



## **Bloomberg and Frankel announce \$90.3 million in property tax reductions for homes and businesses impacted by Hurricane Sandy**

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Mayor Michael Bloomberg and finance commissioner David Frankel revealed a \$90.3 million reduction in property taxes for homes and businesses impacted by Hurricane Sandy. The reduction is a result of reassessments that the department of finance conducted to ensure that the final values reflected damages to homes and businesses, as well changes in market value following the storm. The finance department created a Hurricane Sandy Property Damage Reporting form for homeowners to document physical damage to their properties; hosted 30 outreach events between November and February to help property owners complete the forms; and sent assessors to more than 6,000 properties for on-site inspections. The new values reflect the reassessments to individual properties, as well as across-the-board reductions in market values. For class 1 and class 2 residential properties in neighborhoods with extensive Sandy-related damage, the city reduced market value by 15%; for class 4 commercial properties, market value has been reduced by 10%. The mayor also announced that the application process for the city's business and loan grant program - a part of the Federal Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief Program - is now open. The mayor and commissioner Frankel made the announcement at Liberty Warehouse in Red Hook and were joined by NYC small business services commissioner Rob Walsh, council member James Oddo, council member Sara González, Greg O'Connell, CFO, O'Connell Organization and Jeffrey Torem, Liberty Warehouse director of catering.

"Since Hurricane Sandy struck, we've been doing everything possible to help homeowners and business owners whose properties were damaged," said Bloomberg. "The department of finance's work to reach out to property owners, inspect damage and adjust values will ensure that storm damage is accurately reflected in property tax bills this coming year - and the \$90 million reduction will stay in the communities hit hardest by Sandy, helping families rebuild and supporting local businesses."

"New York City's property owners continue to feel the impact of Hurricane Sandy and the finance department worked to ensure their current values were accurately assessed," said commissioner Frankel. "Our assessors visited thousands of properties in the months after the storm to calculate the impact of damage to homes and neighborhoods, and make certain that it's accurately reflected in our tax rolls."

"The city's low interest emergency loan and matching grant program has helped hundreds of small businesses get back on their feet after Hurricane Sandy but there is still more to do," said commissioner Walsh. "The new federally funded business loan and grant program is now available, and will help provide a boost to small businesses still working to recover from Sandy."

"From the moment Hurricane Sandy struck, Mayor Bloomberg and our entire Administration have

been focused on doing everything within our power to help homeowners and businesses rebuild their homes, businesses and communities," deputy mayor for economic development Robert Steel said.

"Today's announcement is the latest evidence of the Mayor's commitment to the work of recovery."

"The property reassessments completed over the past several months have provided business owners in the neighborhoods most impacted by Hurricane Sandy with critical assistance, contributing to the ongoing recovery of these areas," said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Seth W. Pinsky. "This recovery has further been supported by the City's business loan and grant programs, which are in the process of being significantly expanded, thanks to new federal funding. Programs such as these, made possible by continued collaboration across City agencies and at all levels of government, will allow our City not only to restore impacted areas, but to emerge more prosperous than ever before."

"Hurricane Sandy devastated the homes, businesses and lives of many New Yorkers," said City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn. "New Yorkers always deserve to know that their property tax bills are both fair and accurate. The Council held an emergency hearing in February to address concerns of residents regarding the impact of Hurricane Sandy on their property values. I applaud the Department of Finance for listening to New Yorkers and working to ensure that the latest property tax assessments were adjusted to best reflect the impact of this horrible event."

"I am proud to stand today with Mayor Bloomberg in my District to announce this much welcome relief for those most impacted by Hurricane Sandy," said Council Member González. "Red Hook, as well as other parts of the City, suffered heavy losses as a result of the storm and has fought valiantly to recover and become stronger than ever. Offering property tax reductions for home-owners and small businesses is an important substantive way we as a City can assist those who suffered damage to their homes, loss of property and loss of business."

"Nearly seven months after Sandy hit many of my constituents and New Yorkers are still searching for answers and need assistance," said Council Member and Minority Leader Oddo. "I appreciate the recognition by the Department of Finance that additional steps need to be taken in order to fairly assess Sandy impacted properties. We are grateful, but we are still anxious for clarity and information as we go forward so that residents can make informed and educated choices on many fronts. That is why I am particularly appreciative of the opportunity Deputy Mayor Holloway and others in the Administration have given me to share my concerns, ideas and vision of what needs to be done to ensure the best recovery and rebuilding process possible."

"Recovery is a series of steps and today we take another essential step forward with the announcement that nearly 100,000 property owners will be paying less taxes this year as a reflection of losses sustained by Hurricane Sandy," said Council Member Rosie Mendez. "These property tax reductions are only one of the myriad number of ways that we have joined together to empower storm victims and guide them on the path to recovery."

"Giving property tax reductions to homes and businesses impacted by Hurricane Sandy will go a long way in helping residents and business owners rebuild," said Carlo A. Scissura, President & CEO, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. "It is of vital importance that neighborhoods destroyed by last year's storm - particularly Brooklyn's coastline - be able to take advantage of this opportunity to rebuild bigger and better than before. I would like to thank Mayor Bloomberg, Finance Commissioner David Frankel, SBS Commissioner Rob Walsh and Council Speaker Christine Quinn for their leadership on this issue and for ensuring that Sandy-impacted neighborhoods get all the

help and support they need."

Following the publication of the tentative property assessments in January, the Department of Finance worked to ensure that properties that were damaged by Hurricane Sandy and those in hard-hit areas were accurately assessed. Finance created a Sandy-specific reporting form so that homeowners could document and report damage, and received more than 5,400 reports from owners. Inspectors visited those properties, as well as those that the Department of Buildings had marked with a red tag - meaning they had suffered extensive damage following the storm - regardless of whether a damage form was submitted. Overall, Department of Finance assessors inspected 6,122 individual properties.

The Department of Finance also accounted for decreased values for properties in hard-hit areas, even if the individual home or business was not significantly damaged. The Department made across-the-board reductions to Market Values: 15 percent for for Class 1 and Class 2 residential properties and 10 percent for commercial Class 4 properties. In total, the Department of Finance revised values for more than 88,000 properties impacted by Hurricane Sandy, resulting in an overall reduction of \$90.3 compared to the tax burden if calculated from the initial assessments. Due to State law that limits year-to-year tax increases on Assessed Value, Class1 residential properties at 6 percent, some property owners will not see an actual decrease in their bill compared to last year's. Still, more than 50,000 property owners will pay less in property tax payments for Fiscal Year 2014 than the prior year. Liberty Warehouse observed a \$65,000 reduction as a result of the reassessment.

The Tax Commission has also extended the deadline for property owners impacted by Hurricane Sandy to appeal the Assessed Value. This extension is offered to any property with a decrease in either their Market or Assessed Value due to Sandy changes. Owners may file an Application for Correction with the Tax Commission and must do so by June 20th. Forms are available on the Tax Commission's website, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/taxcomm>.

The property tax reassessments are the latest action that the City has taken to assist property owners whose homes, businesses or neighborhoods were damaged by the Hurricane Sandy. In November, the Finance Department provided an interest-free extension for property tax payments due January 1, 2013. The City also undertook the unprecedented home recovery program, Rapid Repairs, which restored heat and electricity for more than 55,000 New Yorkers free of charge.

Mayor Bloomberg and NYC Small Business Services Commissioner Walsh also announced that the application process for the City's business and loan grant program - a part of the Federal Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief Program - was now open. The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development has allocated \$1.77 billion in aid for Hurricane Sandy Relief, of which \$293 million will be spend on business recovery programs:

\$72 million for business loans and grants;

\$90 million for investments in business resiliency;

\$90 million for "Game-Changer Investment Competition" to reward innovative ideas for spurring economic development in hard hit areas; and

\$41 million for a competition to develop resilient technologies.

Business owners can find out more information about the application and other requirements by calling 311 or visiting [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov). The City's Department of Small Business Services will oversee the loan and grant program. Business owners will work directly with an account manager at the NYC Business Solutions Center to apply for loans of up to \$150,000 and matching grants of up to

\$60,000. The City also established emergency grant and low-interest loan programs that have provided nearly \$15 million in loans to 650 businesses and \$4 million in matching grants to 400 businesses.

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