



# *Sectoral Presentation*

**by HON. Clifford EVERALD WARMINGTON**

**MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO**

**MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021**



**TOWARDS A FUTURE OF**



**SUSTAINABILITY**



**STRUCTURAL  
INNOVATION**

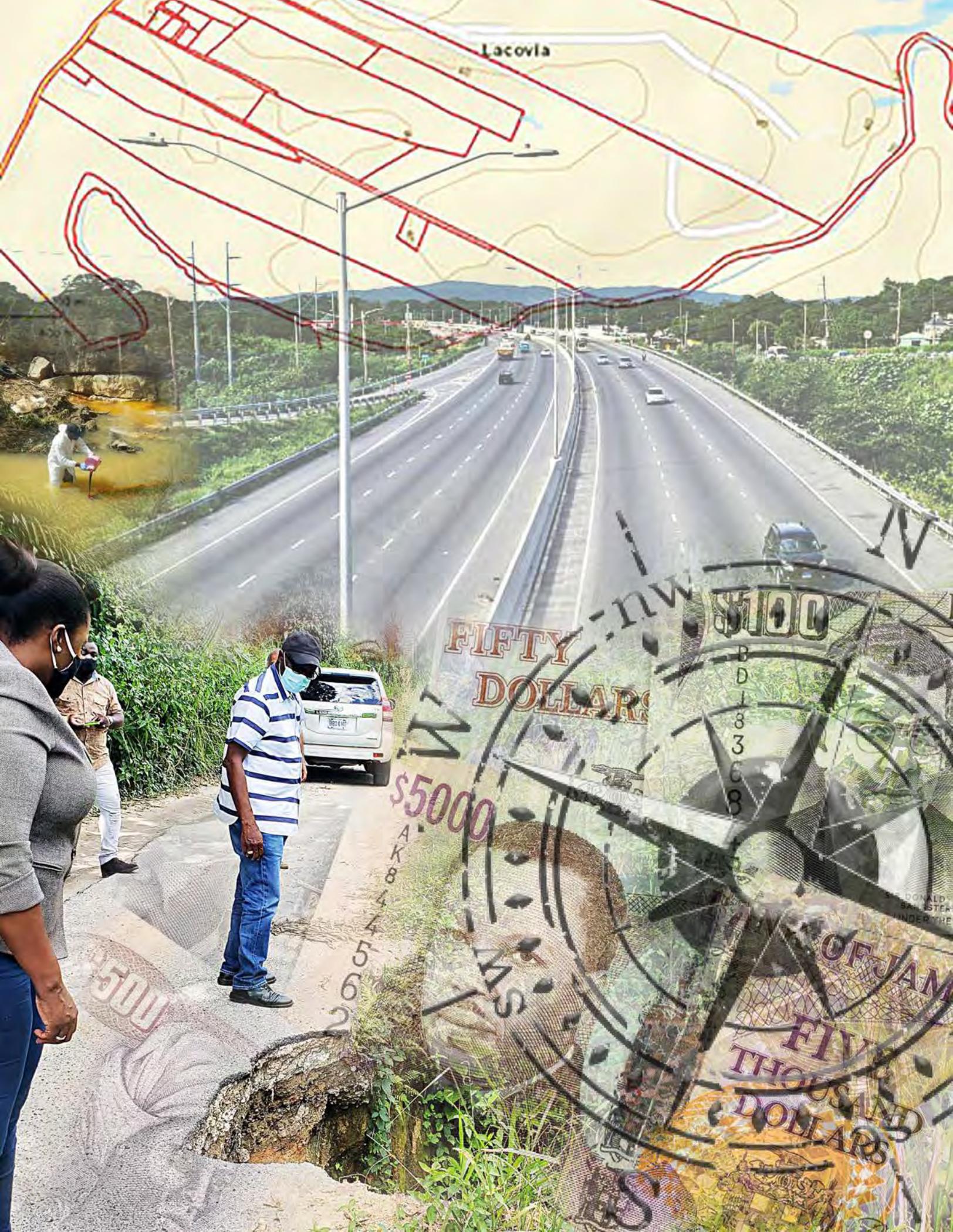


**ENGINEERING  
CREATION**



**INVESTMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES**





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OF JAMAICA

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\$500

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**BY**  
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# *Towards a Future of Sustainability, Structural Innovation, Engineering Creation and Investment Opportunities*

Madam Speaker, it is with heartfelt gratitude that I rise this afternoon to speak in this Honourable House. I want to thank the Most Honourable Prime Minister, Andrew Holness for once again entrusting me with this august responsibility in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC). There is no doubt in my mind that this Ministry is central to all that we as a government wants to and intend to accomplish for Jamaica and its people, through growth and development.

Madam Speaker, I also want to say once again, a big thank you to the people of South Western St. Catherine for their continued support in returning me to this Honourable House as their Member of Parliament for the seventh time.

Madam Speaker, the task is mine today to update this house and the people of Jamaica on critical aspects of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation. This Ministry has a number of functions, but for the purpose of this presentation, I will be speaking on matters dealing with the Water Sector, including the work of the National Water Commission (NWC); land use and management, to include the role of the National Environment and Planning Agency, as well as the Government's push to have a greater percentage of registered parcels; and the rehabilitation of the islandwide road network, which includes the extension of the east/west Toll Road and select corridors in Kingston, St. Andrew, St. Catherine and St. James.

## *WATER SECTOR*

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation continues to champion the cause to improve access to potable water to all citizens by 2030. During the 2020/2021 Financial Year, the MEGJC along with the National Water Commission and the Water Resources Authority undertook and implemented several initiatives which enabled us to improve access to the commodity.

Key to these initiatives is the recently approved National Water Sector Policy and Implementation Plan 2019 (NWSP). This has served as the master plan for ensuring the protection and sustainable development of our water resources.

The Water Policy & Monitoring Branch, of the ministry, undertook several plans aimed at highlighting the measures outlined in the Policy, as well as increasing and maintaining communication with the public on issues related to the water sector. One such initiative was the hosting of Virtual Information Sessions which sensitized the public on areas such as Water and Health, Rainwater Harvesting, Water & Agriculture and major initiatives being undertaken in the water sector, inclusive of measures to mitigate against drought.

Madam Speaker, collaboration is integral to the successful implementation of the measures outlined in the Policy. As such, the Cabinet approved the formation of the Integrated Water Resources Management Council (IWRMC) and the appointment of its members in July 2020.

The IWRMC is a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral body, led by the MEGJC that seeks to facilitate broad-based consultation among key stakeholders for matters relating to water and water-related resources. Deliberations have commenced on measures being undertaken by key stakeholders towards improving the provision of water in both Utility Service Areas (USAs) and Non-Utility Service Areas (NUSAs).

Additionally, Madam Speaker, the Ministry in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Jamaica, commenced a consultancy to undertake a Legislative Review and Gap Analysis in Support of an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Approach and Draft Legislation to Support the Implementation of the National Water Sector Policy. It is anticipated that the recommendations and Legislation presented will result in the minimisation of the legislative gaps that exist within the Water Sector.

Madam Speaker, drought is a perennial issue for us here in Jamaica, as a result, a Drought Management Committee (DMC), which is a sub-committee of the IWRMC was established. This Committee had begun a review of the existing Drought Management Plan (DMP) which is now dated. The review process is far advanced, and it is anticipated that the Plan will be completed in this financial year.

Madam Speaker, the Policy of this Government regarding the water sector is clear. ***We are building towards a future of sustainability!***

Let us now look at what has been done regarding the management of this precious resource.

## **WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY (WRA)**

Madam Speaker, the Water Resources Authority (WRA), is the premier hydrologic agency in the Caribbean. The WRA continued to make significant improvements to its Hydromet Network in 2020 with the completion of infrastructure improvement to twelve (12) gauging stations which was started under the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) project, to include the expansion of the real-time data platform.

The WRA added three new stations to its real-time monitoring platform and is on track to eventually have all surface water monitoring stations providing up-to-the-minute data that can be immediately accessed. This is in an effort to make data more readily available for analysis to all stakeholders.

The WRA continues to carry out studies on the availability and quality of our water resources. In this regard, studies were conducted on groundwater quality and aquifer protection in two locations: The Lower Rio Cobre Alluvium Aquifer and the Essex Valley sub-Watershed Management Unit Limestone Aquifer. Secondly, Dye Tracing activities are being carried out to determine groundwater flow in the Dry Harbour Mountain Hydrologic Basin.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to report that the WRA has managed to improve compliance among water abstractors. At the end of the calendar year 2020, 91% of abstractors were compliant as per the conditions of licence granted under the Water Resources Act.

Madam Speaker, I now turn your attention to the supply of water.

## NATIONAL WATER COMMISSION (NWC)

Madam Speaker, the National Water Commission (NWC) plays an important role in national development and is pivotal in the Government's thrust for sustainable economic growth, job creation and social protection. During the 2020/21 financial year, the NWC saw achievements in some key areas of its operations:

- i) Completion of some sections of the Hounslow Water Supply Project – St. Elizabeth namely, Williamsfield to Barbary Hall and Williamsfield to Hopewell.
- ii) Completion of the Waltham to Bunkers Hill pipeline, in Trelawny.
- iii) The NWC and the National Works Agency (NWA) continued their collaboration in executing integrated water supply/sewerage and road projects. This is particularly reflected in the Major Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP), where pipe replacement/road improvement works were undertaken in the following rural communities:
  - Little London to Grange Hill, Westmoreland
  - Ferris Cross to Mackfield, Westmoreland
  - Whitehall to Newmarket, St Elizabeth
  - Fullerswood to Mountainside/Brucefield, St Elizabeth
  - Paisley Ave to Trenton Road, Clarendon
  - Clydesdale to Content Gap, St Andrew

Madam Speaker, these works resulted in the completion of more than 50 kilometres of transmission and distribution pipelines which will serve approximately 50,000 persons. A similar collaborative programme has been initiated for St Thomas and Portland via the South Coast Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP) with one pipeline material supply and five works contracts having been awarded.

The NWC also commissioned new Water Supply Systems in several parishes - Cascade in Hanover, Non Pariel in Westmoreland and Ham Walk/Redwood in St Catherine. Extension of several systems were commissioned in Hopewell - St Elizabeth, Windsor Castle and Kildare - Portland, Wakefield - Trelawny and Richard Hall - St Catherine. Approximately 40,000 customers benefited from the improved service delivery.

Additionally, Madam Speaker, the NWC is also engaged in upgrading several wastewater treatment plants in Clarendon, St Catherine, St Thomas, Portland and St. Mary. These refurbishing works are aimed at reducing any adverse environmental impacts caused by these facilities.

The NWC also continued work on the rehabilitation and upgrading of Greater Portmore, Eltham Park and Horizon Park Wastewater Treatment Plants in St. Catherine, at a cost in excess of JM\$1.3 - Billion to be expended over a three-year period.

Finally, the National Water Commission installed a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) valued at US\$3.0 - Million. SCADA is a computer-based system for the remote control, monitoring and real time data gathering of the Commission's key water works infrastructure within the KSA.

Madam Speaker, the NWC commits to intensifying its efforts to improve the operational efficiency and reliability of its existing water supply systems and the performance of its wastewater treatment and sewerage facilities, as well as to extend its water supply and sewerage infrastructure to provide piped water and sewerage services aimed at achieving the target of 85% coverage of the population. Some of the major projects include:

- i) The continuation of the Kingston Metropolitan Area Water Supply Programme, with the focus in the coming year being the Kingston and St. Andrew Non-Revenue Water Reduction component.
- ii) The work on a five (5) year US\$13.0-Million performance based Non-Revenue Water Reduction programme in Portmore. This will positively impact some 200,000 residents in Greater Portmore, West Cumberland, Waterford and Hellshire.
- iii) The Commission is concluding arrangements to provide an additional 15 million imperial gallons of water per day, from the Rio Cobre Water Treatment Plant, to augment the water supply to Greater Spanish Town, South-east St. Catherine and Kingston and St. Andrew, under a public private partnership arrangement. This will allow the commencement of the construction of a new water treatment plant during this fiscal year. The supply from this new facility will increase the robustness of supply to these areas and is key to increasing resilience to climate change impacts. It is anticipated that the arrangements will be finalized and construction of the facility will commence during the fiscal year.

## **RIO COBRE WATER TREATMENT PLANT, CONTENT, ST. CATHERINE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT**

Madam Speaker, I wish to spend a few minutes to speak to the nation and this House about this last project I mentioned – the Public Private Partnership arrangement.

The NWC supplies 180 million imperial gallons of potable water each day to its more than 500,000 registered accounts representing about two million persons across Jamaica. Within the last five decades, the growth of the industrial sector has resulted in the establishment of several new commercial entities. Additionally, we have seen an increase in the number of residential communities in various sections of St. Andrew, St. Catherine and many other parishes across Jamaica. These have all led to an increased demand for potable water.

The NWC is required to supply an average of approximately 55 Million Imperial Gallons Daily (MiGD) to meet the water requirements in Kingston and St. Andrew (KSA) during the dry seasons (which spans between June to September and December to April). Under the current water production conditions, in the worst case, only 28 MiGD is available for distribution in KSA during the dry seasons, representing a shortfall of approximately 27 MiGD. This is expected to deteriorate further in the coming years due to increased demand and exacerbated by climate variability and climate change.

In order to reduce the shortfall between water demand and supply in the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA) in the medium term, the NWC is seeking to implement various initiatives including the procurement of a 15 MiGD capacity water treatment plant at Content, St. Catherine.

## ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Madam Speaker, in April 2021, Cabinet considered the Water Purchase Agreement (WPA) to be executed between the National Water Commission (NWC) and a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to be incorporated by or on behalf of Vinci Construction Grand Projets (VCGP), Eppley Limited (Eppley) and Jamaica Producers Group Limited (JP) to design, build, finance operate and maintain a 15 Million Imperial Gallons of water per day (MiGD) Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Content, St. Catherine over an initial period of twenty-five (25) years via a Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement.

### ***Benefits of the Project***

- i. Improved reliability of the water supply to the KSA by the production of an additional 15 MiGD of water.
- ii. Improved delivery of high-quality, reliable and continuous water supply service to approximately 150,000 customers in KSA, Portmore and Spanish Town.
- iii. Reduced need for trucking and water restrictions to affected areas during drought.
- iv. Potential for additional revenue by negotiation of contracts for supply to existing and new committed or planned developments, where presently there is no NWC supply available, for example proposed Caymanas Economic Zone.

### ***Cost of the Project***

The Capital cost of this undertaking is US\$60-Million or J\$8.84-Billion, (exchange rate US\$1: J\$147.30)

## NEXT STEPS

Madam Speaker, the next steps in the Transaction are:

- a. Execution of the Water Purchase Agreement
- b. Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (MOFPS) and Office of Utilities Regulation's approval of the financial structure
- c. Construction Contract Execution
- d. Construction Commencement

We expect that once commenced, the project will be delivered in two years.

Madam Speaker, the Government last year commenced work on the installation of over 14 kilometres to waterlines along Spanish Town Road, through a contract valued at approximately \$3.4-Billion. I am pleased to say that despite some hiccups, the project is moving apace with the contract slated for completion in December 2021.

To date, the contractors working on behalf of the NWC have completed 26% of the work. I expect that this percentage will significantly increase with the next two to three months.

Additionally, The NWC will be undertaking a portfolio of projects to reduce NWC's large electrical energy bill. These include use of more efficient electro-mechanical equipment as well as application of renewable energy technology such as a Floating Solar PV at the Mona reservoir. The NWC will continue the procurement and installation of Renewable Energy Systems at key facilities and locations.



*An aerial shot of the Soapberry Sewage Treatment Plant.*

## CENTRAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT COMPANY LIMITED

Madam Speaker, another critical component of managing and protecting our water resources and the health of our population is the treatment of our wastewater.

The Central Wastewater Treatment Company treats wastewater generated from Kingston and St. Andrew, Caymanas Estate, and sections of Portmore in St. Catherine.

I am happy to report that following last year's operating loss of \$70.8-Million, the company has reporting an unaudited operating profit of \$248.5-Million for the year ending March 31, 2021. This increase in operating performance is due to the restructuring of one-third of the Long term loans, from interest only loans to amortised principal payments.

Madam Speaker, the Government is working assiduously to ensure that Jamaica's water resources will be available for generations to come. As we remain committed to the task, we call upon all citizens to do their part in protecting and conserving our water resources.

Madam Speaker, as we call for each citizen to play their part and be water smart, the Ministry, along with its water agencies, are also ensuring that our water resources are protected, properly managed and sustainably developed.

## *CAYMANAS ESTATE WATER SUPPLY*

The Caymanas Estate Development Area (CEDA) located in Eastern St Catherine, occupies 4,332 Hectares and is home to seven (7) communities and approximately 2,030 households. The CEDA is an Urban Development Corporation (UDC) Designated Area in which the Corporation is recognized by the OUR as a licensed service provider for water and sewage. The Estate also features agricultural, commercial, light industrial, recreational and green space developments. The Estate is earmarked for future growth under the UDC's Caymanas Estate Development Plan, with the residential component alone set to grow to over 3,700 households.

Madam Speaker, the CEDA water demand is presently met by a well field comprised of seven (7) wells of varying serviceability which tap into groundwater from the Lower Rio Cobre Limestone aquifer. In meeting the existing demand, the wells are at risk of over-production, resulting in increased salinity. To address this issue and to make provision for the future development of the CEDA, the UDC embarked on a phased project to assess and rehabilitate the well field. With the assessment, feasibility and design phases completed in 2019, the UDC is now obtaining the necessary approvals and securing funding for the implementation phase.

Madam Speaker, the works, estimated at a cost of \$290 – Million, will see:

- The decommissioning of three (3) existing wells
- The rehabilitation of four (4) existing wells and
- The construction of four (4) new wells

The project will satisfy 100% of the UDC's planned residential and industrial demand and 62% of the irrigation demand, thereby meeting the existing and future developmental needs of the CEDA. It will also reduce the threat of over-production and increased salinity from the existing wells.

Additionally, the UDC will seek to better capitalize on its water rights of nearly 29,000 cubic metres per day associated with its wells by securing well abstraction licenses from the Water Resources Authority, once the well field is redeveloped.

Specific beneficiaries of the project will include:

- The Caymanas Village and New Era Caymanas Country Club Estates communities
- The Caymanas Golf and Country Club
- The Kingston Polo Club
- The Caymanas Pony Club
- Future residential, commercial, recreational and light industrial developments

Although the well construction is not directly labour intensive, it will give rise to secondary employment opportunities as the future build-out of the estate will be facilitated by the implementation of this critical primary infrastructure project.

## NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY

Madam Speaker, I now look at the work of the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA).

The mandate of NEPA is “to promote sustainable development by ensuring protection of the environment and orderly development”. The Agency’s plans and programmes are designed to merge into the wider government strategy aimed at more inclusive, resilient and sustainable communities.

Madam Speaker, on the environmental side of the organization, these are among its major achievements.

### **1. The Draft Management Plan and Zoning Plan for the Black River Protected Area (BRPA).**

This was recently completed by the Agency and are to be finalized with key stakeholders for implementation in 2021/22.

Partnership will be one of the primary mechanisms for the successful protection of this protected area. The effective management of this protected area will require a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach as well as the active engagement of local communities, resource users, private sector, non-governmental organizations, donors, as well as government bodies at local and national levels (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, environment and tourism sectors). The first meeting of



*Dye tracing being done in one of our rivers.*

the management committee was held and will be one vehicle used to involve stakeholders in the management of the area with a management plan as a guide.

This Ministry pledges to lead the charge in ensuring that the BRPA is effectively managed for the people of Jamaica.

**2. Implementation activities for the US\$13.5M GEF/UNEP/GO funded project “The Integrating Water Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States National Sub-Project Biodiversity Mainstreaming in Coastal Landscape within the Negril Environmental Protection Area of Jamaica” (IWECO) project.**

Madam Speaker, the objective of the project is to promote conservation of internationally significant biodiversity through the restoration of wetland ecosystem services and sustainable use of wetland biological resources and is to be implemented over four years having commenced in 2018. The project is being executed in partnership with several Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and has five components and four overall goals as follows:

- a. to restore historical hydrological and other physical processes,
- b. to enhance and re-establish native vegetation communities to provide habitat to wetland fauna,
- c. to eliminate conflicts that degrade ecosystem functions and;
- d. to implement institutional arrangements to ensure the long-term sustainability of wetland biological resources.

**3. Implementation of the US\$49M GEF/UNDP/GOJ funded “Conserving Biodiversity and Reducing Land Degradation Using an Integrated Approach” project within the Cockpit Country.**

This project, Madam Speaker, which I know you will have a keen interest in, being the member from Southern Trelawny that form part of the Cockpit Country, will be implemented in association with several MDAs and CBOs. The objective of the project is to address the negative impacts of unsustainable development practices by trying to establish and operationalize a comprehensive landscape approach in the Cockpit Country that harmonizes socio-economic development, sustainable management of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity in this mixed-use landscape of Jamaica. It is to be implemented over the next six years, starting this year. Again, Madam Speaker, we are building towards a future of sustainability!

## ***PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT***

Madam Speaker, I turn now to the Planning and Development portfolio which is an important one. The term “Building Back Better” has been repeated widely to highlight the actions that should be taken in the physical and economic realm in the process of recovering from the pandemic.

As centres of economic growth, and home to concentrated populations, our towns and cities must be at the heart of sustainable planning and development in the effort to ‘build back better’ in the post-COVID 19 era. Madam Speaker, when cities have properly working institutions and efficient infrastructure they are hubs of productivity and economic growth, providing employment opportunities and access to goods and services.

## SPATIAL PLANNING

The NEPA has completed the draft New Negril Master Plan (NNMP) on the request of the Cabinet. The plan was developed at a cost of \$38M and prepared in collaboration with the MEGJC and other stakeholders. The New Negril Master Plan will provide the strategic direction for the management and growth of the area over the next twenty years. The plan proposes densities of 75 habitable rooms per hectare inland and 1:1 and 1:2 plot area ratios at selected areas along the coastline. This will create an additional 19,357 resort rooms, attract over 1.6-Million tourists per year and has the potential to generate annual revenues of over US\$218.8-Million. It will also create 31,552 jobs directly and 31,552 jobs indirectly in the medium to long term.

The boundary of the Master Plan area stretches south-westerly from the community of Esher in the north (adjacent to Lucea) to the parish border of Hanover and Westmoreland. It is approximately 58.62 square kilometres in size, with a coastline spanning 37.9 km inclusive of several bays and coves.

The study area boundary extends approximately 5.5 kilometres inwards from the coastline in some sections.

Madam Speaker, the objective of the Master Plan is to make the New Negril Area a model 21st century community, by creating a smart, sustainable and resilient technology-driven inclusive community where opportunities are created for every member of the community to improve their quality of life in a meaningful and sustainable manner.

This will be achieved through the diversification of tourism products, stimulating economic growth and job creation, improving the social amenities and physical infrastructure while preserving the natural and fragile ecology of the area without compromising the opportunities for future generations.

***Madam Speaker, not only are we building towards sustainability, we are also creating investment opportunities!***

## *NEGRIL/GREEN ISLAND AREA LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY*

Still in Negril, Madam Speaker, the Negril/Green Island Area Local Planning Authority (NIGALPA) received a total of one hundred and thirteen (113) development applications, between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. This during the ongoing pandemic.

The applications submitted were for 99 residential developments, Five (5) resort developments, one recreational and seven commercial developments.

Of the ninety-nine (99) residential development applications submitted, construction has commenced on a total of thirty (30) homes. Compared to the same period in 2019/2020, the Authority saw a thirty-two percent (32%) increase in the number of residential applications submitted, with a projected construction cost of \$31.8 billion.

NIGALPA received an application for a resort development by Incoland Limited (Princess Hotels & Resorts) in the community of Green Island, Hanover. This development will increase tourism activities and create several opportunities for the small, medium and large business enterprises and citizens within the area.

The proposed resort development comprises the following:-

- Four hotels; three adults only sections and one family section inclusive of one thousand and ten (1,010) rooms
- A Casino and
- Eight (8) swimming pools

## **MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTS**

The Board of NIGALPA has granted approval for the purchase of a drone in this fiscal year. Drone technology will be utilized in assisting with the monitoring and enforcement of developments within the Development Order Area. The officers would be able to collect data and carry out surveys on the ground at a faster pace; this also aids with an aerial perspective of the environment. This is necessary especially during the pandemic to ensure that the officers minimize face-to-face interaction with the public whilst carrying out the mandate of the Agency.

For the 2021/2022 fiscal year the Authority will continue to focus on the areas of:

- Approval of Development Applications within 30 days;
- Monitoring and Enforcement of Developments within the Negril and Green Island Area Development Order Area through Drone Technology; and the
- Management of the Craft Market and Beach to include seeking funding for their improvement.

## **DEVELOPMENT ORDERS**

Madam Speaker, regarding the promulgation of Development Orders, the National Environment and Planning Agency, (NEPA) can confirm that all of Jamaica is now covered by at least one provisional development order. This is a significant improvement from the status in 2017 where coverage was limited to forty percent of the country.

A Development Order is a legal document that sets out the framework, guidelines and policies for planning and development in parishes and communities. It enables the Local Planning Authority and/or the Town and Country Planning Authority to regulate land developments within the area defined as the Development Order Area.

During the 2020/21 FY, Confirmation Notices for The Westmoreland Area Provisional Development Order, 2018 and St. Elizabeth Provisional Development Order, 2018 were prepared, approved by the Town and Country Planning Authority and submitted to the Ministry for final confirmation.

Confirmation Notifications for five additional Provisional Development Orders are being finalized for submission to the Town and Country Planning Authority for approval and then to the Minister for Confirmation.

They are:-

- The St. Thomas Provisional Development Order, 2018
- The Hanover Area Provisional Development Order, 2018

- The St. James Provisional Development Order, 2018
- The Kingston & St. Andrew and the Pedro Cays Provisional Development Order, 2017
- The Municipality of Portmore Development Order, 2018

The Agency plans to finalize and prepare Provisional Development Orders for St. Ann in 2021/22, Manchester 2022/23, Trelawny 2023/24 and Negril and Green Island 2024/25.

### **THE JAMAICA DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS PORTAL**

Madam Speaker, the Jamaica Development Applications Portal (JDAP) for electronic submission of development applications by developers for the three pilot municipal corporations of Kingston and St. Andrew, St. Ann and St. James was successfully launched to a select user group (including some developers).

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, NEPA and other relevant parties has been signed for the shared cost and the operation of the portal.

Upon successful completion and resolution of teething issues, this portal will be rolled out in other municipal corporations and will greatly assist the Government in reducing the time taken by the relevant agencies to assess development applications.

### **THE REVISION OF MAXIMUM HEIGHT STANDARDS FOR RESORT/HOTEL DEVELOPMENTS IN RESORT AREAS (WITH SPECIFIC APPLICATION TO THE NEGRIL AREA)**

Madam Speaker, I spoke earlier about the strides we made in the resort town of Negril last year, even with COVID-19 forcing us from enjoying the full gift of nature in many respects. Another accomplishment in respect of Negril that we had last year, was the completion of the draft Negril Master Plan, or what we refer to as the “New Negril.” NEPA is now conducting an executive review of this plan.

It is our intention to engage a consultant under the Integrating Water, Land, and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (IWEco) project to undertake a reassessment of the height, density and setback requirements of the Confirmed Negril and Green Island Development Order area based on the Master Plan.

The Master Plan will serve as a blueprint for the reassessment of height and density standards for other resort areas in Jamaica where necessary, in keeping with the development orders.

### **UPDATING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT MANUAL**

Madam Speaker, the Government is currently updating the Development and Investment Manual for Jamaica to provide a comprehensive guide to developers/investors and the general public on the procedures and standards to undertake all kinds of development on the island.

This activity has commenced with the updating of the chapters on Ship Generated, Medical and Hazardous Wastes and Planning and Development. Other chapters of the Development and Investment Manual including the “Environment” will be updated in this financial year in a timely manner.

***Madam Speaker we are working towards a future of sustainability, structural innovation and investment opportunities!***

## **RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS ACT**

Madam Speaker, Restrictive Covenants are clauses in a property title that limit what the owner of the land can do within the property boundaries. They are intended to enhance property values by controlling development.

During this financial year, the Government will commence amendments to the Restrictive Covenants Act to protect the rights of property owners and also to make the process of covenants modification less onerous to all parties.

## **SUBDIVISION OF LAND**

Madam Speaker, work will also commence this year on the revision of the Local Improvements Act which governs the subdivision of land which is the first stage in the land development process. The Ministry of Economic Growth and Job creation is currently reviewing the process for subdivision and has prepared a draft Validation/Conformity checklist to streamline the process in the local planning authorities and the confirmation process within the Ministry to reduce the turn around times for subdivision of land applications.

## **DIVESTMENT OF GOVERNMENT OWNED LANDS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF LANDS**

Madam Speaker, I now turn to the land portfolio. Support was provided to the programme of divestment of land by the Commissioner of Lands to facilitate equitable, broad-based land ownership and to promote economic growth and development.

As at the end of March 2021, a total of 69 applications for land were processed with 66 being recommended for approval in accordance with the Policy Framework and Procedures Manual for the Divestment of Government-owned Lands.

The total value for the properties approved for divestment during the period by the Minister was \$349,830,930.00.

## **LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENT**

Drafting instructions were issued to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel for the amendment of the Registration of Titles Act and Registration (Strata Titles) Act, Land Surveyors Act, Transfer Tax Act, Stamp Duty Act and the Legal Profession Act to provide the legislative framework to support the implementation of an Electronic land registration system.

Amendments were made to the Regulations under the Registration of Titles Cadastral Mapping and Tenure Clarification (Special Provisions) Act to reduce fees to make land registration services more affordable to poor landowners.

The Registration of Titles Act and The Registration of Titles Cadastral Mapping and Tenure Clarification (Special Provisions) Act (SPA) were amended to facilitate greater adjudication of interests in land and the Systematic registration of land through the National Land Agency's Land Administration and Management Division (LAMD).

The amendment, Madam Speaker, is aimed at accelerating land registration in Jamaica and the delivery of 20,000 new titles within three (3) years by the National Land Agency.

## **REVISION OF POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR THE DIVESTMENT OF GOVERNMENT OWNED LANDS 2015**

The Policy Framework and Procedures Manual for the Divestment of Government Owned Lands 2015 is being revised with stakeholders' input. The initial review of the document has been completed and additional input from stakeholders is now being undertaken. It is targeted to be finalized during the second quarter of the 2021-22 Financial Year.

### **LAND POLICY**

The revised draft National Land Policy has been undergoing further amendment prior to being re-submitted for approval as a Green Paper. Subject to Cabinet approval. Public consultations are targeted during the 2021/22 Financial Year.

### **POLICY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT OWNED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY**

Madam Speaker, the public service employs thousands of persons across, ministries, agencies and departments. Persons move constantly based on where it is determined they are needed. The housing of certain categories of workers, especially when they move say from parish to parish, sometimes causes undue challenges. The Government owns many residential type properties and therefore we are moving to finalise the Policy for the Sustainable Management of Government Owned Residential Properties. Finalisation of this policy is pending receipt of comments from the NLA.

Madam Speaker, this policy is needed to support the Government's obligation to provide an adequate and well-maintained residential unit to meet its housing obligation to certain categories of workers.

## ***SYSTEMATIC LAND REGISTRATION***

Madam Speaker, since the enactment of the Amendments to The Registration of Titles Cadastral Mapping and Tenure Clarification (Special Provisions) Act in 2020/2021, that enabled the processing of matters under systematic land registration, via an adjudication process, the Government's Land Titling Programme has been re-engineered to deliver 20,000 titles in two calendar years. It is expected that 10,000 titles will be delivered in year one (1) starting January 2, 2021.

The Systematic Titling process is targeting privately held lands at a community (scheme) level and will operate alongside the existing voluntary system of registration of lands, where persons visit the NLA's office and request the service to issue a title for their lands.

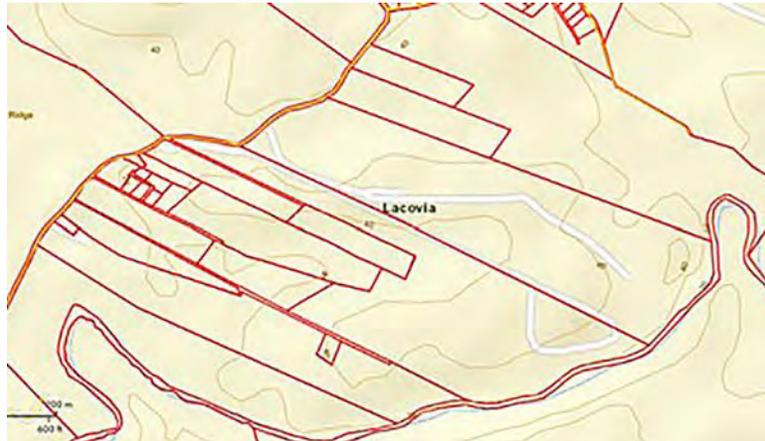
During the 2020/21 Financial Year, twenty-two (22) areas/districts were declared as "Systematic Adjudication Areas", mainly in the parish of St. Elizabeth, which has lowest level of registration of property. St. Elizabeth, Madam Speaker, based on 2016 figures had a land registration rate of 41.47%. When compared to parishes such as St. James at 81.54% and St. Andrew at 86%, one will clearly see that we have a challenge in that parish. The parish is fourth in line behind St. Catherine, St. Andrew and Clarendon in terms of parcels of land.

The Government is working through a Public Private Partnership Agreement with Geoland Title Limited to undertake cadastral surveying and titling services. Through this partnership and

the information generated, we have determined a list of 22 areas for action using systematic adjudication.

The Systematic Adjudication Areas (SAA) in Saint Elizabeth include:-

- Parts of Lacovia called Bartons Wharf
- Parts of Lacovia known as Cuffies Pen, Dixon Land and Rice Piece



They also include parts of:-

- Berlin
- Brighton
- Haughton
- Potsdam
- Exton
- Parts of Friendship called Doctor Rock
- Parts of Burnt Ground called Lower Burnt Ground and Grass Piece
- Parts of Burnt Savannah called 500 Lane and Ghetto Lane

Fieldwork has started in the parish and the teams from the NLA have begun adjudicating rights and interests in these ten (10) Systematic Adjudication Areas (SAAs) mentioned. The Adjudication Record for the Flagman SAA is now complete and will be displayed in the First Quarter of this fiscal year.

Existing NLA staff have been redeployed from other Divisions to increase the adjudication team from 11 to 20 dedicated members of staff as at April 2021.



## SYSTEMIC ADJUDICATION SYSTEM

In this fiscal year 2021/2022, the National Land Agency will introduce an electronic system, the Systematic Adjudication System (SAS) to manage the Systematic Land Registration (SLR) process.

SAS was custom-built to meet specifications set out by the Agency's Adjudication Services Division. Having an appreciation for the sheer volume of information to be processed in producing 20,000 Certificates of Title, it was determined that the land adjudication process must be digitized to the greatest degree possible.

This would serve to improve efficiency while simultaneously supporting greater security and reducing the natural margin of error created by manual processing of the applications.

There will also be a mobile application in development (to come online before July 2021) which functions without an internet connection and will therefore facilitate collection of data in the field.

## *ELECTRONIC TITLING*

During 2020/21, the first draft Bill of the amendments to the requisite legislation, the Registration of Titles Act, was submitted by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC) to the NLA Consultant for review.

The Electronic Titling Project, which is being partially funded by the World Bank under the Foundations for Competitiveness and Growth Project, is expected to be implemented three years after the selection of a suitable vendor and the commencement of the digitizing of volumes of existing titles, which is a priority for 2021/2022 fiscal year.

The objective of e-titling is to improve efficiency in the land registration process in Jamaica when all title records are issued and updated in an electronic format. Other benefits to be accrued from e-titling are the significant reduction in the turnaround time to transfer land; the reduction in the potential incidents of land fraud; reduction in the requirements for storage capacity for title records and the reduction in the cost of title production to the Agency.

## *NATIONAL DIGITAL CADASTRAL MAP*

One of the Government's thrusts is to build a comprehensive National Digital Cadastral Map (NDCM) of the entire island of Jamaica, showing all of the land parcels, to support, in particular, a national cadastral, land titling, environmental resource management, the development approval process, and generally, the economic growth and development of the country.

A National Cadastral Map, by definition, represents a compilation or mosaic of all surveys carried out in accordance with the Land Surveyors Regulations, together with the mapping of the legal boundaries of unsurveyed land parcels, done in accordance with guidelines for executing cadastral mapping.

ANDCM is an integral tool for use by the Surveys & Mapping Division for the process of examination and certification of survey plans for title registration. The NDCM will also be a very useful tool for Land Surveyors to ensure that their submissions are fully aligned to the Titles register and thereby

reduce the instances of survey plans which are submitted for examination and certification, being rejected. The completion of the digital cadastral map is vital to the Agency's efforts to provide much more efficiency in land registration.

During the 2020/2021 fiscal year, the first phase of the online platform, Digital Submission of Survey Plans and Cadastral Maps, which will assist in increasing the rate at which the National Digital Cadastral Map is developed, was completed.

This allows surveyors who wish to submit survey plans with ten (10) lots or more, digitally, for examination and certification, without having to visit the NLA's Office. At the end of the 2020/2021 fiscal year, 21.24% of the National Digital Cadastral Map was developed.

The priority for the 2021/22 fiscal year is to develop 25 percent of the National Digital Cadastral Map over the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

## *GEOSHARE JAMAICA*

Madam Speaker, during the last fiscal year, Geoshare Jamaica was launched. It is a web-based hosting platform at the NLA, which allows customers to access customised maps and data set in a secured environment. The NLA provides hosting infrastructure to persons who do not have the capacity nor expertise to access spatial data.

## *THE NEW SOCIAL HOUSING PROGRAMME (NSHP)*

The NSHP is the social housing initiative, under the housing component of the Housing, Opportunity, Production and Employment (HOPE) Programme. The NSHP aims to provide quality, affordable and sustainable housing and associated services for the poor, indigent and other vulnerable persons living in sub-standard conditions.

The NSHP is being implemented through the Ministry with administrative and technical support being provided by the HOPE unit.

In order to maximise its effectiveness, the NSHP has been divided into three (3) implementation modalities, namely: the provision of indigent housing; relocation of vulnerable communities; and the upgrading of tenements ('Big Yards').

### **STATUS OF THE NSHP**

A total of three hundred and sixteen (316) applications have been received from Members of Parliament across sixty (60) constituencies. The applications received are under two headings;

- Tenement applications - 17
- Housing Units - 299

Of the 316 applications received, 244 have been approved by the NSHP's Project Oversight Committee (POC). The breakdown is as follows:

- Tenement applications – seven (7)
- Housing Units – 237

At the end of April 2021, Madam Speaker, a total of 27 housing units have been completed under the NSHP at a cost of \$242,919,928.43. Those completed are:

- 10 three bedroom units
- 11 two bedroom units and
- Two, one bedroom units.

***Madam Speaker, we have also upgraded one tenement and there is more!***

Currently, there are 17 active construction projects valued at \$171,846,524.50. The percentage completion for these projects ranges from 5% to 80%. We, however, expect that all projects will be completed by July 30, 2021.



*One of the upgraded Housing Developments*

Madam Speaker, a total of \$501,304,000.00 was allocated to the NSHP for the 2020/2021 Financial Year. At the end of March 2021, a total of \$275,336,184.36 had been expended for completed and active projects.

## **FUTURE OF THE NSHP**

The NSHP is in the process of redesigning the housing units with the aim of reducing construction/ material costs without compromising quality, safety or building sustainability. The reduced costs will enable the NSHP to assist a greater number of indigent citizens. It is anticipated that the new designs will be implemented during this fiscal year. We are aiming to construct some 40 to 50 housing units in this fiscal year.

Madam Speaker, the NSHP in collaboration with eGov Jamaica Limited is in the process of developing an automated platform which will allow for the submission, processing, approval and tracking of the applications submitted for housing solutions across all sixty-three (63) constituencies. The platform will offer solutions such as application intake and submission, application processing and seamless integration with applicants' Tax Registration Numbers (TRN) and other systems. These features will ensure efficiency, transparency and reduced delays in the implementation of the NSHP projects.

***Madam Speaker, we are moving towards a future of sustainability and structural innovation!***



*Artistic impression of the Boundbrook Development*

## *FACTORIES CORPORATION OF JAMAICA (FCJ)*

Madam Speaker, I now turn to the Investment Portfolio, beginning with the Factories Corporation of Jamaica.

This organization is very important to our mission as we move “towards a future of sustainability, structural innovations, engineering creations and investment opportunities”! COVID-19 did put some damper on the thrust of the organization, but it also found time to assist some of those impacted.

The organisation instituted policies to assist clients who have been negatively impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19), especially those in the productive sector. The assistance totalling \$55 – million include:

- ✓ A three-month moratorium on rent for companies that had experienced significant decline in business.
- ✓ Special assistance to companies previously experiencing problems.

Some 40 million dollars was spent under these initiatives.

- ✓ Waiver of the annual rental increases for one year (April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021). This amounted to approximately \$15-Million.

Madam Speaker, forty-two (42) of our 119 clients directly benefited from these initiatives.

Notwithstanding COVID-19, the FCJ was able to progress with its projects. The company is in a healthy financial position and was able to maintain this healthy position while ensuring that tenants were able to remain viable and staff remain well protected. The Corporation, implemented the necessary measures to keep the staff engagement up. Madam Speaker, the occupancy levels of available space, moved from 93 to 98 percent during the 2020/2021 period and profits grew from \$487M to \$523M as at January 2021 based on unaudited results.

Madam Speaker, these are some of the major infrastructural accomplishments for the FCJ, for the fiscal year, 2020/2021.

## *GARMEX REDEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION*

In May 2020, ground was broken for the first of two phases for the redevelopment and expansion of the Garmex Freezone to fulfil the increased demand for productive space. This will facilitate the construction of four (4) buildings totalling 90,000 sq. ft. of space and two buildings for small and medium sized enterprises totalling 36,000 square feet.

Three of the four buildings will shortly be delivered and the fourth will be completed by the end of July 2021. There has been a one hundred percent commitment for the spaces to be completed. Construction of the SME buildings will begin shortly with a 3-4-month construction period.

Madam Speaker, in total the Garmex Redevelopment and Expansion project will see the construction of 13 new buildings totalling 370,000 square feet, when completed. In addition to providing more space for manufacturing, agro-processing and warehousing, FCJ will be developing a commercial zone with space for fast food establishments, retail outlets and banking facilities to support the Garmex Freezone, the wider community and green spaces.

## *MORANT BAY URBAN CENTRE (MBUC)*

Construction of the Morant Bay Urban Centre is expected to begin shortly. Once completed, we will have some 436,000 square feet of space being made available. The Morant Bay Urban Centre Company Limited was formed based on the Joint Venture Agreement, (JVA) approved by Cabinet. China Harbour Engineering Company Limited, (CHEC) and FCJ are the current shareholders of the company. This development is seeing Government using lands to engage the formation of Public Private Partnerships.

The Board and Board Committees have started meeting to take full control of the implementation of the project, which is awaiting the final funding and equity stake (22%) approval from the board of National Commercial Bank. We had received NCB Indicative Term sheet for funding which was subject to a final Bill of quantities. This was also subject to CHEC completing all detailed drawings, which has been done and submitted to the Jamaica Fire Brigade for final approval.

It should be noted that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, a Feasibility Study conducted by Pricewaterhouse Coopers, has found that the commitment and viability of the Morant Bay development is even stronger than pre-COVID-19.

Strategic focus will be placed on 'fast tracking' the construction of the stand-alone buildings to accommodate businesses such as fast food establishments, banks and other commercial entities.

## *THE BOUNDBROOK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE*

Madam Speaker, the Boundbrook project is a joint venture between FCJ and the National Insurance Fund, (NIF), through which we intend to build out some 100,000 square metres of factory space. A feasibility study has been completed and has indicated that significant value can be created for the people of Port Antonio, Portland and the surrounding areas with this development. The design contract for the Boundbrook project has now been signed. One hundred thousand square feet of space will be developed to house government and private sector entities. The contract was signed in February 2021 with GW Associates Consultants to commence detailed development drawings in alignment with the conceptual drawings that were previously approved.

Madam Speaker, the construction budget is estimated to cost one billion Jamaican dollars. There will be a return on investment through lease/rentals. Construction is expected to commence in the second quarter of the 2021/22 financial year. It will be conducted in two phases over a 24-month period.

Madam Speaker, we also expect that within this fiscal year, the detailed designs for the development of the Naggo Head facility in Portmore, St Catherine and the redevelopment of the Hayes Freezone in Clarendon will be finalised.

The completion of the Garmex, Morant Bay Urban Centre and Boundbrook projects will see the employment of approximately 500 workers in the construction phase and over 3000 workers thereafter.

***Madam Speaker, we are moving towards a future of great investment opportunities!***

### **JAMAICA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES AUTHORITY (JSEZA)**

Madam Speaker, I now turn to the Jamaica Special Economic Zones Authority (JSEZA).

At the end of March 2020, 98 percent, or 131 of a total of 134 approved Free Zone entities had transitioned to the new Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Regime. This number, together with the 52 new SEZ Developers who entered into Licencing Agreements with the Authority during the reporting period, brought the complement of SEZ entities to 183. This represents a growth trajectory of 30 percent for the new regime.

With these SEZ entities coming on stream, the Government of Jamaica has earned an increase in revenue from J\$22-Million in 2019, to a reported J\$381-Million in June 2020. Moreover, these additions to the SEZ landscape have translated into approximately 50,391 new jobs in the Information, Communication Technology and Business Process Outsourcing; agribusiness; logistics and fuel sectors.

Madam Speaker, preliminary data suggests that after all the current SEZ projects in the pipeline have been processed and approved, the total employment numbers should spiral to approximately 65,000 – with the majority of the recipients being women.

The Special Employment Zones are spread across 11 parishes with the aim of stimulating development of commercial and logistical infrastructure to catalyse the economy, islandwide.

Jamaica's SEZs embrace a range of services including training, incubation space, warehousing and distribution, logistics, manufacturing, assembly, and production facilities.

Currently, the Regime boasts 26.6 million square feet of designated SEZ area; and we are pleased to report that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, there are 12 new Zones under construction, in a variety of industries, totalling one-point-one (1.1) million square feet of committed space. This represents US\$660.6 million of direct investment and the addition of 30,226 new jobs, based on the investor's projections.

Madam Speaker, the business confidence in the SEZ model, which was established as an economic stimulus strategy, continues to grow, with heightened local and foreign investor interest in a wide cross-section of traditional, as well as new and emerging industries.

Going forward, the Authority is currently in discussions with a number of prospective SEZ investors at different stages of their projects.

These include Grand Ridge in Montego Bay, a 65-acre Zone with commercial; educational, medical/pharmaceutical and commercial industries; a 26-acre film studio and post-production facility in Trelawny; and the Seaview Eco-Industrial Park in the Seaview/Riverton area. This comprises approximately 250 acres of mixed-use facilities - data centres; petrochemical, and logistics industries.

Construction on these projects is expected to begin during this financial year, and will realize approximately 400 acres of additional SEZ space, at an estimated value of more than US\$1.3 - Billion.

The Authority will continue to work closely with these and other investors to ensure the projects become a reality.

## **THE JAMAICA INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (JIFSA)**

Madam Speaker, since its establishment in 2011, the Jamaica International Financial Services Authority (JIFSA) has been actively guiding the development of necessary legislation to enhance the commercial and business framework in Jamaica. This was important for Jamaica to be able to compete effectively and take advantage of the opportunity to provide high-valued business services which attract and support international business.

Over the past year, Jamaica, like the rest of the world, has had its economy impacted greatly by the pandemic resulting from the spread of the coronavirus ('COVID-19'). The significant impact on Jamaica has been a timely reminder of the need to diversify the economy. Jamaica's reliance on traditional foreign exchange earners such as bauxite, agriculture and tourism have neither been enough to withstand natural disasters nor a pandemic.

The impact has been felt globally, however, a look at some jurisdictions that rely heavily on financial services show that this sector did not suffer as much as other sectors. One factor is that the day-to-day management of Trusts Funds and Family Offices continue to be operational thereby generating revenue and employment.

There is now the opportunity for JIFSA to position the financial services sector to become a pivot industry, which is sustainable and will provide significant gains to the GDP of the country during similar times, given the heavy reliance on the tourism and other sectors.

Inflows to the financial services industry which caters not only to high net worth individuals and Multi-National Corporations (MNCs), was minimally impacted. This reflected an almost uninterrupted service that created continuous cash flows.

JIFSA's work in developing a competitive suite of business legislation, provides one of the best opportunities to position Jamaica to create a sustainable, less vulnerable environment to economic shocks, by diversifying the country's economic base. The legislation, our near-shore advantage, affordable cost of doing business and our highly skilled personnel, make it ideal for Jamaica to be ready to engage in sophisticated high-valued financial outsourcing and back office services.

Jamaica is positioning itself to become a well-established, strongly regulated and transparent jurisdiction, which offers world-class business support and financial services and solutions to the global financial services marketplace.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS 2020/2021**

Madam Speaker, during the last financial year, JIFSA achieved the following:-

- Completion of Partnership (Limited) and (General) Regulations; approved by Cabinet for tabling
- Completion of the Limited Liability Company (LLC) Bill ready for tabling and draft Regulations (in review)
- Completion of the Segregated Accounts Companies (SACs) Bill; ready for tabling subject to consultations with entities involved with Capital Markets and the insurance industry
- Draft Amendments pursuant to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations in relation to the International Corporate and Trust Services Providers (ICTSP) and Trusts Acts - done in collaboration with the FSC

## ***TOP PRIORITIES FOR 2021/2022***

For the current Fiscal Year, JIFSA will focus on:-

- The passage of Partnerships Regulations for both Acts
- The passage of the Limited Liability Bill and its Regulations
- The Passage of the Segregated Accounts Companies Bill and its Regulations

A JIFSA Webinar will also be held to sensitize professionals on new laws, specifically Partnerships and its uses. The Authority will also continue its collaboration with the Companies Office of Jamaica as Registrar regarding the registration of LLC's and Partnerships in Jamaica with relevant infrastructure. It will also continue to market the jurisdiction.

Madam Speaker, there has perhaps never been a better or more opportune time for Jamaica to diversify its economy. JIFSA believes that the time is now and that the financial services sector is the right industry to form a part of this diversification.

The sector has proven to be resilient and likely to produce significant income streams. A look at the jurisdictions that provide these services show that they enjoy a very high standard of living, as well as, a strong tradition of excellent and professional services. These two things are inextricably linked, thereby creating the perfect environment to live, work, raise a family and do business.

Madam Speaker, the future of sustainability, structural innovation and investment opportunities is in safe hands!

### **NATIONAL WORKS AGENCY (NWA)**

Madam Speaker, I want to now turn my attention to the nation's road infrastructure. The premier organization in respect of the main roads is the National Works Agency. I wish to salute the team at the NWA for some very good work over the past year. A year when we had numerous challenges with rains, break-aways, collapsed roads among others. Madam Speaker, it was also the year when the NWA became ISO 9001:2015 Certified for projects valued above \$250 – Million. This is an accomplishment that is worthy of recognition by all members!

Madam Speaker, it is well known that the Government has been on a major drive to improve the islandwide road infrastructure. This push has seen us completing several key projects, while undertaking others across the length and breadth of Jamaica.



*Tour of roads in St. Catherine North East with Member of Parliament, Kerensia Morrison.*

### ***Major Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP)***

The Major Infrastructure Development Programme, which is an improvement programme that incorporated ancillary water works, is now substantially completed. Activities being undertaken, currently, are corrective actions for identified defects as per the terms and conditions of the contract.

Madam Speaker, the programme was undertaken at a total cost of US\$441-Million and has been successful. It was comprised of road and bridge improvements; drainage improvements; small community-based infrastructure works, such as the improvement and construction of sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities, grating replacement, etc.; the installation of waterlines and sewerage facilities; and the implementation and improvement of telecoms cables and ducts.

### ***Major Achievements:***

Madam Speaker, because I know that some in the society tend to have a very short memory, let me help to recall some of the seminal achievements of this programme, 90% of which was implemented by this government. I do this to the refrain of one of Jamaica's favourite songs...

***"roll back the curtains of memories now and then...Lord show me where I'm coming from and where I could I have been...remind me dear Lord..!"***

### ***We have Modernised targeted Infrastructure***

- 470 kilometres of roads were improved;
- Converted Three Miles from a congested intersection to a modern interchange with not one, but two overpasses.
- Installed new waterlines;
- Installed and commissioned new sewerage facilities along Constant Spring Road, Barbican Road, Hagley Park Road and Marcus Garvey Drive;
- Erected new street lamps along major corridors, providing improved lighting to all road users;
- Improved fire response capabilities with the installation of hydrants;
- Increased/improved sidewalks and pedestrian facilities to include ramps, in some areas.

### ***We have Reduced Congestion***

- Carrying capacity on Legacy Roads (Marcus Garvey Drive, Barbican Road, Mandela Highway, Constant Spring Road, Hagley Park Road and Ferris to Mackfield in Westmoreland) has increased significantly.
- There is a 20% reduction in travel time, on average
- New turning lanes were constructed at major intersections

**We have Improved Connectivity to increase mobility and drive future development and growth. Twelve (12) bridges were constructed or rehabilitated in various locations. These include:**

1. Ward River, St. Thomas
2. Windsor Road Box Culvert, St. Catherine
3. Duncans Pen Box Culvert, St. Catherine
4. Gordon Town Box Culvert, St. Andrew
5. Rentcombe Bridge, St. Catherine
6. Hellshire Bridge, St. Catherine

***Madam Speaker, we are moving towards a future of sustainable engineering creations!***

### ***Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP)***

The Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP) is a two-part programme that is being undertaken by the National Road Operating and Construction Company Limited (NROCC), which is overseeing the segment from May Pen to Williamsfield – Part A, Phase 1C, and the National Works Agency (NWA) which is monitoring the works from Harbour View to Port Antonio and from Morant Bay to Cedar Valley in St. Thomas. These are referred to as Parts B. The programme of works is fully integrated, following on earlier achievements under MIDP, where we not only did road works, but water and sewer works as well.

Since I mentioned NROCC, let me touch briefly on the work of this agency, before expanding on the undertakings of the NWA.

### ***NROCC - SCHIP Part A – Phase 1C – May Pen to Williamsfield.***

Madam Speaker, work also continues on Phase 1C of the SCHIP. These works are being piloted by NROCC. This is the 28 kilometre stretch from May Pen to Williamsfield. At the end of April 2021, the project was 22% complete. We have budgeted 7.3 Billion dollars this year for this aspect of the programme. The thrust this year is to have the project 50% completed. This will include a new bridge over the Rio Minho in Clarendon, a bridge at St. Annes Gully and another structure to span the Milk River, also in Clarendon.

Madam Speaker, we also intend to relocate some 131 Jamaica Public Service light poles, relocate NWC pipelines and install ducts to facilitate the National Broadband initiative. Additionally, we have a number of key drainage features that will be advanced during the year. These include underpasses, overpasses and interchanges. Some 18 locations will be impacted with these features to include Foga Road and Denbigh Drive in Clarendon and St. Jago Road, which leads to Milk River.



*Construction of a new bridge over the Rio Minho in Clarendon*

### ***NROCC - Montego Bay Bypass***

Madam Speaker, Montego Bay in the west continues to grow. This growth is not surprising as it is part of the overall strategy of the Government to make our people prosperous. With this growth there continues to be challenges with efficient vehicular movement across the city. Our response, as was telegraphed before is to construct a perimeter road for the city of Montego Bay. NROCC is again the lead agency in the MEGJC through which the project will be implemented.

To accomplish this task of improving the worsening traffic situation in Montego Bay, Madam Speaker, \$1.2-Billion has been budgeted for this year to commence the works. This programme of works is not just about the bypass road from Ironshore to the AGS Coombs Highway. It is quite a bit more! The project includes the Long Hill Bypass, a drainage study for the city of Montego Bay, as well as improvement in West Green Avenue and Barnett Street.

Contracts for the surveying of the 25km corridor have already been let along with contracts for the valuation of the identified parcels of land that will be acquired in order to construct the road. These surveys are using the preliminary alignment which is largely expected to be followed during the design stage.

#### ***Activities targeted for the current financial year include:***

- The Acceleration of the Surveying, Valuations and Land Acquisition process;
- Engagement of a consultant to serve as the Engineers' Representative; and
- Commencement of Construction in the 4th quarter of the financial year.

Madam Speaker, we expect that in short order we will have an affirmative resolution in this House for the signing of the Contract for the Construction Works, and commencement of the Designs for Constructions.

The Government is also looking at some exciting new initiatives as we strive to have our people moving more efficiently and ultimately driving up their productive capacity. To this end, the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation is now looking at a portfolio of roads that could be tolled and are conducive to the involvement of the private sector. NROCC is again the lead agency on the Ministry's behalf. It has identified some corridors that have capacity deficits, meaning that the existing traffic volumes exceed their projected capacity.

The private arm of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) is now carrying out preliminary assessments on these likely projects. Madam Speaker, I must say that these assessments are being done at no cost to the Government and people of Jamaica at this time, as it is considered essential to assess the proposed projects fundamentals.

We are looking at the following sections of roads with a view to improving their efficiency, given the current realities and where we project to be in the future.

The road sections which have been divided into four packages are:

- Package 1: Montego Bay Perimeter Road and the Long Hill Bypass Projects - 28.6km
- Package 2: Mammee Bay to Salem in St. Ann - 12.3 km
- Package 3: Seacastles to Greenwood in St. James - 6.8 Km
- Package 4: Greenwood, Trelawny to Discovery Bay, St. Ann - 40.7 Km

It is expected that a report of the assessment to determine the toll mechanism will be submitted to the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation by the middle of the financial year.

*Work underway at Albion, St. Thomas as part of  
Segment B (ii) - Yallahs, St. Thomas to Harbour  
View, St. Andrew*



### **SCHIP – Part B**

Madam Speaker, the NWA is the lead agency on behalf of the Government, undertaking these activities under SCHIP – Part B. As I said earlier SCHIP is being implemented in an integrated way, like no other programme of works before. Water supply, laying of fibre optic cables and sewerage infrastructure works, where applicable, along with road works are being undertaken, concurrently, under two separate contract arrangements. The works are contracted at a cost of US\$229-Million, in total, with the road works costing US\$200-Million and the water and sewerage component costing US\$29-Million.

### **SCHIP Part B is being executed in three parts:**

Part B (II) encompasses the area from Harbour View to Yallahs Bridge and will see the rehabilitation of 17.4 kilometres of roadway. This segment is being done by the China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), and as at April 1, 2021 was 14.4% completed. Current activities include the finalization and approval of designs and some aspect of land acquisition. The contracted cost for this segment is US\$114.6-Million.

Part B (III and IV) spans 123.65 kilometres from the Yallahs Bridge in St. Thomas to Port Antonio in Portland, and also from the Morant Bay Roundabout to Cedar Valley, also in St. Thomas.

Madam Speaker, this segment has been divided into 15 distinct sections that we refer to as packages. The packages are being let in three tranches with the ultimate goal of completing the works during the 2022/23 fiscal year.

Already, we have let 10 packages to local subcontractors as per the agreement with China Exim Bank and the Government of Jamaica. As at April 1, 2021, the packages that are underway were 16% completed overall, with individual projects at varying stages of completion ranging from 4% to 44%.

***The roads making up Tranche 1 of the programme are:***

- ▼ Morant River Bridge – Prospect
- ▼ Hordley – Long Road
- ▼ Manchioneal – Fair Prospect
- ▼ Morant Bay – Georgia
- ▼ Georgia to Cedar Valley

***Tranche 2 is comprised of:***

- ▼ Yallahs Bridge – Louden Hill (Salt Pond)
- ▼ Louden Hill (Salt Pond) – Pamphret
- ▼ Pamphret – Morant River Bridge
- ▼ Boston Area – Drapers
- ▼ Drapers – Port Antonio

***For the fiscal year 2021/2022, anticipated physical targets for the programme are as follows:***

- ▼ 60% completion on Part B (ii) from Harbour View to Yallahs Bridge
- ▼ 100% completion on Tranche 1
- ▼ 65% completion on Tranche 2
- ▼ 100% completion in land acquisition component
- ▼ 70% completion in utility relocation activities

Madam Speaker, you will notice that we have the utility relocation activities being completed ahead of the road activities. This is deliberate as we strive to ensure that issues of utility relocation which have dogged some projects over the years, resulting in significant delays are not repeated.

***Price Adjustments for the Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project***

Madam Speaker, the process to contracting for these works comprising the three tranches have been deliberate and extremely transparent. The main contractor, China Harbour Engineering would have invited tenders for the works from qualified local contractors. Awards were made on a competitive basis, with the lowest bid being accepted.

An analysis of the bids, Madam Speaker, will show that they all exceeded the engineer's estimate, which would have been tied to the original sum in the agreement between the Jamaican Government and the China Exim Bank. What this, therefore, means is that we will have to find additional funds to cover the cost of the higher tendered sums.

Madam Speaker, I did say earlier that we are implementing this programme like none other, based on the integrated strategy with water, sewer, telecoms and other relevant infrastructure being included. This, too, will come at an additional cost to the programme, but will be of super benefits to the country.

▼ Higher Bid Returns

- ⇒ With tranches 1 and 2 and 3, we will have to expend an [US\\$60,830,582.12](#) to fund the construction of all 15 packages.

- ▼ Expansion and Renewal of the NWC systems, including sewer in selected areas require an additional **US\$64,362,259.33**
- ▼ Engineering Consultancy and Project Management Services until October 2022 – additional **US\$8,743,383.07**

Consequently, an additional budgetary support in the amount of US\$133,936,224.52 will be required to carry the programme to completion.

### ***Budget Implications FY2021/2022 to FY2022/2023***

Madam Speaker, in light of the deleterious impact of COVID-19 on GOJ revenues, a recommendation has been made for the costs for engineering consultancy and project management services be financed in its entirety by the Government, so that funds earmarked in SCHIP main contract will remain available for construction expenditure which should delay need for additional budgetary support until FY2022/2023.

### ***Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) Programme - 2021***

Madam Speaker, I now turn attention to the other major programme that the Government intends to roll out during this fiscal year. Success it is said breeds even more success!

Following on the success of our efforts at reducing travel times and delays in the Kingston Metropolitan Region with projects such as the Mandela Highway, Hagley Park Road and Constant Spring Road improvements. We will be pushing beyond these areas as we seek to improve vehicular movements and improve pedestrian safety on our roads.

With these in mind, work will begin this year on the following roads.

- ▼ Braeton Road to Hellshire Main Road
- ▼ Grange Lane
- ▼ East Kings House Road
- ▼ Arthur Wint Drive
- ▼ Washington Boulevard Bridge

Madam Speaker, we will be widening the road from Braeton to Hellshire. This work will take into consideration the stretch from Naggo Head to the Texaco Gas Station to East Mid Street. We have budgeted J\$1.485- billion for this project.

During the 2019/2020 fiscal year, we did improvement work at the intersection of Municipal Boulevard and Grange Lane, Portmore, St. Catherine. We intend to continue with these works this fiscal year. The section of Grange Lane between the Phoenix Service Station and the Rubis Service Station will be dualized. Included in these works will also be some works on Madrid Avenue and the Cumberland Gully Bridge. Some J\$532- million will be spent on these works.

Madam Speaker, following on the success of the works to improve travels through the Barbican community in St. Andrew and the many requests received for further works. This will be done! Under the Barbican Road project, a short piece of dualization had been done along East Kings House Road. This year, we will be continuing the works all the way to Lady Musgrave Road, ending at Trafalgar Road. Approximately \$3.1-Billion will be spent on this project.

We have looked at the eastern side of Kingston, Madam Speaker, and we see where more work is needed. Recall that we did work at Camp Road, under MIDP, to include relocating the main entrance to the JDF headquarters. We will be doing more work in that area. This time, institutions such as the Bustamante Hospital and Edna Manley College will receive direct benefits from the improvement that will be made to widen Arthur Wint Drive, from Mountain View Avenue to Tom Redcam Drive. \$1.23-Billion will be spent to undertake these works.

Madam Speaker, Washington Boulevard is one of the major corridors here in the capital city. While we have spent large sums over the years to have it improved, there continues to remain one major weakness. This weakness is in the form of a reduction in the available lanes heading east, once you cross over the Patrick City junction. The problem is that the bridge that spans that section of the Sandy Gully can only accommodate two lanes, even though the road is three lanes on either side of the eastbound structure. We are going to be fixing this issue for good! We have earmarked \$200-Million for the construction of a bridge to facilitate three continuous lanes from Duhaney Park all the way to Constant Spring Road.

Madam Speaker, we are very happy with the improvements in vehicular movements along the Mandela Highway generally. We are however still concerned with the movements into and out of Portmore via this route. To this end we are actively looking at another significant project to positively impact the lives of the people of Portmore.

The Government has given instruction to the NWA to develop on a concept for a more efficient access into and out of Portmore, using the Mandela Highway. This will see a project being done in two phases and will include:

- ▼ A 1.7km long two lane ramp from the Mandela Highway to Municipal Boulevard, inclusive of
  - o A new 120 metres long bridge across the Rio Cobre;
  - o New traffic signal at Dyke Road/Gregory Park main road junction;
  - o Replacement of the Dyke Road/Municipal Boulevard roundabout with traffic signals;
  - o Widening of the Dyke Road to accommodate three lanes, between Municipal Boulevard and Gregory Park; and
  - o Street lighting, road markings and signage.

These, Madam Speaker, would be the deliverables under phase one of the project.

Phase two of this project will see among other things:

- ▼ The Construction of an overpass of the Dyke Road.
- ▼ The widening of three (3) kilometres of road from Municipal Boulevard (Dyke Road to Grange Lane) from two to four lanes with a concrete median.
- ▼ Installation of street lights, road markings and signage.

Madam Speaker, the benefits to be realized by the people, especially those who live or work in Portmore will include a reduction in travel time from 45 to 15 minutes; an increase in the afternoon peak capacity from 1200 vehicles per hour to 3000 vehicles per hour and a significantly improved road condition for people to traverse.

We have looked at the likely negative impact that this project may cause, to include some motorists inadvertently turning off the Mandela onto this new road, while intending to travel on the East/West Toll. Additionally, we will require some of the lands at Ackee Village in order to realise this project.

Madam Speaker, the cost for this project is likely to be high, but the Government is committed to finding an appropriate solution for the congestion levels now being experienced by the people of Portmore, especially with the area well poised for exponential growth over the next few years.

### ***Length Man Programme***

Madam Speaker, in coming months the Length Man Programme is slated to come on stream to assist with the maintenance of roadways across the island. The original concept of a length man is that an individual would be employed to maintain a specified length of roadway in the area that he resides. On a monthly basis the road sections, under the programme, would be checked, by government personnel, to ensure that the work is up to par and to approve payment to the responsible individuals. If the work is not up to the required standard then payment will not be approved until it is.

We believe that two obvious advantages of this type of programme is that an individual is more likely to take pride and care in the maintenance and beautification of a roadway in his community, as he is directly benefitting from it. The community members, also, would likely know which individual is responsible for which section of road and would emit pressure on that individual to ensure that the work is done properly.

The new Length Man Programme is conceptualized as a technology-enabled, performance-based, labour-intensive, preventative-maintenance programme for inter-parish roads and high-trafficked corridors that would be executed by local community labour. Madam Speaker, 62 corridors have been identified islandwide for inclusion in the new programme. These 62 roads would account for 600 kilometres of roadway to be maintained. The concept is similar to the original programme in so far as the maintenance of the roadways is concerned. The role of the length man, under this revamped programme will, however, be expanded.

On the assigned section of roadway a length man will be responsible for debushing, clearing debris, cleaning drains and culverts, as well as repairing minor damage to the road, the road shoulders and retaining walls. The length man will also be expected to assist the National Works Agency to leverage advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) technology. Road conditions and road assets will be logged in a database which will help to enhance investment decisions for pavement maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation and replacement. The information gathered will also assist in predicting future performance of the roadway and its infrastructure.

### ***Pilot Programme***

Madam Speaker, before the programme is fully rolled out, a pilot project will be instituted that will serve to inform the roll-out of the islandwide programme. The pilot area will span Dunrobin Avenue, in St. Andrew to Twickenham Park Road in St. Catherine. It will encompass Washington Boulevard, Dunrobin Avenue, and the entire length of the Mandela Highway, which is a highly trafficked area, approximately 16 kilometres in length, and spanning seven constituencies.

With an initial budget of J\$500-Million, the pilot will have four components:

- Visual Inspections
- Preventative Maintenance
- Mapping of Road Assets
- Environmental Stewardship

Madam Speaker, the Preventative Maintenance aspect will include debushing, debris removal, side drain cleaning, vegetation control and/or minor surface repairs to the road, road shoulders and retaining walls. It will not include road extensions or any new road construction.

The data collection aspect will be in relation to the condition of the road, whether there are potholes and faded markings. It will also take into account road furniture such as signage, protective devices or safety features.

The environmental aspect will encompass the collection of litter, as well as the educating of road users to raise environmental awareness and promote the protection of the environment.

### ***2021/2022 Fiscal Projections***

The NWA undertakes recurrent activities each year that require funding. These are the emergency repairs to roads, river training activities, the cleaning of gullies, islandwide disaster mitigation, bridge development and construction, the maintenance of secondary roads, as well as traffic management and control.

In the fiscal year 2021/2022, the projected budget required for these activities is estimated at \$4,731,762,000, which is a marginal increase over last year's budget of \$4,511,544,000.

The projected capital budget is estimated at \$17,408,064,000 representing the amount currently required for works being undertaken on the Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project.

The Agency's operational budget for this year is likely to be affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season, so these are factors that should be considered. As it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, specific outcomes or consequences are not yet known because the outcomes will largely be determined based on the terms of individual contracts, as well as how the pandemic develops. Anticipated impacts will likely include claims for extension of time and price adjustments or fluctuation costs.

As it relates to the 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season, which is predicted to be similarly active to that of 2020, the National Works Agency has proposed its annual Pre-Hurricane Mitigation Programme, valued at almost \$101-Million. The programme is one that is implemented annually, in the months preceding the season which starts on June 1, and which consists of the cleaning of critical drains and the debushing of identified corridors in a bid to prevent flooding and other adverse effects of persistent rainfall.

The programme is designed on a constituency basis and will address critical drains in all 63 constituencies. Works on this programme will begin as soon as all the relevant approvals have been received. I again urge each and every Jamaican to own their little space and in the process, help us to keep our drains and waterways clear of impediments. Jamaica is a beautiful island that does not need drains to be used as dumps and waterways to be robbed of naturally protective elements, which then put many lives at risk.

Madam Speaker, the Government has been very focused on its mission. We have been very deliberate, as we seek to balance the needs of all in these trying and difficult times. We remain committed to the task of building Jamaica Land We Love. We remain committed to the task of taking this country and its people “Towards a Future of Sustainability, Structural Innovation, Engineering Creation and Investment Opportunities.”

**I THANK YOU!**





## *National Pledge*

*Before God and all mankind,  
I pledge the love and loyalty of my heart,  
the wisdom and courage of my mind,  
the strength and vigour of my body  
in the service of my fellow citizens;  
I promise to stand up for Justice,  
Brotherhood and Peace,  
to work diligently and creatively,  
to think generously and honestly,  
so that Jamaica may, under God,  
increase in beauty, fellowship and prosperity,  
and play her part in advancing  
the welfare of the whole human race.*

