

The Virgin Islands Consortium

For Mapp, It's Quality Of Work That Matters, Not When A Project Starts Or Ends

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp told this publication that his focus on capital projects will not consider speed, but rather quality of work done. He said while some of the projects he announced may start before the 2018 gubernatorial race, he would not spend energy trying to make sure that they are completed before then.

"The projects I have been associated with all my career, I can point to them and they're all standing, and they're all functioning. Why? Because you get it done right the first time. But you don't do it because you're worrying about an election and you want to have a facade and ribbon cutting to show somebody that you're doing something," said Mr. Mapp [during a charrette](#) held last week to discuss the development of the Altona Lagoon

and Cramer Park.

The governor was referring to a Consortium story [critical of delays](#) on work at the Paul E. Joseph Stadium, which Mr. Mapp said would have commenced in earnest last October.

"This is the beginning of a vision for the revitalization of Frederiksted that was developed through the design charrette process in 2005 while I was PFA [Public Finance Authority] director of Finance and Administration," Mr. Mapp said in October 2015. "I want to thank the administration's team of attorneys along with Commissioners Gustav James, Pedro Cruz and Randolph Bennett and the PFA's consultant, Coastal Systems-USVI, for working with the representatives of GEC, LLC to get this significant project back on track."

Since then, however, the stadium area has been desolate and far from being "back on track."

On Tuesday, Public Works Commissioner Gustav James [told the Senate Committee on Finance](#) that the project was no longer delayed, and that it would be a "premier" facility once completed.

But completion, the governor says, will not be determined by his reelection bid.

"History is very kind; it abuses everybody; it doesn't care. So when you govern and you use the resources in a manner that makes sense, the community gets the benefits of it, and that's my thing."

Earlier this week, the governor [submitted](#) a \$260 million capital projects budget, which includes the building of schools, additional monies for the Paul E. Joseph Stadium development, and funds for a sports and events complex at the University of the Virgin Islands' St. Croix campus. According to the governor, these projects will create jobs and hence new demand for local goods and services in the private sector, resulting in increased tax revenues to the government.

To accomplish these goals, the governor suggested the refunding and restructuring of all or a portion of certain series of the government's outstanding matching fund revenue bonds and gross receipts taxes bonds, to allow the government to take advantage of current low interest rates and to provide cash flow relief by reducing debt service cost through fiscal year 2020.

Feature Image: From left to right: Finance Valdamier O. Collens, Governor Kenneth Mapp and Nellon Bowry, director of the Office of Management and Budget. (Credit: Government House)