NYC GREEN CODES
LEGISLATION AT A GLANCE

GCTF Proposal
Study Adaptive Strategies to Non-Flood Climatic Risks

Implemented
Building Resiliency Task Force; Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency

Summary

When Hurricane Sandy hit New York, the GCTF’s recommendations to study building resiliency acquired new urgency.

The Mayor and City Council asked Urban Green Council to convene a Building Resiliency Task Force to consider code and industry practice changes for new and existing buildings that would make them stronger and better able to withstand weather-related emergency events such as high winds and extreme heat, as well as floods. The BRTF’s proposals included changes to the building code, as well as recommendations for best practices in new construction and retrofits that would improve how buildings fare in extreme weather conditions. The complete report of the BRTF is available at http://www.urbangreencouncil.org/BuildingResiliency.

The Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency, a post-Sandy project by the Mayor’s Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability, also generated recommendations targeted to improving the resiliency of individual buildings in extreme weather. The complete SIRR report is available at http://www.nyc.gov/html/sirr/html/report/report.shtml.

Recommendations

From the BRTF:

Wind:

- Require new and replacement windows and doors to be wind resistant in homes
- Recommend anchoring framing to foundations and strengthening foundations and basements in existing homes
- Require that equipment and structures added to existing buildings meet the same wind standards in effect for installations on new buildings
- Require heavy pavers on rooftops, and impact-resistant windows in high wind zones

Heat:

- Expand existing cool roof requirements to include pitched roofs
- Prohibit the sale of dark roofing materials and dark “crumb” rubber in synthetic playing fields
- Encourage owners to use self-cleaning cool roof coatings
- Study the longevity of various cool roof options
• Develop a multiyear strategy for ensuring that new and substantially altered buildings maintain habitable temperatures during power outages
• Clarify requirements for tightly sealing new windows and doors and upgrading roof insulation during roof replacement

From the SIRR:

Wind:

• Amend the Building Code to clarify current wind-resistance specifications for façade elements
• Restrict the use of pea gravel and small-dimension stone as ballast on roofs
• Initiate a study to help the City more accurately map the wind profiles facing New York City’s buildings across all five boroughs, identifying sites that face the greatest risk