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91st Assembly District  
Larchmont - Mamaroneck - New Rochelle - Port Chester - Rye Brook and Rye

September 9, 2022

Dear Friends,

Last night I spoke at the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery meeting in New Rochelle on that agencies draft Hurricane Ida Action Plan. I continue to stress the need for more funding and coordination to expedite needed flood mitigation infrastructure projects. The GOSR plan focuses on housing needs, especially housing costs not covered in other programs.

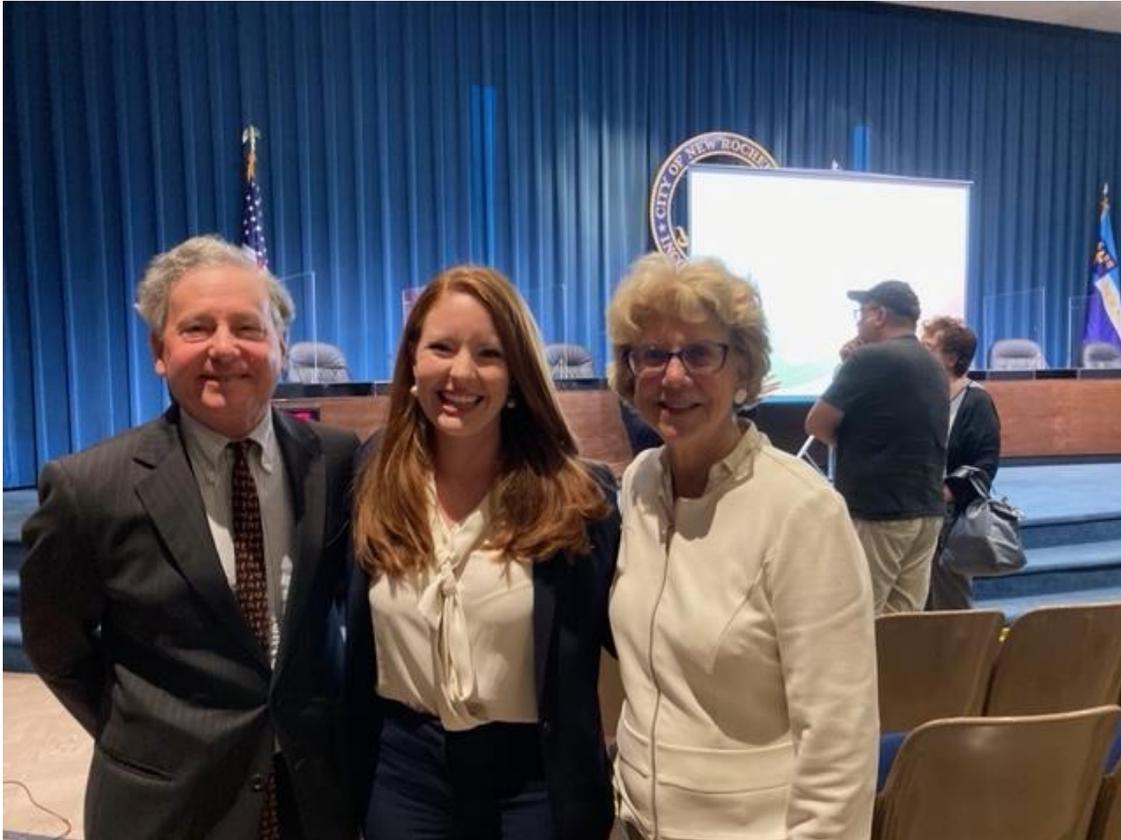
This newsletter also includes:

- Hurricane Ida Action Plan comment period
- Mamaroneck One Year After Ida Community Meeting
- City of Rye Flood Workshop
- Suicide Prevention Month Resources
- Tax Relief for Low-Income New Yorkers

I hope these resources and information are helpful. Please contact me on any issue where I can be of assistance. My District Office number is 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,

*Steve*



Assemblyman Otis and Senator Shelley Mayer with Katie Brennan, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery at New Rochelle City Hall for the hearing on GOSR's Hurricane Ida Action Plan.

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**Statement of Assemblyman Steve Otis, Governor's Office of Storm Recovery Meeting on the Hurricane Ida Action Plan, September 8, 2022, New Rochelle City Hall**

Welcome to New Rochelle and to the Sound Shore of Westchester County. Thank you for your Hurricane Ida Action Plan and Program Design proposal.

And thank you for coming here to share your plan and solicit further comments. Westchester County communities suffered severe damage from Hurricane Ida, some of the worst flood loss challenges in the region. The events of last year do not stand in isolation. Prior storms have also reminded Sound Shore residents of our continued vulnerability to storm events and the importance of implementing resilience and mitigation projects on an expedited basis.

I have worked on these issues for many years going back to FEMA's Project Impact when I was mayor of the City of Rye. Over a decade ago, I served on the Westchester County Flood Action Task Force. I also have worked with the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery since it was created after Superstorm Sandy in 2013.

The recurring challenge for residents and local governments has been to keep the focus on implementing resiliency projects when the sky is blue and memories of storm damage fade with time.

We need to double our efforts at implementing resiliency projects and that is the message we have heard consistently from Governor Hochul, from the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery and the many other state agencies that have been very active in Westchester since Hurricane Ida last September.

The Hurricane Ida Action Plan and Program Design is an important part of the state government response because of its focus on assessing and responding to unmet needs, especially related to housing. GOSR reviewed what other federal

and state programs were able to accomplish to date. This review was a very important part of the GOSR plan for the use of over \$41 million in federal funds.

In developing the plan, GOSR met with local officials, the vital not-for-profit community, state legislators and numerous state agencies involved in the Ida response. The programs in the plan are designed to address unmet needs related to housing consistent with the federal framework covering these CDBG funds.

I would like to highlight a few of the components of the plan that I believe are valuable towards improving our resilience in the future.

I am very pleased to see that the plan includes funding of tasks that may not have been readily available in other programs such as repairs to owner occupied residences, relocation of tenants, and support for housing authorities and not-for-profits that provide housing.

The plan underscores the importance of reducing natural disaster risk, the importance of reducing exposure and, where appropriate, removing people from harm's way.

The plan also reinforces the importance of building code compliance and sustainable rebuilding. The current theme of "build back better" has a longer history when it comes to rebuilding after a storm. Hurricane Ida Action Plan projects will include building code compliance and improvements to make housing more resilient.

This legislative session Senator Mayer and I passed legislation in both houses to require flood mitigation considerations be reviewed for elevated consideration in the state building code. The NYS Building Code Council would then examine

how to better incorporate these issues as part of the state standards. It is great to see building code compliance included as a principle in the GOSR plan.

As was the case with GOSR's New York Rising program, the Hurricane Action Plan encourages matching the funds provided through this program with other funding sources. This will be especially important with municipal projects where more funding is needed from all sources to implement flood mitigation and resiliency projects, many of which have already been studied but not yet funded or implemented.

One area where I think the plan can be modified would be to include cooperatives and condominiums in the Affordable Housing Resiliency Initiative eligibility criteria. If the resident economic qualifications criteria are met, those complexes should not be excluded just because they are constituted as a cooperative or a condominium.

Another area in which we need to find additional resources is to help fund mitigation projects affecting small businesses in high-risk flood areas. Fitting these projects with the HUD funding parameters may not be feasible. I suggest that GOSR look for outside funding or partnerships with other state agencies such as the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Empire State Development or the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES).

In every community I represent, we have businesses that continue to be vulnerable to major storm events. We need to give local governments additional tools to fund the flood mitigation projects necessary to better protect these businesses. GOSR can play a role in supporting these efforts.

Hurricane Ida also highlighted the weakness of our municipal stormwater systems across the state. Failing or inadequately sized stormwater systems resulted in damage to residential and commercial properties.

I want to make a pitch today for voter approval of the Environmental Bond Act on the ballot this November. The bond act includes a proposal I have championed to create a new stormwater grant program. The bond act, if approved by the voters, will provide at least \$250 million for these needed grants. Our municipalities and local property taxpayers need state assistance to help pay for these needed upgrades.

I look forward to hearing other comments on the Hurricane Ida Action Plan and know the GOSR will make adjustments. I want to again thank Governor Hochul, my colleagues in both houses of the legislature, Katie Brennan, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery and the entire GOSR team for securing these federal funds and making a commitment to addressing the housing and infrastructure needs that continue to require our attention and commitment.

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### **Hurricane Ida Action Plan**

*Public Comment Period Now Open for Recovery Grants to Enhance Resiliency*

*Next Hearing Virtual - **September 13 at 6:30pm***

*([click here for virtual hearing info](#)).*

New Yorkers are invited to provide feedback on the plan [here](#) by **September 28**

Following the public comment period that is open from now through September 28, GOSR may update the Action Plan based on feedback from the comments and hearings. Any updates will be [available here](#).



# One-Year After Hurricane Ida Community Meeting

Wednesday  
September 14

7:00 pm - 8:00pm  
Mamaroneck Ave. School  
850 Mamaroneck Avenue

Free & Open to  
the Public but  
tickets are  
required.



Coalition For Community  
2014, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022



MAMARONECK SCHOOLS

As our community marks the one-year anniversary of the floods from Hurricane Ida, the **Village of Mamaroneck** will host a **One Year After Hurricane Ida Community Meeting** on **Wednesday, September 14, at 7:00pm** at **Mamaroneck Avenue School**. Village of Mamaroneck **Mayor Tom Murphy** will moderate a discussion that will include:

- A presentation by Village Manager Jerry Barberio about the initiatives the Village has taken in the past year to mitigate flooding.
- An announcement from the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery about new funding available for homeowners and renters recovering from Hurricane Ida.
- Steps residents can take in anticipation of the next natural disaster.

Resources and print materials will be available from the **Community Resource Center** and other community organizations operating under the **Coalition for the Community** — a collection of hyper local nonprofits, social service agencies and houses of worship working together to develop solutions to community needs.

The **Mamaroneck School District** will provide an interpreter as well as wireless translation equipment so this event can be simultaneously translated for the Spanish-speaking members of our community.

This event is **FREE** and **OPEN** to the public; but tickets will be required. Stay tuned. More details about how to obtain tickets and how to submit questions will be posted in late August/early September.

Submit your **QUESTIONS** or reserve **FREE TICKETS** online at:  
**[www.villageofmamaroneck.org](http://www.villageofmamaroneck.org)** OR use the QR Code:  
**The Deadline to submit questions is Friday, September 9 at 5pm**



Watch the livestream on LMC Media Channels Optimum (Altice) 76/Fios 35,  
streaming on [LMCMEDIA.org](http://LMCMEDIA.org), or on LMC's YouTube Channel.



## City Council Work Session - Flooding

**The City Council will hold a work session on Thursday, September 15, 2022, at 6:30 pm in City Hall. The session is a follow-up to the Blind Brook watershed work session that was held in May and will provide additional details on flood mitigation and resiliency efforts since Ida. There will be a presentation by Ramboll Engineering, City staff as well as DCMC (FEMA/Federal funding consultant).**

**The meeting will take place in the Council Chambers at City Hall and will be televised on RyeTV and live-streamed on [ryeny.gov](http://ryeny.gov)**

## **Governor Hochul Announces Statewide Initiatives To Raise Awareness During Suicide Prevention Month**

State Office of Mental Health Launches Digital Campaign to Promote New York's Suicide Prevention Resources; Host Virtual Suicide Prevention Conference

Governor Hochul has announced a new digital public service campaign and other statewide initiatives to raise awareness of suicide prevention efforts and the mental health resources available to all New Yorkers. Governor Hochul also issued a [proclamation](#) in advance of Suicide Prevention Day, and recognizing September as National Suicide Prevention Month, marking both by illuminating state buildings and landmarks in purple and teal for two days starting September 9.

The digital campaign will run through November, spreading awareness of suicide prevention resources and crisis services throughout New York. Launched today by the state Office of Mental Health, the campaign will feature ads promoting these services on many social media platforms, including YouTube, TikTok and Snapchat.

In addition to the campaign, OMH's Suicide Prevention Center of New York is using the [Got5 Challenge](#) to promote and raise awareness of the Crisis Text Line among school-age youth. The grass roots marketing campaign encourages students to sign their school up to receive promotional items, post photos of them on social media, and share a [short video](#) about the Crisis Text Line to students and faculty via email.

Students can text 'Got5' -New York's unique Crisis Text Line keyword -to 741-741 to anonymously connect with a trained volunteer crisis counselor for support

and to access mental health resources. This text line has resulted in more than 428,000 conversations since 2013.

In a parallel effort to help all New Yorkers experiencing a mental health crisis, New York State successfully implemented 988 in July. The three-digit number can be called or texted by anyone with a New York area code to reach a trained counselor from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Governor Hochul's FY 2023 Enacted Budget included \$35 million to significantly expand crisis call center capacity, with this funding to increase to \$60 million starting in FY 2024.

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**Governor Hochul Announces \$475 M in Tax Relief For 1.8 M Low-Income New Yorkers and Families**

*New Yorkers Who Received Empire State Child Credit and/or the Earned Income Credit to Automatically Receive Checks, New Yorkers Can Check Eligibility [Here](#)*

Governor Hochul and legislative leaders have announced \$475 million in tax relief for eligible low-income New Yorkers and families as part of the state's ongoing effort to combat inflation and improve affordability. The New York Department of Taxation and Finance will soon begin sending direct financial assistance to 1.75 million New Yorkers who received the Empire State Child Credit and/or the Earned Income Credit on their 2021 state tax returns. New Yorkers can expect to receive their checks by the end of October.

Governor Hochul and members of the state legislature approved the [Additional NYS Child and Earned Income Tax Payment](#) as part of the FY 2023 Enacted Budget. The program will provide an average payment of \$270 per eligible recipient. Eligible New Yorkers do not need to take any action to receive their checks; checks will be mailed automatically.

The program builds on Governor Hochul's commitment to putting more money back in the pockets of everyday New Yorkers. Earlier this year, the Governor accelerated the distribution of \$2.2 billion in tax relief to more than 2 million New Yorkers through the new [homeowner tax rebate credit](#). Governor Hochul also [announced a statewide gas and diesel tax holiday](#) to provide New Yorkers relief at the pump as fuel prices hit record highs.

New Yorkers who have recently moved should update their address with the Department of Taxation and Finance to prevent delays in receiving their Additional NYS Child and Earned Income Tax Payment checks. To do so, they can create an account on the Department's [website](#) and follow on-screen instructions to complete required fields and save their updated address.

