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## Pounding the Pavement Continues: New Road Projects on St. Croix

**U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS**—Many road projects have started and ended, but residents and tourists alike will be especially pleased as the Department of Public Works announces the start of road work at Route 64 (Airport Road) on St. Croix.

DPW Contractor—Marco St. Croix, Inc.—met with engineers and other staff on Monday, December 9, for a pre-construction meeting. Prior to roadwork starting, the contractor will mobilize by placing traffic control devices and beginning to clear and grub. Milling and paving of the roadway will follow. This project is anticipated to be completed by March 2025. Travelers are encouraged to arrive at the airport earlier while construction is in progress to avoid any possible delays.

“We are excited to finally bring this long-awaited project to bear. The road had really fallen into a bad state of disrepair, and we want to make sure we’re creating a safe roadway for visitors and residents returning home,” said DPW Commissioner Derek Gabriel. “Our continued commitment to improving our road conditions has been strong in 2024, and this project really embodies that commitment.”

The Department also began work on Seven Flaggs Road on Thursday, December 5th, following outreach from concerned residents. The contractor—Marco St. Croix Inc.—will be restoring approximately 1000 Linear Feet by 16 feet of the public right-of-way section of the roadway that was washed out by the torrential rainfall. Roadwork will also include installing a new granular fill road base, paving the roadway with asphalt, elevating the roadway, and installing an earth swale.

Meanwhile, the Christiansted Town Road Paving Project is making considerable strides. In 2021, The Department of the Interior’s (DOI) Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) funded the Christiansted Rehabilitation Project. In an effort to synchronize work schedules with other utilities, the department postponed road work until agencies such as the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority and Waste Management Authority completed the bulk of their piping projects. Now, in 2024, not only has the Department completed Phase 1 of the Downtown Christiansted Road Repairs Project, but Phase 2 is well underway and nearing completion. Phase 1 included sections of Queen Street, Hill Street, East Street, Prince Street, and Market Street, while phase 2 includes New Street, West Street, Smith Street, Strand Street, Queen Cross Street, sections of Queen Street and King Street.

At the Clifton Hill Connector Project site, residents may have noted a shift in the roadway as DPW Contractor—Grace Civil, LLC—began working on new medians on the Melvin Evans Highway. About 330 ft of median will be demolished following the installation of the new medians. The median work is necessary to create new dedicated turning lanes. Also, newly energized highway lights have lit the entire highway from Emancipation Drive to Williams Delight. By the first week of January 2025, the contractor will complete most of the lighting work. Aside from pole repairs, the contractor is waiting for transformers from the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority to light the remaining sections, including lights in Sunny Isles, Home Depot, and Paradise Mills.

In Frederiksted, the remaining roads for the Downtown project are expected to go out to bid before the end of the year with construction beginning in the first quarter of next year. These roads include Strand, King, Queen, and Fisher Streets. Also in Frederiksted, road repairs in Estate La Grange are coming to fruition in the coming months.

The department urges motorists to follow all safety controls and directives from on-site flaggers throughout this reconstruction period.

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