

**City of New York
Office of Management and Budget
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM
EAST SIDE COASTAL RESILIENCY (ESCR) PROJECT**

**Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed
Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the City of New York (the City) is proposing to undertake activities within the 100-year floodplain relating to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. President Obama signed the "Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013" (Public Law 113-2) into law on January 29, 2013. Among other appropriations, the Act included \$16 billion in CDBG-DR funds for "necessary expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from Hurricane Sandy." Pursuant to 24 CFR Part 58, the City, as the subrecipient of the grant funds, has identified its Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as the Responsible Entity for maintaining the CDBG-DR Environmental Review Record. This notice is required by Section 2(a)(4) of Executive Order (EO) 11988 for Floodplain Management, and by Section 2(b) of EO 11990 for the Protection of Wetlands, and is implemented by HUD Regulations found at 24 CFR 55.20(b) for the HUD action that is within and/or affects a floodplain or wetland.

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy made landfall, greatly impacting the east side of Manhattan between East 42nd Street and the Brooklyn Bridge and highlighting existing deficiencies in the City's ability to adequately protect vulnerable populations and critical infrastructure during major storm events. Hurricane Sandy caused extensive inland flooding, resulting in significant damages to residential and commercial property, transportation, critical power, and water and sewer infrastructure, which in turn affected healthcare and other critical services. To address the vulnerability of this area, the City is proposing to construct a flood protection system along a portion of the east side of Manhattan between Montgomery Street and East 23rd Street (with an alternative alignment to East 25th Street) as part of the East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) Project. In addition to providing a reliable flood protection system for this area, the ESCR Project also aims to improve and enhance access to the waterfront.

Within this proposed project area, the City is proposing to install and operate a significant flood protection system that would be integrated to City parkland and streets while reducing coastal flood hazards and protecting a diverse and vulnerable residential population and safeguarding critical housing, energy, infrastructure, and transportation systems. It is also an objective of the ESCR Project to enhance access to waterfront parkland, including East River Park and Stuyvesant Cove Park. The proposed flood protection system would be comprised of a combination of elevated berms, structures, and deployable systems that would be integrated into the parkland and streets. Assuming all approvals are issued, project construction is anticipated to commence in summer 2017.

Since the ESCR Project is federally funded and requires approvals from various City, State and federal agencies, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to examine the potential environmental and social impacts of the

project. HUD has allocated CDBG-DR funds for the ESCR Project, which would be dispersed through OMB; therefore, OMB is the Lead Agency for the NEPA review. The ESCR Project is also primarily located in City parkland and requires approvals from the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR); therefore, DPR is the Lead Agency for review pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR).

The FEMA Revised Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps for New York City are available at <http://apps.femadata.com/preliminaryviewer>.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

All interested persons, groups, and agencies are invited to submit written comments regarding the proposed use of federal funds to support the construction of the ESCR Project in a floodplain. Written comments should be sent to OMB at 255 Greenwich Street, 8th Floor, New York, New York 10007, Attention: Calvin Johnson, Assistant Director CDBG-DR or via email at CDBGDR-Enviro@omb.nyc.gov. The minimum 15 calendar day comment period will begin the day after publication and end on the 16th day after publication. Such comments should be received by OMB on or before February 22, 2016.

City of New York, Office of Management and Budget, Dean Fuleihan, Director
Date: February 5, 2016