

WONDER NO MORE: BEFORE AND AFTER



Hatfield, Tucker and Palmers Cross main roads in the parishes of Manchester, St. James and Clarendon respectively are only three road rehabilitation projects currently being implemented or recently completed under the island-wide **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme**. These are among the larger projects. However a few smaller works, some valued less than \$1-million, are also being done under the programme. One such is Wonder Lane in Bog Walk, St. Catherine, which received some hotmix patching, completing previous efforts to improve the community road.



SECONDARY ROADS: One of the NWA's Primary Focus

Some \$4-billion dollars' worth of well-needed roadworks have been proposed for funding under the National Works Agency's **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme** for the first quarter of the 2020/2021 financial year. Though not all projects can be financed due to budgetary constraints, road improvement works have commenced along a number of well-travelled roadways across the island. The pothole repair, road rehabilitation and drainage improvement activities are currently at varying stages of implementation and when complete will benefit hundreds of communities right across the length and breadth of Jamaica. *See their story on pages 5, 7 & 12*

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I SEA WALL!



The scope of work in relation to Package Four of the Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP) involves the construction of two major seawalls, designed by the National Works Agency. The seawalls are being built for an area along the coastline on Wharf Road in the vicinity of Morant Villas, St. Thomas. The structures comprise of mass concrete with 40% of the volume occupied by boulders. The seawall height will range from three (3) to eight (8) meters and will span approximately 68 meters in total.

FIRST, ADVANCED WORKS



At the end of June works were 9% complete overall on the 48-kilometer-long first tranche of packages under the Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP). Advanced works are being implemented apace along five stretches of roadway to include Hordley – Long Road and Manchioneal – Fair Prospect, in Portland and Morant Bay Roundabout – Prospect; Morant Bay – Serge Island and Serge Island – Cedar Valley, in St. Thomas.

No way to access Constant Spring, however Central Avenue remains two-way



A motorist enters Central Avenue from Constant Spring Road, which is the only movement permitted between both roadways at the intersection since mid-June 2020.

In a bid to improve the movement of traffic in and around the Corporate Area, the National Works Agency (NWA) implemented a number of traffic changes and restrictions to complement the improvements achieved under the Hagley Park Road and Constant Spring Road Improvement Projects.

One such change is the restriction of movement from Central Avenue onto Constant Spring Road, and while Central Avenue remains a two-way corridor, traffic is now only able to access the roadway from Constant Spring Road. The two-way traffic flow along Central Avenue remains unchanged so as to continue to accommodate ease of access to private residences and businesses situated along the roadway. Motorists travelling along Central Avenue with the intent of accessing Constant Spring Road is now able to do so via West Avenue.

One of the reasons that prompted the improvement of Constant Spring Road, and other major thoroughfares in the Corporate Area, was the high volume of traffic that these roads accommodate on a daily basis. A couple of the methods the National Works Agency (NWA) routinely uses to improve the movement of traffic is either a change in the direction of traffic flow or restriction on problematic movements, such as left and right turns, that may often conflict with the predominant flow of traffic.

Central Avenue, off Constant Spring Road, is just one of a number of roadways that has been so modified. Signs were erected as early as February of this year signaling the impending change. In mid-June the implementation of the traffic change was completed and the traffic signals previously located at the intersection that were contrary to the new movement were removed from the phases.

A Visit To Seaforth

After completing the last stop of our SCHIP package 4 and 14 tour in the small one road township of Seaforth, St. Thomas amidst light afternoon rain, our driver Mr. Edwards asked if I was satisfied. Suspecting that he really wanted technical feedback, I promptly redirected his question to the engineer on board.

The **Roadster** was there principally as a layman - who is a commuter and pedestrian - to assess the optics and gauge public sentiments on the ongoing works.

In recent times, there has been a noticeable fall off in the number of queries and concerns about the roadworks in St. Thomas, particularly the start date. A trip to the parish today would clearly reveal why, as various earth-moving equipment, safety and directional signs, workmen in hard hats and reflective vests can be seen along roadways under contract. For now, they are chiefly engaged in excavation activities for important drainage improvement works.

New concrete features are evident all about the project. Wider, more accessible sidewalks now line an extensive section of the three-kilometer stretch from the Morant Bay roundabout into the town center and thankfully are being utilized by residents. Evidently the works are slowly transforming the eastern parish capital into a safe, pedestrianized seaside town.

A kilometer away, just outside the town along Wharf Road significant works have been done on completing a mass concrete sea wall to retain the roadway along a narrow, precarious drop-off. An articulated vehicle operator, disregarding the 15 km/h speed limit and perhaps already finding assurance in the incomplete structure, sped downhill around the narrow, low visibility corner even while the **Roadster** was on location assessing the progress.

Thankfully, the alignment and width of the roadway at this section will eventually be improved under the project.



Morant Bay is being visibly transformed into a pedestrian-friendly environment as works progress under SCHIP.

Evidently the works are slowly transforming the eastern parish capital into a safe, pedestrianized seaside town.

Visit To Seaforth ... Continued from page 3

We then headed towards Prospect, across the Nuts River Bridge (which is also slated for rehabilitation works) and pass the Princess Margaret Hospital. Works on the road out to Prospect involves primarily the widening and raising of the roadway. We turned around at the East Prospect housing development, which is the end of that contract package, some six kilometers east of Morant Bay.



One of three well-maintained detour roads along the road to Seaforth, which is currently being reconstructed.

The next stop was Seaforth along the Church Corner to York main road some nine kilometers back the other way. The road to the famed Reggae Falls and Stony Gut is dotted with several culverts and crossings with no less than eight currently being reconstructed under SCHIP. Approximately 600 meters into the project, three box culverts are being built to replace existing deficient culverts and beyond this point four existing box culverts are being widened and improved. Detour roads are established to facilitate the phased reconstruction of the structures and are clear evidence of the efficient traffic management along this stretch of the project.



Motorists and pedestrians are protected from open trenches as they are cordoned off from the thoroughfare which remains in use.

All trenches are secured with the requisite safety barriers and excavated material is covered. Flag women work in tandem to direct traffic along restricted areas as works are carried on in earnest by local skilled laborers even as residents move about their communities, unencumbered, but very much aware of the significance of the activities going on around them.



Workmen do steelwork on site to create the frame into which concrete will be poured to complete the new drains.

School Roads repaired to the tune of millions in Western Hanover

The Corona Virus pandemic has changed our reality and has affected every sector of society including the education system, with schools being closed since March 13, 2020.

The National Works Agency (NWA) has capitalised on the downtime to undertake repairs of the roadways leading to the Green Island and St. Simon Primary Schools in Western Hanover. During the pandemic, the NWA has remained committed to its mandate and have continued to work to improve the road and drainage network across the island, while observing the established safety protocols.

The roadways targeted are both parochial roads, with the Green Island roadway being a service corridor abutting the main road leading from Green Island to Negril, serving residential properties as well as the Green Island Primary School and the Holy Trinity Anglican Church. While the St. Simon roadway adjoins the Lances River to Houghton Court main road, serving several residences, business places and the St. Simon Primary School.

The roadways within the Green Island and St. Simon communities have truly tested the patience of residents over the years who have been subjected to commuting on pothole-riddled roadways. For residents of St. Simon this was even more challenging due to the hilly terrain and the length of the severely undermined roadway.

Recognizing that inadequate drainage was a serious concern along both access roads, improvement to existing drainage infrastructure was emphasised under the projects. The roadways were resurfaced using Double Surface Dressing.

Now complete, the roadways are truly ready for September morning and the reopening of schools. Approximately \$10.4 million was devoted to this effort, which has been met with the approval of residents and other stakeholders.



A view of a section of the Green Island roadway which was recently repaired at a cost of \$3.9 million



Hanover's Parish Manager, Gareth Bernard, during an inspection of the roadway, prior to its completion, uses spray paint to highlight the proposed location of a concrete V-Drain.

NWA Completes Multimillion Dollar Improvement to the North Gully



A section of the recently upgraded section of the North Gully in St. James

Ahead of the start of the 2020 North Atlantic Hurricane Season, the National Works Agency sought to increase the capacity of the North Gully through a \$10 million dollar contract. The project which began in April 2020 is now complete.

North Gully is a major drainage feature in the parish of St. James. The drainage feature extends from Harbour Street in the heart of the city of Montego Bay to the community of Green Pond and serves several districts including King Street, Canterbury, Capital Heights and Salt Spring.

The project targeted a section of the North Gully located in the Green Pond community and forms part of the Agency's continuous efforts to repair the full extent of the gully.

This latest effort involved the construction of gully walls and inverts to include steel fabrication, form work and the pouring of concrete. These works will significantly increase the performance of this section of the Gully and prevent erosion of both residential and commercial properties, located along its banks.

Two Bites of the Cherry: Tucker Main Road benefits from Secondary Road Programme and NHT Intervention



A view of a section of the Taylor Avenue to Friendship roadway which is currently being rehabilitated at a cost of \$144 million. Here a motor grader is being used to assist in the reshaping of the roadway.

Residents are now anxiously awaiting the completion of a \$114-million dollar road rehabilitation contract, currently being executed along the Tucker main road in St. James. The project targets the section of roadway between Taylor Avenue and the community of Friendship.

For residents, this is a critical development for the area as the roadway, which is a heavily used one, has overtime fallen into a state of disrepair. The roadway serves several communities including Tucker, Irwin, and the new National Housing Trust development, Estuary, located in Friendship. It also serves as a link to communities such as Johns Hall and Lottery.

This second phase of the project represents a strategic partnership between the National Works Agency (NWA) through its **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme** and the National Housing Trust (NHT), who are the main project financier. This latest effort is part of a comprehensive plan to upgrade the 6.1 km stretch of roadway between the Fairfield Bridge and Hurlock in the parish. The plan is being executed in three phases.

This second phase of the project follows closely on the heels of phase 1 which saw repairs being done to a 1.5 km stretch of roadway between the Fairfield Bridge and Taylor Avenue under a \$74.1 million dollar contract in March. Similar to the previous phase of the project, the current contract involves drainage improvement, the reshaping and stabilization of the roadway and road resurfacing using Asphaltic Concrete. Additionally, the project involves the construction of retaining walls along sections of the roadway.

Guava Ridge to Content Gap Roadway in St. Andrew Finally Completed

Residents of the communities of Content Gap and Guava Ridge in St. Andrew were able to breathe a collective sigh of relief in May of this year (2020), when the rehabilitation of their roadway was finally completed. The project, which commenced in February 2018, was long in coming but the end product is one that promises to be more efficient than its predecessor, and is expected to improve the productivity of the area.



Guava Ridge to Content Gap Roadway in St. Andrew

The rehabilitation, at its inception, was a much anticipated project as the roadway had not received any significant attention for a while before that time. Also, being a narrow roadway with slopes, landslips were regular occurrences that often created difficulties for motorists. It is an understatement, therefore, to say that residents were elated to learn that their roadway was to get attention. The elation waned somewhat as the relief they so long awaited took two years to achieve.



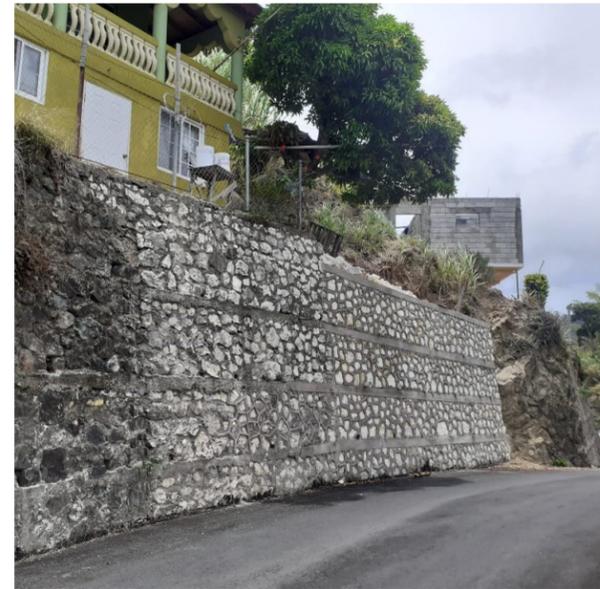
The Guava Ridge to Content Gap corridor completely blocked by a backhoe during pipe-laying activities.

The delay, however, turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it allowed for a component that was not previously included in the scope of the project, to be added. This involved the installation of a potable water system by the National Water Commission (NWC). Many rural communities in Jamaica still do not have potable or piped water so the idea of getting both a road and water was like an early Christmas.

The roadworks had to be paused to allow for the installation of the water pipelines as the infrastructure is placed beneath the surface of the roadway. The pause lasted for four months as the water pipe installation works had to be planned and scoped for inclusion. This segment commenced in November 2018 and lasted for almost one year.

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Guava Ridge to Content Gap Roadway in St. Andrew Finally Completed ... Continued from page 6



The existing retaining wall at Content Gap was extended under the project

During that time residents and stakeholders slowly ran out of patience, they expressed gratitude for the added works, but not having a proper roadway was like purgatory. They longed for the roadworks to be finished and some complained bitterly that their lifestyle and livelihoods were being hampered by the delays. Now that the roadworks are completed, residents are overjoyed. They have since painted the Content Gap Square and some kerbs, adding to the overall aesthetics of the area.

The scope of the roadworks included the clearing of landslips; rock excavation and the removal of unsuitable material that was replaced with approved free draining material, compacted in layers. There was also drainage improvement works to include the cleaning of existing drains, the installation of HDPE pipes, complete with the construction of catch basins as well as kerbs and channel and a reinforced concrete U-drain. The driving surface was prepared with the relevant base material and prime coat and paved with asphaltic concrete. Over ten retaining walls were also constructed as part of the project, complete with parapet and coping including the installation of guardrails where necessary. The completed road surface will also have road markings.

The roadwork project was undertaken as part of the Major Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP) at a cost of \$164 million.



- 1 **Keep a journal.**
It's always a good idea to have an outlet for self-expression.
- 2 **Find a confidence booster.**
Identify and engage in an activity that makes you feel good about yourself.
- 3 **Exercise.**
Go ahead, work up a sweat and increase endorphins, the body's 'feel-good' chemicals.
- 4 **Take a break from 'Social'.**
Research has revealed that the obsessive use of social media can cause anxiety.
- 5 **Forgive.**
People who practise forgiveness, it has been said, report being more satisfied with their lives.
- 6 **Smile.**
Oh the magic of a smile. Lowers blood pressure. Improves mood. Reduces stress.

Residents welcome Repair of the Clarks Town – Hyde roadway in Trelawny

Residents of the Hyde community in Clarks Town, Trelawny are expressing appreciation for a major road improvement project which is being undertaken along the Clarks Town to Hyde roadway located in the hills of Trelawny. The project which is valued at approximately \$22 million targets 1 kilometre of roadway.

Hyde is a community within Clarks Town, which subsumes several others including Bottom Town, Top Town and Mack Hill. The community is served by a parochial roadway which adjoins the nearby Clarks Town to Kinloss arterial roadway.

Hyde road has been the source of much frustration for residents who had long been weary of the deteriorating road surface which made for uncomfortable commute. Residents explained that the roadway has been in a state of disrepair for decades, with not much being done, over the years, to improve its condition.

“Mi born and grow here and this is the first me see work to fix the road,” said Neville Sylvester, an elderly resident of Hyde, Trelawny. “From me have sense a so the road bad. Me glad fi see seh them consider it,” he added.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Ansell Smith, another resident of Hyde. “Mi nah tell no lie, morning time when me a jog the road so bad me haffi find another route, so me feel good to see the work being done,” said Smith. For Smith, the project is the best effort he has seen to improve the roadway, having a vague recollection of an attempt to fix a small section with marl more than 20 years ago.

The project, which began in June 2020, involves the complete rehabilitation of the roadway to include significant drainage improvement and the resurfacing of the roadway using Asphaltic Concrete overlay.



Ansell Smith, resident of Hyde

Neville Sylvester, resident of Hyde



A concrete U-drain which was constructed as part of efforts to improve the drainage systems along the Hyde roadway.

Hatfield Road Has Been Worked On

It normally takes a twenty minutes' drive to travel the 15 kilometers from Mandeville to Huntley via Hatfield in Northwest Manchester. The travelling time has now been significantly reduced since the National Works Agency completed the rehabilitation of the road from Hatfield to the farming community of Huntley.

The three-month project, which was implemented under the NWA's **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme**, was completed at a cost of some \$22-million involved bushing and the trimming of approximately 3,000 meters of embankments. Drainage improvement works included the cleaning of 4,000 meters of side drains, outlets and thirty meters of earth drains. The task was completed with sweeping, and Asphaltic Concrete overlaying works.

The project was a challenge especially working under Covid-19 protocols and restriction. The close proximity to their asphalt plant was a major advantage and strict social distancing was practiced during road rehabilitation. Miss Pricilla Lee, a data entry clerk from nearby Lincoln District, says now she can boast of driving on her "carpet". Her only fear is that robot taxi drivers will increase their speed or drive recklessly. Along with farming, Hatfield and Huntley are now properly poised to be a new suburb of Mandeville.



Workmen cleaning side drains along Hatfield Road, Mandeville



The sweeping of the roadway in progress



The bushing of the embankments was part of the preparatory works

Seaman's Valley to Alligator Church Bridge Receives Much Needed Attention



Site clearing and drain cleaning activities being done along a section of the Seaman's Valley to Alligator Church Bridge roadway



A truckload of material is deposited onto the roadway as paving activities get underway

The Seaman's Valley to Alligator Church Bridge roadway is a part of the main roadway that leads to the Maroon communities of Belview, Comfort Castle and Cornwall Barracks in the Rio Grande Valley in Portland. This roadway was in disrepair for some time but since May of this year the corridor has been targeted for some much-needed rehabilitation. The works are expected to be completed by the end of October, weather permitting.

The project targets 1.9 kilometres of the roadway and complements the approximately 1.3 kilometres of rehabilitative works that were undertaken from Fellowship to Moore Town in 2015. Residents and stakeholders, alike, are very appreciative of this venture as the roadway is one that is often repaired with river shingle due to a constraint on resources. One resident applauded the efforts saying that "a years now dem road ya no see dem kind a work ya."

Drainage works are a major component of the project as the Rio Grande Valley is an area which experiences rainfall even when other parts of the island do not. The drainage works will include the cleaning of side drains, the installation of HDPE pipe culverts, the construction of catch basins as well as 100 metres of kerb and channel. The surface of the roadway will also be scarified and prepared with base and prime coat, ultimately being paved with asphaltic concrete. The project is being undertaken under the **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme** at a cost of just under \$36.5 million.



A grader levels material and shapes roadway to prepare for a new surface



More base works for another section of the Seaman's Valley to Alligator Church Bridge corridor

A New Culvert For Bubbling Spring At Point

Citizens traditionally expect to see familiar activities aimed at improving the road and drainage features across parishes as the North Atlantic hurricane season approaches each year. It's no different for residents of St. Elizabeth who have grown accustomed to the National Works Agency (NWA) undertaking projects that are meant to improve the safety and ease with which they travel across the expansive parish. Drainage improvement works are particularly important in St. Elizabeth because of its sprawling plains and copious waterways and attractions, which support the parish's tourism product.

The NWA started the replacement of a blocked culvert along the Luana to Tombstone main road in Southwest St. Elizabeth on July 1. A section of the roadway would become impassable whenever it rained heavily. Investigations by the parish team unearthed the reason for the flooding. They discovered that an existing concrete culvert was clogged with mud and stones right at the entrance of the Bubbling Spring Mineral Bath attraction.

The \$2.5 million dollar project being undertaken by contractors NF Barnes Construction and Equipment Limited on behalf of the NWA will seek to excavate and remove the compromised culvert and replace it with a High Density plastic culvert. Three catch basins will also be constructed under the contract to assist with the draining of water into a nearby Swamp after which the roadway will be restored with Asphaltic Concrete. The project, which is 60% complete, is being financed through the **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme** for the current financial year.

Nicknamed the Healing Stream by many of its users, the waters of Bubbling Spring is said to possess therapeutic properties. It is believed to contain sodium, calcium, potassium, manganese and iron. The attraction is also a popular location for the performance of religious rites such as baptism. The water which feeds the Spring flows from the Cockpit Country in Trelawny beneath the hills and comes up in Middlequarters then travel through the morass and into the Black River.



The entrance to Bubbling Spring Mineral Bath, Point District, St. Elizabeth



Excavation of trench for the installation of HDPE 600mm culvert



Heavy equipment working to remove the deficient culvert

Finally....

Works Start On Rehabilitating Palmers Cross Main Road

Residents of several districts located off the Palmers Cross main road in Clarendon are now anxiously awaiting the completion of road improvement works which began in their community in March. Sections of the roadway are susceptible to flooding and have long been riddled with potholes. Over the years, there have been several demonstrations over the poor condition of the corridor especially about the ponding caused by blocked drains.

The project should be wrapped up by the end of summer. The works are being implemented under the NWA's **Maintenance of Secondary Roads Programme** at a cost of over 27 million dollars. The scope of work includes the cutting of overhanging trees and the bushing of approximately 5,400 meters of overgrown verges. Drain cleaning activities focused on the maintenance of both earth and side drains.

Scarifying and preparation of formation is completed and Base Course works is about 80% completed. Only prime coating and Asphaltic Concrete overlay is left to be done.

The project is however having some challenges. During the early stages of the rehabilitation works, the contractor encountered broken pipes on both sides of the roadway. This necessitated the intervention of the National Water Commission. The company is presently replacing the damaged water pipe infrastructure. When the work is completed, the citizens of communities such as Palmers Cross, Redwood, Sandy Bay, Savannah, Birds Hill, Chateau and May Pen will experience much easier travel along the corridor.



Drain cleaning works along Palmers Cross main road, Clarendon.



Scarifying of the road surface in preparation for asphalt application

Improved Approach: Liguanea Avenue's New Bridge



Rescheduled twice, the reconstruction of a box culvert along Liguanea Avenue, St. Andrew finally got underway in April 2020 in spite of COVID-19 (well, actually because of the pandemic). Fears about the project's potential impact on traffic in the City was allayed by the significant reduction in activities on our roadways due to various lockdown and curfew orders. Two months later, the project was complete, way ahead of schedule, at a cost of \$26.5 million with nary a complaint from residents or motorists about the implementation of the works.



CORRECTING CROSSINGS



One of two single cell box culverts being constructed over sections of the Morant River in Seaforth to improve drainage in the area.

Some 42 bridges and culverts which lie along the corridor from Harbour View, St. Andrew to Port Antonio, Portland are earmarked for improvement under the ongoing Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP). These works will no doubt improve the overall weighted condition of the island's 740+ bridge inventory since the North Coast Highway project which concluded in 2008 saw similar rehabilitation works being done on several structures along the adjoining roadway from Port Antonio to Negril.

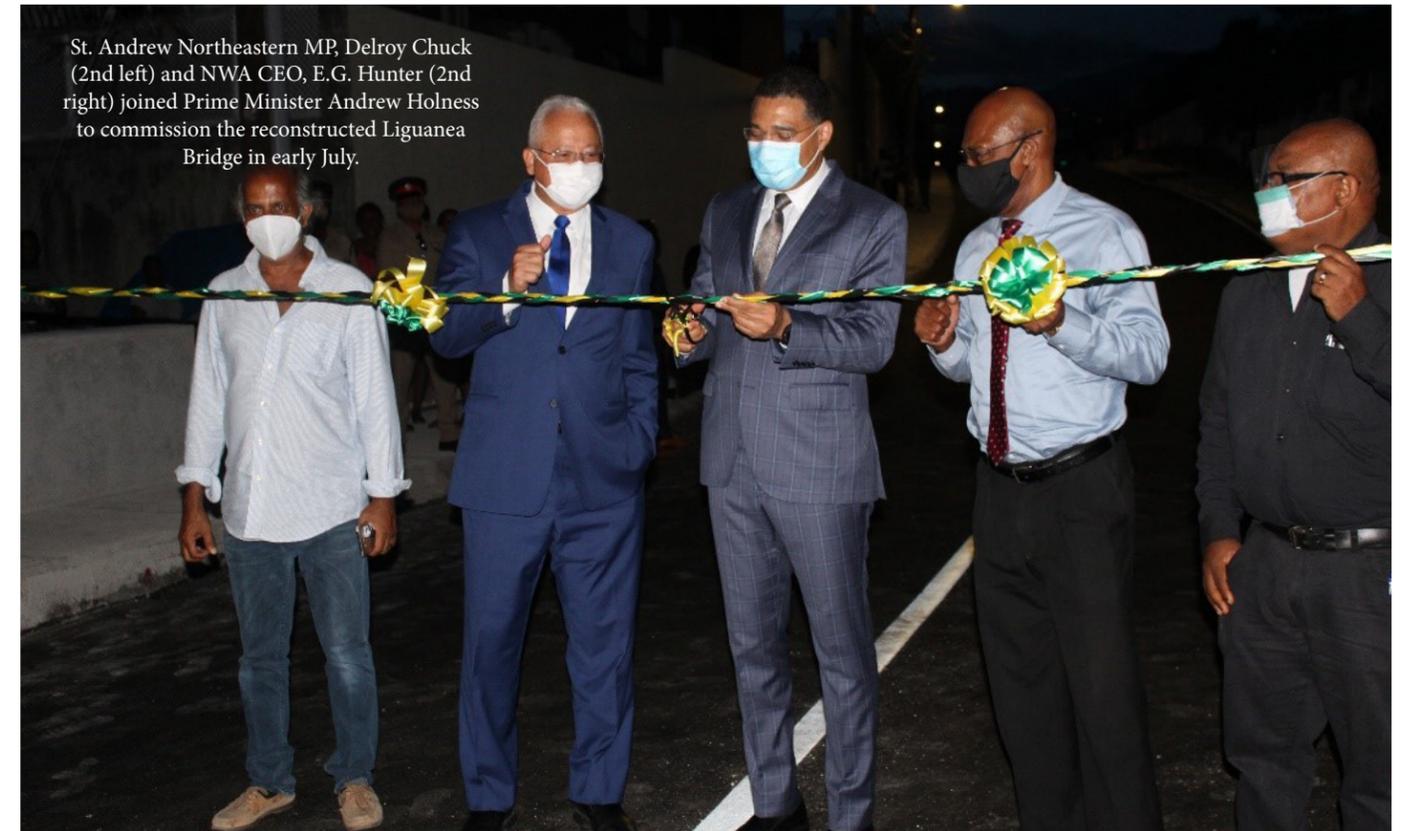
When the works are fully implemented, the improvement of bridges along Class A coastal roadways under SCHIP, will almost complete the circle of strategic, planned improvement to our bridges and crossings right along a ring around the island. A number of bridges located along some interior roadways will also receive attention. All nine of these lie along the roadway linking the Morant Bay roundabout in St. Thomas to Cedar Valley, 26 kilometers north.

These works are supplemented by several other separately-funded bridge improvement projects and programmes. In early July, a reconstructed two-lane reinforced concrete box culvert was opened along Liguanea Avenue in St. Andrew while activities have mobilized to replace a derelict single lane steel bridge at Mahogany Vale, high up in the treacherous hills of St. Thomas. The Tiber River Bridge in St. Mary is also set to undergo major repairs in the months ahead. These three projects alone are valued at a combined \$300 million dollars.

Works were also recently tendered for the installation of a new pedestrian bridge in the community of Southwood, Northwest Clarendon. The engineers are considering revisiting an original design, proposed years ago, one which should withstand

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Correcting Crossings ... Continued from page 10



St. Andrew Northeastern MP, Delroy Chuck (2nd left) and NWA CEO, E.G. Hunter (2nd right) joined Prime Minister Andrew Holness to commission the reconstructed Liguanea Bridge in early July.



Site clearance work began at the Mahogany Bridge construction site in mid-July. The 180-million dollar project will involve highly technical piling works to launch the 120 meter-long structure.

the rage of the Rio Minho in the most severe flood event.

Over the last decade the average weighted condition of the National Works Agency's bridge stock has improved by 14 percentage point. As at today, this stands at 71.6, which suggests that taken altogether the structures are generally in fair to excellent condition. The newly-commissioned Liguanea Bridge, for example, is rated 100 and is not in need of inspection for the next 5 years at least under ordinary conditions while the decommissioned Mahogany Vale Bridge is rated 0 and will be duly replaced over the next seven months.

The bridge is among just 10% of the existing inventory which is deemed as defective. The NWA continues to make steady progress in reducing this percentage on an annual basis, subject to the availability of capital funding.