

FEMA Approves Funds for Permanent Repairs in All 78 Municipalities

GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico – The recovery of the island after the impact of Hurricane Maria reaches a milestone now that all 78 municipalities have funds earmarked for permanent work. This will allow for the reconstruction of 3,635 municipal projects such as roads and bridges, public buildings, and the rehabilitation of parks and recreational facilities in the communities, among others.

“Each one of these projects represent an opportunity to rebuild stronger and stimulate the economy. We remain focused on helping our municipalities and communities in their long-term recovery,” said the Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, José Baquero Tirado.

Roads and bridges, one of the areas most affected by hurricanes Irma and María, has the largest amount of approved funds. To date, FEMA has assigned over \$557 million to help fund over 1,700 transportation infrastructure projects for municipal roads.

Also, recent grants include about \$612,000 to the municipality of Juncos for repairs to the Community Center in the Lirios neighborhood that consists of three buildings. Juncos’ mayor, Alfredo “Papo” Alejandro Carrión, mentioned that this is a multipurpose space that serves several sectors of the municipality and is used as a shelter, if necessary. “With this assignment we will begin to work on rehabilitating the structure so that it can once again serve our citizens and in times of emergency,” he said.

Similarly, this obligation covers repairs to the municipal landfill in the Gurabo Abajo neighborhood, which serves as a final disposal facility for seven other municipalities in the eastern area. Reestablishing various waste control and management measures at the site is imperative to protect the public health of the municipality’s residents.



Other areas that will be transformed as part of the recovery efforts are some 1,237 parks and recreational facilities, such as baseball stadiums, basketball courts and athletic tracks throughout Puerto Rico. This represents an injection of more than \$383 million for projects that allow communities to carry out sports and community outreach events.

Among the communities that benefited from these obligations is the Coto Sur neighborhood at the Sabana Sector in Manatí. The municipality was approved nearly \$551,000 for repairs to the infrastructure of a baseball park, a basketball court and a community center for the benefit of 8,000 residents. Of these funds, over \$143,000 are destined for hazard mitigation measures to prevent similar damage that could pose a threat to the site in the future.

“This is very good news for all municipalities, particularly after so many challenges they continue to face in the wake of hurricanes Irma and María. This comprehensive allocation will strengthen the health and infrastructure sectors, as well as the communities that have contributed so much to the municipalities. We thank FEMA for remaining committed to Puerto Rico,” said the executive director of the Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resilience (COR3), Ottmar Chávez.

On the other hand, over \$188 million was approved for 640 projects to repair public buildings that provide essential services, such as hospitals, police stations and even buildings of historical value. A grant of about \$1.8 million to the island municipality of Vieques will help repair several public buildings, including the Office of Emergency Management, the Municipal Police, the Electronic Library and the Villa Borinquen community and recycling center. To make the structures more weather resistant, about \$87,000 of the obligation was allocated for mitigation measures.

To date, FEMA has obligated nearly **\$19.4 billion** for costs related to hurricanes Irma and María, including projects to help rebuild infrastructure throughout Puerto Rico. FEMA works with COR3 through the agency’s Public Assistance program to obligate recovery funds to private nonprofit organizations, municipalities and agencies of the Government of Puerto Rico.

For more information on Puerto Rico’s recovery from Hurricane María, visit fema.gov/disaster/4339 and recuperacion.pr. Follow us on our social networks at



Graphic

