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Cyril E. King Airport to Partially Open New Parking Facility Next Month

Executive Director Carlton Dowe leads VIPA towards early completion of airport enhancements

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New parking lot at Cyril E. King Airport set for partial opening in May. By. VIPA

Half of the new parking facility at the Cyril E. King airport will be opened to public use next month, with the remaining spaces available by the end of May, said V.I. Port Authority Executive Director Carlton Dowe during a public meeting on Thursday to discuss the project. However, he expressed optimism that these timelines may be moved forward to finish and open the entire facility sooner than expected.

“What we want to do come April 16 is open 50 percent of the parking lot just trying to help move passengers and move people around,” said Mr. Dowe, as he explained how the facility would operate to members of the public who had joined the meeting in person or were listening in online.

The VIPA leader outlined the pricing structure for parking at the facility – free for the first 15 minutes and \$4 for up to an hour, with costs rising in increments to a \$20 daily rate fee for anything over 5 hours. Monthly parking is available at a cost of \$250.

Tenants and airport employees, who will not be allowed to utilize the facility until it is 100 percent complete and operations, will be charged reduced daily and monthly fees of \$10 and \$100 respectively.

In response to a question about safety considerations, Mr. Dowe indicated that “one of the things that we are going to be doing is marking out the entire area where we want people to cross.” He appealed to taxi drivers and car rental employees to ensure that they too are utilizing the designated crossing area. “Most of these folks that’s walking out with their luggage...they’re following some taxi driver, most times, they’re following some car rental person,” Mr. Dowe noted.

Additionally, the current dedicated taxi lane will be maintained, as will the new passenger pickup area that was implemented late last month. Temporary staff will be on hand to direct traffic and pedestrians until the full opening.

Once fully operational, the new transportation center is expected to help accommodate the growing passenger volume at the airport in a more efficient manner. Officials believe the improved facilities will enhance the visitor experience and continue attracting more tourism to the Virgin Islands.

“I think we should have a smooth transition and we feel good at the Port Authority,” Mr. Dowe said about the fast approaching opening date for the airport’s new parking facility. “I’m looking forward to the day that we do all of this.”

VIPA’s Governing Board agreed to rename the parking facility after the agency’s former Director of Engineering Dale Gregory during a [meeting in January](#).