THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF DISASTER RECOVERY
VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY

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DPW Obligated $26.3M to Address Flooding and Repair Roads Territory-Wide

U.S. Virgin Islands- The Office of Disaster Recovery announces that the Federal Emergency Management Agency, through its Public Assistance Program, awarded the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works $26,394,709 for eight road projects in both the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John districts.

The obligations will cover costs to rebuild roads damaged by the onslaught of heavy rains and strong floodwaters caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. On St. Croix, repairs and improvements will be made to the roadways in LaGrange, Williams Delight, Mount Pleasant and Hermon Hill. On St. Thomas and Water Island, various roads in Bovoni, Frydenhoj, Anna's Retreat, Frenchman's Bay, Mariendahl and Red Hook, in addition to the commuter parking lot, dock and ramp for the Phillips Ferry Landing, will be restored.

Department of Public Works Commissioner Derek Gabriel said, "To mitigate against future damages, these FEMA funds will allow the Department to reinforce the pavement with new subgrade and base material, reinforced with geotextile and asphalt. In an effort to further preserve the roadway, we are paying specific attention to the drainage systems, particularly the design and installation of swales and culverts in order to mitigate against heavy rains and run-off. I appreciate the continued collaboration and cooperation from FEMA and the support of ODR as funds are obligated to comprehensively address these oft-plagued areas."

Over $7 million in federal funding will be utilized for four road projects in Frederiksted, two in the Williams Delight area and one in Estate Mount Pleasant and LaGrange. The roads will be resurfaced, and new traffic signage will be installed. The scopes also include the construction of critical hazard mitigation drainage features -such as concrete culverts and drainage pipes in Williams Delight and land clearing and roadway excavation in Mount Pleasant. At LaGrange Road, heavy rains caused strong floodwaters to erode the roadway. Repairs will ease access to local neighborhoods and provide a secondary route from Frederiksted to Mahogany Road (Route 76).

On St. Thomas, the Water Island project includes the resurfacing of Providence Hill, Overdown, Upper Flamingo Road, and North, South, and Upper Beach Roads and repairs to the commuter parking lot dock and ramp for the Phillips Ferry Landing.

During the hurricanes, excessive run-off from the western uphill area on St. Thomas merged with existing floodwaters causing the Nadir Gut to overflow, leading to the continuous erosion and undermining of the concrete roadway and the area behind the wall of the gut. The $10 million project in Jersey and Smith Bay will address the

collapse of the concrete wall, damage to the box culvert at the Nadir Gut, and repairs to more than a dozen roadways.

"FEMA's Public Assistance team continues to partner with the Office of Disaster Recovery on plans for the Department of Public Works to pave a path for road repairs. These roads provide access to neighborhoods on St. Croix, St. Thomas and Water Island. It is imperative the Territory's roads are fit to withstand the rigors of daily traffic and any impacts from future storms. The inclusion of $11.1 million in Hazard Mitigation Proposals for these eight projects will focus on strengthening the pavement in areas prone to saturated subgrades and improve stormwater drainage for the roads and watersheds," said Acting Recovery Director John Covell.

Mitigation funds have also been allocated for temporary traffic control personnel to ensure the safety of motorists and on-site work crews.

"Repairing the territory's roadways is a top priority for the Bryan/Roach Administration," said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, Office of Disaster Recovery Director. "The Territory has faced significant challenges in its efforts to obligate road projects. This award signals a path forward for road repairs across the Territory and is the first of more to come. We will continue to work with FEMA to obligate the remaining roads left in ruin and disrepair after the 2017 storms."

The Department of Public Works will begin issuing solicitations before the end of the month to secure contractors to start the work to repair these roads.

The Office of Disaster Recovery
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