

FEMA Obligates Over \$783 Million to Repair Puerto Rico's Roads, Bridges and Ports

Release Date: September 2, 2020

GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico — For the past three years, FEMA has awarded funds to repair and strengthen Puerto Rico's transportation infrastructure. [Along with the Central Office of Recovery, Reconstruction and Resilience of Puerto Rico, or COR3, the Agency has obligated over \\$783 million](#) to revitalize the island's vast network of roads, highways, bridges and piers which sustained substantial damage after Hurricane María.

These funds include **\$428.8 million** for the Department of Transportation and Public Works for projects such as installing over 18,000 road signs in 654 state roads across nearly 1,310 miles throughout the island— a benefit to more than 1.2 million people.

“In one year we have managed to approve funding for over a thousand road and bridge projects, which represents an important step forward in the recovery of the Island. Our focus is to continue obligating funds for roads and other areas that affect the daily lives of residents,” said Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Alex Amparo.

Also, over **\$11.2 million** was obligated to the Puerto Rico Port Authority and the Ponce Port Authority for work that includes repairs to 12 piers, like repairing the crane system at Puerto de las Américas Rafael Cordero Santiago. This is a key port for emergency management operations and after the hurricanes managed the entry of cargo and supplies needed to re-establish the distribution chain on the Island.

Being an island, these piers serve as the main receiving point to obtain food and construction materials, among other goods. Roughly 306,211 tons of rice and flour were received by these ports last year, and a total of over \$500 million in merchandise. In addition, all fuel for the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority's



FEMA

Page 1 of 3

power generating plants and co generating AES- Puerto Rico plants is received through our ports.

Likewise, roughly **1,249** municipal projects to address damage to roads and bridges have been obligated so far. These encompass many of the hardest hit areas such as Jayuya where over 16,600 residents were left isolated after the storm. For this municipality, over **\$88.6 million** was awarded to undertake 71 permanent work and architectural and engineering design projects throughout various neighborhoods. Work has already been completed in many of these roads, including the Haydee Pacheco and the Manolo Morales Roads in barrio Puerto Plata which benefit 10 and 15 families respectively.

“These projects are of service to the vulnerable people of the communities with most needs in our municipality. I appreciate all the work and cooperation that FEMA has had with the Municipality and the effective communication,” said the mayor of Jayuya, Jorge L. “Georgie” González Otero.

In the southern coast, the municipality of Yauco was assigned more than **\$4.3 million** for architectural and engineering design costs and permanent repairs to several bridges that collapsed during the storm and serve as key access points for more than 376 families. On air at the Agency’s radio show, Dando Palique, the municipality’s Mayor Angel Luis “Luigi” Torres Ortiz expressed that repairing the Rho Eta Delta Bridge, Harry Cintrón Bridge, Fraticelli Bridge, as well as the Palos Blancos Bridge are a high priority as these connect several communities.

Another **\$1.4 million** are earmarked for permanent repairs to the severely damaged PR-105 and Camino Noriega roads in Maricao. The latter is a municipal road in barrio Montoso used by 16 families. Moreover, this is the main route to transport goods out of a local farm that has three employees and produces star fruit, sapote fruit, lychee, rambutan and other fruits.

“This path affects this community as they are practically unreachable. Once the road is repaired, these families will have a direct access to basic services, since it has an exit on Highway 105 and 120. [Also], farmers will have better access to transport their agricultural products,” added Maricao’s mayor, Gilberto Pérez.

For his part, COR3's Executive Director, Ottmar J. Chávez, indicated that "during the past few months, a large number of recovery projects were obligated through



FEMA

Page 2 of 3

uninterrupted work, in spite of the other emergencies that have arisen. These obligations promote the attention to essential and important structures for all the sectors that receive these federal contributions. We remain committed to continuing to work on the projects that remain to be served”.

To date, FEMA has obligated over **\$7.2 billion** for costs related to hurricanes Irma and Maria, including projects to help rebuild infrastructure throughout Puerto Rico. Roughly 1,200 local staff are leading the efforts and play a key role in moving recovery forward. Despite unprecedented challenges, our resolve remains undeterred as we continue this banner year of recovery. The Agency is part of the transformation and the revival of the island, a process that is becoming more evident every day and that will benefit the island's residents and its future generations.

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 Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico, Facebook.com/COR3pr and on [@COR3pr](https://Twitter.com/COR3pr).

