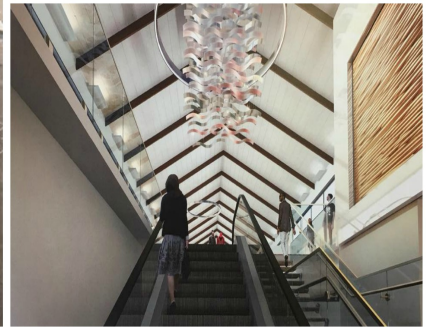


# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## St. Croix Airport Redesign Unveiled: Second Floor, Escalator, Jet Bridges, Baggage Handling Expansion And More

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ST. CROIX -- A design charrette for the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix came along with some positive news that both the territory's airports were placed ahead of states to receive funding from the federal government for their redevelopment following the 2017 storms.

That's according to Virgin Islands Port Authority Director David Mapp, speaking at the St. Croix airport's terminal cruise lounge to a packed audience during the charrette on Tuesday evening. He said the U.S. Department of Transportation, whose arms include

the Federal Aviation Administration, had set aside \$1 billion for U.S. states and territories affected by disasters.

Mr. Mapp told The Consortium that it would cost \$130 million for the redesign of the St. Croix airport, however, he did not give a timeline for completion. Instead, he said the redesign effort would be a balancing act of maintaining operations while work is performed.



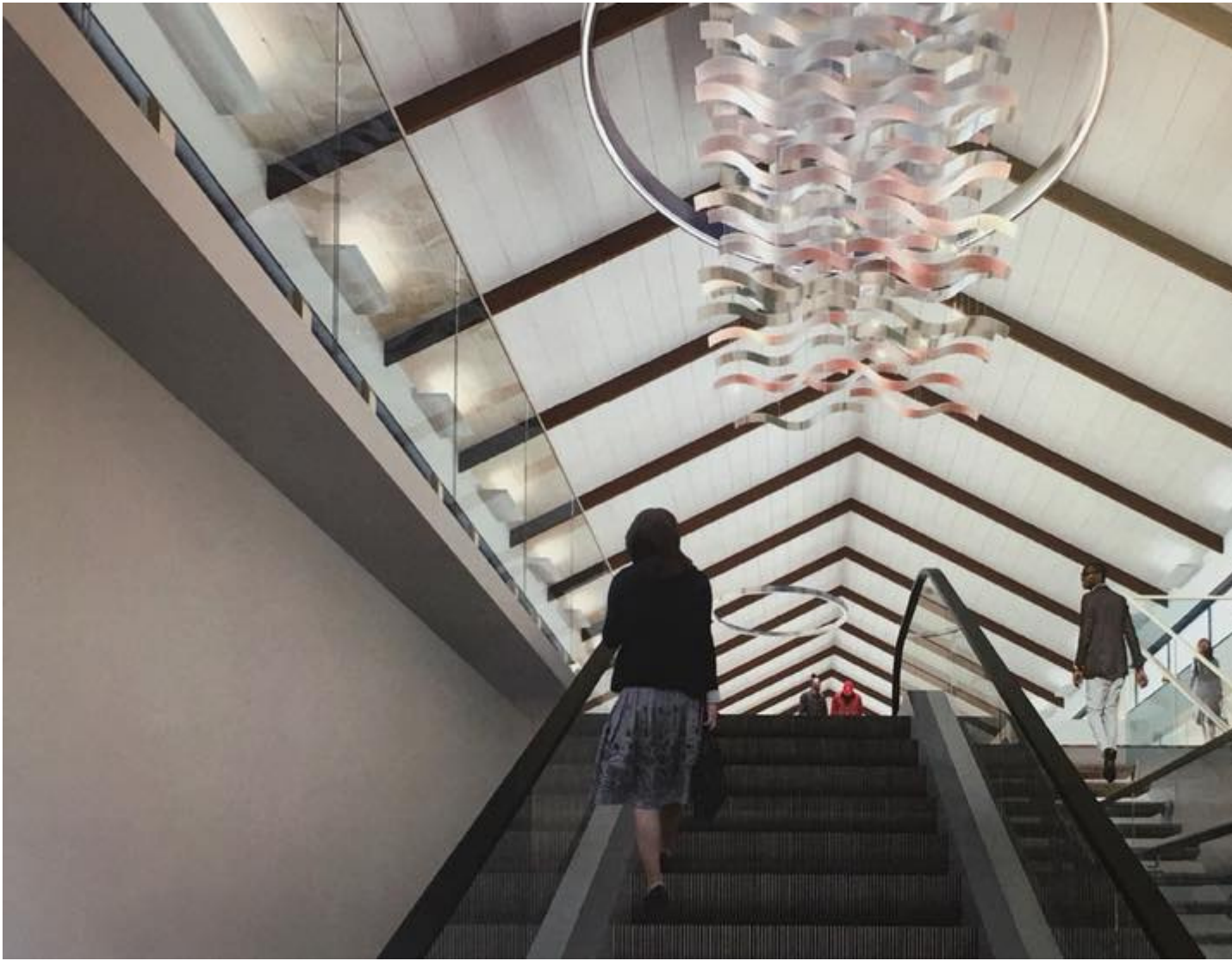




















"The duration will be driven by a function of maintaining operations," Mr. Mapp said. "Again, we're growing every year in number of flights and we have to build around that growth, not shut the airport down to build it."

Asked whether he was certain that the territory would receive the funding (the Cyril E. King Airport redesign [costs an estimated \\$230 million](#)), Mr. Mapp said, "I think with the money being available and us being number 1 to get it, I'm pretty sure we're going to get it."

The territory has to submit its proposal to the Department of Transportation by October 31, according to Mr. Mapp. It will be competing with Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico for a portion of the \$1 billion. "We have the highest priority is what we were told, and we don't want a whole building, that's the answer," Mr. Mapp added.

Community members posed a number of questions to both Mr. Mapp and representatives of the company procured for the redesign concepts, American Infrastructure Development. Mr. Mapp said the redesign would take into consideration the recommendations of residents.

According to the pamphlet provided, the current redesign plan includes the following:

### **? Redesign, expansion and modernization of the interior of the terminal**

This includes:

- Addition of a second level
- Integration of jet bridges
- Increasing of concession/retail space

### **? Revitalization flow between compartments**

This includes:

- Improvement of passenger flow
- Expansion of baggage handling

The design also includes the incorporation of tropical landscape and improvements to assist with the flow of vehicular traffic, among them a plan to reposition pay kiosks. Solar energy will also play a big role in powering the redesigned airport.

Mr. Mapp said the redesign, once completed, would increase airport traffic by 50 percent. At one point he spoke of a daily U.S. to St. Croix flight this year, but that statement was incorrect, according to Department of Tourism officials, who shared [these documents](#) with The Consortium showing the airlines' 2018 routes as they relate to the territory.

According to Monifa Brathwaite, V.I.P.A.'s public information officer, the jet bridges would lead passengers straight from the plane and onto the second floor of the airport. From there, passengers would head down -- via an escalator -- to the first level to collect the belongings in the expanded baggage claim area.

Other improvements include the expansion of the T.S.A. area to include three lines that would quicken the checkpoint; the utilization of a lot of glass, which Mr. Mapp said would leave visitors with a beautiful scenery of St. Croix instead of heading down a blind tunnel; and a plan to relocate the landfill near the airport, which has caused disruption in the past.