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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND OEM COMMISSIONER BRUNO ANNOUNCE “WHAT IF NEW YORK CITY...” COMPETITION TO DESIGN URBAN HOUSING FOR USE AFTER A DISASTER**

*Ten Competition Winners Will Receive \$10,000 to Further Develop Projects*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno today launched the “What If New York City...” housing design competition, which seeks innovative approaches to sheltering victims in the aftermath of a disaster. If a catastrophe impacted New York City, thousands of residents would be displaced from their homes. Because fully rebuilding communities could take several years, so the competition seeks designs for the provisional housing that could be used in the interim. The competition scenario focuses on a fictional neighborhood called Prospect Shore that has just been hit by a Category 3 hurricane, leaving 38,000 families without housing. Entrants are asked to design a provisional housing plan for the community that could be used by emergency planners in real life. The judging criteria recognize that traditional post-disaster housing, such as mobile homes, is not suitable for New York City’s high population density and concentrated infrastructure. The competition is being sponsored by OEM, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Architecture for Humanity – New York.

“New York City has exceptional emergency response capabilities, but we can always do more to better prepare ourselves,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “If a storm were to hit, our immediate need for shelter would be met. The greater challenge is to provide longer-term, provisional housing for what could be thousands of displaced families while their communities are rebuilt. New York is home to great colleges and universities; we’re hoping that students will enter this competition as part of their course work.”

“‘What If New York City...’ will allow the best and brightest from the fields of architecture, design and urban planning to work on a project of great importance to New York – and potentially to cities around the world,” said Commissioner Bruno. “I look forward to serving on the jury and seeing the solutions that address this challenge.”

“We know firsthand from our involvement in the rebuilding of New Orleans the devastating effects wrought by poor planning,” said Maria Blair of the Rockefeller Foundation. “The Foundation’s new Climate Change Resilience Initiative aims to develop the ability of communities to manage and plan for the aftermath of coastal storms and other natural disasters. So, we applaud Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Bruno for launching this innovative design competition, and we’re proud to be supporting it.”

“This competition is an unprecedented opportunity to address unique challenges New York City presents from a design perspective,” said Architecture for Humanity – New York Director of Strategic Development Cynthia Barton. “New York City is setting a standard for post-disaster housing that will be important to densely settled coastal cities everywhere. Architecture for Humanity – New York is honored to be a part of this landmark competition and to support the diverse and innovative contributions that designers from around the world make to one of the most important humanitarian challenges we face today.”

The design competition complements the City’s Coastal Storm Plan (CSP), which dictates how New York City would respond to a coastal storm emergency. The plan details the protocol for informing, evacuating, and sheltering New Yorkers in the event of a devastating hurricane. The City intends to incorporate aspects of the competition’s winning submissions into the sheltering component of the plan.

Seven prominent figures with expertise in government, urban planning, design, architecture, engineering, and emergency management will sit on the competition jury to evaluate and guide submissions. The jury is chaired by Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner David Burney and includes OEM Commissioner Bruno; Paul Freitag of Jonathan Rose Companies, LLC; artist Mary Miss; Guy Nordenson of Guy Nordenson and Associates; Enrique Norten of TEN Arquitectos; and Richard Plunz of the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

Judging criteria include capacity, the possibility for rapid installation, site and unit flexibility, reusability, livability, accessibility, security, sustainability, and cost efficiency. The design competition is a two-part process with an open competition stage and a project development period. The jury will review all submissions and select ten that best meet the judging criteria. These 10 winners will be awarded \$10,000 each to revise their projects and prepare presentation materials. The jury will favor submissions that are useful to emergency management and urban planning officials in the aftermath of a disaster.

At the announcement, held at Gantry Plaza State Park in Long Island City, the Mayor and Commissioner Bruno were joined by DDC Commissioner David Burney, Community Assistance Unit (CAU) Commissioner Nazli Parvizi, Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Commissioner Robert Hess, Rockefeller Foundation Associate Vice President and Managing Director Maria Blair, Rockefeller Foundation Chief Operating Officer Peter Madonia, Architecture for Humanity – New York Director of Strategic Development Cynthia Barton and Director of Design Research Andrew Burdick. The Rockefeller Foundation provided funding for the competition’s design and management, as well as prize money for submission development. Architecture for Humanity, which has extensive worldwide experience in designing shelter after disasters, advised OEM on the creation of the competition.

Further information on the competition, including details on eligibility, schedule, and judging criteria, is available at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov).