

# Improvements to Roads and Bridges in Puerto Rico Are Underway

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*Coamo and Ponce are among the municipalities with completed projects*

**GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico** — The improvements to thousands of road and bridge projects in Puerto Rico will be accomplished with millions in funding allocations from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Some of these permanent repairs have already been completed as a result of \$729 million earmarked for municipalities. In addition, in the past 60 days, the Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTOP, by its Spanish acronym) was allocated close to \$37 million for these purposes.

These obligations provide the basis for road reconstruction works such as asphaltting, stabilizing retaining walls and replacing guardrails.

“Having roads in good condition is vital for residents, transportation commerce and the safety of all. The completed projects in our municipalities are important milestones that mark a recovery that is moving forward,” said the Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, José Baquero Tirado.

The municipality of Coamo already completed some of the repairs for its roads with the help of over \$1.7 million in federal funding. Nearly 25 streets, rural roads, and alleys have been repaired to the benefit of some 3,000 families. The projects include nearly \$796,000 for various repairs in Callejón Bravo, Callejón Los Gandules, Urbanización Miraflores and Parque Las Flores, and over \$232,300 to repair three streets in Los González Sector. About 60 of the municipality’s projects across different categories are under construction or in the bidding process.

“We have focused on the rural projects, which are the ones that were damaged the most. Residents of Los Gandules received a lot of water, as well as the Callejón Bravo neighborhood, which are subject to mountain water runoff from the surrounding hills. The fourth mile was restored, and this project has already been



completed,” said Coamo Mayor Juan García Padilla.

Likewise, the municipality of Ponce has completed construction work on 15 municipal roads through obligations of over \$513,000. Among them, Sector El Collado, which is home to approximately 60 families.

Among the 78 municipalities, Utuado is the municipality with the highest number of projects approved for permanent repairs to road infrastructure, with 256 projects approved for \$53.6

million. The allocations include funds to repair Highway #140 to Jayuya and another road that leads to the Caonillas Lake. These roads provide access to seven neighborhoods that are home to nearly 7,000 families from the towns that were most damaged during Hurricane María: Bo. Tenuan I, II and III, Don Alonso, Caonillas, Mameyes, Limón, Paso Palmas, Las Palmas and Barrio Jaucas. Also, these roads provide access to schools, water distribution systems, Caonillas Lake, Cañón Blanco and a health center.

To date, the Agency has approved nearly **\$967 million** for more than **2,100** road and bridge repair projects across the island that sustained damage from Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

For her part, the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Public Works, Eileen M. Vélez Vega, said that these funds are very important to address the needs of Puerto Rico's state roads. “Road safety is our priority and we will work as a team with federal agencies and mayors for the benefit of drivers who use our roads.”

Manuel A. Laboy Rivera, Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency (COR3), stated that “we are in direct communication with mayors and agency officials such as DTOP to ensure that permanent works projects are expedited. Meanwhile, we are moving forward with changes in COR3 processes to continue offering the required assistance without so much bureaucracy related to the reconstruction of the Island, but always fulfilling federal requirements.”

**[VIDEO]** To learn more about the reconstruction efforts on the roads in Coamo, click [here](#).



For more information on Puerto Rico's recovery from Hurricane María, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4339](https://fema.gov/disaster/4339) and [recuperacion.pr](https://recuperacion.pr). Follow us on our social networks at [Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico](https://Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico), [Facebook.com/COR3pr](https://Facebook.com/COR3pr) and [Twitter @COR3pr](https://Twitter.com/COR3pr).



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