

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Announces Commencement Of Downtown Charlotte Amalie Revitalization Project

Business / **Published On October 27, 2015 10:53 PM /**

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ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp today announced that Tip Top Construction, based on St. Croix, was awarded an \$8.4 million contract for the long-awaited Main Street Revitalization Project in downtown Charlotte Amalie, which the territory's leader says will not only provide major enhancements to the downtown area, but will also provide employment for multiple residents.

According to a press release issued late Tuesday, the project was mired in court litigation, however, Mapp administration officials worked with all litigants involved to move the project forward.

"This Main Street Revitalization Project will be the beginning of this administration's vision to enhance not only the downtown area but the entire Charlotte Amalie waterfront from WICO to Crown Bay," Mr. Mapp said. "Furthermore, we have major undertakings currently going on throughout the territory."

The governor highlighted the recommencement of work on the Paul E. Joseph Stadium on St. Croix, and added that combined, these two projects -- as well as others yet to be announced -- will improve the lives Virgin Islanders.

"Work on St. John's Centerline Road, the Paul E. Joseph Stadium Project in St. Croix, and now the Main Street Revitalization Project in St. Thomas, amongst others," the governor continued.

He added: "The lieutenant governor and I are working hard to facilitate projects like these that will improve the lives of Virgin Islanders, put people to work and increase the income potential of the territory. The Main Street revitalization is an investment, not just in our infrastructure, but in our people, in our history and in our culture. We are looking forward to completion of this highly anticipated project."

Public Works Commissioner Gustav James said work on the Main Street project "will be performed at night, so as to not interfere with the daily commerce on Main Street." Mr. James further stated that the plans for the project will be posted on DPW's website "in the near future."

Enhancements expected to be part of the project include:

- Installation of a water main
- Improved waste water management
- Improve existing drainage
- Removal and replacement of existing sidewalks
- Placement of palm trees
- Placement of trash receptacles
- Demolition and removal of existing utility poles.
- New enhanced roadway surface with brick pavers
- New enhanced sidewalk surfaces with stone pavers

St. Thomas-St. John Chamber of Commerce President Sebastiano Paiewonsky Cassinelli sees the project as long overdue and much-needed to help bolster this island as the premier tourism destination that it is.

"The Revitalization of Main Street is the cornerstone for the revitalization of Charlotte Amalie and will solidify our position as a premiere destination for visitors," said Mr. Cassinelli. "This investment in our infrastructure will improve our overall product and serve to showcase our unique historic district."

He added: "This beautification effort will enhance St. Thomas' sense of place and will be a catalyst for other such public-private initiatives. The St. Thomas-St. John Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Revitalization, Inc., and the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands have been engaged in a collaborative effort in planning for the future of the Charlotte Amalie and to revitalize our historic town with the executive and legislative branches of our government, through the leadership of the Department of Public Works

and its partner, the Federal Highway Administration.”

As for the contractor, President Joe Hollins said he was pleased that the company he helms was awarded the job, and also praised the administration for its diligence in working to remove the many barriers that halted progress.

"We are extremely honored and thankful to Governor Mapp for the new administration's diligence in clearing the way and removing the stumbling blocks allowing this very important and vital federally funded project to advance," Mr. Hollins said.

"Tip Top looks forward to working closely with the new leadership of the various GVI departments along with the Main Street community. It is truly 'a time to build,' and by working together we will have a successful and timely completion of the Main Street Revitalization Project invigorating the economy for Virgin Islanders by Virgin Islanders."

After a mobilization period of approximately thirty days, actual construction is scheduled to commence by the end of November, according to the release.

Feature Image: Portions of downtown Charlotte Amalie.

Image Credit: SpiritOfArgo.