

The Virgin Islands Consortium

40 Years in the Making: Bryan Cuts Ribbon on Phase 1 of Veterans Drive Project

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Veterans Drive, Phase 1 By. GOV'T HOUSE

ST. THOMAS — Governor Albert Bryan on Thursday cut the ribbon to officially open Veterans Drive – Phase 1 on St. Thomas and marked yet another major infrastructure project the Mr. Bryan has completed under his tenure.

According to Gov't House, decades since it first was conceived, Phase 1 of the Veterans Drive expansion and upgrade widened the scenic roadway along the St. Thomas Harbor to four lanes, with the addition of a picturesque row of palm trees in a grassy medium and the magnificent Waterfront Promenade that has become a mainstay for joggers,

cyclists, aerobic groups, walkers and people watching the sunset.

The project [broke ground in May 2018](#) during the Mapp administration.

"This project is a beautiful addition to the downtown landscape of Charlotte Amalie," said Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory, who along with many other officials and elected leaders attended the function. "And we have already witnessed — those of us who traverse the roadway — people exercising, taking leisure walks on the new promenade, or sitting and enjoying the magnificent view. I think I've even seen a couple get married here a few months ago."



Governor Bryan is joined by elected officials and other leaders for Phase 1 of the Veterans Drive Project on Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021. (Credit: Gov't House.)

She added, "This expansion will be enjoyed by Virgin Islanders that will come long after all of us sitting here. And you know what, it's a known fact [that] St. Thomas U.S. Virgin Islands has the most beautiful port in the Caribbean."

Governor after taking the stand said while he was excited for today's ribbon-cutting, there was some sadness in him because the vision he had for the project did not manifest the way he wanted. Attempting to learn what distracted him, the governor then listed a dizzying number of projects that he said his administration has completed. "Wooo! I'm tired, are you? And that's just the tip of the iceberg..."

Even so, Mr. Bryan paid homage to governors before him, noting that the project was decades in the making. "I wanted to have all the governors here because today is about yesterday, today and tomorrow," the governor said. "This project is 40 years old. I was watching Mister Rogers Electric Company when they were doing this stuff," he joked to laughter from the audience. "It takes that long to do great things, but it also speaks to the perseverance."

According to Gov't House, phase 2 of Veterans Drive will see the road rerouted and widened around the outside of the Legislature peninsula and west to the Blyden ferry terminal, with the addition of a major plaza in the Vendors Plaza area marking the entrance to Charlotte Amalie pocket parks, a tree-lined allée from Vendors Plaza to Palm Passage and a palm tree court that will provide outdoor dining opportunities.