



VIRGIN ISLANDS PORT AUTHORITY

St. Croix | St. Thomas | St. John United States Virgin Islands

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2026

VIPA Announces the Commencement of the Charlotte Amalie Harbor Dredging Project and Update on the Former Cancryn School Demolition Project

ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — The Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA) has announced that the Charlotte Amalie Harbor Dredging Project will start next month. This major infrastructure initiative aims to improve navigational access in Charlotte Amalie Harbor and support the continued growth of St. Thomas as a premier Caribbean cruise destination. VIPA also provided an update on the demolition of the former Addelita Cancryn Junior High School property in Crown Bay that will serve as a temporary placement site for beach-quality dredged material.

Charlotte Amalie Harbor Dredging Project

VIPA Executive Director Ava Penn said VIPA has entered into a contract with Orion Marine Construction, Inc. to perform marine dredging services within Charlotte Amalie Harbor, including the entrance channel, turning basin, and West Indian Company (WICO) berth pocket in St. Thomas. The VIPA Board of Governors selected Orion Marine Construction through a competitive bidding process and approved the award at its March 18, 2026, meeting. The contract, executed between the parties on June 5, 2026, is valued at up to \$41,927,000, with the project to be completed within 365 days of dredging commencement.

“This long-awaited project represents a significant investment in the future of St. Thomas and the Territory’s maritime infrastructure. We are pleased to move this important project forward after years of planning,” Penn said. The dredging project has been in development since 2008 and is designed to increase the controlling depth for larger vessels and ensure safe operating conditions in key areas of Charlotte Amalie Harbor. Dredging activities will be carefully coordinated to occur around scheduled cruise ship calls. VIPA does not anticipate the project will adversely affect cruise traffic to St. Thomas.

Project Phases

The Charlotte Amalie Harbor Dredging Project is scheduled to begin dredging by October 12, 2026, and be carried out in two phases:

- **Phase 1 — October 2026 through March 2027:** This phase will consist of dredging the non-beach quality material from the entrance channel, turning basin, and WICO berth pocket. The material will be transported via vessel from the Charlotte Amalie Harbor to the south shore of St. Croix, where it will be temporarily placed for dewatering at the Gordon A. Finch Molasses Pier in Krause Lagoon. It will then be transported via truck for final placement at a disused quarry site on the north side of the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport.
- **Phase 2 — March 2027 through October 2027: This phase will consist of dredging the beach-quality** material from the entrance channel. The material will be transported via vessel to Crown Bay Cargo Port for unloading. It will then be transported via truck for placement at the former Addelita Cancryn Junior High School property.

The sequencing and timing of individual construction activities may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate marine operations, cruise ship schedules, weather conditions, and other project requirements.

Funding for the Project

The Charlotte Amalie Harbor Dredging Project is funded by various sources. The Virgin Islands Legislature has allocated \$17,000,000 and \$6,000,000 through Acts 8787 and 9068, respectively, for dredging activities for the Charlotte Amalie Harbor Dredging Project.

Cancryn Property Demolition Progresses

VIPA has made significant progress in preparing the former Addelita Cancryn Junior High School property located in Crown Bay as a precursor to its use for dredged material storage as a part of the harbor dredging project. This \$2,527,504 project began in December 2025 with hazardous material abatement from the facilities slated for demolition. Following the completion of the abatement activities, VIPA's contractor, Custom Builders, began demolition on the site in June 2026.

Demolition of several buildings at the former school is now largely complete. Remaining demolition activities are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2026. This project was funded through an allocation of \$2,000,000 from the Virgin Islands Legislature via Act 9068, with the balance of the project being funded via VIPA's Marine operating revenues.

For any questions regarding VIPA's ongoing projects, please contact the Public Information Office at (340) 774-1629 ext. 6640 or via email at info@viport.com.

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