



V.I. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

BUDGET TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
SENATOR KURT VIALET, CHAIRMAN

06.29.2021

PRESENTED BY:

DEREK GABRIEL

Commissioner

Department of Public Works

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DPW.VI.GOV



INTRODUCTION

Good morning Chairman of the Committee on Finance Senator Kurt Violet, Finance Committee members, other Senators in attendance, as well as the viewing and listening public. My name is Derek Gabriel and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Accompanying me today in the well is Deputy Commissioner of Administrative Services Rueben Jennings, Federal Highway Program Manager Jomo McClean and Deputy Commissioner of Transportation Karole McGregor. Participating remotely are Assistant Commissioner Dennis Brow, District Engineer Eran Flemming, as well as Deputy Commissioners of Operations Dodson James and Orville Isaac. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of our FY 2022 budget request.

Since we presented our FY 2021 budget, DPW has been on the move. We have completed several federal and local road projects spanning across the Territory. They include the Mafolie Retaining Wall Project, Garden Street Paving Project, Sion Valley Road, Hess Road - Sunny Isle Intersection, Manassah Hill Road, Eastern Cemetery Road, Scenic Road, and a segment of Centerline Line Road in Estate Adrian on St. John. We recently cut the ribbon for our Main Street Revitalization Project and are expecting to finish Phase 1 of Veteran's Drive in the Fall, giving downtown Charlotte Amalie a much-needed facelift. DPW's CIP Division has overcome staffing shortages to manage over \$85 million of disaster recovery projects for most of our sister agencies and departments. The department is finally beginning to realize the



OUR MISSION

The V.I. Department of Public Works is mandated to plan, construct and maintain public roads, highways, storm drainage systems, buildings, transportation systems, parking facilities and cemeteries.

fruits of our labor as over the past six months alone, we have received over \$53 million of obligated FEMA project worksheets, or PWs, specifically for road projects and another \$14 million of obligated PWs for our buildings.

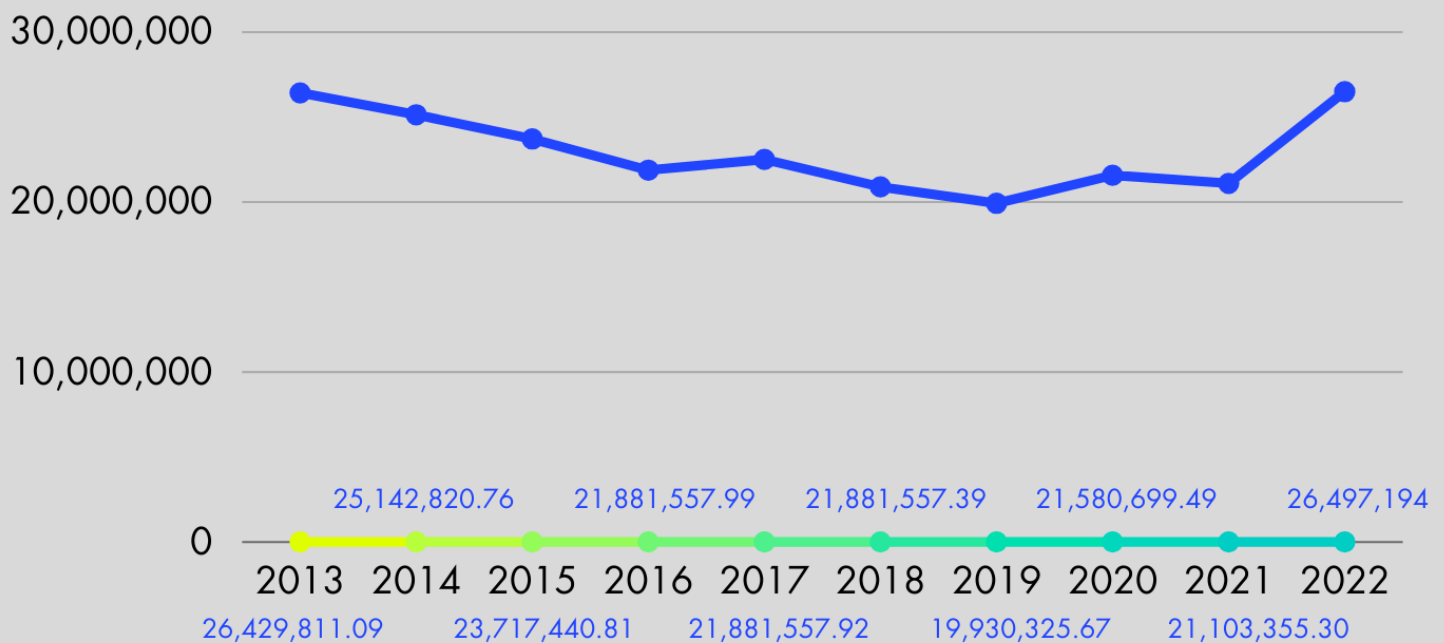
With the help of this Body, the department was able to procure critical pieces of heavy equipment including a street sweeper on St. Thomas and patching trucks for both districts. I am pleased to report, and I am sure many of you have seen, our street sweeper is operational and “on the road” across the island. More importantly, we are weeks away from performing road patching as a wholly in-house function in both districts, except for purchasing asphalt. Like any other department, we faced significant challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but our VITRAN busses have continued to serve our residents, especially our disabled and senior citizens. Moreover, VITRAN recently expanded its service on St. Thomas, and we are exploring ways to do the same on St. Croix. Our roads, bridges, buildings, public cemeteries, and parking lots are all slated to have major projects in the coming months. Additionally, my team and I are working with the Office of the Governor and Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett to access federal dollars through the touted American Rescue Plan to address our stormwater drainage system, especially in the historic towns.

We have accomplished a great deal over the past twelve months, but I am exponentially excited about what we have in the pipeline. As we present our budget, you will notice that we are very forward focused with a keen eye on fixing long-standing issues that have persisted in our community. We know that we have a generational opportunity to maximize our disaster recovery funds as we build back better, and with your help, we know that we are up to the challenge.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

For fiscal year 2022, Governor Bryan has recommended a total of \$26,497,194 to be allotted to DPW from the General Fund.

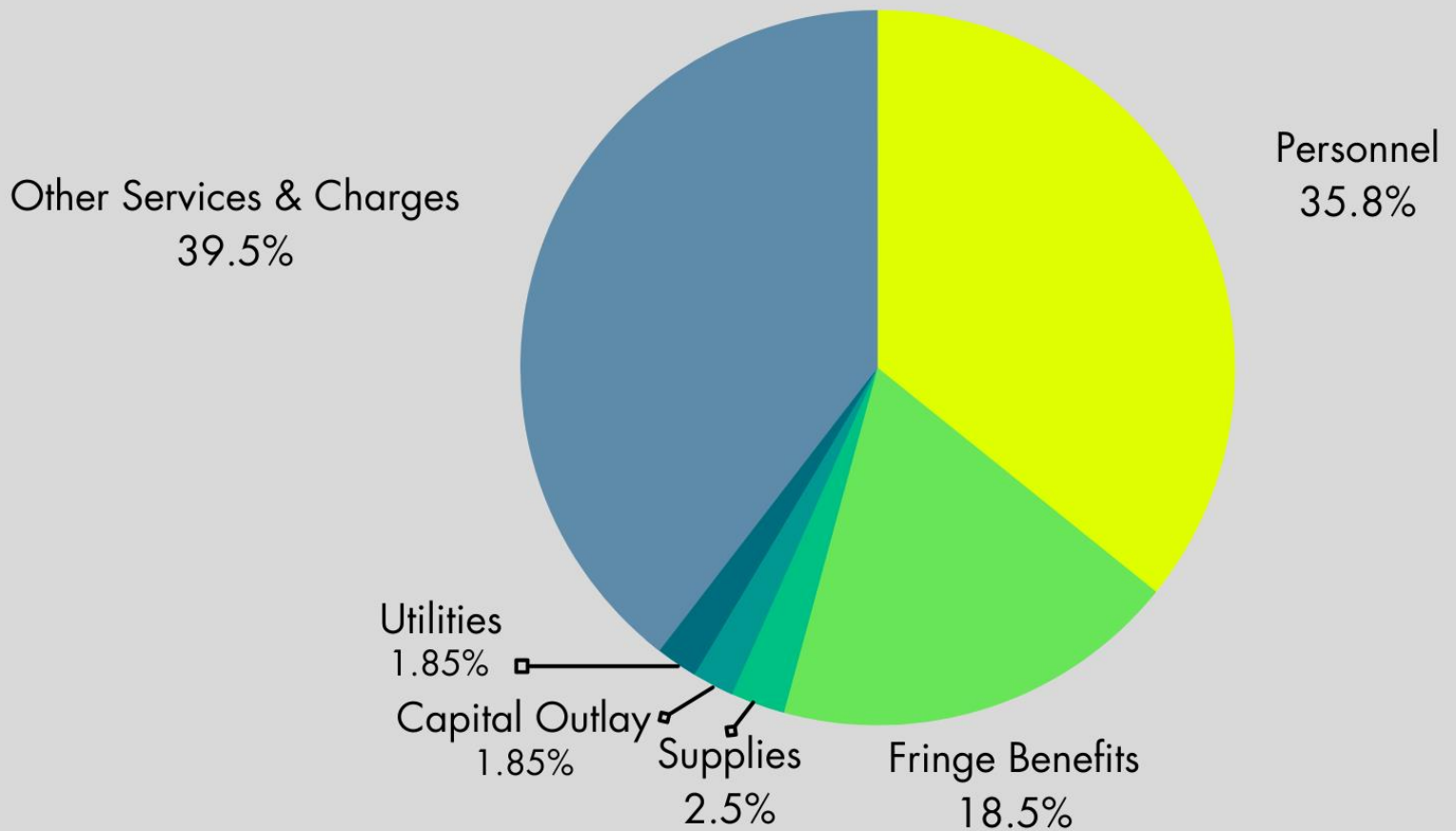
\$26.5M



DPW will also receive \$500,000 from the St. John Capital Improvement Fund, \$300,000 from the Tourism Revolving Fund, and \$1,000,000 from the Anti-litter & Beautification Fund to assist with roadside cleanup and maintenance. In FY 2022, we anticipate receiving a combined total of \$29,101,515 in federal funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

FY 2022 GENERAL FUND

\$26,497,194



\$9,479,165 Personnel

—

\$4,889.29 Fringe Benefits

—

\$651,500 Supplies

—

\$10,477,500 Other Services & Charges

—

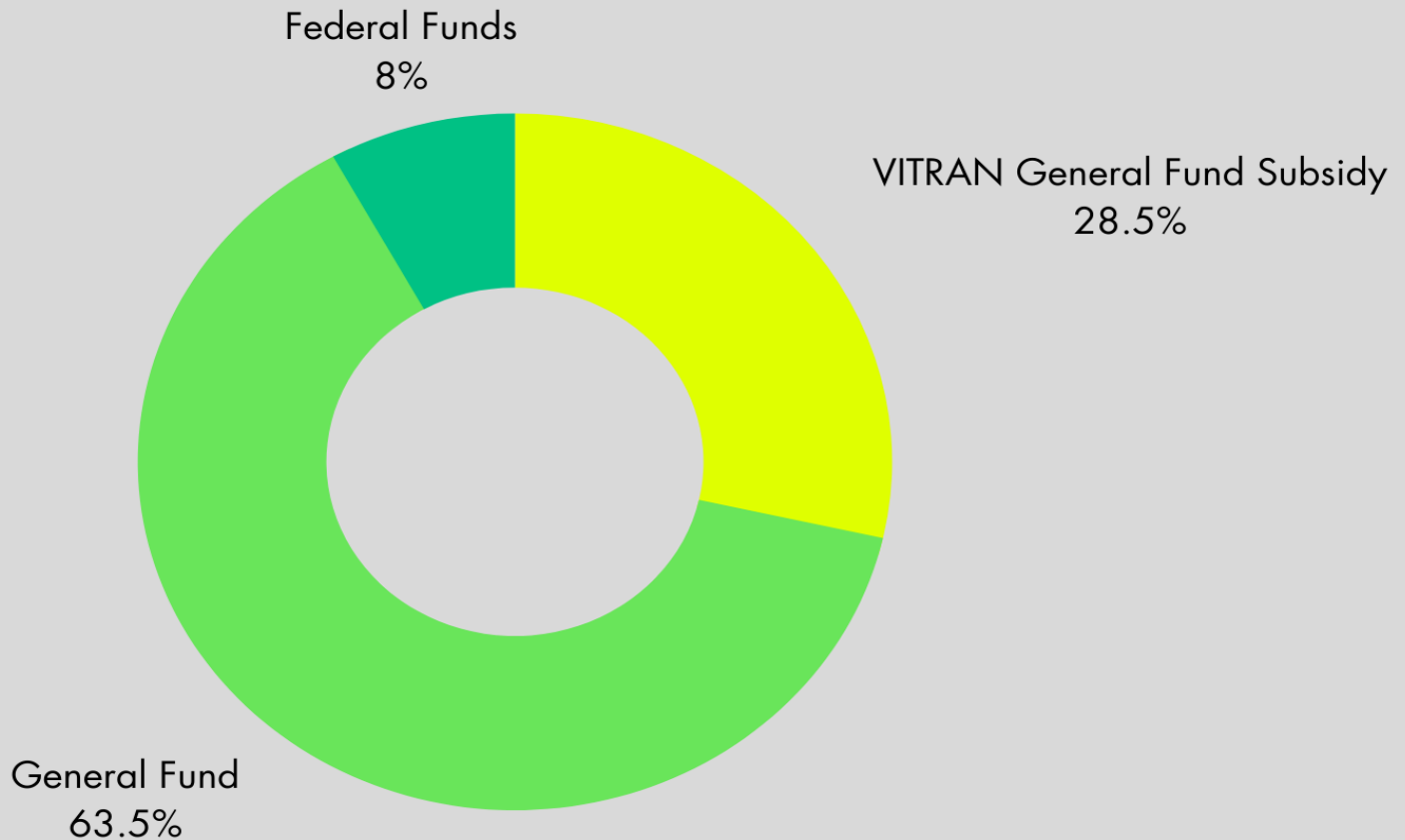
\$500,000 Capital Outlay

—

\$500,000 Utilities

—

PERSONNEL SERVICES & FRINGE **\$14,368,194**



As of June 23, 2021, DPW has a workforce of 228 employees, an increase of 16 employees from last year June.

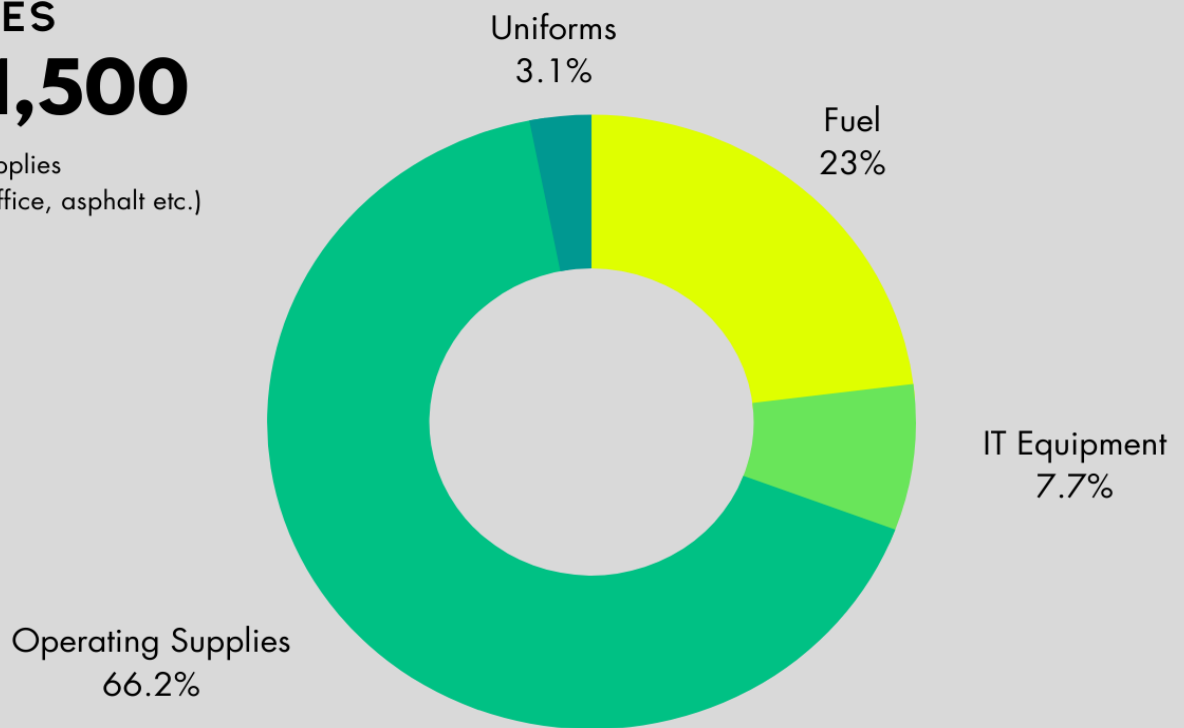
72 of our employees are in the exempt status, 2 are classified non-union and 154 are unionized. We also have 5 Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) workers.

Our proposed personnel services and fringe benefits represent 54% of the department's total general fund operating budget.

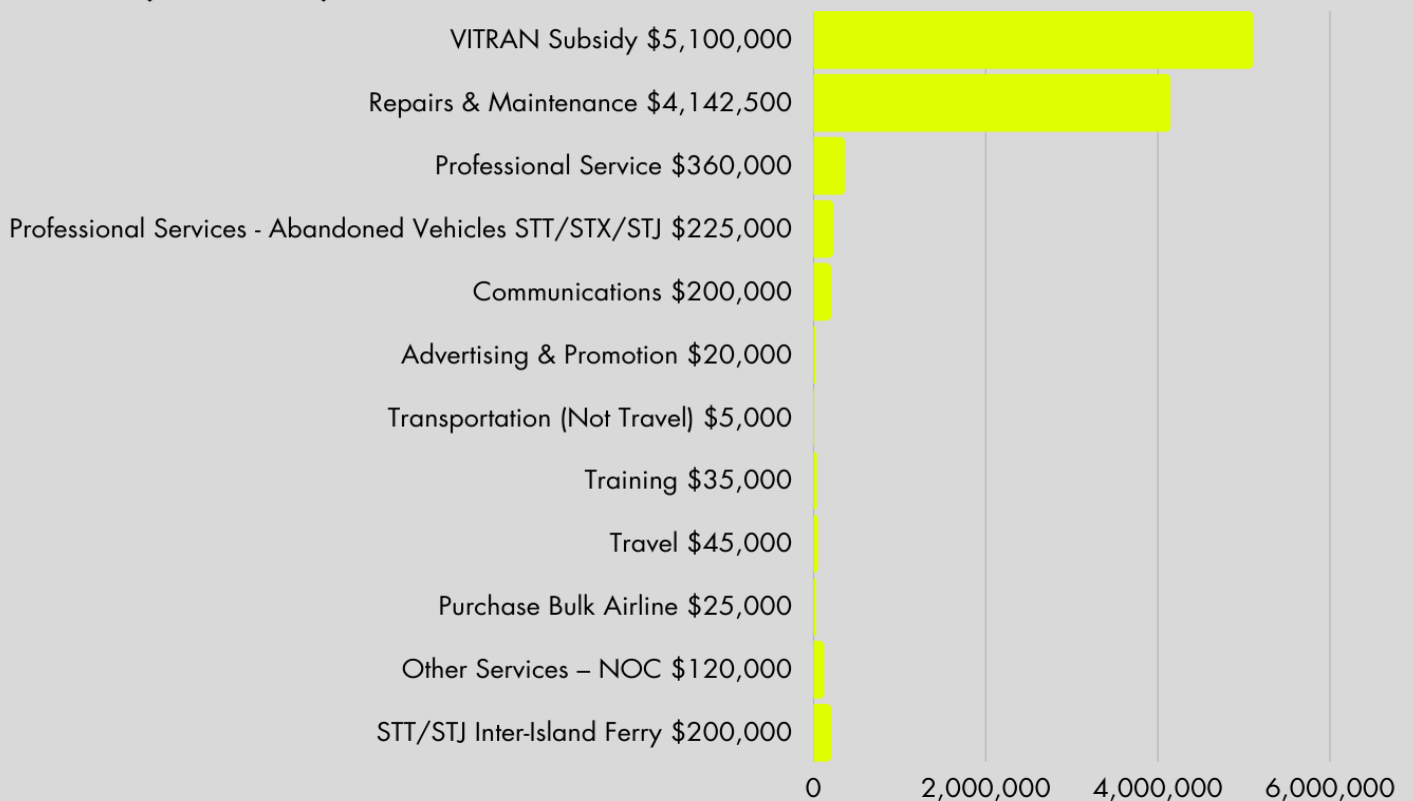
As of June 23, 2021, we have 5 federally funded and 19 general fund vacancies.

SUPPLIES \$651,500

Operating Supplies
(equipment, office, asphalt etc.)



OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES \$10,477,500



CAPITAL OUTLAYS

\$500,000

This amount is budgeted for a dump truck, roll on/roll off trucks and two pickup trucks for our Operations unit.

UTILITIES

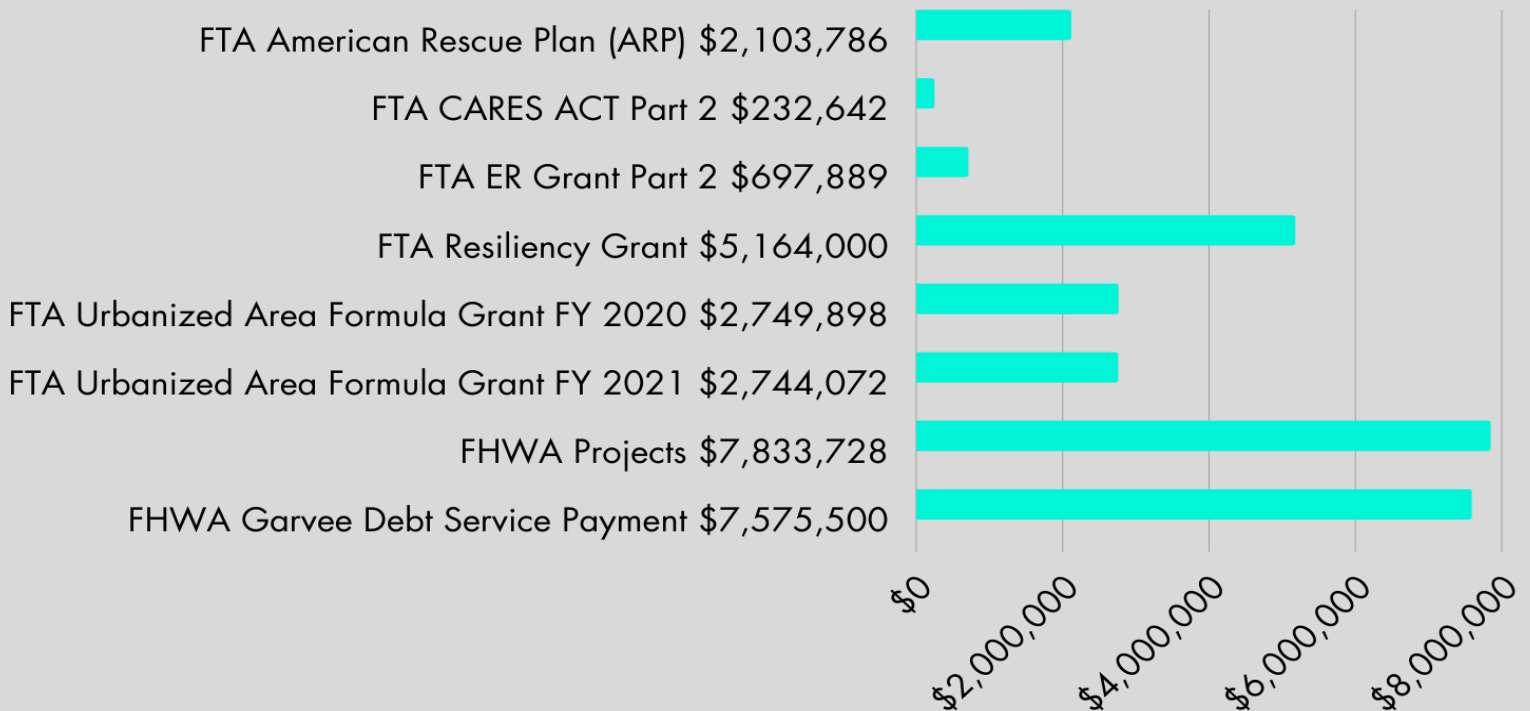
\$500,000

The proposed appropriation for utilities is \$500,000. Utilities will be paid from Single Payer Utility Fund. The department has begun the auditing of its water and electrical usage and this initiative will continue into FY 2022 as we continue to implement additional cost saving measures.

FEDERAL FUNDS

\$29,101,515

*Anticipated for FY 2022





ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Division provides fiscal management, support, and guidance to all divisions within the department. The office processes transactions, certifies that mandated services are cost-effective, monitors local and federal funding sources, manages personnel and labor relations, maintains our in-house communication network, and validates compliance with federal and local statutes.

This past year, we have focused on implementing cost saving measures, such as the installation of LED lights throughout our buildings. We began upgrading our network to include WIFI access throughout our buildings and voice over IP (VOIP) phones. We are slated to complete this overhaul of our information technology network by December 2021.

The department is working feverishly to change its organizational culture. Studies have shown it takes between 18 months to 5 years to change organizational culture. With change, we are emphasizing practices that are consistent with professionalism, accountability, and effective communication; having discipline, and working to make our community better for everyone. Change does not come overnight or without resistance. However, we are committed to reinforcing these values across the department.

HUMAN RESOURCES

It is the mission of the Human Resources Unit to provide effective human resource management by developing and implementing policies, programs and services that contribute to the completion of department and employee goals by:

- Properly balancing the needs of the employees and the needs of the department.
- Retaining our valued employees by assuring effective leadership qualities in our managers, as well as enhancing two-way communication between employees and management.
- Providing training and development in areas of effective leadership and career development, employment law and government regulation, and litigation avoidance.
- Providing training and development in heavy equipment (Third party).
- Continuing leadership training for directors and supervisors in employee relations, project management, time management and honing skills.
- Encouraging participation in an automotive training program called GM Perks, which is in collaboration with General Motors.
- Branding our New Hire Onboarding and promoting a “family experience.”
- Cross training staff in areas of grievance officer and drug & alcohol testing.



Some of our accomplishments this fiscal year include the hiring of 20 full time employees, promotion of 10 employees territory wide and continuous training for staff. We are committed to the professional development of each team member at the department.

OFFICE OF HIGHWAY ENGINEERING



ACTIVE
PROJECTS



ACTIVE PROJECT
COSTS



GARVEE FUNDS
EXPENDED



GARVEE FUNDS
APPROPRIATED



ER FUNDS
EXPENDED



ER FUNDS
APPROPRIATED

*The remaining balance of the funds are allocated for projects that are about to commence throughout the territory.

FY 2021 TO DATE



OFFICE OF HIGHWAY ENGINEERING

The Office of Highway Engineering (OHE) is responsible for the design, management and implementation of all projects funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Presently, DPW receives annual funding in the amount of \$16,800,000, at an obligation authority of 89% or \$14,935,200 under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Of this designated funding, approximately \$7,500,000 is used for debt service of the GARVEE Bonds floated at the end of 2015. As a result of these authorized funds, DPW has several projects under construction, or about to be advanced to the construction phase. The following is a summary of projects and accomplishments achieved by the OHE Program.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Main Street Enhancement (Route 308) – A ribbon cutting ceremony was held May 27, 2021. The scope of this project included sewer line replacement, waterline relocation, telecommunication relocation, “blue bit” sidewalk construction, Eurocobble street pavers, historic style street lighting and signage. The last items remaining to be completed are the removal of historic utility poles and the installation of street signage.



Mafolie Retaining Wall (Route 35) - FHWA-ER Project - This project scope entailed constructing a retaining wall along a segment of Mafolie Hill Road. The contractor, Four Star Construction, completed this project in March 2021.



ACTIVE PROJECTS

Carlton Road Pavement Rehabilitation (Route 667) – This project was awarded to Marco St. Croix in December 2020 and is 80% complete. The project scope involves road reconstruction, asphalt paving, striping, new drainage crossings, new paved waterways, signs and guardrails. Construction is expected to be completed this summer.



Clifton Hill Connector Road/Melvin Evans Highway-Container Port Intersection Phase I (Route 75/Route 66) - This project was previously authorized for construction by the FHWA in 2017. The contract was terminated for convenience in 2020 and the design consultant is currently revising the bid documents. The project will be re-bid this summer. We anticipate construction restarting this fall. The scope for this



project includes major road reconstruction, asphalt paving, roadway widening, striping, new drainage, construction of turn lanes on Melvin Evans Highway, new signalization, waterline relocation and utility pole relocation.



Mt Welcome Pavement Reconstruction – Gallows Bay (Route 753) – This project was recently awarded to Eleven Construction and includes major road reconstruction, pavement markings, signs and drainage improvements. Construction work will begin this summer.

Clearview Retaining Wall Project ER-VI-33(7), Crown Mountain Road – Work on this project is approximately 78% completed. The contractor is Rumina Construction, and the contract amount is **\$1,098,805**. The project limits start along Route 33 North, which includes the right of way above Clearview Apartments to the beginning of Scott Free Road. The improvements for this project include slope stabilization, guardrail installation, retaining wall construction, drainage improvements, pavement restoration, cable system installation, signage, permanent thermoplastic pavement markings. This project has been delayed for the last nine months, as we are waiting for VIYA to relocate their underground lines.



Crown Bay Roadway and Pedestrian Improvements VI-9999 (131) – Work on this project commenced in March 2018 and is approximately 95% completed. The project limits begin at the entrance of the Department of Public Works in Subbase, heading East towards Inspection Lane, along Crown Bay Road Route

304, then proceeds north between the intersections of Route 304 and Route 33 towards Nisky Intersection on Route 30. The improvements for this project include minor concrete structures, median improvements, landscaping, signage, installation of video detection systems, traffic system installation, permanent pavement markings, ADA compliant sidewalks, as well as road reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Emergency Repair Project ER-VI-9999(127) - Rumina Construction was selected for this project, with a contract cost of **\$226,743**. This project covers the reconstruction and repair of two areas, one on Route 1041 Fish Bay and the other on Route 20 Kingshill Road. Rumina Construction will finalize completion of the work on Route 20 - Kingshill Road, while the work on Route 1041 was incorporated into the design build project being managed by Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA). The work on this route includes damages caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Veterans Drive Project Phase I, St. Thomas \$42

Million – GARVEE Project - In conjunction with Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division, this project was awarded to American Bridge. Construction is nearing completion, as work is approximately 85% complete. The scope for this project includes new seawall construction, roadway widening, promenade construction,



drainage improvements, historic styled pedestrian and street lighting, signalization, signage and landscaping. This transformative project is expected to be completed in early Fall 2021.

Melvin Evans Highway Project, Route 66, St. Croix \$15 Million – GARVEE Project - This project was divided into six segments, with four of the six segments now completed. One segment is in construction and the remaining segment is nearing finalization of bid documents.



Mahogany Road, Route 76, St. Croix \$8 Million – GARVEE Project - The design consultant has submitted the 100% plans to DPW and we have started the right of way acquisition process. The scope for this project includes pavement reconstruction, asphalt paving, new drainage crossings, paved waterways, striping and signage. We anticipate being able to advertise for this project in the fall.

Hams Bluff Road, Route 63, St. Croix \$7 Million – GARVEE Project - The department is utilizing FHWA's RFP template for the territory to solicit for the services to perform this work. The proposed improvements to this roadway, which stretches 3.8 miles long, will include roadway reconstruction, geometric and safety improvements, signage for hikers and bikers, guardrail installation, culvert replacement and striping. This project will start at the entrance to Aggregate Inc. and terminate at the intersection of Creque Dam Road - Route 58.

Spring Gut Road Phase I, Route 85, St. Croix \$5 Million – GARVEE Project - The construction documents for this project are approaching the 100% stage. The design firm has submitted right of way plans and the department has initiated the acquisition process. The improvements to Route

85 include the replacement of a bridge, roadway reconstruction, installation of sidewalks, shared bike/pedestrian path, drainage, utility relocation, lighting, signage and striping of roadway.

Sion Valley Road, Route 81, St. Croix \$6.6

Million - GARVEE Project - This project runs from Rattan Road, through Peter's Rest, then through the Sion Farm Intersection on Route 70 to Schuster's Water. Construction started in January 2019 and is approximately 96% complete. The proposed improvement work involves reconstruction of roadway, drainage improvements, installation of sidewalks, striping of roadway and signage.



Rattan Road, Route 74, St. Croix, \$3 Million – GARVEE Project - Survey services are completed, and in-house design is underway. The sector of this roadway from Five Corners to Route 79 (Island Center Road) is earmarked for improvements. They include the installation of guardrails, improvements to geometrics, signage, pavement improvements, drainage improvements and striping of the roadway.

Frederiksted Roads, Route 702, 7025, 7027, 7029, & 7023, St. Croix \$3 Million – GARVEE Project - The design firm, Antillean Engineering, submitted construction plans to the department for review, however we provided comments to the designer on items we would like addressed. We anticipate this project will be sent to FHWA for approval in the fall.

Christiansted Roads, Route 754, 75E, 75W, St. Croix – GARVEE Project - Eastern Federal Lands was assigned the project development of this project, which is in the preliminary phase of design.

VI ST ER STJ (002) - FHWA-ER Project - This project, managed by EFLHD, is a Design Build ,which includes five (5) damaged sites throughout the island. Among the sites are Routes 104, 107, 108 and 1041 (Fish Bay Road). Construction is currently underway at Route 108. Eastern Federal Lands anticipates additional sites will begin construction this summer.

VI ST ER STX (003) – FHWA-ER Project - This project, managed by EFLHD, is a Design Build, which includes sixteen (16) damaged sites throughout the island. Project sites are Midland Road Bridge, East Airport Road Bridge, Route 7532 (vicinity of the lagoon) and North Shore Road. The contractor, Virgin Islands Paving, has been working on designs and permitting since December 2020. Eastern Federal Lands anticipates construction to begin in July.

VI ST ER STT (004) - FHWA-ER Project - This project, managed by EFLHD, is a Design Build, which includes thirteen (13) damaged sites throughout the island. Included are Route 333 (in the vicinity of Dorothea Fire Station), Route 335 (Upper Lindbergh Bay), Route 42 – Mandahl Road and Route 30 (Black Point Hill). The contractor, Island Roads Corporation, continues to work on designs and permitting. Construction is underway at Route 33 (near Shibui), Route 333 (Dorothea) and Route 38 (Weymoth Rhymer Highway). Eastern Federal Lands anticipates additional sites will begin construction this summer.

Permanent Traffic Signs - STT/STJ – FHWA-ER Project - This project entails installing new traffic signs throughout the district of St. Thomas/St. John. The Contractor's Notice to Proceed (NTP) commenced on June 8, 2020. This project is ongoing and expected to be completed by Fall.

Permanent Traffic Signs - STX – FHWA-ER Project - This project was awarded on Dec 4, 2020. The selected contractor, Celestine Construction, is currently installing new signage throughout the island. We plan to execute a change order, in the near future, to add additional time and signage.





44

ACTIVE PROJECTS

34.3

MILLION

COST FOR CURRENT PROJECTS

LOCAL ENGINEERING

STJ | STT | STX

LOCAL ENGINEERING

The Division of Engineering provides architectural, engineering, design and inspection services for the Department of Public Works and other government agencies. These services include planning, designing, cost-estimating and construction management of a variety of capital and public infrastructures throughout the territory. The division is responsible for project management, which includes:

- Requests for Proposals
- Design Review
- Project Inspections
- Contract Administration
- Approval of Contractor Requests for Payment

COMPLETED PROJECTS

The division recently supervised repairs to the Christiansted Boardwalk, which was severely damaged by the 2017 hurricanes. The damaged joists, broken guardrail and collapsed Trex decking were all replaced, restoring the boardwalk to its original condition. The boardwalk is now safe for public use.





Also completed in FY 2021, were road repairs on Route 681, better known as Hess Road. The Sunny Isles signal light intersection was also paved and striped to include cross walk to improve the safety for motorists and pedestrians.

Since the last budget hearing in June 2020, the **Fortuna Bay Road Repair Project** was completed. This roadway collapsed during the 2017 hurricane season and has been completely repaired by installing new concrete pipes under a new reinforced concrete roadway. Gut remediation was also conducted to ensure flood waters are channeled directly to the concrete culverts. The total cost to complete this project amounted to **\$418,280.80**.



The **Bovoni Low Water Crossing Project** was closed-out in January 2021. This project repaired a low water asphalt section of roadway and installed curb inlets, to ensure the future durability of the road. Specific areas of asphalt roadway were milled, and new asphalt placed with pavement stripping from the road near the Purple Shop heading West towards Lima Gas Station in Bovoni. The total cost to complete this project amounted to **\$145,047**.



The **Eastern Cemetery Roadway Phase 2 Project** was closed-out in March 2021. This project entailed extending the existing asphalt roadway approximately 500 ft. and constructing parking spaces, sidewalks and a low water crossing, which provides easier and safer access for the visiting public. The total cost to complete this project amounted to **\$429,712**.



The **DPW Division of Transportation - Fort Christian Parking Lot Office Renovation Project** was completed in April 2021. This project entailed tile installation, roof gutter repair, cement board walls, insulation, new doors, electrical work, and other miscellaneous construction. This newly renovated office now provides a clean and vibrant workspace for employees to enjoy. The total cost to complete the project amounted to **\$54,323.50**.



ACTIVE PROJECTS

For upcoming road repairs on St. Croix, a contract has been executed for the Town of Christiansted and Frederiksted. Work began this month for the Town of Frederiksted. As part of phase I, Queen Cross, Hill, Hospital, New, King, Customs, Lagoon and Market Streets will be repaired. The contractor, V.I. Paving, is currently focused on drainage improvements in the area of New Street. Under phase II, King Cross, Veteran's Shore Drive, Route 702 (from LaGrange to Frederiksted)

and East Street will be repaired. The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) has provided two (2) grants to fund both phases of repairs in the historic town of Frederiksted.

The division is also slated to manage projects to pave roads in the Town of Christiansted - specifically Queen, Strand, Hill, East, West, Smith, Prince and Market Streets. We are working with our infrastructure and utility partners to coordinate on the start date of the project, so as to avoid re-digging. Funding for this project is also made possible through a grant from DOI, and is being coordinated with WAPA, VIYA, Office of Disaster Recovery and Waste Management. We have monthly coordination meetings with our utility partners to align our project schedules.

With the allotment of funds from the St. Croix Capital Improvement Fund, phase 1 repairs at Estate La Reine, Bugby Hole, Herman Hill and Estate St. Georges are now possible. The scopes of work call for the installation of drainage infrastructure to improve the drainage capacity of the residential areas, as well as the paving and striping of the roadways for safety. These projects are currently in the procurement stage and executed contracts are expected by the end of Summer, at which time road repairs will commence.

For phase 2 of road repairs at Estate La Reine, Bugby Hole, St. Georges and Herman Hill, they will be paid with revenue from the Excess Debt Service Reserve Fund. Additionally, these monies will also fund road repairs at the following locations:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| ▪ Estate Upper Love | ▪ St. John |
| ▪ Mt. Pleasant | ▪ Calquohoun |
| ▪ Whim | ▪ Williams Delight |
| ▪ Strawberry Hill | ▪ Campo Rico |
| ▪ Richmond | ▪ Work & Rest |
| ▪ Union and Mt. Washington | ▪ Route 83, leading to Catherine's Rest. |

Preliminary designs for these projects were completed and packages are now being prepared for bid solicitation. We would like to thank Governor Albert Bryan and this body for recognizing the need to address neighborhood roads throughout the territory and for providing the necessary funding.



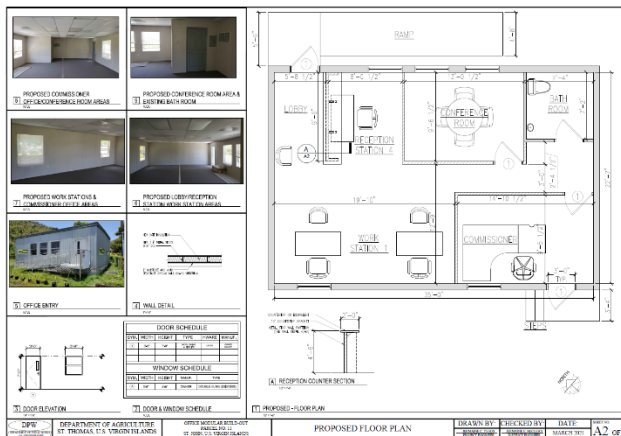
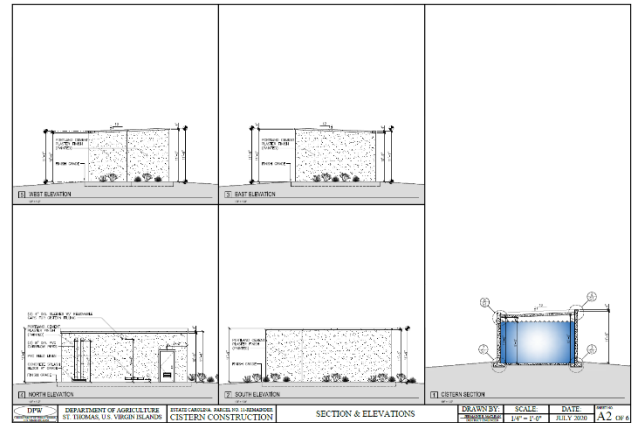
The **Benner Hill Guardrail Project** is located above the National Guard Armory in Estate Nazareth. Approximately 1,384 feet of guardrail will be installed to ensure the public's safety while traveling the inclined and curvaceous roadway. This project is currently under construction and is scheduled to be completed by August. The contract price is currently **\$139,000**.

The **Bolongo Bay Drainage Project** is currently under contract with an effective start date of June 21, 2021, and end date of February 15, 2022. This project entails construction of concrete swales, trench drains, concrete pipes, detention ponds and other drainage structures which will enhance the natural flow of water in the area, channeling it to the bay and alleviating excessive sheet flow on the roadway. The contract amounts to **\$1,261,365.00**.



The Department of Public Works **Crusher Yard Hurricane Repair Project** plans, specifications and bid package were recently completed and are ready for advertisement. The scope of work entails a concrete roof upgrade, new windows, rollup doors, A.D.A. accessible restrooms and other interior retrofits.

The Department of Agriculture **Estate Carolina/ Coral Bay Cistern Construction Project** plans, specifications and bid package were completed in July of 2020 and forwarded to the Department of Agriculture for further processing. This project entails the construction of a 20,212-gallon cistern and pump room at the Department of Agriculture's St. John Office location. The cistern construction will provide much-needed water supply to the neighboring farming lots. This project is funded by a U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant, with collaboration from the VI Agriculture Advisory Group.



The Department of Agriculture **Office Modular Build-Out Project** bid package was completed in January 2021 and forwarded to the user agency for solicitation. This project was advertised on two occasions, with no contractor being selected for various reasons. This project will be advertised again in anticipation of selecting a responsive and responsible contractor. The

scope of work entails constructing interior partition walls, painting, door installation and electrical/mechanical modifications.

The **Magens Bay Sidewalk and Ramp Project** bid package was recently completed in June 2021 and forwarded to the Magens Bay Authority for further processing and advertising. The scope of work entails construction of concrete sidewalks and A.D.A. accessible ramps, which will provide for a safer traversing experience for the visitors of beautiful Magens Bay Beach.

The Department of Human Services **Generator Building Project** bid package was recently completed in June 2021 and is ready to be advertised. The scope of work includes construction of a masonry and reinforced concrete building with roll-up door to house the existing generator.

TRANSPORTATION



FLEET



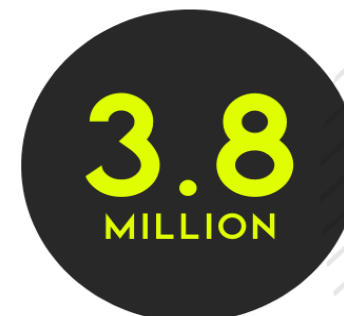
OPERATIONAL
BUSES



GRANT FUNDS
EXPENDED



GRANT FUND
BALANCE



GRANT FUNDING
RECEIVED

FY 2021 TO DATE



TRANSPORTATION

The Division of Transportation includes the Office of Public Transportation (OPT), the Virgin Islands Transit System (VITRAN), and public parking lots. In addition to the \$5.1 million appropriated from the general fund, which is mainly used to pay personnel and vehicle maintenance costs, this division also relies on funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and special federal grant allocations to fund fixed route, paratransit buses and capital projects. The OPT is the designated grant recipient for the territory's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Urbanized Area Formula (UAF) Grant Program.

FEDERAL GRANTS PROGRAM

In FY 2021, the Office of Public Transportation was awarded part one (1) of the CARES ACT Grant, in the amount of \$3,868,318, as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Part two (2) of the CARES ACT Grant in the amount of \$232,642 is expected to be awarded this year. Other COVID related grants expected to be awarded this year are the Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriation (CRRSAA), amounting to \$27,055 and the American Rescue Plan Grant in the amount of \$2,076,786.

I would like to take this moment to specifically thank our ADA Paratransit and fixed-route drivers. While many were able to work from home, our paratransit service remained fully operational, and our fixed-route drivers were back on the front-line as soon as our buses were equipped based on COVID-19 safety protocols.

In FY 2021, the Office of Public Transportation also expects to receive annual appropriations of \$2,749,897 and \$2,744,072 from the Federal Transit Administration. These funds were

approved to be used in support of transit operations, to include the construction and expansion of transit infrastructures, upgrades, transit modernization, and operating assistance including personnel.

As of June 1, of FY 2021, the Office of Public Transportation has expended a total of **\$6,781,982.46** from the Federal Transit Administration Grant Program allotments.

Presently, the Office of Public Transportation manages 10 federal grants. As of June 1, 2021, the OPT has a balance of **\$9,788,779.43** in accumulated grant funds. These funds are allocated for the construction of the St. Croix Operations and Maintenance Facility, as well as the Lloyd "Sonny" Barnes Bus Terminal at LaReine - which is in its final engineering stage before going out to bid. The balance will be used to purchase new vehicles, personal protective equipment (PPEs), and office equipment. It will also provide the necessary funds to sanitize bus shelters and facilities, cover personnel costs, and sustain the Drug and Alcohol Program. These projects and purchases are all in-progress or in the procurement process.

VITRAN

This year, VITRAN expanded Fixed Route services along Perimeter Road, adjacent to the Roy L. Schneider Hospital, Lockhart School, Skills Center, Foothills, Celestino White Senior Homes, Paragon Building and other establishments along the route. Transit modernization will continue with the purchase of ten (10) new ADA



Paratransit buses. Five are now in the manufacturing stage, while the remaining five are in the procurement process. The department will also purchase four (4) heavy duty buses and one (1) medium duty bus; and hire five additional Mass Transit Bus Operators; re-instate suspended bus routes, and lastly continue with the implementation of the Intelligent Transportation System RouteMatch on the Fixed Route System, with more than 500 hundred locations geocoded.

PARKING LOT OPERATIONS

Throughout fiscal years 2020 and 2021, revenue from both parking lots plummeted with the onset and ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. However, in recent months, revenues began to steadily increase with the reopening of businesses, services, and community events. The Parking Lot Fund currently amounts to approximately \$1.8 million. The department plans to use this money to fund upcoming projects in the parking lots.

At the Fort Christian Parking Lot, in FY 2021, offices were renovated, security cameras installed, and the acquisition of automated parking equipment is in process. Plans are also being made to resurface the parking lot. Also in FY 2021, repairs to the perimeter fencing at the Strand Street Parking Lot and automated parking equipment are in the procurement process, for construction and installation this year.

FERRY BOAT TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

The department continues to work with federal agencies and local ferry operators to develop a system that best meets the needs for public marine transportation. The Ferry Operators and Ferry Stipulation Agreements are completed and have been submitted for legal review. Discussions are in-progress with the Virgin



Islands Port Authority to develop a Memorandum of Agreement for marine services to include monitoring, inspection and review of ferry vessel maintenance and reporting. The department is also conducting ferry service need surveys, which will help identify the required capacity for efficient passenger service, give us necessary information to better plan for expansion and any projected change in ridership. The department has applied for Ferry Discretionary Program grants and will continue to seek funding outside the territory for ferry passenger services and capital. The intent is to identify and provide funding for operations, programs, and services to the public marine transportation system.



64

ACTIVE PROJECTS

85.6
MILLION

COST FOR CURRENT PROJECTS

CIP

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) division continues to administer the planning, improvement, renovation, and construction of government infrastructure, as directed and prioritized by the Office of the Governor and the Office of Disaster Recovery. However, as a result of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, the CIP division has been focused mainly on FEMA projects for our sister agencies.

Community Related Disaster Recovery/ FEMA Projects

CIP is currently involved with 26 projects disaster recovery projects in the St. Thomas / St. John district and 29 disaster recovery projects in the St. Croix district. In following with the Governor's mandate to restore community facilities, we have been working with the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation to push ready projects into construction as quickly as possible.

On St. Thomas we currently have the following projects in the pre-design or procurement phase:

- Lionel "Smut" Richard Ballpark
- Ezra Frederik Ballpark
- Alvin McBean Ballpark
- Lionel Roberts Stadium

In the St. Croix district,

- Vincent Mason Coral Resort Park and Pool
- Cramer's Park Pavilion and Concession Stands
- D.C. Canegata Complex
- Buddhoe
- Reinholdt Jackson Complex



Proposed Vincent Mason Pool Project

The Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation **Educator's Park Hurricane Repair Project** is currently under construction and has an expected completion date of July 19, 2021. The scope of work entails repairing damaged brick walls, historic handrails, benches and electrical receptacle replacement. The contract price for this project is currently **\$39,100.50**.

The Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation has two projects that were advertised twice, and no contractor was selected for various reasons; the **Doris Hodge Tennis Center Hurricane Repair Project** & **Coki Point Hurricane Repair Project**. Both projects will be readvertised in anticipation of selecting a responsive and responsible contractor. The scope of work for the tennis center includes chain link fence replacement, roof repairs, painting, light poles with led fixture upgrades and miscellaneous construction work. The scope of work for Coki Point entails replacing perimeter fencing, columns, gates, railings, and signs, as well as repairing damage to the merchant buildings and restrooms.

The Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation **Joseph Aubain Ball Park and French Town Tiny Tots Playground Hurricane Repair Project** was recently advertised through the Department of Property & Procurement wherein a Contractor was selected. Once the contract is prepared and executed, the contractor will be responsible for purchasing and replacing bleachers and light poles with LED upgrades, as well as repairs to the dugout, press box and the French Town Tiny Tots Playground.



Paul E. Joseph Stadium Complex - DPW continues to assist the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation with this project. \$18.2 million has been expended on contract management consulting, including miscellaneous expenses, retainages owed, investigation, design, and construction to date. The work is still on-hold pending the decision of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) and FEMA on the Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) being undertaken. As a result, the project completion date is pending the decision expected in the middle of the third quarter of 2021. Funding is provided by the PFA, and inspection is performed by CIP engineering.

Government House Restoration for St. Thomas – DPW provides project/construction management services to the Governor’s Office for the historical restoration of the St. Thomas Government House. This \$4.2 million restoration requires significant attention to historical detail (for which the State Historic and Preservation Office plays a significant role) and structural repairs for which the quick design are being made after the structural defects were observed. The funding for this project is provided by FEMA, and engineering support is performed by Jaredian Design Group.

St. John Government House Restoration – DPW provides project/construction management on behalf of the Governor’s Office for the historical restoration of the Battery. This \$2 million restoration requires significant attention to historical detail and structural repairs. This project is complete, and the final closeout/payment is in progress.

Department of Health (DOH) WIC Facilities – CIP continues to participate in the design process for the DOH Woman Infant and Children (WIC) facilities on all three islands. Currently the Frederiksted WIC clinic on St. Croix, the Knud Hansen Clinic on St. Thomas and the Morris DeCastro Clinic WIC on St. John. The Knud Hansen project is estimated at approximately \$3.7 million, the Frederiksted WIC clinic work is estimated at \$591,908 and the Morris DeCastro Clinic work is estimated at \$455,000. All three projects are still in the design phase and projected to be in the procurement phase before the end June 2021.

Department of Public Work (DPW) Facilities – The Department of Public Works currently has three projects being managed by the CIP Division. The Susannaberg Office Second Floor is in the construction phase. This project is substantially completed and the construction contract was executed at \$456,188. It is anticipated that this project will be completed in the third quarter of 2021 after the arrival of a long lead hurricane windows and door being fabricated. The second project is on St. John at the Susannaberg Maintenance building. This project is on hold pending a FEMA decision and subsequent award. DPW submitted an engineer's report stating that the structure should be replaced, while FEMA is evaluating if a repair is all that is warranted. In either case this is a FEMA project that is hinged on the FEMA final decision. The third and final DPW project is the VITRAN Maintenance Building and Bus Facility on St. Croix. This Federal Transit Administration (FTA) project is currently in-progress at a construction cost of \$6.7 million.

Virgin Islands Department of Education – CIP continues to support the Department of Education on their numerous projects throughout the Territory. These projects are in various stages of the construction process. For example, the Gladys Abraham Elementary School project is in the beginning stage of the construction work while others are far along in the construction/ demolition process as is the case of the Alfredo Andrews Junior High School.

St. Croix Bureau of Corrections (BOC) – The BOC Golden Grove Facility has two (2) projects that CIP is managing. The first is the temporary roof repair for the Golden Grove Facility. This project documents were developed for the bid process and is being evaluated by BOC to confirm compliance with the agency needs. It is anticipated that the bid package will be in the procurement process on or before June 30, 2021. The second project is the BOC Golden Grove Fence. This work is currently under redesign and is expected to be in the procurement process before the end of the Summer.

OPERATIONS

5.66
MILLION

**ROADSIDE CONTRACTORS
CURRENT ANNUAL COSTS**

429
THOUSAND

CEMETERY FUND BALANCE
FY 2021 TO DATE

CEMETERY NEEDS

- CRYPTS
- CLEAR LAND IN EASTERN CEMETERY
- KINGSHILL & EASTERN CEMETERY CHAPELS
- NEW CEMETERY LAND FOR ALL ISLANDS

OPERATIONS

The Division of Operations is comprised of four units. They are responsible for the maintenance of public roadways and highways; public cemeteries; government buildings; as well as our fleet of heavy equipment and trucks throughout the territory. Throughout the last year, the division has focused on community improvement projects throughout the islands.

In the St. Croix district, some notable projects include sidewalk and drainage repairs in Estate Golden Rock; Estate Whim; the North side of Juanita Gardine School; Estate Princesse; and Estate Richmond, including the addition of an ADA accessible ramp.

School bus shelters, also called shanties, in the following areas were most recently completed:

- Water Gut
- Estate St. George
- William's Delight
- La Grange
- Educational Complex



In the St. Thomas/St. John district, noteworthy projects include the repair an undermined roadway in Dorothea, new drainage installed in Estate Elizabeth, blocked drainage cleared from Department of Labor our to the Waterfront, and a concrete roadway rebuild in Upper Hospital Ground.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The department plays a critical role in Hurricane Preparedness. We work hand in hand with VITEMA and other agencies, under the federal emergency response framework, to ensure all needs are met. During the pre-disaster stage, in addition to gut and drainage maintenance, the Operations Division also assists in the securing of government buildings, as well as ensuring access to critical facilities. During the post disaster stage, the Engineering and Operations Divisions perform preliminary damage assessments of the territory's infrastructure to determine the level of damage incurred.

On April 1, ahead of the hurricane season, Operations crews shifted their focus to assessing all guts and scheduling a thorough gut maintenance and cleaning plan. Work crews are on their way to having all priority guts in the territory cleared by July. Several guts will be recommended to the Army Corps of Engineers to change the structure and become transformed to concrete. Those recommendations will be forwarded.

PRIORITY GUT MAINTENANCE STATUS (As of June 10, 2021)	
St. Croix	90%
St. John	100%
St. Thomas	85%

The department's sand bagging protocol will be conducted in a manner consistent with the BLUE SKY initiative, which implements COVID protocols. Private citizens receive 6 sandbags per household and government agencies receive 24 bags, unless otherwise changed by the Director of VITEMA.

PRE-FILLED SANDBAGS (As of June 10, 2021)	
St. Croix	2000
St. John	700
St. Thomas	5000

HEAVY EQUIPMENT

The list below outlines recent heavy equipment purchases:

STT Sweeper	\$234,000
STT Roller	\$45,000
STT Patching Truck	\$205,000
STX Roller	\$45,000
STX Patching Truck	\$205,000
STX Dump Truck	\$140,000
STT / STX 2 Pickup trucks	\$70,000
STT / STX 6 Backhoes	\$510,000



Now that the department has purchased the appropriate equipment, patching operations will move in-house. DPW plans to hire a dedicated patching crew to man this operation full time.

ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE

The department is responsible for maintaining our roadsides and keeping them free of grass and debris, which comes at a cost of about five million dollars to contractors every year.

This challenge was addressed in our Agency Reform Plan, which we worked in partnership with the Office of Management and Budget. In the effort to save money, the department is entering into an agreement with the Bureau of Corrections. The MOU is currently in draft version and will be submitted to the Department of Property and Procurement shortly. It is our intention to effectuate this partnership, at a fraction of the cost, to maintain the Melvin Evans Highway in the very near future.

PERMITS INCOME

141
THOUSAND

**BURIAL PLOT
PERMITS**
*CRYPT FEES INCLUDED

490
DOLLARS

**DRIVEWAY
PERMITS**

140
DOLLARS

**EXCAVATION
PERMITS**

15
THOUSAND

**ADVERTISING
DEVICE PERMITS**

FY 2021 TO DATE

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE



The Department of Public Works founded its Strategic Development Office (SDO) to meet specific goals defined by the Commissioner, that may not necessarily fit into any of the mandated divisions. The office is responsible for communications, project administration, special projects and policy development.

PERMIT FEE INCREASES

Based on another recommendation made through our participation in OMB's Agency Reform Plan, the department increased its burial plot permit fee in September 2020. The difference in dollars collected can be seen in the chart below. This increase in funds will help the department to better maintain the territory's public cemeteries and fund the Territorial Cemetery Enhancement Program.

BURIAL PLOT PERMIT FEE COMPARISON	
FY 2020	FY 2021 (As of June 21, 2021)
\$ 95,498	\$ 141,195

Noting the benefits of the burial plot permit fee increase, the department plans to increase other fees, namely for driveway and road excavation permits. For over 30 years, the department has charged \$35 each for these permits. Under the new fee schedule, residential driveway permits will increase to \$100. Commercial driveway permits will range from \$250 to \$450, depending on the size, and will include impact fees. Road excavation permit fees will also increase – starting

at \$150. An impact fee tied to the project cost will also be implemented. The department plans to enact these permit fee increases before the end of the year.

CEMETERY RECORDS PROJECT

The department's burial records were severely damaged by the 2017 hurricanes, and previous storms. Currently, all burial records are paper only and many are either missing or in decay. We also lost several maps that identify burial sites with plot numbers and names in the storms. Noting these adverse effects, the department has initiated a Cemetery Records Project, which aims to transfer all paper records to electronic files. This project will focus on scanning and digitizing existing records, as well as the creation of a digital database where all records will be stored. We will employ new technology that will identify each gravesite plot number with a geocode to assist in the creation of maps that clearly document burial locations. This will provide a beneficial tool that will allow the department to better assist the public with locating their loved ones. These tools will also provide value to DPW staff in need of this information.

This project has been separated into several phases; the first began with the buildout of the database. Staff will need to be trained on how to input information accurately. Phase two, which includes the scanning of existing records will continue throughout the rest of the year. The department currently has \$50,000 allocated for this portion of the project. In April, we applied for a Department of Interior Grant to fund the remainder, of what we anticipate will be a three-year project.

SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS

DPW communications efforts have grown exponentially in recent years. Prior to 2019, the department had growing Facebook pages (DPW and VITRAN) and engaged with the public via press releases, radio updates and informational videos.

Since then, the team has grown and so has the output. Three individuals currently manage the



department's communications efforts, which are now comprised of public notices, social media, radio appearances, informational videos, the DPW website, our email contact listing and VITEMA alerts. As the department provides consistent, timely information to the public, social media followings continue to grow and follow upward trends.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS		
	ESTABLISHED	CURRENT FOLLOWING
Facebook	December 2017	2,658 followers
Instagram	August 2019	660 followers
YouTube	August 2019	3,312 views 21 Subscribers
Twitter	May 2021	25 Followers

Also, in commemoration of National Public Works Week, the department distributed over 200 activity books, touting the importance of the department, to elementary students throughout the Territory.

LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION PILOT PROJECT

This project is slated to beautify the public right-of-way along Route 30 on St. Thomas – from the Airport entrance up to Havensight. Budget cuts in last fiscal year, however, altered the area of coverage. The project limits currently include the medians from the Airport entrance to the Nisky Center intersection. Due to the positive public response, it is our hope to be able to add additional funds to this project in the coming fiscal year to continue along Route 30. If funding allows, we would like to expand this project to St. Croix, near the entrance to the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport.



VITRAN MARKETING

The Strategic Development Office, in conjunction with the Office of Public Transportation, has worked for the last several months to develop VITRAN's Advertising Program. We have researched the necessary federal guidelines to institute such a program, however, the department's capacity remained an issue. Therefore, in moving forward with Act No.

8254, which allows the department to permit advertisements to be placed on VITRAN buses, we are moving towards outsourcing this effort and will advertise a request for proposal (RFP) to manage this operation by Fall 2021. It is our intent to remain involved in the process and liaise with the selected candidate, but we do not have the necessary staff or tools to effectively manage such a robust program on our own. We believe there is a great opportunity for a public/private partnership in advertising on VITRAN branded buses, ferries, and facilities including bus shelters.



CLOSING

Senators, my team and I have outlined a budget presentation complete with a myriad of completed and active projects, our accomplishments, challenges, as well as our expected workload that will continue to grow for the foreseeable future. To best meet the challenge ahead of us, I have a few goals I would like to see to fruition.

First, we are keenly focused on finding ways to infuse technology into every facet of the way we do business. I am happy to report that our asset management and transportation infrastructure software, iWorQ, is online and currently being used internally. iWorQ personnel have been in the Territory over the last few weeks conducting pavement assessments and inventory of our roadways. This software system includes work order, sign, cemetery, pavement, and fleet management tools that will be of great benefit to the department. It also has a customer facing app that will allow our residents to upload actual work orders and provide a notification once it is resolved. To make public transportation more reliable and interactive, RouteMatch will allow riders to see their bus location and possible delays in real time. Fusing technology with our technical capabilities will allow us to be more responsive, efficient, and productive than ever before. Also, it will allow VITRAN to expand bus services on all three islands we service.

To effectively manage over 1400 disaster recovery projects, we expect to add highly capable employees with technical expertise. We will be taking the proactive approach of attending local and national job fairs and being more aggressive in recruiting recent college graduates. We are focused on adding construction, procurement, legal, and management professionals as we anticipate these areas will be critical to the department's success. As I mentioned during my confirmation hearing, we are also actively working to establish an engineering scholarship program to foster our future leaders.

The DPW team constantly meets with our federal partners, especially with the U.S. Department of Transportation, to find ways to maximize federal dollars available to the Territory. To that end, we expect to establish the department's first Pavement Preventative Maintenance Plan aimed at

realizing federal funds for road maintenance. I am committed to re-establishing DPW's State Planning and Research Office, which should allow us to combine federal funding sources to create more robust projects.

Finally, our cemeteries are of paramount importance. Working with local and federal partners, we are crafting a strong Territorial Cemetery Enhancement Plan aimed at revitalizing our cemeteries and preserving our burial records for future generations. This has been a long-neglected area that I personally offer my commitment to address. We are scouring both local, federal and disaster recovery dollars to address this under-funded mandate.

Our goals and mandates are large and ambitious, but we are ready for the challenge. The men and women of this department are tremendous, and I cannot thank them enough for all they do on a daily basis. These accomplishments are due to their commitment to the Territory. I ask that you continue to support us by providing the funding we need to grow and excel. We are focused on achieving greatness for our people. Thank you for listening to our extensive budget presentation and we stand ready to answer any questions you may have.



V.I. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DPW...*On the Move!*