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

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ODR Releases 5 Year Timeline for Recovery Projects

U.S. Virgin Islands- The Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery (ODR) has issued a comprehensive 80-page report outlining a framework for the completion of over 300 critical recovery capital projects totaling more than $7 billion through the end of 2026. The Recovery Leaders' Summit Report includes an analysis of all construction projects over $250K and the Territory's continuing commitment to strengthening coordination, building capacity and addressing challenges to ensure the efficient execution of capital projects over a five-year timeline.

The report is the product of an extensive discussion that began during the first annual Recovery Leaders' Summit held in Puerto Rico in October 2021 with recovery leaders from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands and continued thereafter in several synchronization meetings. It catalogs project start and completion dates, project costs by island, as well as the challenges associated with the simultaneous execution of those projects. Panelists all agreed that adequate capital and the necessary resources to fund projects are crucial elements to ensuring success. Initially, the money to fund projects in the Virgin Islands posed a challenge as the Territory was required to pay for projects upfront and then be reimbursed. Ultimately, ODR petitioned FEMA and received approval to restructure the payment process allowing the Territory to pay by invoice eliminating the need to find billions of dollars to start recovery projects.

According to ODR Director Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, RAND, a global nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision-making through research and analysis, reported in 2020 that feasible disaster recovery spending for the Territory lies between $600 to $800 million annually. "The GVI is set to exceed that threshold in 2022 and expects to push that number up as recovery construction spending peaks in 2024. ODR recognizes that sharing information with the public and business community is vital to ensuring adequate supply chain management to support project needs," said Williams-Octalien.

Contractors, merchants and service providers are urged to pay keen attention to the recovery leaders' summit report and schedules as a method to forecast inventory and workforce levels. ODR is confident that working cohesively with the public and private sectors to address recovery challenges, including rising construction costs and logistical impediments caused by the global pandemic, helps to ensure the successful and timely completion of these essential projects.

Crafting work schedules was a joint effort launched at the Summit by representatives from the Virgin Islands Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team, Departments of Public Works, Education, Planning & Natural Resources, VI Housing Authority, VI Housing Finance Authority, Water & Power Authority and Waste Management Authority.

Deputy Executive Director Margarita Mosquera-Mendez from the Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction, and Resiliency (COR3) and Housing Director Felix X. Hernandez Caban of the Departamento de la Vivienda de

Puerto Rico also participated in sessions on lessons learned, best practices and shared challenges. Mosquera-Mendez thanked ODR for hosting the Summit and emphasized the benefits of "exchanging ideas and challenges, particularly the cost inflation of labor and materials, and better executing FEMA's Public Assistance Program."

The summit report is designed to ensure all stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to develop a plan to address the large population of projects expected between now and 2026. The report can be viewed electronically at http://www.usviodr.com/category/reports/. For questions, please contact the Office of Disaster Recovery via email at info@usviodr.com.

The Office of Disaster Recovery
"Building a Legacy of Resilience"

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The Bryan-Roach Administration is committed to transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the Government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov