

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE D. KURT TIBBETTS, OBE, JP,  
MINISTER FOR PLANNING, LANDS, AGRICULTURE, HOUSING &  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**TO THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS  
17<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

**Infrastructure Works**

Madam Speaker:

I ask your indulgence to provide this honourable house and the listening public an update to my Ministry's infrastructure projects that have really started to come to fruition. For some time now, the government has been publicising the various plans that we have been developing, and promising of better things to come.

Well today, Madam Speaker, one can really start to see good evidence of these works across the island, from West Bay to North Side. No district has been left out. Now let me back up for a minute, Madam Speaker, and note that every year, we allocate and address district roads that are in need of repair. The NRA, who's responsibly it is to undertake such works, provides the Ministry with an extensive list of these roads. Using a sophisticated computer program, roads are ranked by condition; for example, safety, potholes, the condition of the surface, shoulders, etc, and then given what's called a (Pavement Condition Index) PCI rating. The lower the rating, the poorer condition the road is in. The Ministry and

the Authority then consult with elected representatives to prioritize these works in line with available allocations, after which the list is finalised and the NRA can action.

We have found this to be quite successful, for although it doesn't remove all subjectivity from the process, it certainly adds a level of objectivity that is welcomed by the public who have wondered why their road has never been addressed. Madam Speaker, before I go any further, Let me say, this is an ongoing process, so there are roads out there that are in need of repair, but haven't been addressed as yet. But I say today, we know of them, and we are going to fix them! Bit by bit, we are going to address roads in every district. For Madam Speaker, this isn't about politics; this is about taking the available financial resources and spending them wisely.

Madam Speaker, I've shed some light on the process, so now let me expand a little on the projects. Starting in East End, and working with my learned colleague across the aisle, we have addressed 6 roads, including the Sunny Field Extension through to Reef Point (Fosters), High Rock Drive, Farm Road, and Winters Land Road. While the quantity was not as high as other districts, these road-works were significant to the district. In North Side, the road to Rum Point was in bad shape, and for the past couple of years the NRA has been slowly working on it piece by piece. The drive to one of Cayman's most popular spots must have been pleasant this Easter as the team

worked feverously to finish the last 2500ft before the break. This was the strategy I spoke of earlier, Madam Speaker, because, had we fixed the entire length (about 7800ft) at one time, we would have used up all the funding on just that section of road. Instead, with careful planning, we were also able to complete 15 other roads in the district. Later this month, we also plan to go back and address the junction at Rum point; thus, completing road-works in that area for the time being.

Madam Speaker, in Bodden Town, we saw the need to address Anton Bodden Drive, which had a PCI rating of 50! This road was in need of repair for sometime now, and my colleagues from Bodden Town insisted that we address it this year. So again we had a strategy that allowed spending monies on this while also addressing 14 other roads that were necessary in Bodden Town. Now, residents of the area can travel on a well-built road for many years to come. Yes, Madam Speaker, we may not have been able to do as many roads as we would have liked to, but this accomplishment paves the way for us to address many more roads in the new fiscal year (starting in July).

In West Bay, we have completed 13 district Roads, and have a number of others scheduled for work over the next coming months, including the Birch Tree Hill Road from Rev Blackman to the Ed Bush

Stadium, a road Madam Speaker, that has been neglected for far more years than I can remember!

In George Town, Madam Speaker, we have completed 27 roads, including the Canal Point Road, leading to a number of popular establishments such as the Foster's Supermarket at the Strand. This was a road that the public desperately wanted fixed, but it had never been addressed. But I must say Madam Speaker, it wasn't easy. It required a lot of, what's called, accommodation works, including sidewalks, drains and raising the road to minimize flooding. I want to commend the NRA for a job well done. It looks...and feels great!

Madam Speaker, I'm sure the public will have seen the works on Godfrey Nixon Way that have now commenced. This is one of the larger projects that the Government has been planning for the past year in an effort to improve traffic in and out of George Town. When it is complete by month's end, it will have 3 lanes- 2 directional and a centre lane for turning into the numerous businesses along there. This should lead to a much smoother traffic flow. Madam Speaker, we are planning similar work on Smith Road that will be taken on just as Godfrey Nixon is wrapping up. We all know how important Smith Road is for traffic to and from schools, businesses and the hospital, and how congested it can become at peak times during the day. The design considers a more efficient drop-off and pickup for the

Prep school, a turning lane to reduce congestion, and revised junctions at either end. The intersection with Anthony Dr and Melrose Ln will also become a key Junction Madam Speaker, as this will be the new link from Humber that will connect Elgin Ave to Smith Rd. This leads to greater interconnectivity, and / or cross-flow of traffic. In other words Madam Speaker, persons will not have to drive the entire length of one road or the other to cross over. For example, Madam Speaker, if you are on Elgin and going to Windsor Park or Pasadora Place, you can just zip across Humber and you're there. Just as importantly, Madam Speaker, ambulances will have better movement to and from the hospital, leading to possible reduction in response time.

Madam Speaker, we are also working with the many establishments that are located on Sparky's Drive, in a private / public partnership that will lead to resurfacing that road with a more durable layer of asphalt given the types of vehicles that predominantly use it. I want to take this opportunity, Madam Speaker, to publicly thank the businesses in there that have so willingly contributed to this effort, and call on the others, that quite frankly, Madam Speaker, have been slow to respond to Government's proposal. Ironically, Madam Speaker, it appears that the ones that cause the most damage are the same ones that are reluctant to contribute. Having the first section of this road repaired to a more durable standard could only be advantageous to all concerned. Madam Speaker, in the same

vicinity, we have also begun work on Red Gate Road, upgrading it and connecting it through to the corner of the existing Owen Roberts Drive, just behind the rental car depot. This opens up more area for development, and also provides another link for the Water Authority to supply the area with potable water. It gives tour operators, tourists and locals another avenue to and from the airport, and should cut down on congestion in and about Industrial Park, leading to a more pleasant first and last experience for the tourist visiting our shores. Those who travel eastward will also have seen some work being carried out on *Shamrock Road in the vicinity of Red Bay Primary and in the Spotts area*. Next steps will be safer realignment of the Chrissie Tomlinson Roundabout and the one near to the Lighthouse School. This work surrounds the safety of the road users,

Madam Speaker, it is Government's intention to revise the Traffic Regulations (2012) with an amendment of speed zones around the island. Again Madam Speaker, we have consulted my colleagues in this honourable house, along with the public and carefully considered their opinions, and anticipate the new speeds to take effect early next month. I want to mention in particular Madam Speaker, West Bay Road; from KFC north to the Public Beach, where the Traffic Management Panel has recommended reducing the speed limit to 30MPH. But we have bigger plans for West Bay Road as well. Many have experienced, the new Pedestrian Crosswalks on

the West Bay Road, and we plan to put more in along that route. In fact Madam Speaker, we had placed the order in February and had just received the equipment for an additional light and crosswalk near the Marriott Hotel, when the unfortunate incident occurred involving a pedestrian crossing the road. I want to pause for a minute Madam Speaker, and wish God's Blessings on the young man that was injured in the accident. We wish for him a full and speedy recovery.

Now Madam Speaker, it won't just stop with Pedestrian crossings however. Government, through its technocrats in the Ministry and NRA are looking at ways of improving safety along this route by preventing the middle lane from being used to overtake, but rather used as it was originally intended- for a turning lane. This will enhance the safety of pedestrians, while making the drive more pleasant for the motorist. Those that are in a hurry can use the Esterley Tibbetts Highway.

Madam Speaker, in closing I want to recognise the employees of government and its agencies, for the diligent work they are doing on these infrastructure projects throughout the island. We are once again raising the bar in Cayman that will make our roads safer, more pleasant to drive, and we believe this will further encourage more sustainable development.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.