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Press Contact
Richard Motta
340-474-2399
www.vi.gov
www.richard.mottajr@go.vi.gov

Governor Bryan Applauds HUD's Approval Of CDBG Mitigation Action Plan for Hurricane Recovery

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – Governor Albert Bryan Jr. applauded the decision by the U.S. Department of Housing, and Urban Development to approve the Territory's action plan using the fourth tranche of $774 million of disaster relief funding for the 2017 hurricanes, which is awarded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-MIT) funding earmarked for mitigation projects in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Approval of the plan frees up federal funding to spend on housing, infrastructure & public facilities; economic resilience & revitalization; public services, and planning.

"HUD's approval of our mitigation plan clears the way for the Bryan-Roach Administration to fulfill its pledge to fully realize our community's recovery from Hurricanes Irma and Maria," Governor Bryan said. "These funds not only help us strengthen the resiliency of the U.S. Virgin Islands, but also make it possible for us to build better, newer, and stronger and to upgrade our standard of living in the Territory."

Unlike the Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds, which have been awarded for hurricane-specific disaster recovery, mitigation dollars can fund projects of a varying nature to serve the Territory's most critical mitigation needs, even without a clear tie-back to a specific disaster.

Locally, this fourth tranche of federal assistance is administered through the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority (VIHFA) in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery.

"The 2017 hurricanes crippled the Virgin Islands and truly revealed our weaknesses in disaster response. This approval is a major win for the territory because this is the first time that we've ever had access to such a large volume of capital to address issues in our community that surface after natural disasters," said VIHFA Executive Director Daryl Griffith. "With mitigation funds, we can adequately prepare not just for hurricanes, but for earthquakes, flash floods, and tsunamis as well."

The USVI's action plan was shaped by community input provided through a series of town hall meetings, focus groups, and surveys conducted in 2020.

HUD's CDBG-MIT Program supports strategic and high-impact activities to mitigate disaster risks and reduce future losses by lessening the impact of future disasters and reducing or eliminating the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship.

The plan proposes activities to address unmet infrastructure and public facilities, economic resilience, housing, public services, and planning needs, following HUD requirements and public input, using data-driven decision-making to establish priorities.

A digital copy of the USVI's HUD-approved Mitigation Action Plan is available online here at the V.I. Housing Finance Authority's website. More information about the CDBG-MIT Program in the Territory is available online at cdbgdr.vihfa.gov/programs/cdbg-mitigation.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is committed to transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov.

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