

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Public Works Provides Detailed Update To Senators On Status Of Roadwork In Territory

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Department of Public Works officials, chief among them Commissioner Nominee Nelson Petty, Jr., on Monday delivered a detailed update to senators who make up the Committee on Housing, Transportation, Infrastructure and Telecommunications, on the status of road projects spanning the entering U.S. Virgin Islands.

Mr. Petty said projects active as of Monday totaled \$176 million, \$76 million of which is expected to be expended during the current fiscal year.

In total, the Department of Public Works is anticipating \$460 million to complete infrastructure projects, [funds sought by the Mapp administration](#). The \$460 million does

not include \$16 billion included in the U.S. Congress's Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 for flood control projects for areas impacted by disasters. Mr. Petty told lawmakers that so far three projects have been identified in the territory costing approximately \$127 million. They include the LaGrange, Turpentine Run and Savan Gut Flood Control projects at a cost of \$9.2 million, \$48 million and \$70 million respectively. These projects will be managed directly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and no matching fund is required, Mr. Petty said.

The commissioner nominee also spoke about the GARVEE Bonds, funds [championed by former lawmaker Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly](#) in 2015, which Mr. Petty said are now being expended. "To date, we have expended approximately \$32 million of the \$91 million and are well on our way to expending these funds," he said. "The Veteran's Drive Project – Phase 1, is estimated to cost \$42 million and is currently ahead of schedule. The Melvin Evans Highway Project was broken into 6 segments. Three of the segments are in construction, two are in the procurement phase and the design of the last segment is near completion. The total estimated cost for all six segments is \$15 million."

He gave updates on the Sion Valley Road project, whose contract cost \$6.4 million and is expected to be completed in October. Additionally, Rattan Road, Mahogany Road, Hams Bluff Road, Spring Gut, Frederiksted federal routes and Christiansted town roads are all under design, Mr. Petter said, adding that designs are expected to be completed by the end of 2019, with construction commencing early 2020.

Mr. Petty updated senators on a number of federally-funded road projects: Moravian Highway Pavement in St. Thomas costs \$2.1 million and is expected to be completed in July; the Scot Free Bridge Replacement in St. Thomas costs \$751,473 and was scheduled to be completed on April. 14 of this year; emergency repairs to route 104-1 in St. John costs \$145,433, and is set to be completed on May 24; Main Street Rehab, the long-delayed project in St. Thomas costing more than \$6 million with a completion date of August 2020; the Crown Bay Road project in St. Thomas costing \$337,575 and scheduled to be completed on April 30; and emergency repairs at Hull Bay (Route 37) in St. Thomas, which costs \$617,849.50.

On St. Croix, the federally-funded road projects include East Scenic Road Pavement, which costs \$1.2 million; the Clifton Hill Connector Road, costing \$5.5 million; and the Carlton Road Pavement Reconstruction and Drainage Improvements project.

In giving updates on traffic signal replacement, Mr. Petty said while the scope of work in both districts is the same and involves design and construction of traffic signal systems -- including the removal of the damaged components of the existing traffic signal systems as well as the installation of foundations, signal poles, mast arms, signal heads, controller cabinets, manholes, conduits, wiring, vehicle detectors, electrical service and traffic signal communications -- work was further along on St. Croix.

See Mr. Petty's full testimony [here](#).