

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor Bryan Says New, Major Hotel Will Be Built On St. Croix During His First Term In Office

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ST. CROIX -- A new, major hotel with hundreds of rooms has not been built on St. Croix in almost 20 years, with Divi Carina Bay Resort being the last to open on the big island. (There's the award-winning The Fred Hotel in Frederiksted, but that's a small, boutique operation.)

Former Governor Kenneth Mapp [in May 2016](#) said his administration was ready to move forward with the next phase of a four-star hotel project on St. Croix, following a \$50,000 (paid through the Public Finance Authority) destination study to locate an area here to best fit the upcoming resort. The former governor even unveiled what he called a transaction team that would lead the effort. Then, in August of the same year, Mr. Mapp

[approved \\$1 million](#) for professional services, studies, project development and expenses related to the St. Croix branded hotel project.

Mr. Mapp during his years in office saw the need for a new hotel on St. Croix, arguing that the island remained far behind in room accommodation. "The island of St. Croix is net minus approximately 1,800 rooms to take any real part in the tourism industry," the former governor said in May 2016.

He added, "It is the intent of my administration to pursue arrangements with one of the top nationally recognized names in the hotel industry to develop, build and operate a first class, full service luxury resort with a minimum of 250 rooms. This upscale lodging facility will include appropriate ancillary facilities with food and beverage outlets, meeting rooms and recreational amenities."

Three years and a new administration later, and there's no new, 4-star hotel on St. Croix.

Now, Governor Albert Bryan, who also believes that St. Croix needs another major hotel to increase the island's accommodation, has been pursuing a new deal, one he believes will happen soon. Mr. Bryan is even more confident that his predecessor, telling The Consortium last week that a new hotel will be the reality on St. Croix before his first term in office -- which ends in January, 2022 -- expires.

"We have several opportunities for hotels on St. Croix that we're exploring right now. Some viable, some less viable, but rest assured that we're looking to see how do we package our economic development tools in a way that would make it enticing," Mr. Bryan said.

He added, "I really feel we're going to get it this time; I just feel positive about it. Within these first four years, we're going to get a hotel."