



Ministerial Statement
by
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Minister of Public Works

Update on the Water and Wastewater Masterplan Implementation

Friday, December 2nd, 2022

Mr. Speaker, outlined in the government's platform of 2017 were a number of commitments made that were designed to enhance the lives of our citizens. Specific to the Ministry of Public Works, the government committed to reviewing the current system for handling Water and Wastewater – and to work with the private sector to facilitate systems that would properly treat sewage waste across the island which also includes the two Municipalities.

As many in this House today and the listening public are well aware, the Government has begun this endeavour by implementing the previously announced Water and Wastewater Masterplan which began in the summer of 2020.

Since the announcement of Phase I of this Plan which is the Bermuda Land Development Company (BLDC) Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project – a \$30 million dollar plan, the progress has been remarkable and kudos must be given to the technical officers within the Ministry and the hardworking contractors for their diligence in bringing this phase to this point.

Mr. Speaker, as I have recently said before in this House in another Ministerial Statement, the roadworks associated with this project – mainly the multiple trenching projects on Southside Road and along the main road in St. George's Parish – are tentatively set to conclude by the end of this month.

The overall BLDC project is expected to be completed within the 1st quarter of 2023. This is a delay from the original date of December 31st, 2022 which is being caused primarily by supply chain delays – where in some instances equipment and supplies

that used to take 4 weeks to deliver are now taking 10 weeks or more. While this is unavoidable – I’m pleased to report that so far – we are still within budget.

Mr. Speaker, concurrently with the BLDC project – the Ministry in partnership with BELCO and various private contractors has been installing brand new High-Density Polyethylene (“HDPE”) pipes and Polyvinyl Chloride (“PVC”) Ducts at various locations around the island for the purpose of future alignment of the overall Water and Wastewater Master Plan and the desperately required infrastructure upgrades.

This method of preparing infrastructure before the completion of the masterplan allows the Government to enact cost savings by installing new underground assets for a fraction of the cost it would have been otherwise. These are assets the Government can recoup from later in the form of leasing to other utilities or to make use of itself for additional services to the public.

Mr. Speaker, as aforementioned the Masterplan is extremely vast encompassing a number of phases and projects, one of which is establishing a Water and Wastewater Regulatory Framework.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Public Works is currently reviewing the country’s water sector and regulatory structure. This exercise also includes a review of similar countries and how their water sectors are organized and regulated.

Honourable members of this House and the listening public may recall in September and October of this year, through workshops with key stakeholders, online posts on the Bermuda Citizens Forum, Social Media Live events, radio interviews, and other outreach channels – the Ministry completed this initiative’s first consultation phase.

The objective of the consultation is to engage stakeholders, including the public, to ultimately develop recommendations to improve the Island’s water and wastewater regulatory structure. The government has identified certain current and future risks concerning the industry and engaged major industry stakeholders and the public to determine their view of the state of the industry to help guide regulation moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, counter to what some on the opposite side may have said recently in the media, this Ministry believes in transparency and informed facts to make the best decisions possible.

With that being said **Mr. Speaker**, the Ministry of Public Works is now soon to complete three reports on: (1) a Regulatory Authority Structure, (2) Water Quality

Standards, and (3) Wastewater Quality Standards – all based on the feedback received from the general public and stakeholders. These three (3) reports will be the basis of the second round of public and stakeholder consultation which is expected to begin early next year.

Mr. Speaker, these major infrastructure upgrades designed to enhance the lives of residents are not going unnoticed internationally either. The Bermuda Government was recently awarded a National Government Leadership Award by the Alliance for PE (Polyethylene) Pipe which recognises the valuable work of the Bermuda Government in the implementation of the Water and Wastewater Master Plan, the correct use of PE pipes and the great work of the BLDC in facilitating the start-up of a fusion training and certification protocol on the island.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind this Honourable House that as articulated in this legislative year's Throne Speech:

“...the Government will continue to prioritize the improvement of Bermuda's infrastructure. The completion of Phase I of the Water and Sewage Infrastructure Master Plan in March 2023 will see the installation of a new sewage treatment system, water production facilities and the associated distribution system. These improvements will prevent the contamination of our inshore waters and treasured local beaches...”

So, **Mr. Speaker**, what does all of this mean to the people of Bermuda? To put it in perspective a few facts:

- 16 miles of piping has been laid in slightly more than 5 miles of trenching in St. David's & St. George's.
- 1,500 feet of that piping is under water from Severn Bridge to Stokes Point Road.
- A new wastewater treatment plant – installed but not yet commissioned.
- A new Reverse Osmosis Plant.
- 8 Lift stations (sewage).
- 10 Water pumping stations.

- New water storage tank for St George's – 110,000 gallons
- Removal of sewage outfall in St Georges.
- New reclaimed water supply for use as irrigation (St. Regis)
- Control and monitoring system for all infrastructure.
- 3 Standby power generators for essential operations of the plants and pump and lift stations.

And of course the contractors who have done the work.

Mr. Speaker, virtually every trenching firm in the country has been engaged in this project from Alternate Concrete Solutions, D & J Excavating, Invincible Trenching, Island Construction and Smith Excavating. Several other firms have been involved with the works including Crisson Constructing, H & H Plumbing, Burrows Plumbing, Richardson & Wright Construction and P & M Electrical.

Mr. Speaker, this is a huge undertaking designed to provide improved services to the new St. Regis Hotel, the St. George's Club, the Sylvia Richardson Seniors Care Facility, the Town of St. George and environs and the people and businesses of Southside.

Government believes in protecting our residents by investing in our water and wastewater infrastructure as without this we could not ensure a healthy population nor a healthy environment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the general public for their patience and cooperation during this exercise and also thank Mr. Andrew Dias and Mr. Stephen Tucker of BLDC and Mr. J. Tarik Christopher the Principal Engineer, Water in the Ministry of Public Works for their untiring efforts in driving this project along.

Mr. Speaker, as always I will commit to keeping this Honourable House and the people of Bermuda informed as we progress through the various phases of this project.

Thank you **Mr. Speaker**.