

logo not found or type unknown

# Sen. Johnson Fears Juan F. Luis Hospital Won't be Rebuilt in His Lifetime

## ODR Director Outlines Next Steps Amidst Skepticism

Health / **Published On November 07, 2023 07:02 AM /**

Nelcia Charlemagne **November 07, 2023**

Image not found or type unknown



**The Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM**

At a recent Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning meeting, Senator Franklin Johnson expressed a deep-seated concern that the reconstruction of the Juan F. Luis Hospital might not be completed within his lifetime.

The sentiment came as a stark reflection of the community's anxiety over the [protracted timeline](#) to actually get JFL North temporary hospital online, and the absence of a definitive timeline for the demolition and rebuilding of the original facility, damaged by hurricanes in 2017.

Adrienne Williams-Octalien, the director of the Office of Disaster Recovery, informed the committee about the imminent commencement of several disaster recovery projects, promising advancements in crucial sectors such as health, education, housing, utilities, and infrastructure.

Key among the anticipated projects are enhancements to healthcare facilities, specifically the Charles Howard Medical Center and the Queen Louise Home for the Aged, as shared by Williams-Octalien. This announcement comes after the successful completion of various projects in the previous fiscal year.

Senator Johnson, drawing attention to the healthcare community's apprehensions, cited a grim prediction from a local doctor about the indefinite delay in the construction of the new Juan F. Luis Hospital. Pressing for concrete timelines, Johnson asked Williams-Octalien about the schedule for the hospital's demolition and the commencement of rebuilding efforts.

Williams-Octalien attempted to alleviate concerns by outlining the steps ahead for the Juan F. Luis Hospital's redevelopment. She noted that a solicitation for its demolition is expected in the first quarter of the next year, with contract finalization within three to four months thereafter, aiming for a demolition start date around April or May 2024. The ODR director emphasized that the planning process is meticulous, taking into account environmental assessments and the need to maintain hospital services during reconstruction.

Despite these assurances, Sen. Johnson remained skeptical about witnessing the completion of the Juan F. Luis Hospital in the foreseeable future. Williams-Octalien reinforced the project's prioritization and estimated a five to six-year construction timeline, acknowledging that the ambitious scope of the hospital's design could potentially extend this timeframe.