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GVI, Liberty Communications Working to Improve Wireless Communications on West End of St. Thomas

Governor Bryan takes residents' concerns into consideration and directs working group to find alternative communications site to provide complete wireless coverage of area

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — The Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) and AT&T/Liberty Communications have been seeking to expand the reach of first-responder communications network across the Territory and are looking for an alternative communications site after hearing the concerns of residents on the West End of St. Thomas. The existing site will not be used. The new communications site also will provide enhanced cell phone and internet coverage to the farthest reaches of the area.

After hearing residents' concerns about the original site, Governor Albert Jr. has asked a working group of both parties to find a different site that gives high priority to concerns residents may have in an effort to improve connectivity in an area of St. Thomas that traditionally has been spotty or non-existent. Finding a new communications site is part of the Bryan-Roach Administration's initiative to upgrade wireless communications throughout the Territory,

"One of my goals is to make sure that all residents in all parts of the Virgin Islands have reliable access to wireless communications, which is vital for so many aspects of a better standard of living, including online commerce, emergency services and everything that puts them on the same level as the rest of the digital world," Governor Bryan said.

The system being constructed by AT&T/Liberty Communications is part of a national FirstNet System intended to enhance first-responder communications across the country. The communications site at the West End is required by the First Net Authority to guarantee emergency communications in all of the Fortuna area.

FirstNet is an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce designed to build and operate a nationwide broadband network that allows first responders to have a reliable communication system in place before, during, and after an emergency. For this, the federal government is deploying the first nationwide, high-speed wireless broadband network for public safety.

After the working group identifies feasible sites that meet communications requirements, representatives from the GVI and AT&T/Liberty Communications plan to meet with residents of the West End to discuss the plans for the site and address any concerns they may have.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov

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