



GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 5, 2024

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## **Governor Bryan and VIPA Officials Unveil Groundbreaking P3 Partnership to Propel USVI Airport Infrastructure Development**

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS -- Today marked a significant milestone for infrastructure development in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Governor Albert Bryan Jr., Virgin Islands Port Authority Board Chairman Willard John, and VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe introduced VIports Partners at a joint press conference held at Government House in St. Thomas. In a historic action taken at a special meeting held on March 26, VIPA's Board of Governors selected VIports Partners to join with the Port Authority in a Public-Private Partnership (P3) to improve the Cyril E. King Airport (STT) on St. Thomas and the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport (STX) on St. Croix.

"Today is a monumental day," Governor Bryan said. With tourism increasing and the Territory reporting record-breaking visitor numbers, the U.S. Virgin Islands must remain competitive with other Caribbean destinations. "They are coming to eat our lunch," Governor Bryan quipped. "I like them you know, but if you know me, I like to win. And win we will."

Calling the P3 partnership "transformative," Novelle Francis, president of the 35th Legislature, said the collaboration couldn't have come at a more vital time. "A destination as exceptional as ours demands nothing short of a first-class airport," he said.

VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe explained the vision and objectives of this transformative collaboration. The partnership between the Port Authority and the P3 Partner aims to revolutionize the way major infrastructure projects are financed and executed in the territory.

Dowe emphasized that the P3 partnership is an alliance between the public and private sectors. The airports will continue to be owned by VIPA but will be remodeled by VIports Partners to include modern-day amenities and features expected by today's travelers.

"This is a grand and ambitious endeavor befitting a premier destination. By fostering collaboration, innovation, and accountability, the partnership holds the promise of delivering infrastructure solutions that will propel the USVI forward in the 21st century," said Dowe.

VIPA Board Chairman Willard John emphasized the Authority's commitment to improving the Territory's airport terminals and infrastructure while enhancing the customer experience and ensuring fiscal responsibility utilizing innovative solutions.

VIports Partners underscored the attractiveness of infrastructure investments to institutional investors seeking stable, long-term returns. By harnessing private-sector ingenuity, technology, and capital, the partnership aims to develop the territory's airports in ways that not only meet current needs but also anticipate future demands and foster economic growth and prosperity while showcasing the rich culture of the Virgin Islands.

"We thank VIPA for entrusting us with this important project serving the unique needs of both St. Thomas and St. Croix and the citizens of the U.S. Virgin Islands," said Mark Melson, Chief Investment Officer of Tikehau Star Infra. "Today we start our journey together as long-term partners, a partnership that is committed to the redevelopment and modernization of both airports and the operation of these airports. Our team, VIports Partners, has been purpose-built to meet the needs of this project. We, together, have the capabilities and experience to provide a world-class operation and deliver transformative infrastructure."

During the press conference a transition agreement was signed. The transition agreement outlines the actions that will be taking place between VIPA and VIports Partners over the next nine months in preparation for the signing of the P3 agreement.

VIports Partners also highlighted the pivotal role of private sector participation in driving infrastructure development forward. "We are thrilled to work with the Virgin Islands Port Authority to develop this transformational project – bringing our expertise in developing world-class airports along with tailor-made solutions for the unique requirements of each airport," stated Steve Nackan, President Aecon Concessions. "This historic project will significantly improve service levels and capacity, modernize amenities and passenger experience, and enhance the resiliency and sustainability of the airports – all driven by a shared commitment to delivering a lasting legacy for USVI through this landmark project while prioritizing local economic, social and community benefits."

Frasca & Associates LLC is serving VIPA as the P3 and Financial Advisor, Mayer Brown LLP is serving as the P3 Legal Advisor, the Law Offices of Jennifer Jones and the Law Office of Trudy Fenster are serving as Local Counsel, The Paslay Group is serving as the P3 Technical Advisor, and Public Strategy Group is serving as the Communications Advisor.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure, and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government, and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit [transparency.vi.gov](https://transparency.vi.gov)

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