



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 8, 2015

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**MAYOR'S FUND TO ADVANCE NEW YORK CITY AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS
ANNOUNCE RELIEF EFFORT FOR VICTIMS OF BOROUGH PARK BUILDING EXPLOSION**

Mayor's Fund partners with Borough Park Jewish Community Center, American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Council Member Brad Lander, other elected officials to support victim's families, affected residents, local businesses

New Yorkers can contribute to Borough Park Relief Fund at nyc.gov/bprelief

NEW YORK—The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City today announced the launch of the Borough Park Relief Fund, in partnership with the Borough Park Jewish Community Center, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, American Red Cross and The Salvation Army, along with Council Member Brad Lander and other Brooklyn elected officials, to support those affected by the recent building explosion on 13th Avenue in Borough Park, Brooklyn.

Those impacted by the gas explosion and building collapse on October 3rd currently face a variety of associated costs, including relocation, lost or damaged effects and goods, funeral and medical expenses. The Borough Park Relief Fund will aim to provide them with financial relief as they recover and rebuild. The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce will be providing assistance to affected business owners.

“The City's brave first responders were on the ground immediately following the tragic gas explosion and building collapse on Saturday, working tirelessly to save New Yorkers and their homes. But our city still suffered a senseless loss of life – and many in the area are now without a stable home and their belongings. The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City – chaired by our city's First Lady Chirlane McCray – are teaming up with New Yorkers in all five boroughs to help our brothers and sisters in Borough Park by providing crucial relief in a time of immense pain and tragedy. I encourage all New Yorkers to lend whatever help they can to support those affected,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“In times of tragedy, the people of New York City come together. Nothing can bring back lives lost, but I'm proud that our collective efforts might help ease the suffering and support rebuilding,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray, Chair of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City**. “In this city, we look out for each other. I'm confident that, with this fund, New Yorkers will again show the generous spirit that makes this city great.”

The fund builds upon the strong initial support provided by first responders, city services and grassroots organizations. First responders from the New York City Police Department, Fire Department of the City of New York, and the American Red Cross provided critical assistance immediately following the explosion. The Mayor's Office of Emergency Management established a resident support center at the Borough Park branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, where individuals and business could receive assistance with City services, including finding temporary housing.

Locally based organizations and neighbors in the Borough Park community gave additional support to those in need. Masbia, a nonprofit soup kitchen and food pantry located in the area, donated food and supplies for

displaced families. Neighbors near the site of the explosion brought hot coffee and stood by families and first responders.

“New York City has a strong record of stepping up and supporting each other in times of difficulty and disaster,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “Due to the tragic building explosion in Borough Park, those impacted are in desperate need of help from their fellow New Yorkers. I encourage everyone to look into contributing what they can to the Mayor's Fund effort to help our neighbors in this time of need.”

“Our communities respond with compassion in times of crisis. This fund is an extension of that spirit,” said **Council Member Brad Lander**. “We are deeply grateful to all of the first responders that helped. One of the most poignant moments of the past few days was when the Figueroa family, in hours of unimaginable grief, sought to acknowledge their service by buying pizza for all the first-responders on the scene. Now, New Yorkers from across the five boroughs can show their compassion by supporting the families of the victims and helping them recover from this tragedy. Thanks to Mayor de Blasio, First Lady Chirlane McCray, and the team at the Mayor's Fund and Boro Park JCC for helping us establish this fund. I hope New Yorkers from across this city will join us in contributing.”

“The Mayor's Fund is proud to be coordinating support for the many Borough Park families who are coping with tremendous loss and face a long road to recovery,” said **Darren Bloch, Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City**. “We urge New Yorkers to once again stand up for their neighbors during this difficult time, and look forward to working with the Boro Park Jewish Community Council to immediately direct those contributions to where they are most needed.”

“Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims of this terrible tragedy,” said **Rabbi Yeruchim Silber, Executive Director of the Boro Park Jewish Community Council**. “What is heartening though is to see how this community, especially the volunteer organizations, came together in the wake of these tragedies to assist our brave first responders and to be on the ground providing assistance to those affected. As one of the largest local providers of Social Services, Boro Park Jewish Community Council is proud to partner with Council Member Lander and the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City to help provide relief for the victims, their families and those displaced.”

“New Yorkers never shy away from helping one another, and the people of Borough Park affected by this tragedy are in need of help now more than ever,” said **Carlo A. Scissura, President and CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce**. “I encourage all residents and businesses to donate whatever they can to assist the victims on their road to recovery. The Brooklyn Chamber is proud to work with Mayor Bill de Blasio, First Lady Chirlane McCray, Council Member Brad Lander and other elected officials, and the Boro Park Jewish Community Council to provide any support necessary.”

“We continue to pray for the victims of the explosion at 4206 13th Avenue, and we are focused on assisting the dozens of Brooklynites impacted by this tragedy. It is time to turn our pain into purpose, reflecting the spirit of One Brooklyn and giving to our neighbors in need. I am honored to partner with the Mayor's Fund, Council Member Lander, and the Borough Park community as we jointly ask New Yorkers to give to the Borough Park Relief Fund,” said **Borough President Eric Adams**.

“I am extremely grateful to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, the Borough Park JCC, Council Member Brad Lander and the other elected officials for their crucial efforts to alleviate the devastation caused by last week's building explosion,” said **Congressman Jerry Nadler**. “The launch of the new Borough Park Relief Fund will aid victims of the explosion in returning to a life of normalcy in the coming weeks and months with dignity. My thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families and I wish all impacted the best as they embark on a road to recovery.”

Council Member David Greenfield said, “The explosion that happened this past weekend in Borough Park was an immense tragedy. The Borough Park Relief Fund will offer assistance to those who are both directly and indirectly affected by the damages of the fire. My thanks to The Borough Park Jewish Community Center, the

Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and Councilman Lander for their swift action to help those most in need. I pray for the speedy recovery for those who are hurt and for the families who have lost a loved one and encourage everyone to contribute to this worthy cause."

"Although the Sukkot holiday was marred by the explosion of this building on 13th Avenue, our community is deeply thankful to the Fire Department, New York City Police Department, the American Red Cross, and all other first responders and community organizations for their quick response and presence," said **New York State Assembly Member Dov Hikind**. "As recovery turns to relief, the businesses and residents affected by this tragedy will need all the help they can get. Thank you to the Mayor's Fund for initiating the Borough Park Relief Fund to assist in the efforts to provide financial help. I urge all those who can contribute to the fund to do so."

"Community Board 12 thanks Council Member Lander for spearheading this relief effort, Mayor de Blasio for availing the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City to assist during this time of need, and all of the City agency personnel that responded," said **Barry Spitzer, District Manager of Brooklyn Community Board 12**. "We would especially like to recognize Hatzolah, our community's volunteer emergency medical first responders, who – as always – were at the scene almost instantly treating the injured. We strongly urge the greater New York City community to donate to the fund and be a part of somewhat minimizing the pain this event has caused by helping those that were affected begin to move forward."

"I urge everyone to donate generously to the special emergency relief campaign to help the victims of the Boro Park 13th Avenue explosion, every little bit helps," said **Alexander Rapaport, Executive Director of Masbia Soup Kitchen**. "Please help spread the word, so after you donate online, brag about it, tell your friends about it, email it, post it, or tweet it with link to the campaign page and urge everyone to donate as well."

New Yorkers interested in contributing to the fund can donate online: nyc.gov/bprelief, or by mailing a check, made payable to "the Borough Park Relief Fund" to:

Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
253 Broadway, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10007

###