

# Over \$6.4 Million from FEMA for Projects in Vieques and Culebra

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**Guaynabo, PUERTO RICO** ? Four projects in the island municipalities of Vieques and Culebra are in design or construction thanks to an allocation of over \$6.4 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In Vieques, the funds will be used to repair the Antonio Rivera Rodríguez Airport and the Luis González Camareno Municipal Coliseum, while in Culebra they will be used for the Government Center and the Multi-Use Center.

“These projects will favor the over 10,000 residents of Vieques and Culebra and will have a positive impact not only on their daily lives, but also on their sports, cultural and social activities. Furthermore, the repairs to the Vieques airport will support tourism, which is vital to its economy. These and other federal allocations are proof that FEMA remains firm in its commitment to helping Puerto Rico’s comprehensive recovery and, undoubtedly, this includes the entire archipelago,” said Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator José G. Baquero.

The Antonio Rivera Rodríguez Airport in Vieques, built in 1995 and managed by the Puerto Rico Ports Authority, serves about 40,000 people each year and offers flights to the San Juan, Isla Grande and Ceiba airports. The facility consists of a main terminal, an air rescue building, a lounge, a hangar and two storage buildings.

“The airport is one of the main routes for the movement of passengers and cargo, such as mail and different means of delivery like USPS, UPS, DHL and others. Its optimal operation assures residents the continuity of these services,” said Vieques Vice Mayor Adolfo Rosa Miranda.

Currently, this vital project for the municipality is in the design phase. With the federal allocation of over \$4.1 million, the floors, elevator system, generator, fire prevention system and structural beams and columns will be replaced. Here the replacement of roofs, transformers, light poles and the runway lamp sensor have already been completed.



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Page 1 of 5

Construction work at the Luis González Camareno Municipal Coliseum is also underway. This project has an allocation of over \$628,000 to paint the basketball court, repair cracks and replace doors, emergency lights, fire hose, metal roof, folding wooden bleachers, electrical outlets and lighting poles, among others.

For the vice mayor, this facility is vital for the development of multiple sports, as it is the only indoor coliseum available in the municipality island also known as *Isla Nena*. “Basketball, boxing, volleyball and other very important recreational activities for the people of Vieques are organized here,” he added.

Moreover, repairs to the Culebra Government Center are already underway, with an allocation of nearly \$830,000. This three-story building houses 13 offices — including the Department of the Family, the Municipal Legislature, the Office of Land Management and an interactive court — and serves some 500 to 700 people each month.

Repairs will consist of reinstalling the structure’s retaining wall, cleaning the contaminated air conditioning duct system and replacing the air conditioner’s condenser and compressor. There will also repair the asphalt pavement and concrete sidewalk, roof resurfacing and will replace light fixtures, walls and fire- and water-resistant gypsum ceilings.

According to José A. Rodríguez Fera, of Culebra’s Federal Programs Office, these repairs will result in improved quality and accessibility of services with more comfortable facilities for visitors. “It also helps administrative operations run more efficiently. In this way, infrastructure projects are expedited, aside from the fact that the structure complies with all regulations and safety requirements to have an optimal, adequate and accessible work environment,” he added.

Likewise, repairs to the Multi-Use Center at the Flamenco neighborhood are in progress. The structure houses a library, a community foodbank and a shelter, among others. The Center received an allocation of nearly \$810,000 for the replacement of detached concrete roof slabs, light fixtures, windows, air conditioners and the application of a waterproof membrane for the roof, among other works.

Also located there is the nonprofit organization El Junte Comunitario Culebrense, which channels aid to the community. “Its mission is to positively impact the lives



of children, youths, adults and seniors, offering them opportunities in the fields of environmental impact, education focused on technology, art, culture and sports with the vision of creating programs and activities aimed at educational, social and economic support, empowering Culebra families to develop a greater well-being and better quality of life,” said Rodríguez Fera, who added that repairing this structure already has a positive impact on the entire community.

The four projects have funds assigned for hazard mitigation, which will prepare the facilities to face future disasters. For Vieques, this allocation consists of nearly \$197,000; while for the projects of Culebra, the allocation is of nearly \$13,300.

For his part, the executive director of the Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency, Manuel A. Laboy Rivera, said that “the reconstruction of the island municipalities is led by multiple government agencies, which together with the work performed by the municipalities of Vieques and Culebra, rehabilitate and give resilience to the infrastructure affected by previous disasters. An example of this is the advanced process of the construction of the Susana Centeno Health Center in Vieques and the Culebra Government Center, among other works that have benefited from the advance of funds through the Working Capital Advance pilot program. The COR3 team is committed to continuing to work as a team with the municipalities and state agencies, as well as federal agencies, for the benefit of the people of Culebra and Vieques.”

To date, FEMA has obligated over \$33.9 billion for over 11,000 recovery projects in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane María. Of these funds, nearly \$70 million have been allocated for permanent work projects in Vieques and Culebra, totaling over \$62 million and over \$7 million, respectively.

For more information about Puerto Rico’s recovery, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4339](https://fema.gov/disaster/4339), [fema.gov/disaster/4473](https://fema.gov/disaster/4473) and [recovery.pr](https://recovery.pr). Follow us on our social media at [Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico](https://Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico), [Facebook.com/COR3pr](https://Facebook.com/COR3pr) and [@COR3pr](https://Twitter).





**VIEQUES, Puerto Rico (April 24, 2024)** – FEMA allocated over \$4.1 million to repair the Antonio Rivera Rodríguez Airport in Vieques. Built in 1995 and managed by the Puerto Rico Ports Authority, this airport serves about 40,000 people each year and offers flights to the San Juan, Isla Grande and Ceiba airports. This vital project for the municipality is in the design phase. With the federal allocation, the floors, elevator system, generator, fire prevention system and structural beams and columns will be replaced. Photo FEMA / Eliezer Hernández





**CULEBRA, Puerto Rico (June 25, 2024)**- Repairs to the Culebra Government Center are already underway, with an allocation by FEMA of nearly \$830,000. This three-story building houses 13 offices — including the Department of the Family, the Municipal Legislature, the Office of Land Management and an interactive court — and serves some 500 to 700 people each month. Photo FEMA/Eduardo Martínez



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