Park, the Greenway will include an asphalt bike path that runs parallel to the flood protection and separates cyclists from pedestrians at the waterfront. Foundations will also be built for a future flyover bridge that will elevate the Greenway over its narrowest point as it passes the Con Edison facility at 14th Street.

Access to the Corlears Hook and Stuyvesant Cove ferry landings will be maintained throughout construction. The three parks north of 14th Street will also have phased construction to better maintain community access to recreation.

In advance of ESCR construction, NYC Parks has also been making [improvements](#) to local parks and open spaces to ensure that the community still has access to places to play and relax while their beloved parks are made more resilient than ever. NYC Parks has [planted over 500 of a planned 1,000 trees](#) in the community, in addition to the over 1,800 that will be planted in the new park. The NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has also begun work to create a new waterfront park and rehabilitate the deck of Pier 42, located south of East River Park.

The City has engaged extensively with the local communities through its Community Advisory Group (CAG); city officials have joined the CAG for nearly 150 meetings and calls to discuss the project since 2018. During construction, three Community Construction Liaisons (CCLs), working on behalf of DDC, will update the community on progress and mitigate concerns on construction impacts. New Yorkers can track ESCR progress, receive email updates, learn more about the project and view outreach materials on the project's dedicated website [here](#).

Funding for ESCR comes from the City and from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which provided \$338 million in Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery funds through the Rebuild By Design competition.

The East Side Coastal Resiliency project team is led by the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC), Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), and the Mayor's Office of Resiliency (MOR). Other agency partners include the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of City Planning (DCP), Small Business Services (SBS), and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC).

“I’m proud that we are embarking on this first-of-its-kind project that not only protects us from storms and sea level rise, but ensures permanent access to our cherished East River Park where I, as a Lower East Side resident, have so many memories. Climate change projects like ESCR are our generation’s moonshot, our subway system. They’re not going to be easy. But I’m happy that our community stepped up and took the lead on the first major resiliency project in New York City. I look forward to continued work with advocates, the local advisory group we set up, and other officials to ensure this City does right by our neighborhoods with East Side Coastal Resiliency,” said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**.

“Almost a decade ago, I stood in Stuyvesant Cove Park and watched the water rise from the East River during Superstorm Sandy. It was clear that we needed long-term solutions to confront the climate crisis. Today marks the beginning of hard-won protections and neighborhood improvements. I am proud that the East Side will be leading the way and grateful for the City’s commitment to our communities—we have only just begun,” said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

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