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Lee Board of County Commissioners receives HUD CDBG-DR allocation for Ian long-term recovery needs

Fort Myers, FL, March 15, 2023 — The Lee Board of County Commissioners today learned that the United States (US) Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has allocated \$1.1 billion in Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding directly to Lee County to assist with the county's long-term recovery following Hurricane Ian. These disaster recovery funds can be used for a variety of activities including housing redevelopment, infrastructure repair, economic revitalization and long-term planning.

"The damage from Hurricane Ian impacted so many people in Lee County and these funds are key to our long-term efforts to rebuild their lives," said Lee County Commission Chairman Brian Hamman. "We are grateful to HUD for allowing Lee County to administer these funds as our community comes together to build back stronger and better than ever."

Prior to the release of CDBG-DR funds, the county is required to develop a CDBG-DR Action Plan to describe the uses, management and oversight of these funds, and must be approved by HUD. In support of this effort, the county's regional Recovery Task Force (RTF), led by Commissioner Kevin Ruane, will continue engaging with each of the hardest-hit communities across the county to hear directly from community leaders and members of the public about their remaining needs and seeking input on how to best use this funding to bring Lee County back better than ever.

"Hurricane Ian did catastrophic damage to our community, but our commitment to recovery has never wavered," RTF Chairman Ruane said. "Leaders from both the public and private sector are already working to meet the needs of our neighbors working to rebuild lives and communities throughout Lee County."

Communities and Lee County residents preparing for CDBG-DR funds are encouraged to begin the planning process but should not anticipate applying for some time. In addition to the required approval of the county's CDBG-DR Action Plan, HUD must issue guidance – via Federal Register notice – detailing rules and regulations for administering these funds. In total, the county's CDBG-DR Action Plan development and associated approval along with the guidance issuance by HUD could take several months. While this process will take time, it will also help ensure that this funding is distributed in a way that enables the county to repair and rebuild its communities more resilient to the future hazards that it may face.

The county will continue to distribute information as it becomes available.

About the funding announcement: HUD Deputy Secretary Adrienne Todman held a press conference with local officials today to announce the CDBG-DR funding for Lee County. Visit [Lee County's YouTube channel](#) to watch the press conference. The direct video link is www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xa6PoJRIcA

About Lee County's regional RTF: In response to the massive and widespread devastation caused by Hurricane Ian, the Lee Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to form the regional RTF based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF). The purpose of convening this task force is to collaborate as a community, combining efforts to recover and rebuild in a resilient manner. For more information, visit ResilientLee.org.

About Lee County's Ian Progress Report: Lee County's Ian Progress Report is a data-driven site dedicated to updating the community on the fiscal needs, progress and opportunities with state and federal partners as Lee County moves forward after the hurricane. The report is available at ianprogress.leegov.com and provides easy access to a snapshot of initial damage assessment, FEMA individual assistance, survivor housing, disaster-recovery dollars, parks and beaches updates, and public works projects.

Background: Hurricane Ian made landfall in Lee County on Sept. 28, 2022, as a Category 4 storm with a wind speed of 155 mph, the largest hurricane to make landfall in Lee County and the fifth largest storm in U.S. history.

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