

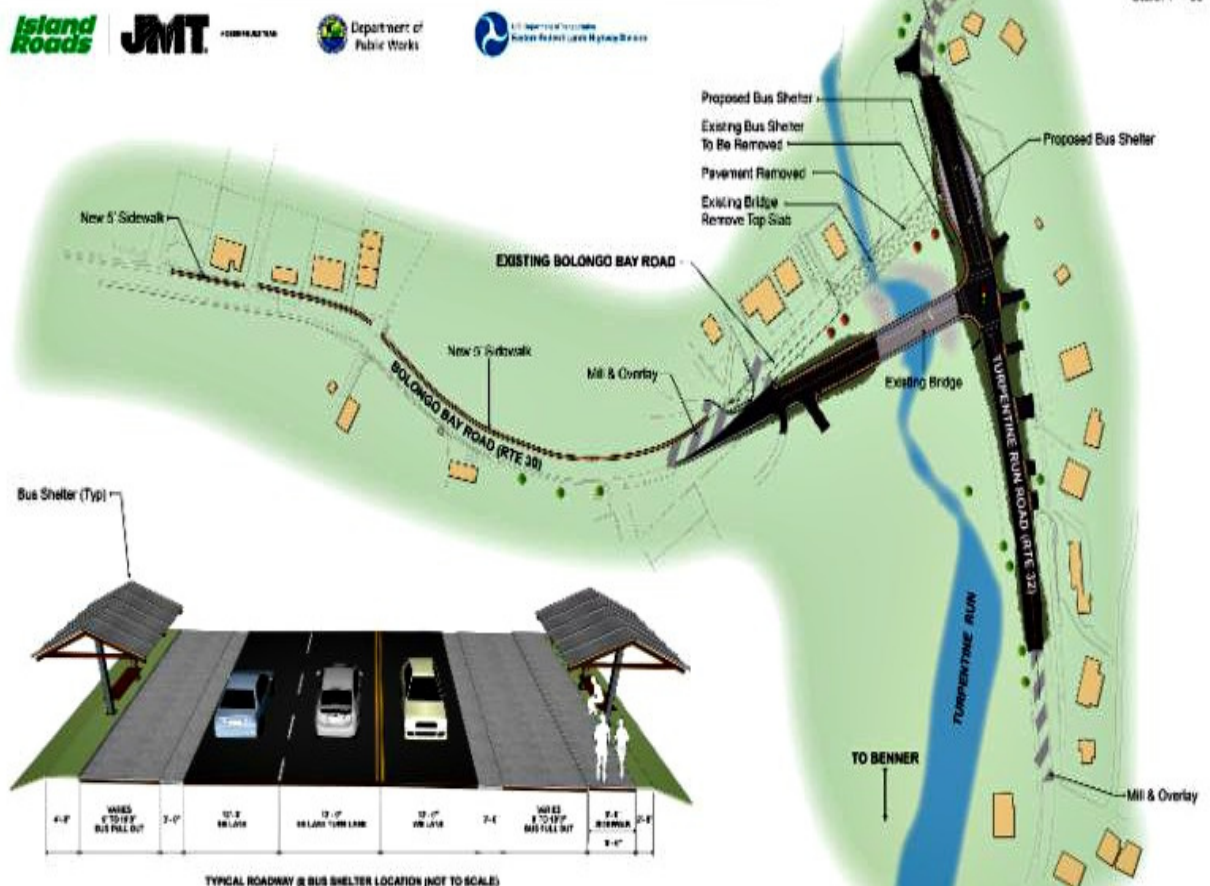
The Virgin Islands Consortium

'Bridge To Nowhere' Heading Somewhere As Mapp Administration Breaks Ground; Projected Completion Date Is Early 2018

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Turpentine Run Bridge Approaches



ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp, members of his administration, and an official of the Federal Highway Administration (F.H.A.) ceremonially broke ground on Tuesday for the long stalled Turpentine Run Road Project, known as the "Bridge to Nowhere", Government House has announced.

The \$9.5 million project began over 20 years ago with construction of a concrete bridge over the Turpentine Run gut, but stalled when adjacent land acquisitions hit a dead end.

The governor, Department of Public Works Commissioner Gustav James and F.H.A. Assistant Division Administrator Michael Avery, described the project as primarily necessary for flood mitigation, according to Government House. However, the release added, Mr. Mapp noted that the completed project would make the intersection safer and relieve traffic congestion in the Estate Nadir area as accelerated development will result from the planned enhancement of the nearby Clinton E. Phipps Racetrack.

The Government of the Virgin Islands has a [franchise agreement with VIGL, Ltd.](#), to modernize and operate both racetracks in the territory after a \$30 million investment. Mr. Mapp predicted significant economic growth and improvements in the Estate Nadir area.

Nadir area residents welcomed the administration's commitment to finally complete what had appeared doomed for so long. Nadir community activist Julian Henley described the groundbreaking ceremony as "a great day". He recalled extreme flooding that has plagued homeowners for years, often driving people from their homes. Mr. Henley thanked the governor for taking on the project, according to Government House.

Mr. Avery said that the federal government is fully committed to the good use of federal funds to improve safety, roads and bridges in the Virgin Islands. He said that a new procurement process will speed up project completion, and promised that another \$105 million will be spent on such projects in the coming months, according to Government House.

Saying the completion of the project was long overdue, the territory's leader thanked residents for their patience. "It shouldn't have taken 20 years," he said.

The Turpentine Run Road Project is scheduled for completion in early 2018. Island Roads, Corp. is the design and construction contractor. Traffic has been diverted to minimize disruptions. In order to complete the project, the former gas station at the intersection, a long standing eyesore, was demolished.