

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Announces \$530 Million In Road Construction Territory-Wide

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ST. THOMAS -- In a West Indian Company conference room here on Tuesday morning, Governor Kenneth Mapp -- flanked by Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter and Department of Public Works Commissioner Nelson Petty, Jr. -- announced that his administration was in the process of reconstructing roads territory-wide at an initial cost of \$530 million, some 90 percent of which would come through the federal government from funds already approved, with the 10 percent match -- roughly \$53 million -- being funded through the local government.

"Today I can advise you that the Government of the Virgin Islands and its federal partners will be placing \$530 million on the road systems of the U.S. Virgin Islands," Mr.

Mapp announced. He included the [\\$100 million provided through GARVEE bonds](#) currently sitting in the local treasury as part of the total, so in actuality the current federally funded amount is \$430 million.

"We're going to add approximately \$430 million as of today for construction of a modern road system in the Virgin Islands," Mr. Mapp said. "Today we can tell you that \$80 million of those dollars will come from FEMA public assistance; \$100 million will come from FEMA hazard mitigation grant program; \$40 million is coming from Federal Highway Emergency Road Repairs Program; \$205 million will be coming from the Community Development Block Grant-DR funds; [and] \$5 million has already been approved by the Department of Interior for hurricane recovery," Mr. Mapp said.

The \$530 million will allow the local government to construct the territory's roads to federal highway standards, Mr. Mapp said. "Those roads are from stem to stern, from beginning to end," he said.

The governor revealed that the territory's public road system consists of 1,273 miles of road, with 785 miles on St. Croix, 353 miles on St. Thomas, 124 miles on St. John and 11 miles on Water Island.

The projects include:

- Queen Mary Highway, (Route 70) on St. Croix, which is roughly 40 miles
- The South Shore road on St. Croix (Route 62), which is 9 miles
- North Shore Road and Salt River Road, which are a combined 7 miles
- The East End Road (Route 82), which is 7 miles

St. John

- The entire Centerline Road, which is 12 miles long

St. Thomas

- Bordeaux to the University of the Virgin Islands
- Frenchman's Bay Road
- Bolongo Bay Road (Route 30), which is 14.5 miles
- St. Peter Mountain Road and Skyline Drive (Route 40), which are a combined 7 miles of road
- Hull Bay Road (Route 37) which is 2.2 miles
- Mandahl Road (Route 42), which is 3.2 miles long

Mr. Mapp said the 11 miles of road on Water Island will be done in a single project. A list with more detailed information, as provided by Government House, is immediately below. The list also includes completion dates.

LOCALLY FUNDED RO

Project Type	Project Title
Road Repair	Catherine's Rest Residential Road Repairs
Road Repair	La Grande Princess Residential Road Repairs

FHWA-FUNDED ROAD P

PROJECT	ISLAN
Clifton Hill Road Improvements	STX
Crown Bay Improvements	STT
Scott Free Bridge	STT
Main Street Enhancement	STT
Raphune Hill	STT

The governor appeared confident in his administration's ability to get the projects that have not yet started off the ground, and stressed that today's announcement of road construction territory-wide was not "pie in the sky." He said bids were going out and that stateside firms would most likely join the process; Mr. Mapp said he would urge the three local paving companies to consider forming partnerships with the bigger, more established U.S. firms, but added that the local companies are free to make their own decisions.

The governor said his office was in the process of preparing legislation to ascertain that companies that damage the roads for their purposes (placing pipes, lines and other communication material underground, for example), repair these roads to the standard prior to the damage. The legislation would also call on these companies to hire police officers to direct traffic.

The new roads will include detailed signage that light during the nighttime. The Department of Tourism, Mr. Mapp added, allowed use of its Mocko Jumbie logo, which will be at the center of all the street signs. "Again as a testament for visitors and the symbol of the Virgin Islands," the governor said.

The \$530 million of initial funding, Mr. Mapp said, will not be the final amount to be placed into the territory's road system; the complete reworking of all roads would cost over \$1.2 billion, he said today. "But we want to really concentrate on bringing our road systems up to modern standards, and getting the first, second and third tier neighborhood roads up to standard where children and folks can walk on them," he said.

The governor said \$10 million will be set aside to remove dumpsters from neighborhoods. In lieu of the dumpsters, the administration plans to work with the Waste Management Authority to construct what the governor called "refuse centers".

"These will be fenced in; they will now have compact bins, and in addition, we're saying to the Waste Management Authority as a condition of our grant, we do not want you to turn people away with waste because it ends up in the bushes," Mr. Mapp said. The refuse centers will not only include compact dumpsters, but for appliances and hazardous waste as well.

[View the original embedded media](#)

Feature Image: Newly paved Mainstreet in St. Thomas.