

Galveston shoring up beaches with help of \$13.3 million in FEMA grants

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AUSTIN, Texas — Galveston has begun replacing hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of sand that were eroded from its beaches during Hurricane Harvey, working to make the city safer from future storms and bolster its tourism industry.

FEMA's Public Assistance program is providing 90% of the funding for three Galveston beach restoration projects whose combined cost exceeds \$14.8 million. FEMA's share is over \$13.3 million.

"People underestimate the value of a beach renourishment project," said Galveston City Manager Brian Maxwell. "They think it's all for tourism, but it actually does benefit the island and protect us even further, because we did have some pretty high tides during Hurricane Harvey."

"This beach really saved our bacon," he added, noting that Harvey flooded parts of the city. "It actually protected the seawall itself."

Galveston's beaches are also vital to its economy as the main attraction for its 7 million annual visitors, who spend more than \$800 million a year in the city.

Robin Newton from Glen Rose, Texas, who visited Galveston this month for the second time, said she enjoys the city's walkability, family environment and activities.



“Altogether with us [on this trip], there’s grandparents all the way down to the grandkids and a few ages in between,” she said. “There’s something for everybody when we come out here.”

FEMA’s Public Assistance program reimburses eligible applicants for actions taken in the immediate response to and during recovery from a disaster. Eligible applicants include states, federally recognized tribal governments, U.S. territories, local governments and certain private nonprofits. The program provides project funding directly to the state for disbursement to applicants; the Galveston grants were disbursed through the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

To view a video on the beach projects, visit <https://youtu.be/PyYLQJKSaXo> or www.facebook.com/FEMAHarvey.

For additional information on Hurricane Harvey and Texas recovery, visit the Hurricane Harvey disaster web page at www.fema.gov/disaster/4332, Facebook at www.facebook.com/FEMAHarvey, the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at www.twitter.com/FEMARegion6 or the Texas Division of Emergency Management website at www.dps.texas.gov/dem.

