



REMARKS

**The Most Hon. Hubert A. Minnis, M.P.
Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
The Commonwealth of The Bahamas**

The Official Opening

Replacement of Newton Cay Bridge, Long Island

18th December, 2020

At 10:30 a.m.

- Hon. T. Desmond Bannister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works;
- Hon Adrian Gibson, M. P. and Chairman, Water & Sewerage Corporation;
- Senior Government Officials;
- Family Island Administrator;
- Distinguished Guests;
- Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good morning.

It is a pleasure to be with you today to officially declare open two infrastructure projects for Long Island.

These projects are part of our vision and plans for the ongoing development of the Bahamas gem and treasure that is Long Island.

You are well-known as a people of industry and hard work. Long Island is known for its self-reliance and creativity.

I love the diversity and richness of the Family Islands.

One of my greatest missions as prime minister is to ensure that every major island in our archipelago has the infrastructure and amenities needed to improve your quality of life.

Such infrastructure is also essential for your economic and social development.

This is why we are fighting for a better future for The Bahamas and for Long Island.

Whereas other countries in the region have mostly one landmass to develop, we have a far-flung archipelago, with many islands, cays and settlements.

This development challenge is also an opportunity and a strategic advantage for The Bahamas.

This is why we cannot only be New Providence-centric.

The Bahamas is an archipelago of possibilities and riches.

Long Island is one of these riches.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Later this morning, we will officially inaugurate the new Monument Road.

But first, we are here for the official opening of the Newton Cay Bridge.

The bridge crossing at Newton Cay provides access across a small creek from northern Long Island to the spectacular beach of Newton Cay.

The original concrete bridge was built in 1980.

After years of experiencing the storm force effects of various hurricanes and the harsh marine conditions, the structure partially collapsed. It was deemed unusable.

The replacement was necessary, so that both residents and tourists could safely access Newton Cay.

The old bridge had a span of only twenty-six feet between the abutments, whereas the channel width at this location is sixty feet.

Thus, the bridge sub-structure was restricting flow of the natural creek channel at this point.

The restricted flow was causing severe scour to the bridge abutment.

It was also severely effecting the natural marine ecosystem in the area.

This included increased sedimentation in the creek, modification of the mangroves, and the decrease to the fish larvae export of the inland lagoon.

The work undertaken was important for your marine environment.

The new bridge has a span of sixty feet.

This will allow for the opening up of water channel creating unrestricted flow and will aid the natural regeneration of the ecosystem in the area.

Following a competitive tender process, in August 2019, a contract was awarded to Mr. Stefan Knowles of SJK Engineering & Construction Limited.

The contract was in the amount of Four Hundred and Seven Thousand, Two Hundred and Sixty-Three Dollars Thirty-Six Cents, VAT inclusive, for the construction of the footbridge.

The project was completed in February 2020.

The construction works undertaken included:

- Installation of a 60 foot long by 8 foot wide arched timber footbridge. The bridge

is a prefabricated “kit” bridge and was supplied by Western Wood Structures of Oregon, USA. The bridge utilizes laminated Douglas Fir timber.

- Construction of reinforced concrete abutments and wing walls.
- Construction of concrete seawall, boat ramp and adjacent car parking area.
- Construction of reinforced concrete approach slabs to both sides of the bridge.

- Road reconstruction in the vicinity of the site.

The completed footbridge uses laminated timber to create an iconic structure that compliments the beautiful landscape of this unique location.

This new bridge is good for your environment, your economy and your quality of life.

There are many more good things on the way for Long Island.

As prime minister, I assure you that we are working hard for a better future for Long Island.

It is my vision and my Government's vision to ensure that you have the infrastructure and amenities you need for the ongoing development of Long Island.

The Long Island community throughout The Bahamas has played a vital and big road in national development.

I know that this community has long been committed to doing in Long Island, what it has done for The Bahamas.

The Government must be a vital partner in such development.

I thank all of those involved in this project, including the Minister of Works and his staff.

I also thank your Member of Parliament for Long Island, the Hon. Adrian Gibson.

You have in him a dedicated representative, who never tires of letting me and my cabinet colleagues know what you need.

Adrian is deeply committed to you.

May God bless Long Island and may God bless our Bahamas.

I know that I will see many of you shortly at the official opening of the new Monument Road.

Thank you and good morning.
