

Philanthropy & Nonprofits

Houston to receive \$6.5M of United Arab Emirates' gift for Hurricane Harvey recovery

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Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner.

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Houston will receive \$6.5 million of the [\\$10 million the United Arab Emirates previously pledged to Texas](#) for Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts, UAE officials and Houston Mayor [Sylvester Turner](#) announced Jan. 7.

The \$6.5 million will go to the Greater Houston Community Foundation to help with Harvey-related homelessness relief, community revitalization, library services and public health expansion, according to a press release. The foundation will oversee, manage and distribute the grant funds to the following specific projects:





- **Avenue CDC's new training and education center:** \$2.6 million to build a new, permanent location for Avenue Center, a mixed-use community resource hub directly north of downtown. "The center will serve as a community resource hub, providing a space for an early childhood education center, post-disaster housing counseling, homeownership programs and an area for general congregation," per the release.

- **Homeless Navigation Center:** \$2 million to create and operate a facility offering short-term housing alternatives for the unsheltered homeless population. It will operate under a pilot program for two years and will operate as a disaster recovery shelter during inclement weather.
- **Mobile Health Clinic and Command Center:** \$1.1 million for the Houston Health Department to expand the Pediatric Asthma in the Home Stretch Program to three more schools in the Houston Independent School District, test children for blood lead poisoning and create the Children’s Environmental Health Mobile Unit. The money will cover staffing, school stipends, testing supplies, lab services and the creation and maintenance of the mobile unit, per the release.
- **Flores Neighborhood Library:** \$800,000 to re-build and re-open the library in Houston’s Second Ward, which has been closed since Harvey. The money will also fund upgrading the library’s programming and computer lab and purchasing new furniture.

“We are extremely grateful to Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba, Consul General Al Mehairi and the people of the United Arab Emirates for this generous gift, the responsible way in which it will be managed and the care taken to ensure that it will provide quality-of-life improvements to Houstonians at a grassroots level,” Turner said in the release. “As Houston builds forward from the hurricane, we cherish our helpful partners such as the UAE.”

The UAE has previously helped the U.S. in other disasters, including Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Superstorm Sandy in 2012 and the tornadoes that tore through Joplin, Missouri, in 2012.

[In October 2018, funds from the State of Qatar's \\$30 million donation to Texas were allocated to local recovery efforts.](#) Harris County received \$2.5 million from the Qatar Harvey Fund to help reopen a Third Ward hospital, and another \$2.5 million donation from the fund was announced as the founding contribution to the mayor’s fund to battle Houston homelessness. The \$30 million gift from Qatar also includes \$5 million for the Rebuild Texas fund. Back in 2005, the country also created a \$100 million Qatar Katrina Fund.

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