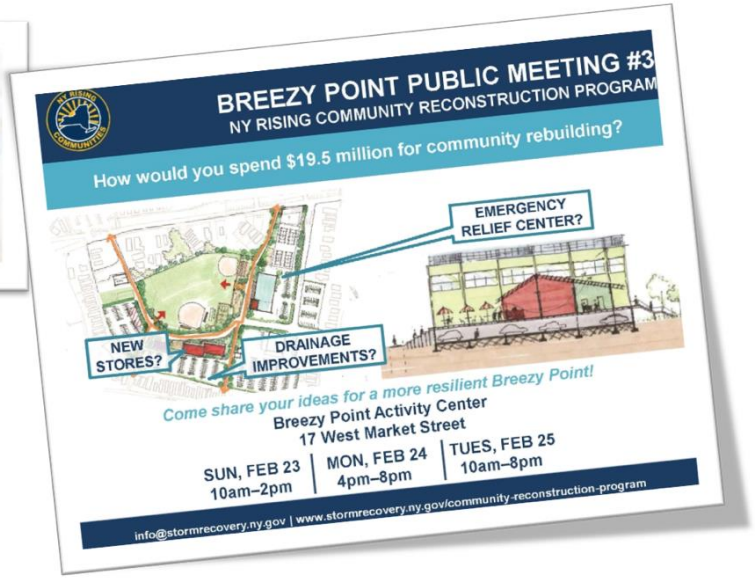
3.3: Assessment of Economic Vulnerabilities and Investment Strategies

Assessment of NY Rising Community Reconstruction Zone Investment Strategy Projects

Judd Schechtman, NYU

Resiliency Institute for Storms & Emergencies

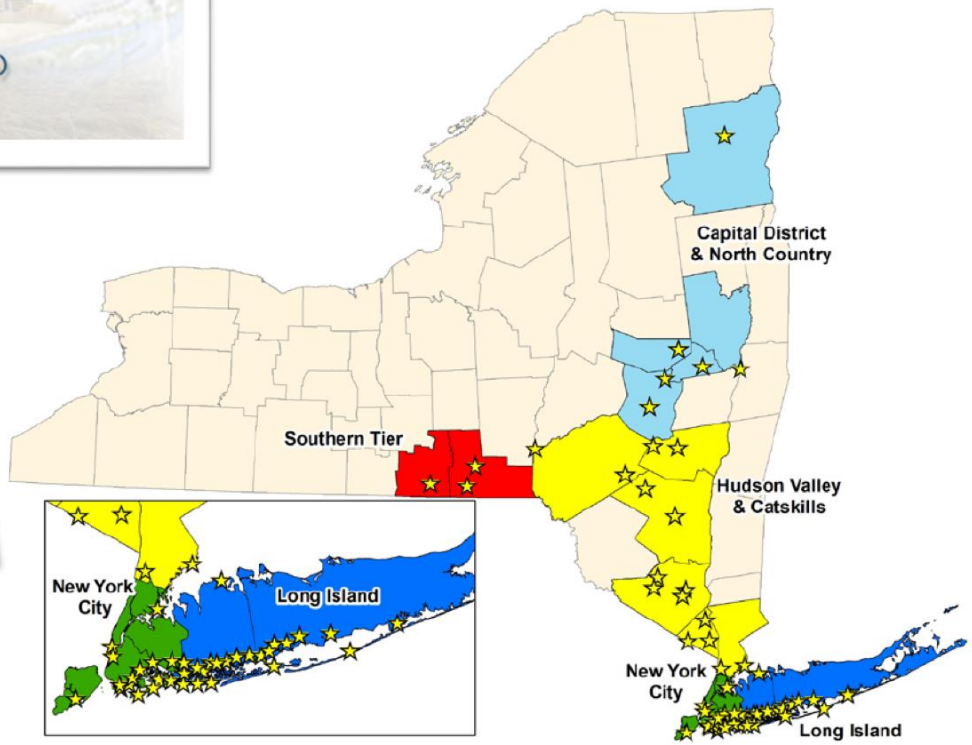
What is the Community Reconstruction Program?



- Established by Governor Cuomo to provide rebuilding and revitalization assistance to communities severely damaged by Hurricanes Sandy and Irene and Tropical Storm Lee
- 45 Community plans completed May 2014
- Funded by $25 million in Federal CDBG recovery grants
- State will complete evaluation for competition funding
- State will help communities find additional funding
- Total appropriation of $4.4 billion for NY Rising Projects

What is the community reconstruction program?

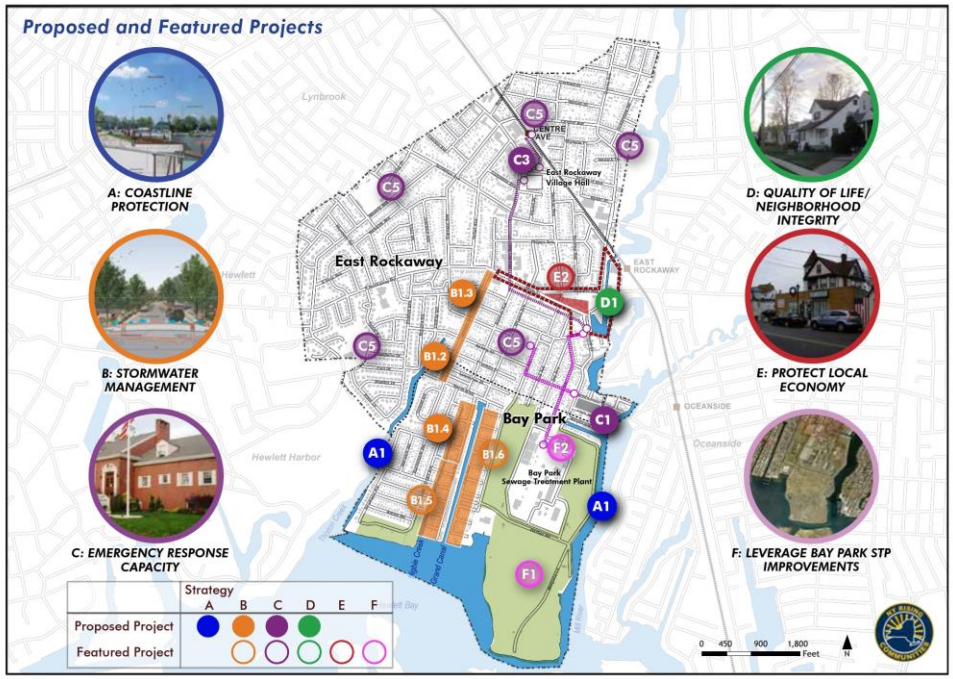
"As we continue to adjust to the new normal of extreme weather, it is critically important that our communities are as safe and resilient as possible"



NY Rising is an unprecedented community driven participatory recovery process

OBJECTIVES

- Assist state in analyzing project benefits by providing comprehensive analysis on multiple dimensions
- Establish method and framework for evaluating alternative resiliency investments considering potential factors
- Understand and assess what types of storm recovery projects communities chose
- Improve knowledge about benefits of community-based recovery planning for global transfer



Research Methods

- Collected data by inventorying all 45 community reconstruction zone plans in Round 1 (over 1400 recovery projects)
- Created framework for assessing projects based on Community Development Block Grant criteria, New York State guidance and from academic literature
- Coded and evaluated projects based on consistent criteria
- Established aggregate "benefits" scoring based on CDBG, NYS & other criteria

Objectives and value to NY State:

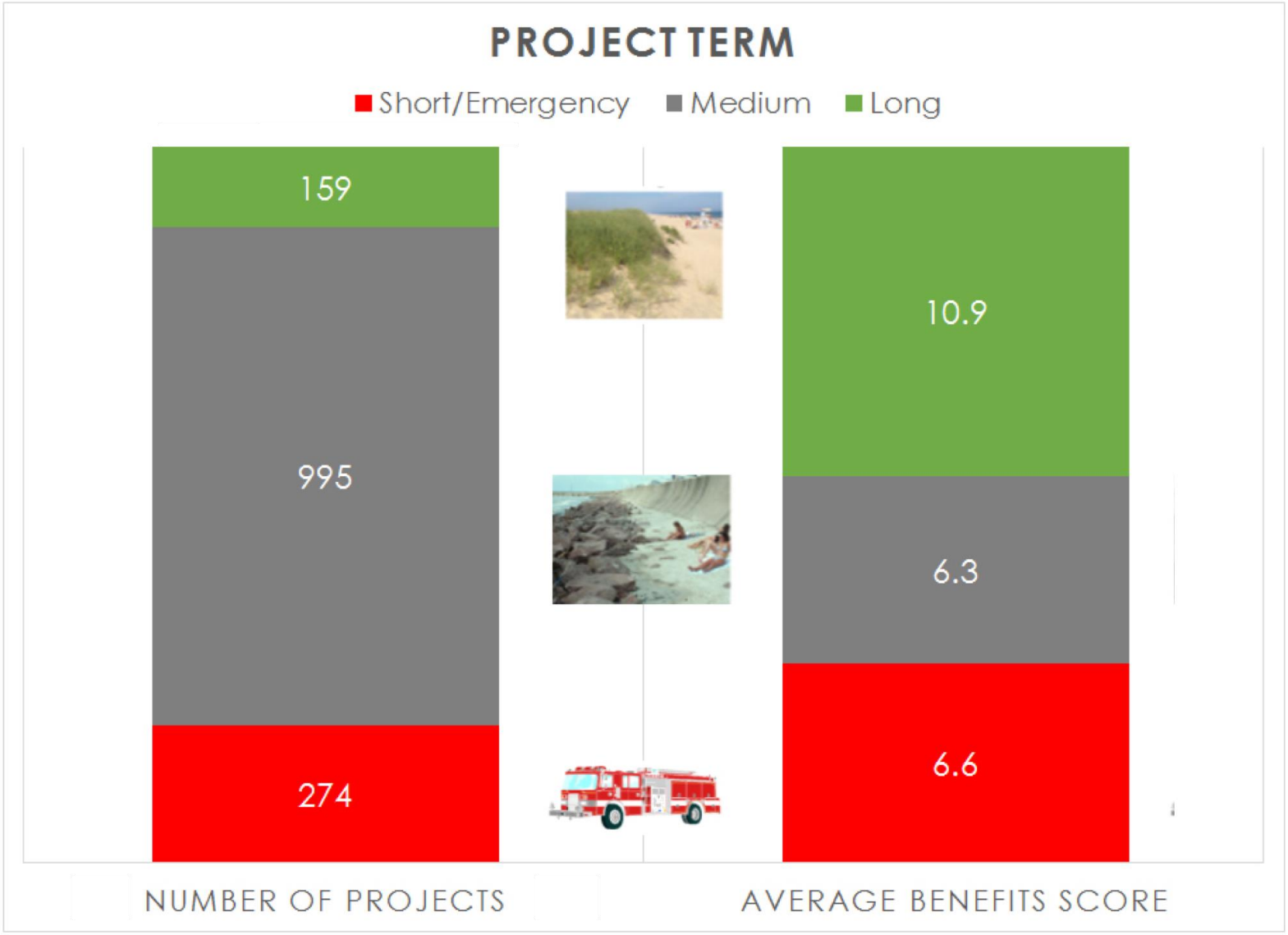
- Provides method and criteria to assess proposed projects
- Helps state and others understand outcomes of CRZ planning process
- Establish method and framework for evaluating alternative resiliency investments considering many potential factors

Evaluation Criteria

Categeory	Criteria
Project Category	Infrastructure, Housing, Economic, Natural and Cultural Res, Comm Plan and Cap Building
Consistency with NYCRR	Increase Resiliency of Key Assets, Addresses Risks, Econ Growth, Coordinate Reg Initatives, Prot Vuln Pop
Term	Short, Medium, Long
IPCC Strategy	Accommodation, Prevention, Procedural, Protection, Retreat
Type	Administrative, Capital Investment, Education, Law, Pilot Project, Plan, Study,
Project Management Tool	Buildings/Structures, Education, Emergency Plg, Fiscal Tools, Gray Infr, Green Infr, Land Use Planning
Implementation Scale	Building, Neighborhood, Municipality, Region
Costs	Value
Funding Needed	Yes, No
Climate Adaptive Benefits	Likert Scale
Climate Mitigation Benefits	Likert Scale
Environmental Benefits	Likert Scale
Economic Performance (Cost Sav)	Likert Scale
Economic Development Benefits	Likert Scale
Vuln Pop/Social Justice Benefits	Likert Scale
Health and Human Svcs Benefits	Likert Scale
Flood Risk Reduction	Likert Scale
Adaptive Val (Gen Risk Reduction)	Likert Scale

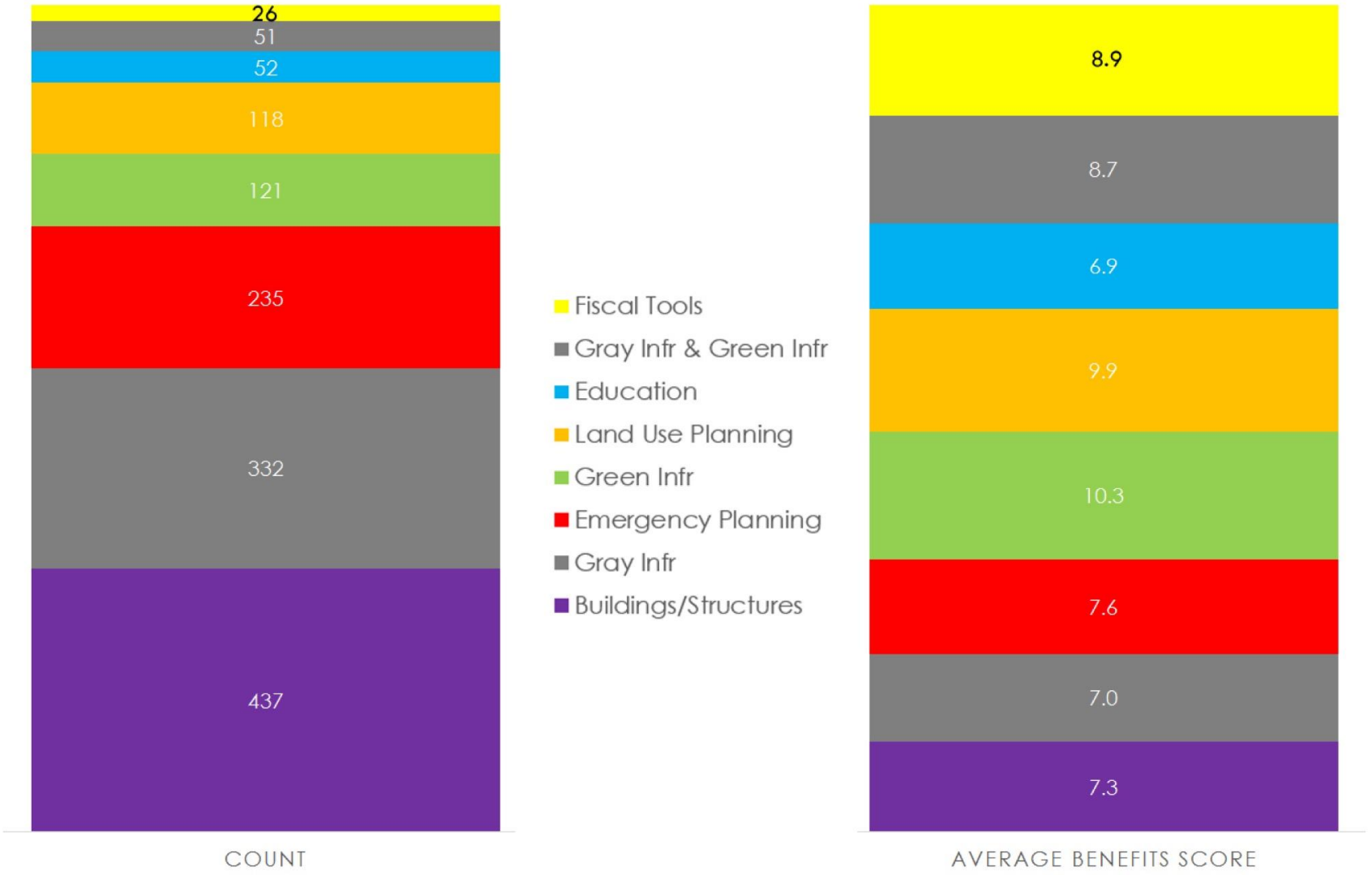
RESULTS

COUNT AND AVERAGE AGGREGATE BENEFITS SCORE OF ALL PROJECTS BY TERM



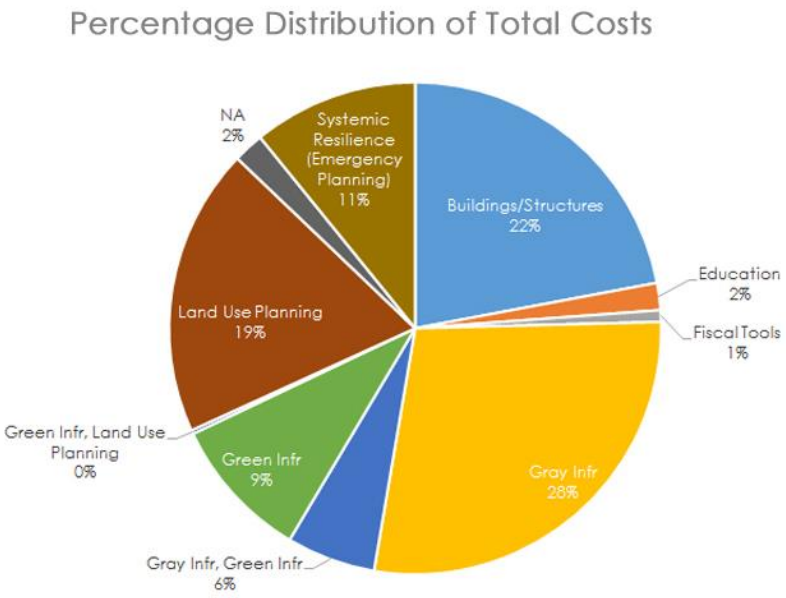
RESULTS

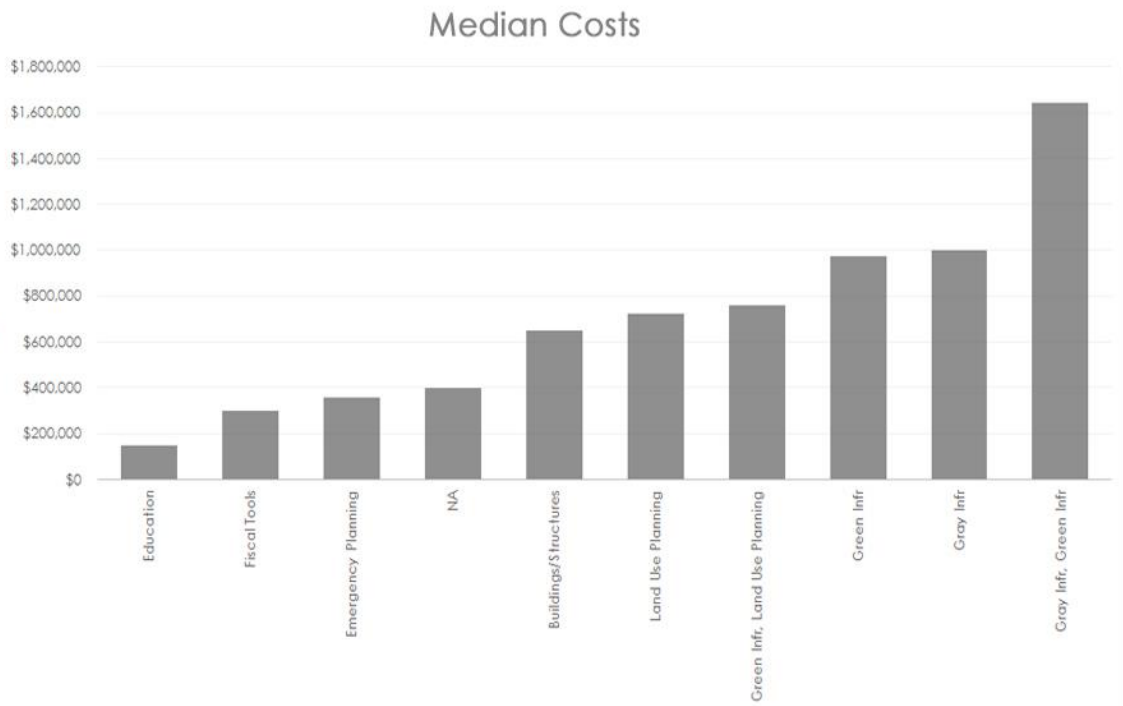
COUNT AND AVERAGE AGGREGATE BENEFITS SCORES OF FEATURED AND PROPOSED PROJECTS BY PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOL



RESULTS

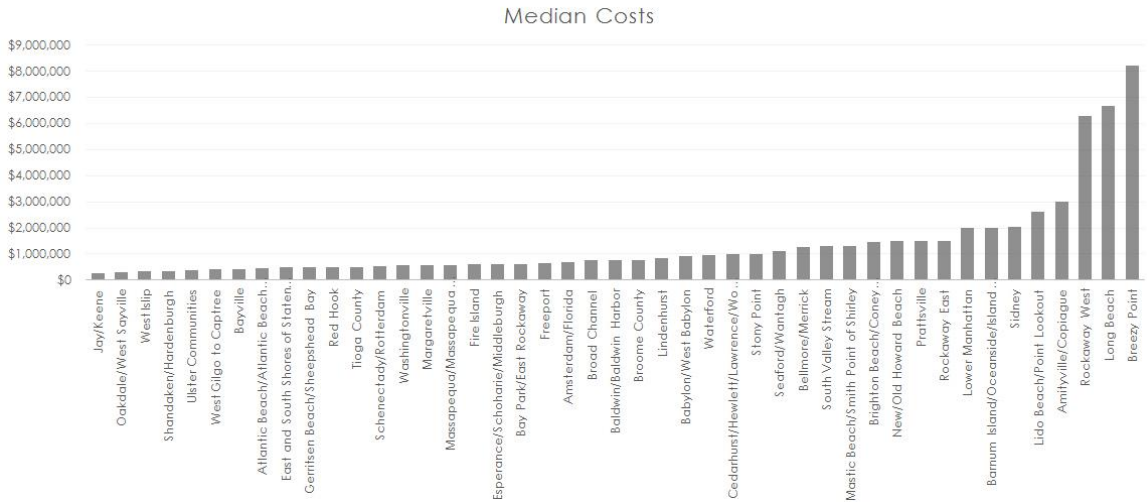
MEDIAN AND TOTAL COSTS OF FEATURED AND PROPOSED PROJECTS BY PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOL

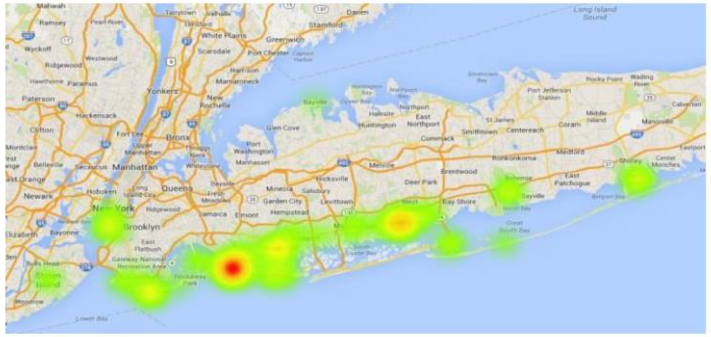


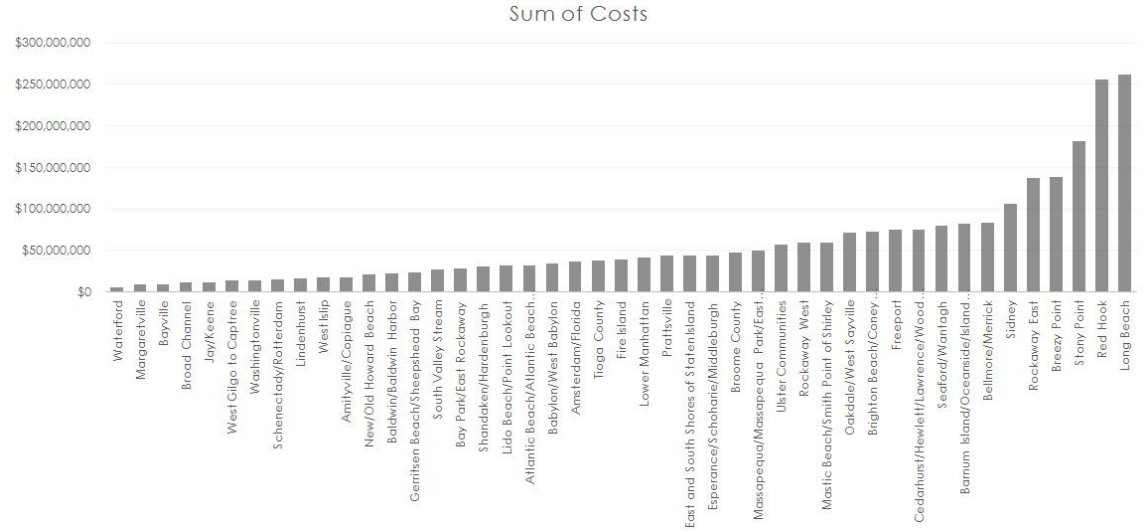


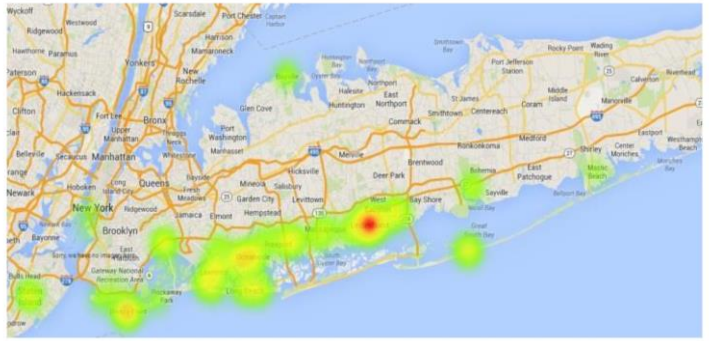
RESULTS

MEDIAN AND SUM COST OF PROPOSED AND FEATURED PROJECTS BY CR COMMUNITY



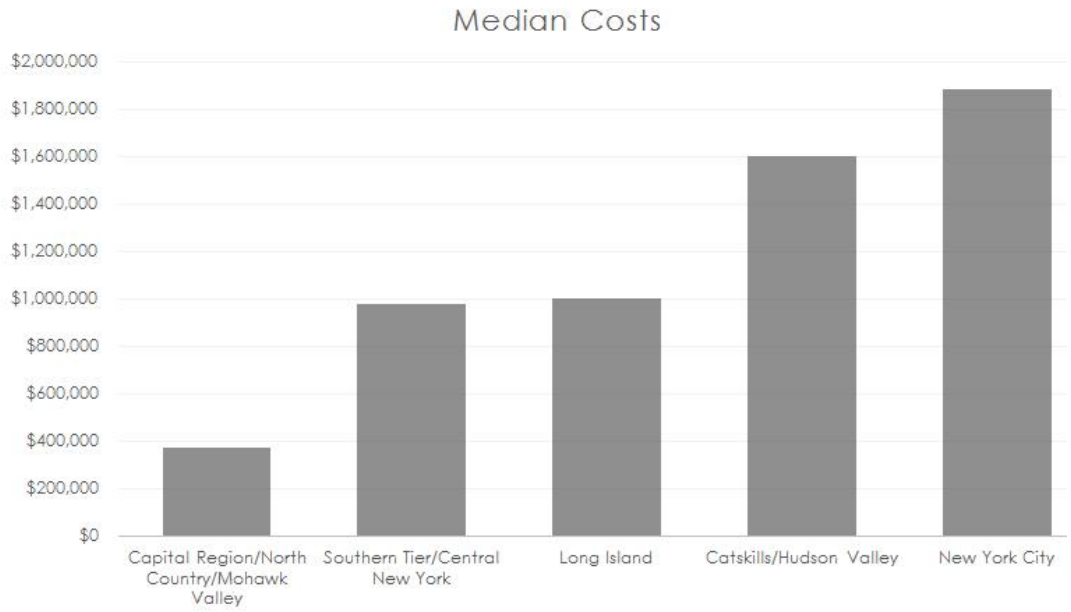


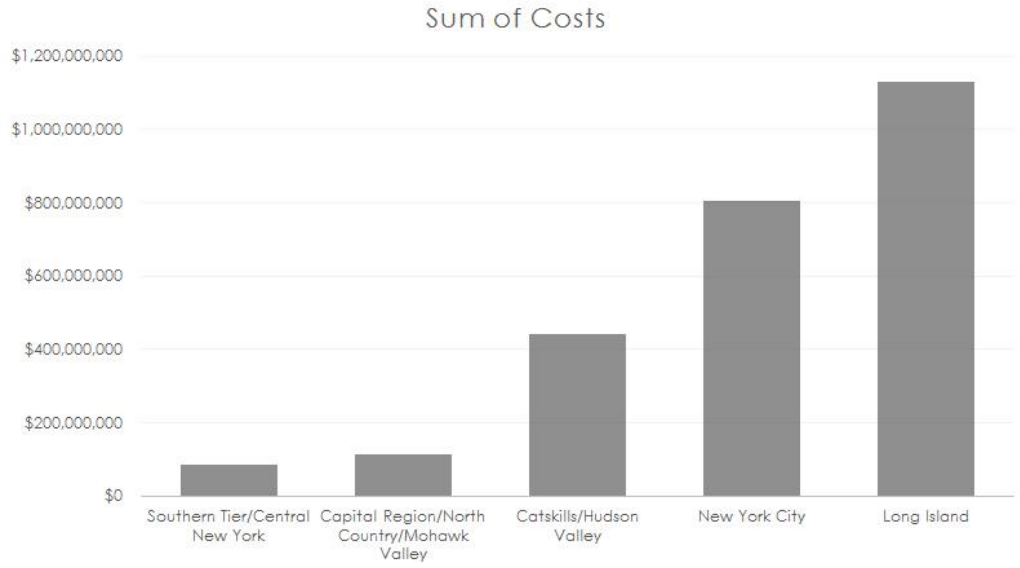




RESULTS

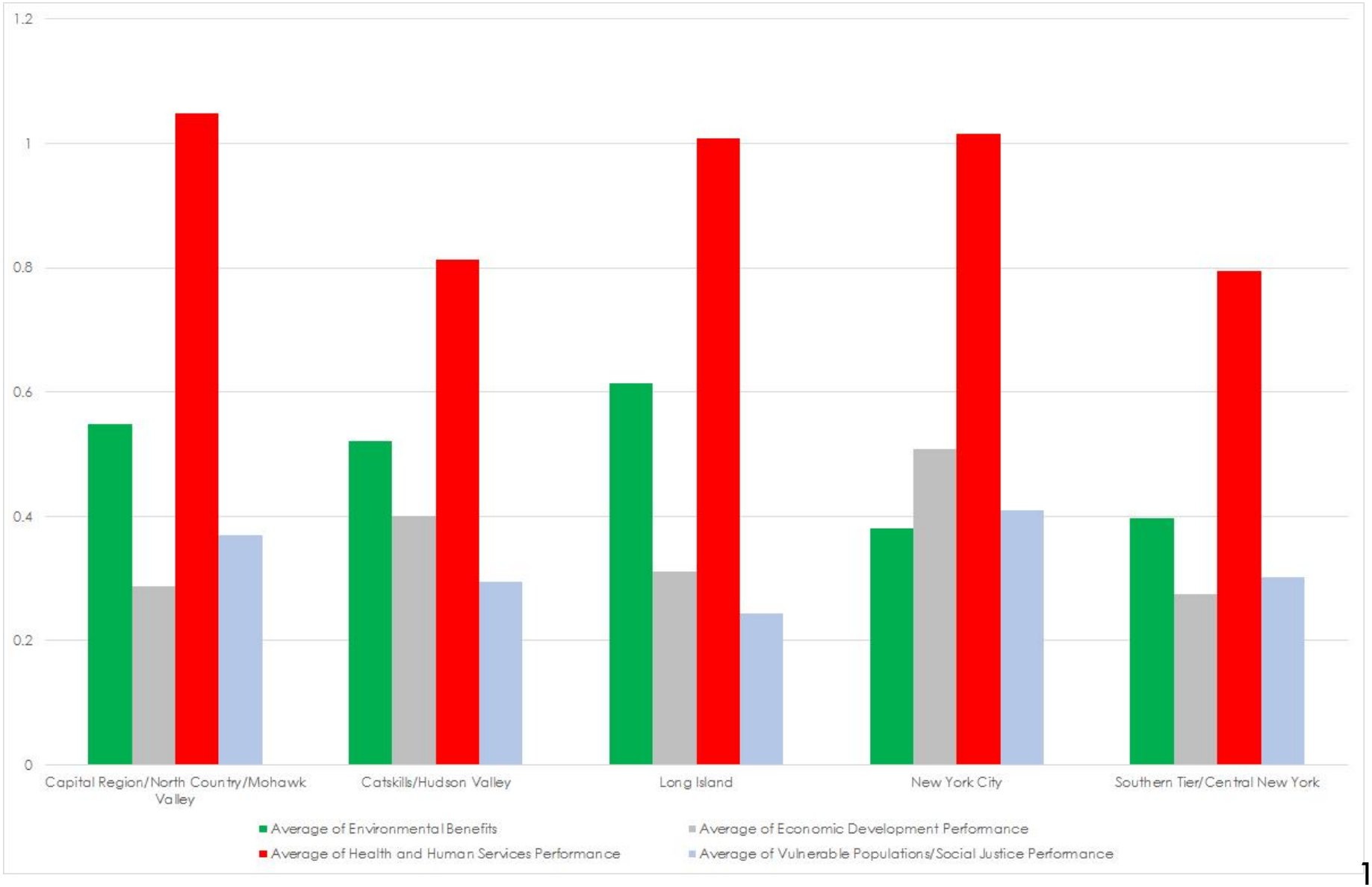
MEDIAN AND SUM COST OF PROPOSED AND FEATURED PROJECTS BY REGION





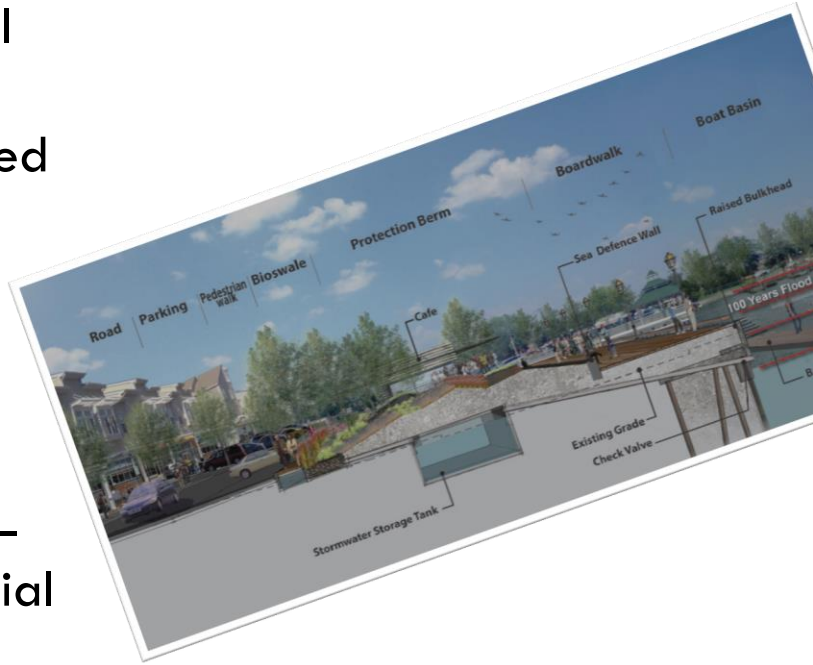
RESULTS

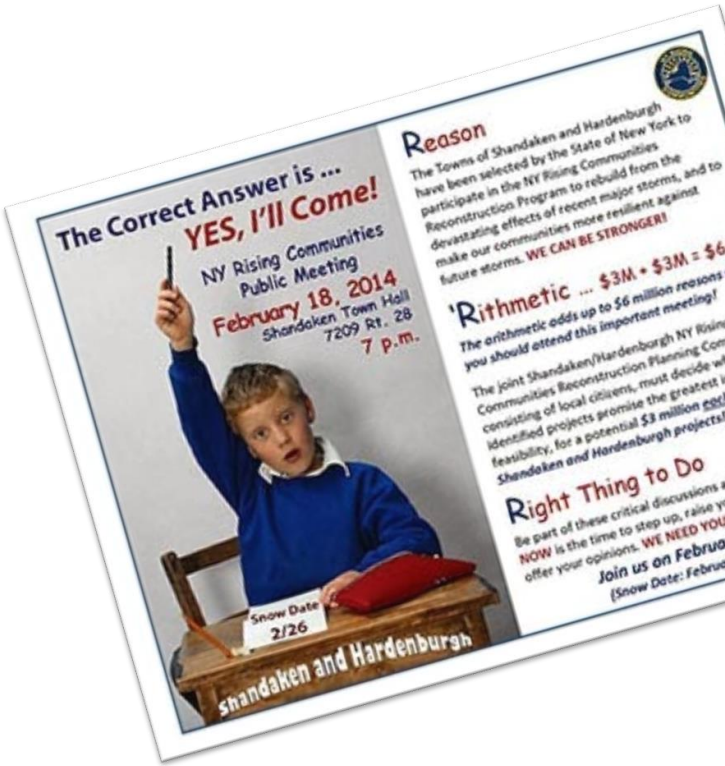
AVERAGE AGGREGATE BENEFITS SCORES OF FEATURED AND PROPOSED PROJECTS BY REGION



Summary

- Bottom-up recovery planning has significant benefits
- Projects concentrated on infrastructural solutions although a substantial number integrated social justice and environmental concerns
- Low cost solutions could have been better utilized (Regulations were under-emphasized; only 20 projects out of 840 concerned legal tools)
- Plans, predictably, were largely a vehicle for federal spending instead of building local autonomy for adaptation
- Types of benefits emphasized vary by region – L.I. highest in environmental; NYC highest in social justice/vulnerable populations; Capital Region highest in health and human services; Southern Tier had lowest average benefits scores in most categories



RECOMMENDATIONS

- In many cases, plans could benefit from clearer implementation strategies
- Benefit prioritization targets could be included
- Claims of benefits should be more precise and standardized
- Data such as public preferences should be made public in plans
- Greater emphasis could be placed on longer time horizons and climate change responsiveness
- Greater emphasis could be placed on town-driven, autonomous and low-cost strategies