THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF DISASTER RECOVERY
VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY

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Department of Health Receives $251M Obligation to Demolish and Reconstruct the Charles Harwood Medical Complex

ST. CROIX, U.S. Virgin Islands – The Office of Disaster Recovery announces that FEMA has awarded $251 million to the Department of Health to fund the demolition and reconstruction of the Charles Harwood Medical Complex.

The health clinic was deemed eligible for full replacement in February 2019. After three years of negotiations with FEMA, the Department of Health now has the necessary funds to commence the project. The solicitation to demolish the three-story medical center will be issued before the end of the month. Asbestos abatement should begin by October 2022, and demolition will commence before the end of the year.

"The replacement of the Charles Harwood Complex will strengthen the healthcare infrastructure on St. Croix and help Virgin Islanders who use the facility for important medical services. The Harwood complex offers a variety of community health services and its ability to reopen swiftly after hurricanes is critical to St. Croix. The project to rebuild the Harwood Complex is a significant step forward in St. Croix's recovery following Hurricane Maria, and we look forward to working with the Territory to improve healthcare facilities throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands," said FEMA U.S. Virgin Islands Recovery Director Kristen A. Hodge.

In the past, residents visited the Charles Harwood Medical Center for a wide range of services, including medical, dental, family planning, labs, immunizations, mental health and other services. Like many others in the Territory, the facility could not withstand the back-to-back Category 5 storms in 2017 and was shuttered shortly after. In April 2019, the department relocated most of its services into modular facilities built in the rear of the building.

Department of Health Commissioner Justa E. Encarnacion talks about future plans for the new clinic. "Our staff is excited about the promise this new facility holds for our clients and their ability to provide exemplary service to our community. The intricate ongoing conversations taking place during the design phase is focused on improving healthcare options for all residents. Our plans are to construct a new state-of-the-art clinic that will give everyone access to all 35 divisions of the department housed in one convenient location. Thereby fulfilling our mission to reduce health risks, increase access to quality healthcare and enforce health standards for current and future generations of Virgin Islanders."

In July 2020, FEMA obligated $9 million for master planning and design services. A solicitation was released in November 2020, and designs for the new facility will be complete before the end of the year.

"We are excited to begin the next steps to construct the first permanent clinical facility using the industry standards approved for healthcare in 2020. Getting to this point required all those involved to move the project through multiple queues amid a global pandemic," said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, Director of the Office of Disaster Recovery. "The announcement of this obligation demonstrates the determination of the staff at the Department of Health and ODR to build back better and in accordance with all federal regulations."

Once the demolition is complete, construction of the new facility will begin. For this and other disaster recovery advertisements, visit http://www.usviodr.com/doing-business-with-odr/.

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