



# TRANSFORMING LIVES, RENEWING HOPE &

*Building the Road to Prosperity*



## SECTORAL PRESENTATION

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Minister of State for Works in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation

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Gordon House

Mr. Speaker, I must first give thanks to the one who sees all and knows all, that Great Geometrician of the Universe, for His many blessings, His guidance and protection from all harms and danger, the one who protects us from the evil planners who are always seeking our destruction, but will never, ever succeed.

I must recognise the people of South West St. Catherine who have once again seen in me a man who stands with them, works with them, works for them and one who continues to be dedicated and committed to their welfare cause. A Representative who has been Tested, Tried and Proven so many times. I am grateful to them, for electing me to serve a sixth time in this Honourable House as their Representative.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge the members of my staff: the Senior Managers and other members of staff who have been providing valuable support.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Most Honourable Prime Minister, for the confidence and trust in me shown by him, in appointing me to this noble position. I am humbled by his

confidence and I am committed to work relentlessly, in playing my part, in moving this country, from poverty to prosperity.

Mr. Speaker today I rise to speak in this honourable house on matters which I truly believe will make Jamaica a much better place. We intend through this Ministry to ensure that we take this country and its people from poverty to prosperity. To make this country strong, the build out of our infrastructure will be key. This includes ensuring that our people live in suitable houses, travel on reasonably good roads and enjoy a way of life that reflects positive change.

I will this afternoon outline to this House some important pillars of our plan to move our people and this country from poverty to prosperity. I will be taking you through the various programmes that we now have on the roads, as well as share with you other exciting initiatives that will be undertaken by this administration.

# Routine Maintenance

Mr. Speaker, since taking office in February, the government has set out to intensify the rate at which we carry out routine maintenance activities on the main road network. Through funding from the Road Maintenance Fund (RMF) we have done some 72, 000 square meters of patching across the country. Through this effort we have spent \$180 – million. This year we will be spending through the Road Maintenance Fund approximately \$1.110 – billion. We have identified a number of areas and activities to target through the allocation.

These include:

- River Training works - \$54 – million
- Island-wide Disaster mitigation works - \$200 – million
- Hot Mix Patching - \$200 – million
- Road Rehabilitation and Spray Patching - \$290 – million and

- Traffic Management and intersection improvement  
- \$60 –million.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is one thing to be speaking of the amount of money spent on routine maintenance activities, it is another thing when it comes to the payment of these services. We came into office not only hearing of the many complaints about non-payment of bills. Many of us have had to use gentle suasion to prevent confrontations between individuals, resulting from the NWA not paying or taking an inordinately long time to settle bills for work.

Having experienced the problem, we have taken steps that will see this issue being no more. Beginning immediately, our contracting partners, once they have completed the work, will be paid within two weeks of the bill being given final approval. This is being made possible through a new thrust, a new way of doing business between ourselves and our partners. We inherited a system whereby bills had to be generated by the NWA, then funds requested from the RMF, before payment is made. This often led to weeks and sometimes months elapsing

before persons are paid for services. Under this new direction, the RMF will advance sums every quarter to the NWA, who will in turn pay for the services, once satisfactorily rendered. All documents relating to works in the preceding quarter will then be sent to the RMF before the next tranch of funds is made available. So you see Mr. Speaker, we are not going to be irresponsible and not ensuring that all the necessary documentation is in place, evidencing work done and value added to the communities. The drive to moving from poverty to prosperity demands a new approach to doing business, a new approach to engaging our customers and a new approach to how our people relate to government.

Mr. Speaker, it is with this new approach in mind that I have been leading by example. A few weeks ago we had a demonstration in South-east St. Ann, where residents complained about the state of the Golden Grove main road. I will agree that the road is really in a poor state, but that has been the case well before February. I don't countenance public disorder and that I have made very clear. I do however, have an

open door policy and welcome anyone who desires to engage me about the state of their roads. The people of Golden Grove contacted me asking for a meeting. This was subsequent to their demonstration. I agreed to meet with them, listened to their concerns and at the end of the day, we found a solution to their problem. They wanted to see an improved main road and through the RMF, we have managed to obtain some 33.6 million dollars to undertake work on this road. The point here, Mr. Speaker, is that I aim to make this portfolio very responsive to the people. I don't intend, however, to allow this Ministry to be held to ransom by any community or person for selfish reasons. Be prepared to work with us and we will work with you!

A key part of our routine activities is the patching of our roads. Mr. Speaker, I am not comfortable with the state of affairs with this activity. Too often we see where roads have been cut and prepared for patching, but the work takes weeks to be completed. This is unacceptable! We will ensure that cuts are repaired within 48 hours of being prepared and small holes

don't become craters because of slow or no response. Too often, Mr. Speaker there are small things, such as a pothole or a broken manhole cover that goes unattended for an inordinately long time, resulting in accidents or serious cost implications for government. We intend to deal with this issue. The NWA has a regional structure and we intend to ensure that this structure works for the benefit of the people.

## **Revolving Regional Fund**

To improve the effectiveness of the NWA to respond to some of these small but crucial issues, we will be establishing a revolving fund in all the regions. The Regional staff will be in a position to respond to some of these demands in a timely manner without having to go through layers of red tape while persons are exposed to grave danger. Fourteen million dollars will be set aside for this purpose. This will be financed through the RMF.

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware that the government can outline its best possible plans to move this country forward. These

objectives will amount to naught without the active involvement of the people. With this in mind, I intend to engage the members of staff at the National Works Agency in order to lift the morale of the officers, especially in the regions. I have detected that there is low morale impacting staff. I intend to make them feel relevant, meaningful and involved in the process of moving us from poverty to prosperity.

## **Procurement of contracts**

Mr. Speaker, this Ministry as a driver of the economy understands very well the need for fiscal prudence and adherence to the rules under which contracts are procured. Currently, contracts under \$500 thousand do not have to be tendered. The rules allow for three quotes to be received and an award made based on the prices. It may sound like a lot of money but we all know that in context of Works, this sum is negligible. Since the increase from \$250 thousand to \$500 thousand, the Jamaican dollar has devalued by some 65 to 70%. It is for this reason Mr. Speaker, we are proposing that the

ceiling for the procurement of these small contracts be lifted to \$1.5 – million. We believe that this better reflects current realities where costs of works are concerned and will reduce the amount of barriers that often prevents simple tasks from being accomplished in a reasonable time. There are times when small projects are tendered and owing to one reason or another it takes three months, six months or even nine months to get implemented. We want to change this!

## **Flood Mitigation Programme**

Mr. Speaker I now turn to the issue of flood control. We intend to continue the efforts of mitigating flooding in many areas of the country as well as to dust off plans that were there but shelved some years ago. We have been listening to the statements of the Metrological Office and the possible outlook for this year in terms of hurricanes. Our plan is to undertake our mitigation effort in three phases. The first phase of the works is just now coming to an end. Under this phase we are spending \$82 – million. This through the Capital A budget.

Overall we will be spending \$336 – million on disaster preparedness this year. The \$200 million from the RMF, plus the \$54 – million for River Training works and the \$82 – million from the Capital A budget.

We intend to do even more! Mr. Speaker, the Big Pond and Old Harbour area have for years suffered from flooding. In 2012, there was a plan to implement a central flood control system in the communities. This system which was slated to cost US\$5 – million was shelved. We will be implementing this system through funds from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). We will be spending US\$8-million on this system, which will include two additional bridges between Church Pen and Old Harbour. We are committed to helping the people to build a resilient community through solid infrastructural development!

## **Traffic Management**

Mr. Speaker we intend to continue the efforts at reducing congestion on the main road network, while at the same time

making it safer for persons to travel. We will be targeting some intersections for improvements during this fiscal year. The improvements will see among other things, the widening of the areas to facilitate turning lanes and the installation of traffic lights. On the matter of traffic lights Mr Speaker, many persons use the intersection of St. Johns Road and the Spanish Town Bypass. The road is busy for many reasons including being the gateway for where many go to get their final rest. We recognise the inherent dangers going through that junction and so we will be putting up traffic signals at the St. Johns Road/Spanish Town Bypass junction. Not only that, the intersections at Job Lane and Brunswick Avenue where they touch the Spanish Town Bypass will also be signalised.

We will be doing some 100 kilometers of road markings and installing over 400 safety signs across the country. We recognise our role in reducing the carnage on the roads and will be doing all that is necessary to save lives. Repainting of Pedestrian Crossings will also be a key feature of our road

safety thrust as will be the repairs to guard rails and retaining walls.

## **Major Infrastructural Development Programme**

Mr. Speaker, the Major Infrastructure Development Programme has been in progress now for two years. This five year programme valued at US\$354 – million has seen only about US\$10.34 – million being spent on local projects over the two year period. Fifty – eight point one seven (\$58.17) million dollars has been spent overall through this programme, with US\$30.49 – million being spent on JEEP related projects. The main contractor, China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) has directly implemented projects at a cost of \$8.71 – million. Clearly, the rate of project execution has been bad. We intend to not only increase the rate of project execution, but also ensure that every cent that is spent is value for money.

We inherited a serious overhang where the non-payment of contractors was concerned. This situation has however, been cleared up and I can say that as at the end of June everyone who had completed work under JEEP five and six has been paid. We are moving from poverty to prosperity!

That said Mr. Speaker, this year we will be spending US\$100 million on projects through the MIDP. We intend to go even better in the 2017/18 financial year, when we will execute projects valuing US\$150 – million. The remainder of the loan will be expended in the 2018/19 financial year.

For this financial year, Mr. Speaker, we have some major projects that will be undertaken. These include Constant Spring Road to Manor Park and the Mandela Highway.

### **Constant Spring Road**

Mr. Speaker, many of us are aware of the difficulty getting from Old Stony Hill Road and passing the turn off to Clifton Boulevard, where we all call Cassava Piece. On the road to prosperity we will be making a stop here as we begin the

process to improving the corridor from Old Stony Hill Road to the intersection of West Kings House Road and Constant Spring Road. This corridor will be widened to accommodate four lanes of traffic.

The project will be broken down into two (2) phases of implementation. These phases were determined based on the urgency to address the delays being experienced in the Manor Park area, as well as the minimal land acquisition required for implementing the first phase.

### **Phase One (1):**

Under phase one of the project we will be:

- Widening the corridor from Clifton Boulevard to Norbrook Drive (approximately 1km) from 2 lanes to 4 lanes. There will also be two sidewalks and a median to separate northbound from southbound traffic.
- New traffic signals will be installed at the Clifton Boulevard intersection with right turn lanes. Cassava Piece Road intersection will accommodate left-in, left-out movements.

- Manor Centre intersection will also be signalised with right turn lanes.
  - Existing signal at the Olivier Road intersection is to be upgraded with two right turn lanes on the Constant Spring Road northbound approach. Olivier Road will be widened for approximately 100metres to provide two westbound right turn lanes on the approach and a left turn lane along with two receiving lanes.
  - New traffic signals will be erected at the Grosvenor Terrace intersection (gully bridge), so too at the Norbrook Drive intersection.
  - The existing Box Culvert just north of Norbrook Drive will be widened to facilitate the increase in the numbers of lanes from two to four, as well as sidewalks and the
  - Provision of a bus lay-by area in Manor Park
- We intend to have this phase completed in eight months and within the budget of US\$7 – million.

Mr. Speaker the design for this project has been substantially completed. Titles have been received from the National Land

Agency and are now being overlaid onto the design drawing to determine the extent of land acquisition required.

## **Mandela Highway**

Mr. Speaker we intend to this year commence the process to transforming the Mandela Highway from the current four lane parking space that it has sometimes become to a more efficient carriageway, befitting the status of the road carrying the most traffic per day.

The improvements will essentially entail an increase in the number of lanes from four (4) to six (6), between Six Miles and the On and Off ramps of Highway 2000.

- There will be three (3) lanes per direction with limited access.
- Sections of the roadway elevation will be raised to reduce the risk of the corridor becoming inundated.
- The Duhaney River Box Culvert will be upgraded.
- A new bridge will be constructed over the Fresh River. This will have increased flow capacity.

- The eastbound ramp leading to Washington Boulevard will accommodate two (2) lanes of traffic.
- The short section of Spanish Town Road and along Washington Boulevard, between Duhaney Drive and Six Miles will be overlaid.
- A service road will be provided along the northern side of the highway from the Ferry Police Station to General Paving Company Ltd and connected to the mainline via a partial diamond interchange (Overpass Bridge). This will facilitate safe access/egress to the highway for motorists and pedestrians from the adjacent developments.

Mr. Speaker, we have a budget of US\$64 – million to be spent on the project. This year we intend to have the bridge structure over the Fresh River and the Box Culvert at Duhaney River completed as part of the works.

Mr. Speaker, while we are on the subject of the Mandela Highway, I want to announce that starting immediately we

will be discontinuing the exclusive bus lane that was created on the westbound carriageway in the mornings. We have done our own reviews and deem that it is causing much inconvenience to road users without much success. Going forward, the road will be used according to how it was designed.

### **Marcus Garvey Drive**

Work is now in progress along Marcus Garvey Drive and we expect that by the end of the fiscal year, we will begin to see marked improvements along the corridor. Work is now taking place on two critical drainage systems as we move to ensure that the road is far more resilient and reliable when inclement weather is affecting that part of the island.

We will be spending \$2.31 – billion this year. This will see us completing the project and in the process open up many opportunities for economic growth and prosperity.

# Barbican Road

Mr. Speaker, the proposed work includes the widening of Barbican Road from two (2) lanes to four(4) lanes between the intersection of Russell Heights and Barbican Road to the Jacks Hill Road/Barbican Road intersection. Barbican Road and East Kings House Road circle will also be realigned into a “T” junction. The realignment is geared at improving safety for vehicular and pedestrian traffic and reducing congestion in Barbican Square, reducing travel time and improving network efficiency by promoting a smoother flow of traffic along the corridor.

The proposed work will include:

- a. Closure of the Western leg of East Kings House Road which intersects Barbican Road in the vicinity of the Barbican Baptist Church.
- b. A change in flow of traffic from one way to two way along Barbican Road between the Barbican Baptist Church and

Fontana Pharmacy and along the Eastern leg of East Kings House Road between the Barbican Centre and Barbican Road in the vicinity of the Fontana Pharmacy.

- c. Land acquisition and utility relocation activities will be required to allow for the widening of the roadway.
- d. Erection of new traffic signals at the intersection of:
  - i. Barbican Road and East Kings House Road,
  - ii. Jacks Hill Road and Barbican Road and
  - iii. Birdsucker Lane and Barbican Road

Mr. Speaker, already we have identified some 29 parcels of land to acquire as part of this development. The National Land Agency is now well advanced with the process of acquiring more than 50% of these. Given the progress made to date, we expect that actual construction along this one kilometre stretch will get underway by the end of the last quarter of the fiscal year.

## **Hagley Park Road**

The designs for the widening of Hagley Park are now being finalised. We intend to undertake the repairs in two phases. The section of this road from Six Miles (Portia Simpson Miller Square) to Keesing Avenue, which is one point five (1.5) kilometres will form phase one of the project. I have asked the NWA to ensure that, subject to budgetary constraints, all is in place to have this project commence during this financial year. Elsewhere in St. Andrew we will be doing work on the;

- Essex Hall Road
- Parks Road to Cavalier and
- Back Bush,

Some gully works will also be done this year. Work will be done on the;

- Sandy Gully
- Constant Spring Gully at Roehampton and
- Perkins Boulevard Gully at Meadowbrook Estate.

Mr. Speaker we are an all-inclusive government and so we are not only looking at improving the state of infrastructure in Kingston and St. Andrew, we will be taking it all over the island.

In St. Mary we will be rehabilitating the road from;

- Chovey to Claremont
- Guys Hill to Gayle

St. Ann;

- Alexander to Browns Town
- Ocho Rios Development Road
- Grenock to Alexandria

Trelawny

- Stewart Town to Lorimers via Albert Town

St. James

- Black Shop to Stapleton
- Williams to Hopeton
- Adelphi to Kent to Salt Marsh
- Sign to Virgin Valley

## Westmoreland

- Grange Hill to Little London
- Glasgow to Savanna la mar
- Ferris Cross to Mackfield (A major project to be done by the Chinese)

## St Elizabeth

- Tomb Stone to Gutters
- Middle Quarters to New Market
- Springfield to Pisgah
- Mountainside to Fullerswood

## Manchester

- Sedburg to Clandon
- Walderston to Grantham
- Christiana to Limit

## Clarendon

- Freetown to Four Paths
- Palmers Cross to Fogo Road

- Cocoa Piece to Alexandria

## Portland

- Buff Bay to White Hall
- Tranquility to Bangor Ridge

## St. Thomas

- Morant Crossing to White Hall
- Seaforth to Soho
- Port Morant to Bath

Mr. Speaker under the forerunner to the MIDP, which was the Jamaica Infrastructure Development Programme (JDIP), we had started several projects which were later abandoned by the government in January 2012. We will restart and complete these projects this time round! These projects are:

- Windsor Avenue
- Windsor Road/Duncans Pen Road
- Gutters to Bushy Park
- Spring Village to Rock Stone and

- Bretherin Town.

You will notice Mr. Speaker that these projects are all in St. Catherine. Additionally, we will be carrying out rehabilitation work on the roads from;

- Woodhall to Bellfield and
- Back Pasture to Junction.

Former Prime Ministers Bruce Golding and Portia Simpson Miller had some time ago made a special request for two roads to be rehabilitated. These were however, not done. I intend to honour their request and Sherman Terrace/Wellside Lane and Bigonia Crescent in the Marlemont Housing Scheme will be rehabilitated.

Mr. Speaker, there are over 750 bridges on the main road network. These are very important to get persons into and out of many communities. We intend to complete the work on the Kupius Bridge in Clarendon. To this end \$519 – million dollars will be spent on this project. Additionally, the following bridges will be done under the programme:

- Serge Island – St. Thomas;
- Johnson River – St. Thomas;
- Trout Hall Pass – Clarendon;
- Duncans Pen – St. Catherine;
- Nightingale Grove – St. Catherine and
- Spring Garden at High House – St. Catherine.





## **New Technology in Road Rehabilitation**

Mr. Speaker we recognise that in moving the country from poverty to prosperity we cannot continue doing things the same way. We will do some things differently! We hear the cries everyday about the quality of the road network and we know of the difficulties finding the funds to treat with all the demands. We therefore must look at what we have and how we can use the resources available to maximise value and

satisfy our customers. One of the things we will be looking to do is use, where feasible, rubber in the repairs of our roads.

There is no doubt that waste tyres pose a significant health and environmental risk to our people. If, for no other reason, they facilitate the breeding of mosquitoes, which we know are the carriers of the Zika and Chik V viruses. Over one million tyres are discarded annually in Jamaica, so the magnitude of the risk is great. We are moving to eliminate, or at a minimum, significantly reduce this risk associated with tyres. Rather than costing millions to fight mosquito borne diseases caused by improper disposal of tyres, we are going to be using these same tyres to save costs and build a more resilient road network.

The Ministry, through the NWA, is now actively exploring the use of crumb rubber in the making of asphalt for our roads. We have already received interests from three companies and we intend to look closely at the technology and use it where appropriate.

Rubberised asphalt as it is called contains regular asphalt concrete, which is then mixed with the crumb rubber that

comes from waste tyres. The process involves the removal of extraneous materials such as wires, fibre, dust, glass rocks etc. from the tyres which are then reduced into small pieces. The small pieces are then mixed with the asphalt and used as the final surface on the roads.

Mr. Speaker in a country where we are so accustomed to have badly rutted roads due to ageing, the use of rubberised asphalt will help to add more life to the corridors. The process is environmentally friendly, increases the safety of the corridors, through a reduction of hydroplaning, as well as facilitates shorter stopping distances.

The chemical composition of crumb rubber has been demonstrated to naturally retard the aging and oxidation of rubberized asphalt pavement, as designed to do in tyres. This along with the physical elasticity of the rubber creates a road surface that is as much as 50 times stronger and much less brittle than conventional asphalt. This product reduces the likelihood of cracks developing along the roads, which inevitably leads to potholes.

Mr. Speaker the use of rubber in the asphalt making process will not only present a more environmentally friendly way of disposing of tyres, but will also assist in the creation of jobs. We intend through an approved procurement process to identify a suitable company with which we can partner and in the process move the country along this critical path to prosperity.

Once the process is complete, we intend to enter into at least one framework contract for the production and supply of the material. This is not a wish as we intend to start during this year in the following parishes:

- Portland
  - New Eden
  - West Retreat
- St. Ann
  - Black Gate to Linton Park
  - Maida to Carnie
  - Shaw Park
- St. Mary
  - Robins Bay to Orange Hill

- Port Maria to Islington
- Clermont to White Hall
- Wood Park/Farm Pen/Russel Hall
- St. James
  - Leader Road, Montego Bay
  - Salt Spring main road
  - Orange Street/Williams Street
  - West Side
  - Peace View
  - Zekes Lane
- St. Andrew
  - Hamstead Road/Chaves Road/Ulster Road
  - High Light View Road
  - August Town Road
  - West Meade
  - West Meade to Hydra Drive
- Clarendon
  - Mullet Hall
  - Chapelton Road, May Pen

- Howard Avenue
- Portland Cottage
- Salt River
- St. Catherine
  - Colbeck Road
  - Riverside Park

Mr. Speaker, in recent years the NWA has embarked on the use of Micro-surfacing as one of the methods of repairing pavements across the island. We have looked at the numbers and it's our view that we can get more value from using Asphaltic Concrete as the final surface rather than Micro-surfacing, given the amount of money it is costing for this method of road paving. We are therefore going to be moving away from Micro-surfacing roads to using more Asphaltic Concrete to repair worn surfaces. We believe that the people will get better value for money in this process.

## **North/South Linkages**

Mr. Speaker, there is now a thrust to improve the South/North linkage through Clarendon and St. Mary. The road from Sour Sop Turn to Chapelton has been under construction for some time. This corridor is divided into three with the first section being from May Pen to Sour Sop Turn, Sour Sop Turn to Chapelton and Chapelton to Trout Hall. Over a billion dollars is being spent on the second leg of the roadway from Sour Sop Turn to Chapelton. We inherited a plan to move onto the third section from Chapelton to Trout Hall.

Mr. Speaker, having looked at the approach that was being undertaken to the rehabilitation of the corridor, we think that it was wrong and that the better approach ought to have been the project starting in May Pen, correcting the serious drainage defects that exist, and continue onto Trout Hall in stages. This is a much better approach! What now obtains will be of little benefit if persons get to Sour Sop Turn and cannot make it to

May Pen, their destination, as the road is impassable due to inclement weather.

We will therefore be shifting the focus from the section of road from Chapelton to Trout Hall and instead do that from May Pen to Sour Sop Turn.

Mr. Speaker the Junction Road in St. Mary has been the source of much trouble for many persons travelling between Kingston and the North-eastern parishes of Portland and St. Mary. At the best of times this corridor can be said to be difficult to traverse, given its very winding nature. At the worst of times, it becomes an obstacle course with landslides and falling boulders being major threats to road users. We intend to this year start the process to making this road more reliable and less of a threat to the people.

The plan to rehabilitate this corridor will see 18.4 kilometers of road from Aqualta Vale to Toms River being targeted. This year we will start with work on the first 4.8 kilometers from Aqualta Vale to Broadgate. Much of the way has already been cleared for this project to start. The contractor has been

recommended, so too the consultants for the project. The financing is in place and Cabinet will shortly sign off on the project.

Starting in the third quarter of this year, we will commence this 14 months project with funding of \$597,765,122.55 from the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development. Sixty five per cent of the contract price will be received from the Fund, while the Government of Jamaica will underwrite the remaining 35%. This project will help us to drive the economy of St. Mary and the country and contribute to our goal of moving from poverty to prosperity.

## **Utility relocation**

Mr. Speaker, there is an issue that many before me have spoken about but not much progress has been made to correct what I deem to be a serious anomaly that cost the public hundreds of millions of dollars. I speak here about the cost that must be borne by the government in relocating Jamaica Public

Service Power Lines that have to be relocated when we undertake major works.

To demonstrate to you the type of money we are talking about I will point you to three projects. One of which is now underway. The relocation of poles along the Sour Sop Turn to Chapelton main road in Clarendon is costing the government \$43 million. The estimate received from the JPSCo regarding the widening of the Mandela Highway is \$37.9 million and subject to change, not to cost less but more! The estimated cost for the relocation of poles along the Aqualta Vale to Broadgate main road has been put at \$5 million, again this is subject to change.

Mr. Speaker, the JPSCo is a private business that benefits from the significant spend to develop and improve our road infrastructure. The benefits are however, not reciprocated as while the government pays to relocate these poles, the company gets a free ride planting them within the Rights of Way, without any compensation to government. I am aware that some discussions have gone on regarding this issue. I

intend to energise this particular issue as I think the country ought to get some tangible benefits from the JPSCo., which not only demand payment for the relocation but uses the opportunity to replace worn or outdated infrastructure at the public expense.

## **Damaged Road furniture**

Mr. Speaker we continue to see recklessness on our roads, resulting in not only deaths and injury to our citizens and visitors, but critically to the road furniture. I am aware that the NWA has been taking steps to recover sums from guilty motorists and their insurance companies. The rate of settlements though is too slow and we intend to have this matter dealt with. As at the end of June approximately \$26 – million was outstanding for damaged road furniture. We are in the process of collecting approximately \$4.4 – million dollars in settlement.

Road furniture is expensive and we must ensure that these are protected by all. When I reviewed the matters leading to the

NWA requesting payments for the damage, 50% of these were in relation to traffic signals. This is **untenable!** Not only are we seeing damage mainly at intersections but the lives of other road users are being put at risk. When the lights are out there is a greater likelihood of conflicts and more accidents. Our people will have to become more conscious in using our roads and where they fail to, leading to this type of damage we intend to collect.

## **SouthernCoastalHighway Improvement Project**

Mr. Speaker, I will now address matters relating to the Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP). Noise often results in distortion of information and since I don't wish for there to be any more mis-information in the public space, I am going to use the next few minutes to outline to this House the background to our position on the way forward with Segment One of the project.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the existing two lane main road along the southern coastal section of the island from Negril to Mandeville, which is 133 km and Harbour View to Port Antonio, which is 110 km is in an unsatisfactory condition. The corridors have inadequate geometric alignment, poor surface condition, no shoulders in some instances and inadequate drainage features. Road users are subject to long journey times, delays due to poor alignment and flooding during heavy rainfall and frequent accidents with fatalities. These conditions discourage major investments in tourism, agriculture and commerce, which in turn lead to economic stagnation and social underdevelopment.

We inherited a plan based on a feasibility study that was completed in 2014 by Stanley Consultants out of the United States. I will share with this House some of the key findings and projections.

# ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST and Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR)

Mr. Speaker, while not being the ultimate deciding factor in undertaking road development, the Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) is a key component of the decision making process. Internationally, the threshold benchmark is 12%. What this means is that unless a project is likely to give a return of at least 12%, it is not feasible. Segment one (1) was divided into seven distinct sections, Segment two (2) has five sections. Follow me as I go through with this House the estimated construction cost and the EIRR for each.

Segment /Section	Construction section	Length (km)	Construction Cost (US\$)	Cost (US\$) /KM	EIRR %
1A	Harbour View to Yallahs	20.0	139,425,600	6,971,280	23.1
1B	Yallahs to Morant Bay (Belfast)	22.20	182,899,600	8,238,721	11.9
1C	Morant Bay (Belfast) to	32.6	197,299,200	6,052,123	7.6

	Manchioneal				
1D	Manchioneal to Boston	17.2	154,205,700	8,965,448	2.7
1E	Boston to Fairy Hill	2.4	60,608,300	25,253,458	-5.8
1F	Fairy Hill to Drapers (Williamsfield)	5.6	167,608,700	29,930,125	-4.4
1H	Drapers to Port Antonio (Bryan's Bay)	6.4	174,627,800	27,285,594	7.1
	<b>Total segment 1</b>	<b>106.30</b>	<b>1,076,674,900</b>	<b>10,128,644</b>	<b>8.4</b>
2A	Negril to Ferris Cross	33.30	149,236,800	4,481,586	25.3
2B	Ferris Cross to Crawford	29.7	85,949,200	2,893,912	23.4
2C	Crawford to Goshen	36.00	108,704,000	3,019,556	20.8
2D	Goshen to Spur Tree	19.2	195,672,700	10,191,286	12.1
2E	Spur Tree to Williamsfield	13.5	50,669,600	3,753,304	31.2
	<b>Total segment 2</b>	<b>131.60</b>	<b>590,232,300</b>	<b>4,485,048</b>	<b>21.1</b>
	<b>TOTAL segment 1 and segment 2</b>	<b>237.90</b>	<b>1,666,907,200</b>	<b>7,006,756</b>	<b>13.0</b>

Mr. Speaker, the estimated construction cost for the works in Segment one, which is a shorter road is 1.8 times more than that in Segment two. This is due primarily to the mountainous terrain and more kilometres of new roadways in Segment one requiring extensive earthworks, and the need for constructing far more bridges and major box culverts. The overall EIRR for the Project was 13% and the EIRR for the sections in Segment one except for section 1A was below 12% which is the threshold benchmark for projects considered to be viable, while for all the sections in Segment 2 the EIRR was above 12%. A major contribution to the low EIRR in segment 1 is the high construction cost and the low vehicle usage along the corridor. When we compared both roads, we saw that in segment one, 68 km is on new alignment, requiring significant land acquisitions. There are also 49 bridges to be built on this segment. Compared to Segment two, where based on the preliminary design 53.23 km would be on a new alignment with the construction of 18 bridges.

# Implementation Schedule

Mr. Speaker, it was based on the EIRR that the then government developed an implementation schedule proposing to commence with section 1A and 1B, even though these were not with the highest EIRR. It was considered that the improvement of the main road from Harbour View to Morant Bay would serve to initiate the developmental potential of that part of the island. We agree with this proposition.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said in the public about the plans for the road from Harbour View to Morant Bay. What has not been said was that the remaining five sections from Morant Bay to Port Antonio were at the back of the schedule based on the EIRR. The intention was to do the 42 kilometers to Morant Bay, leave it there, and then head to Williamsfield, Manchester, then to Negril, Westmoreland and the St. Elizabeth sections would follow.

## Negotiations with CHEC

Now Mr. Speaker, negotiations commenced with China Harbour Engineering Company and NWA in February 2015 and in March of that year, the GOJ applied to China EXIM Bank (CEB) for a US\$ 400 – million loan. The negotiations with CHEC proceeded and on March 25, 2015 a conditional agreement was signed by GOJ with CHEC for a sum of US\$384, 078,034.13 to design and build out Sections 1A and 1B. Importantly Mr. Speaker, the implementation of the project was subject to the GOJ receiving the loan from the China Exim Bank. In addition to the agreed construction cost, a further US\$120 – million was going to be necessary to fund land acquisition, resettlements, construction supervision and the relocation of utilities. This sum plus 15% of the construction cost would have to be borne by the GOJ. This meant that the GOJ would be required to come up with US\$177.62 –million for the project to be implemented. When added to the US\$384 – million, we would be looking at over US\$561 – million. This, for only 42 kilometers of road.

We therefore set out to review the project, bearing in mind that roads do drive development and there is an urgent need to have this done, not in one area but across Jamaica. We met with China Exim Bank in April, when we discussed the status of our application for the loan and other possible permutations regarding the funds. Mr. Speaker, after carefully reviewing the various issues, we arrived at the position that the extent of the works to be done in the contract for sections 1A and 1B of SCHIP should be re-scoped to make the cost more efficient and the savings achieved be applied to finance two other projects. We explored the possibility of a Bypass for Montego Bay and the extension of the East/West Toll Road from May Pen to Williamsfield under the programme.

The decision was taken not to include Montego Bay under this phase of the proposed works, but that the extension of the Highway from May Pen to Williamsfield would be done. So in early June, following further discussions with my colleague Ministers, NROCC and NWA officials a program of works was

agreed as it pertains to the US\$384M loan that we will receive from the China Exim Bank. The break down was as follows:

No	Project	US\$M
1	SCHIP Section 1A , Harbour View to Yallahs	110
2	South Coast existing Main Road, Yallahs to Port Antonio	74
3	Morant Bay to Cedar Valley	12
4	May Pen to Williamsfield, Toll Road	188
	<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>

Mr. Speaker a number of meetings have been held over the last few weeks. Intensive negotiations between the government and CHEC have been undertaken. This with a view to maximising the impact of these funds on the quality of our infrastructure and to drive economic developments. All this being done with the results of the feasibility study in mind.

Coming out of these meetings, the following has been agreed.

No.	Projects
1	<p data-bbox="289 289 1141 331"><b>SCHIP Section 1A , Harbour View to Yallahs</b></p> <p data-bbox="289 464 1437 768">The original proposed improvement of four (4) lanes from Harbour view to Albion (Approximately 15 Km) and 1.35 Km of 2 lanes from Albion to Yallahs River bridge will be done.</p> <p data-bbox="289 900 1437 1818">This is an improvement from the earlier position announced by the Honourable Prime Minister at a Press Conference held on June 17 at Jamaica House when we stated that construction of 4 lanes from Harbour view to Bull Bay, three (3) lanes from Bull Bay to Grants Pen and two (2) lanes from Grants Pen to Albion to Yallahs River Bridge were going to be done. The Prime Minister did say that the negotiations were continuing with CHEC. It is through these very negotiations we have now been able to arrive at this position and at no further cost to the proposed budget.</p>

2	<p><b>South Coast Main Road, Yallahs to Port Antonio</b></p> <p>Approximately 93 Km of the existing two (2) lane main road from Yallahs River Bridge to Port Antonio will be rehabilitated and overlaid with Asphaltic Concrete.</p>
3	<p><b>Morant Bay to Cedar Valley</b></p> <p>Approximately 26 km of the existing secondary main road from Morant Bay to Cedar Valley will be rehabilitated and resurfaced. Several Retaining Walls and major drainage works will also be carried out.</p>
4	<p><b>May Pen to Williamsfield , Toll Road</b></p> <p>This road will be extended by 27 km from May Pen, Clarendon to Williamsfield in Manchester</p>

	<b>TOTAL</b>

Mr. Speaker, I wish for the following points to be noted.

- a) For the section from **Harbour View to Yallahs**, the possibility of extending the four lane carriageway from Harbour view to Albion as recommended in the SCHIP Feasibility Study as the desirable outcome was always being explored through negotiations with CHEC. This will be done as originally conceptualised.
  
- b) The rehabilitation and overlay of the road from Yallahs to Port Antonio will not prevent the implementation of the preferred alignment that the SCHIP feasibility study has recommended for that corridor. The remaining six (6) construction sections of this corridor, including the Bypasses for White Horses and Morant Bay can be done some time in the future.

c) Given the low Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) that these sections have produced based on the Feasibility study, all of the five sections in Segment two (2) are recommended to be done before the remaining six (6) sections in Segment One (1). What this means Mr. Speaker is that no major improvement work would be done in the near future on the road from Yallahs to Port Antonio.

d) The benefits to be received by the people who use the road from Morant Bay to Cedar Valley would take many more years to come had we not reviewed and re-scoped the project.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Eastern St. Thomas and Eastern Portland in particular will get far more out of this programme in the immediate future than was originally conceived. The work to be done is not patching as many have been led to believe. We have said we are going to be rehabilitating the corridor.

This means improving the drainage system. It means a stronger base. It means removing soft areas. It means greater reliability. It means a better driving surface! That is not patching Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Speaker, \$40 – million has been allocated for the project in the current fiscal year. This sum is to be used to commence some preliminary activities for Sections 1A and 1B. These include land acquisition surveys, the carrying-out of an Environmental Impact Assessment Study, as well as for the consultants to carry out the review and Value Engineering of the sections. We intend to ensure that the project is cost effective and implemented in an efficient manner.

It is the intention of the government to have these works executed over a three (3) year period commencing in the 2017/2018 financial year. Mr. Speaker, we are supremely confident that it will generate employment in the construction industry and will serve to stimulate developments in the eastern end of the Island.

# HOPE

Mr. Speaker, I again say that if we are to move this country to prosperity, we will have to do things differently. Economic growth and job creation are to making this country prosperous. We have to ensure that our people, especially those with not much means, are given the right stimulus to produce; a sustainable social setting is manifested and an enabling government structure in place to make things happen. We intend to do just that! The path to this mission is to give our people HOPE! Our HOPE is not a wish, not a desire nor a dream. It is real! It is tangible. It means taking our people from poverty to prosperity!

Mr. Speaker, the HOPE (**Housing, Opportunity, Prosperity, Employment**) Programme will replace JEEP. It is one of the strategies of the Government of Jamaica to provide a One-Stop Shop (OSS) for social intervention programmes affecting the local community and the most vulnerable groups in the society, namely; children, persons with disabilities, the elderly,

pregnant and lactating mothers, the unemployed, the underemployed, persons who fall below the poverty line and victims of disasters.

We, as members of this honourable House have very often found ourselves having to respond to many needs of the people we represent. The demands vary but when we speak to each other, we all recognise that there is consistency in the demands of our constituents. We intend to change the paradigms that now exist using some of the structures that have worked and modifying others in order to achieve our goal of prosperity.

The HOPE Programme will offer Members of Parliament an efficient system in streamlining programmes for constituency development. Each Member of Parliament will be able to manage and plan the support to the constituency through a central hub. The Programme seeks to improve the social and physical environment in communities island-wide.

HOPE will incorporate several programmes/initiatives that were in different Ministries/Agencies. These are:

- Production Incentive Programme
- Short-term Poverty Alleviation Programme
- Small Business Loans
- Public Assistance Grants
- Urban Renewal Housing Programme and the
- Infrastructure Development Programmes, including the JEEP
- Tourism Enhancement Fund

As a multi-sectoral, inter-governmental agency, the HOPE Programme will offer a range of services to its targeted beneficiaries as well as opportunities for the submission of project proposals from Members of Parliament, community-based organizations and participating agencies. Applications for benefits will be vetted based on a predetermined list of criteria.

The HOPE Programme will be responsible for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of services and projects in keeping with its mandate. The Programme will coordinate all stakeholders and develop and implement appropriate systems

of accountability that are in line with Government policies and procedures. The Programme will prepare regular reports and will provide periodic updates to Cabinet and Parliament through the Honourable Minister.

### **Responsibilities of the HOPE**

Mr. Speaker, the HOPE programme will have a number of responsibilities. These will include:

- a. Collection of proposals from Members of Parliament for various initiatives offered by the Programme.
- b. Validate applicant's eligibility for benefits in accordance with established criteria.
- c. Provision of social assistance and social services to the poor and vulnerable.
- d. Provision of grants for micro income-generating activities (to include provision of seeds, fertilizer, small livestock, tools and irrigation equipment).
- e. Provision of specific and diversified loan products (low interest rate loans) for different sectors of the MSME market, especially the productive MSME sector.

- f. Provision of grants for emergency and compassionate purposes.
- g. Assessment of emergency and provision of relief assistance to victims of man-made and natural disasters.
- h. Redevelopment of Government tenements.
- i. Provision of on-the-job training programmes.
- j. Provision of infrastructure development programmes.
- k. Provision of tourism improvement programmes.
- l. Provision of Wooden and concrete housing initiatives.
- m. Renovation of community/public facilities.
- n. Recycling of products such as PET bottles.
- o. Use of community-based labour for renovation and construction projects **(The Lift Up Jamaica model)**.
- p. Use of locally based procurement of goods and services to complete projects **(The Lift Up Jamaica model)**.

Mr. Speaker we are now moving to establish a Secretariat to deal with the daily operations. The Secretariat will also be developing the procedure to engage stakeholders under the

programme. Other tasks to be undertaken by the Secretariat are to:

1. Coordinate with the various Members of Parliament, Ministries/Agencies to obtain project proposals and funding arrangements to operate the project
2. Develop and implement the appropriate systems of accountability that are in line with Government policies and procedures
3. Conduct site visits to ensure quality and value of works are in keeping with contract documents and specifications. We are looking at having a parish structure in place similar to the Lift Up Jamaica model, where officers are assigned in each parish.
4. Incorporate a training component for projects where possible via the HEART Trust/NTA for areas such as:
  - a. Work ethics
  - b. Occupational health, safety and security
  - c. Clean and maintain premises/work area
  - d. Work attire

- e. Practical tips for performing tasks
- f. Professional behaviour on and off the job

Participants with the requisite literacy and numeracy skills, experience and knowledge may be certified.

5. Provide quarterly status reports on the programme
6. Provide periodic updates to Cabinet and Parliament through the Honourable Minister.
7. Direct the implementation of the budget to ensure that actual expenditure is maintained within planned expenditure; and to seek the approval of the relevant authorities if there are variances.
8. Facilitate the conduct of audits of the programme by the Auditor General's Department, the Ministry's Internal Audit Department or any other duly constituted body to perform such acts.
9. Direct the design and implementation of a comprehensive communication and public relations plan which will continuously update the public on the status of the programme.

## **Application and process of selection of applicants**

Applications for benefits may be vetted based on a predetermined list of criteria. We are looking to have this developed based on the current methodology used by the participating agencies. We will be employing a cadre of Social Workers and Project Officers to investigate the cases submitted for consideration.

Applications may be submitted/received through the following sources:

- Members of Parliament
- The HOPE Programme (direct application)
- Community-based Organizations
- Participating agencies for eg. HEART Trust/NTA, SDC etc.

Applications and project proposals should be in keeping with the policy objectives of the respective partner Ministry/Agency and the programme as a whole.

Where a Selection Committee is needed to evaluate proposals, the panel may be comprised of the following:

- A representative from the HOPE Programme
- Representatives from the Ministry/Agency managing the project
- A representative from the Social Development Commission
- A representative from the National Works Agency when infrastructure projects are being considered

### **JEEP Seven**

Mr. Speaker, I did say that the JEEP would be subsumed under this new thrust. Six phases of this programme have already been completed. We are now going to be moving into a seventh phase. We will be spending \$708.75 – million. Each member of this House will be allocated \$10 – million for projects in their constituency. A further \$157 – million will also be spent on special projects to include things such as manhole replacing and sidewalk rehabilitation. The projects are now being defined and we expect that this will be completed by the end of this month, after which works will start. We expect that

all the works will be completed within four months of August this year.

### **The Budget/Funding for the Programme**

The respective Ministries/Agencies will be encouraged to review existing budgets to identify areas which may be included under the programme.

Where existing programmes are being expanded or amalgamated a stringent process will be undertaken to ensure that all aspects of the finished product is fully funded.

Mr. Speaker, the task of making Jamaica strong again is a huge one. We are not daunted by this fact as we truly believe in the ability of our people to stand up and be counted. We aim to use the development of the country's infrastructure to drive developments. We intend to ensure that we build a kinder, gentler more responsive government – a government that considers the environment within which our people function and how this impact their daily lives. We see ourselves as the

Ministry to make Jamaica strong again and we intend to succeed at this task.

Mr Speaker, I close the way I began thanking that Great Geometrician of the Universe for the many blessings that he has bestowed on this country. With him as my guide, I know I shall play my part in ensuring that this country succeeds on the road from poverty to where it truly deserves to be – PROSPERITY!

May God bless you all and may God bless Jamaica land we love!

I thank you!

