

Fifty-five City Halls to Be Rebuilt with over \$28.5 Million from FEMA

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The federal funds will cover repairs to damage caused by Hurricane María and the 2020 earthquakes

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico –“City halls are the municipality’s calling card, and in many cases, structures of great historical value. Through these awards under two FEMA programs, we expect to impact 55 city halls,” said the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator, José G. Baquero.

To this end, the Municipality of Bayamón was allocated nearly \$5 million for its city hall facilities which include the Municipal Assembly as well as the Braulio Castillo Theater. Of these funds, over \$3 million are earmarked for hazard mitigation measures designed to seal roofs and anchor air conditioning equipment. Other repairs such as improvements to lighting and electrical system components have already been completed.

On the other hand, over \$832,000 was obligated to the Municipality of Vega Baja to repair its historic city hall, which dates back to 1924 and is about to celebrate its centennial. According to Vega Baja Mayor, Marcos Cruz Molina, these obligations and repairs are part of the city's economic development and direct service to the citizens.

“That is why it is so important to keep it in the urban center and for our visitors to enter a building that complies with all safety and health codes ,” said Cruz Molina, who added that in the future the plan is to create a permanent exhibition with these findings as well as its old clock and bell system.

On the other hand, six other city halls will be repaired from earthquake damage, including the ones located in Mayagüez, Peñuelas, San Germán and Ponce. Likewise, the city halls in Sabana Grande and Utuado that together encompass over 300 years of history.



The repairs in Utuado will provide a space where residents can go to seek medications and services for the bedridden. "Residents need to be provided with continuous assistance," said Ineabel Medina, who lives near the town square, while describing the importance of recovering her city hall.

In addition, under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), over \$508,000 was designated to the Municipality of Moca for the rehabilitation of its city hall and another allocation to the Municipality of Arroyo. HMGP funds are aimed at taking key measures to reduce the loss of life and property in the event of future disasters.

At the Moca City Hall, built in 1979, the structure will be modernized to comply with current building codes and the building's structural system will be reinforced to improve its resistance to hurricanes and earthquakes. The building offers, for example, CRIM services and patents, as well as liaisons with federal programs such as Housing and the Central Office of Recovery and Resiliency (COR3), among others. Currently, the repairs are in the design phase.

Moreover, at the Arroyo facility, the annex building will be waterproofed to improve its resistance to flooding. The Emergency Operations Center operates there.

"City halls are the first place that people visit to look for assistance and services. The repairs to these government centers will give structural resiliency to allow for the functioning of the offices during emergencies in benefit of the population. In COR3, we are committed to moving the reconstruction forward, serving as allies to the municipalities, while we comply with federal and state regulations," said Engineer Manuel A. Laboy Rivera, Executive Director of COR3.

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





BAYAMÓN, Puerto Rico (March 2, 2022) – The Municipality of Bayamón was allocated nearly \$5 million for its city hall facilities which include the Municipal Assembly as well as the Braulio Castillo Theater. Of these funds, over \$3 million are earmarked for hazard mitigation measures designed to seal roofs and anchor air conditioning equipment. Other repairs such as improvements to lighting and electrical system components have already been completed. Photo FEMA / Eduardo Martínez



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