GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Decastro Street Sidewalk Works To Deliver Safer, More Accessible Road Town Corridor

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The Virgin Islands Recovery and Development Agency (RDA), in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development, and the Road Town Partnership (RTP) Committee are currently planning to commence the DeCastro Street Sidewalk Improvement Project in September 2026.

The $798,108.74 project, funded by the Government of the Virgin Islands and being executed by TMB Enterprises, will demolish and reconstruct the existing sidewalks along DeCastro Street to create a durable, safe and fully accessible pedestrian network that complies with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility standards. The contract was awarded through a National Competitive Bidding process.

The improvement is needed as extensive deterioration is evident throughout the corridor. Cracked and displaced pavement has created hazardous walking conditions, particularly for persons with disabilities, older residents, children and other pedestrians. In several areas, aggressive tree roots have lifted and fractured the pavement, causing uneven walking surfaces and obstructions.

The scope includes reinstatement of existing drainage infrastructure to support effective stormwater management, approved landscaping and the installation of new trees; and all associated civil works required to deliver the upgraded streetscape.

Junior Minister for Tourism and Culture Honourable Luce Hodge Smith said, “This project is about making Road Town work better for everyone. By improving the infrastructure, safety, accessibility, appearance and user-friendliness of this important corridor, we are creating a capital that is easier to navigate and better positioned to support commerce, public services and community life."

The mature trees lining DeCastro Street include Mahogany, White Cedar and Yellow Poui. Following assessment by the project engineers and the contractor, the affected trees will need to be replaced because their established root systems are currently located under the sidewalks and parking lots, and will inevitably experience damage during the demolition of the sidewalks.

The RDA recognises the community's connection to the trees, the history they represent, and the shade they provide. With that in mind, the design includes the replacement of trees as an integral part of the project. Bottlebrush and Verawood Bulnesia species have been selected because they are salt-tolerant and have less aggressive root systems, which make them better suited to the saline environment of the Wickham’s Cay area.

The intention is to establish a healthier, more sustainable treeline that can grow alongside the improved six-foot, ADA-compliant sidewalks without compromising pedestrian safety or accessibility. This approach will also deliver better value for money by reducing the risk of recurring damage and avoiding the need for further repairs.

Construction will be carefully phased to minimise disruption and maintain safe and continuous pedestrian and vehicular access. Given the critical nature of DeCastro Street, the contractor is required to work with exceptional sensitivity to traffic and pedestrian movements and a majority of the work will take place during nighttime hours. Any required detours will be coordinated with the RDA and the relevant government agencies and communicated to the public.

The contract duration is 120 days, with projected completion in February 2027. The project forms part of the Road Town Development Partnership, which is implemented by the RDA as directed by the Road Town Partnership Committee, a public-private partnership.

Once completed, the project is expected to improve Road Town's infrastructure, aesthetics, safety and user-friendliness while enhancing the capital's business profile and reputation. The upgraded DeCastro Street will better serve residents, businesses, Government service users and visitors of all ages and abilities.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

Photo Attached - Disrupted sidewalk and displaced concrete pavement along DeCastro Street.

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