

Charlotte Amalie Downtown Revitalization



Fig. 1. Overlooking Charlotte Amalie toward the cruise ship port.

Source: <http://www.bellavista-bnb.com/images/dont-forget-the-ship.jpg>

Part I: Selection of City

For this course project I will be focusing on Charlotte Amalie, the capital of St. Thomas in the US Virgin Islands. The reason I have chosen this city because of its rich history and significance as well as the amazing potential it has to be a thriving and dynamic center. Once the greatest port in the Caribbean, Charlotte Amalie has been turned into a tourist-centric center, catering mainly to the tourists who visit the island and who, for the most part, sustain the local economy. The town and its welfare have always been a source of discussion, especially among disgruntled locals who truly want more from their downtown area. Downtown Revitalization Inc., a local revitalization group started by interested and concerned residents was founded in 2010 to create an open dialogue between public and private sectors and local residents. They often discuss initiatives they would like to see come to light and have been pushing for more local redirection.



Fig. 2. Downtown main street showcasing jewelry stores and souvenir shops housed in historic buildings. A. H. Riise (to the left), now owned by later generations and turned into duty-free shopping, was originally the owner of the Danish Apothecary on-island and later began manufacturing his own local rum.

Source:

http://stthomassource.com/files/userfiles/image/2012%20October/Main%20Street,%20St_%20Thomas%20%28Gabriel%20Padilha%20photo%29_.jpg

Charlotte Amalie has very little connection with the local residents and serves them almost no purpose as it is very often closed down when there are no tourists on island. There are wonderful aspects of downtown that are being overlooked, such as great public spaces, historic buildings, and a waterfront, but as everything is geared more for tourists everything closes around 5 or 6 PM, including restaurants and duty-free shops, the majority of which are jewelry shops, leaving little to no diversity. I believe there is more opportunity for this town to return to a thriving and (partly) self-sufficient status, offering a more balanced interest to

locals and tourists alike. I am hoping through this project I will learn more about the ways in which Charlotte Amalie can incorporate local residents and their needs as well as discovering the hidden potential that this town holds.

Part II: Summary of Historical Content

Charlotte Amalie, the capital of St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, was originally home to the Ciboneys, Tainos, Arawaks and later Carib Indians before Columbus discovered the Virgin Islands on his second voyage to the region around 1493.¹ The actual founding of the island was not until 1672 when the Danish West India Company took possession.² A census taken in 1688 showed that there were just 37 people living in a small village in St. Thomas;³ this small village would later be named Charlotte Amalie in honor of the Queen of Denmark.

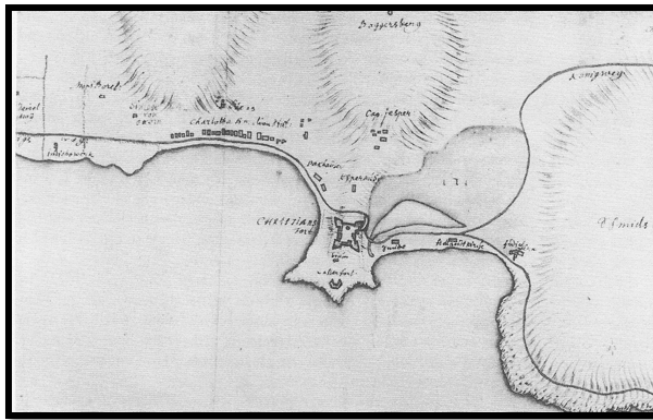


Fig. 3. Danish map of the Charlotte Amalie harbor in the 17th century. Fort Christian is the star-shaped building in the center.

Source: Frederik C Gjessing and William P. MacLean. *Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St. John.*

During the early settlement, work commenced on Fort Christian, which was positioned strategically in the harbor on a landfill. Despite many changes through the centuries, the Fort is one of the only structures to still retain essential parts of its 17th-century design. It is the only building throughout the Virgin Islands that has been in constant, uninterrupted use for

¹ Frederik C. Gjessing and William P. MacLean, *Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St. John*, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1986), 1.

² Kate Parenti, *U.S. Virgin Islands: St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix*, (Florence, Italy: Casa Editrice Bonechi, 1994), 7.

³ Edith deJongh Woods, *The Royal Three Quarters of the Town of Charlotte Amalie*, (Field ed. Tortola: MAPes MONDe editore, 1992), 1.

more than three centuries. In the same period, land was cleared and roads were laid out. This made it possible to set up plantations, about 46 of them at the time, along an east-to-west main road. Sugar, cotton, tobacco and other goods were in production and were being sent back to Denmark. Trade was increasing and “about eighty percent of the people on the island had jobs connected with trade.”⁴ During a 15-year-span the islands underwent several governorships, all of which left the Danish West India Company near bankrupt and the new colony close to an early demise.⁵ Concurrently, St. Thomas soon became notorious as a haven for pirates.

Charlotte Amalie became a free port and was, for a time, the only neutral harbor within the Caribbean. Dutch, English and French traders all performed their trade with other nations freely through this port. There were also many Sephardic Jews coming in from St. Eustatius and Curaçao. As stated by Dr. Charles Taylor, “The St. Thomians shake hands with the universe every day. Vessels of all nations come into his port annually, and people of all nationalities are his visitors.”⁶

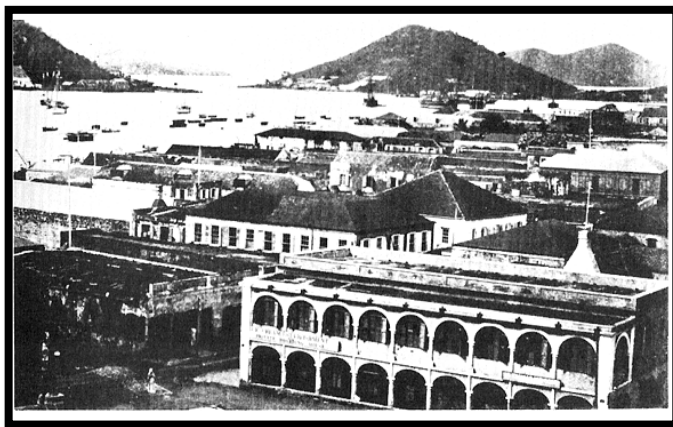


Fig. 4. Warehouses in the forefront, looking towards the harbor in 1890.

Source: *The Danish West Indies in Old Pictures: Dansk Vestindien i Gamle Billeder*.

⁴ Ibid., 3.

⁵ Gjessing, Frederik C. and William P. MacLean, *Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St. John*, 3.

⁶ Woods, *The Royal Three Quarters of the Town of Charlotte Amalie*, 3.

The town grew slowly, initially as a single row of houses toward the north, running from the Fort to the west end of the island. Charlotte Amalie's basic development was well established during its first decades. Warehouses were situated on the south side of Main Street and residences and shops were positioned along the north side. Growth became uncontrolled and caused development to spread upwards past Main Street, resulting in "odd-shaped blocks separated by narrow lanes and general congestion."⁷ The place became so crowded that the government had to seek new residential areas in Savanne, especially for the 'free-coloreds,' who had formed a strong middle class of artisans and shopkeepers. The valley of Denmark Hill was set aside for development for the use of the white population. Both settlements were positioned in a grid-like pattern, dissimilar to the arrangement of town.

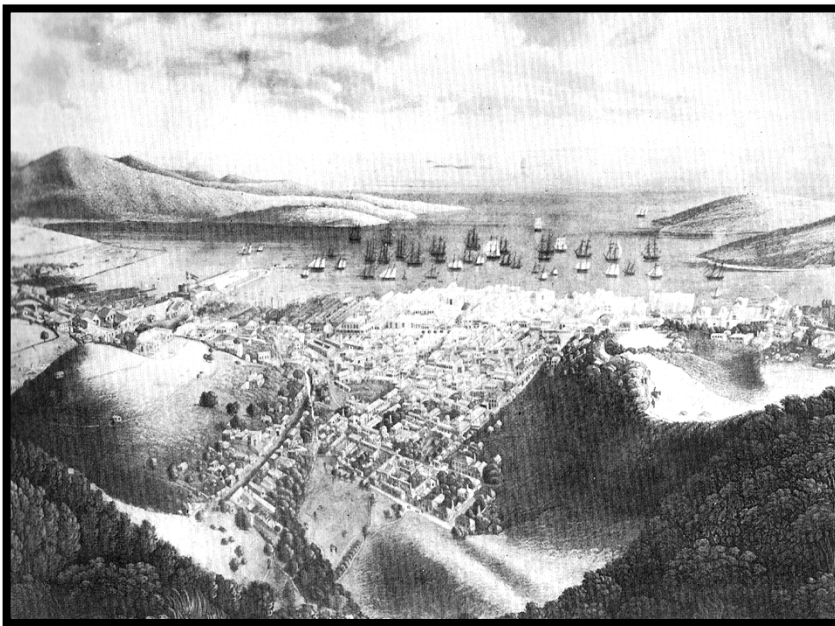


Fig. 5. Looking down towards the harbor on Charlotte Amalie in 1840.

Source: *The Danish West Indies in Old Pictures: Dansk Vestindien i Gamle Billeder.*

On the northern side of Main Street, known as Kronprindsens Gade in the Kronprindsens Quarter, importance was given to shops more so than warehouses. Ground floors housed large openings adaptable to a variety of uses. Second floors were turned into residences, with majority having exterior stairwell access coming from a courtyard near the rear of the building. The commercial district did not conform to the standard architectural styles (ie: Baroque, Classical Revival, Regency, etc.), but rather these buildings were influenced by styles that the

⁷ Gjessing, Frederik C. and William P. MacLean, *Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St John*, 19.

new inhabitants brought with them, mixed with the constraints of climate, site and the functionality of the structures, as well as the availability of materials and local construction techniques and skills. These “influences and conditions combined to produce an architecture of adaptation with a strong character unique to the Danish West Indies.”⁸

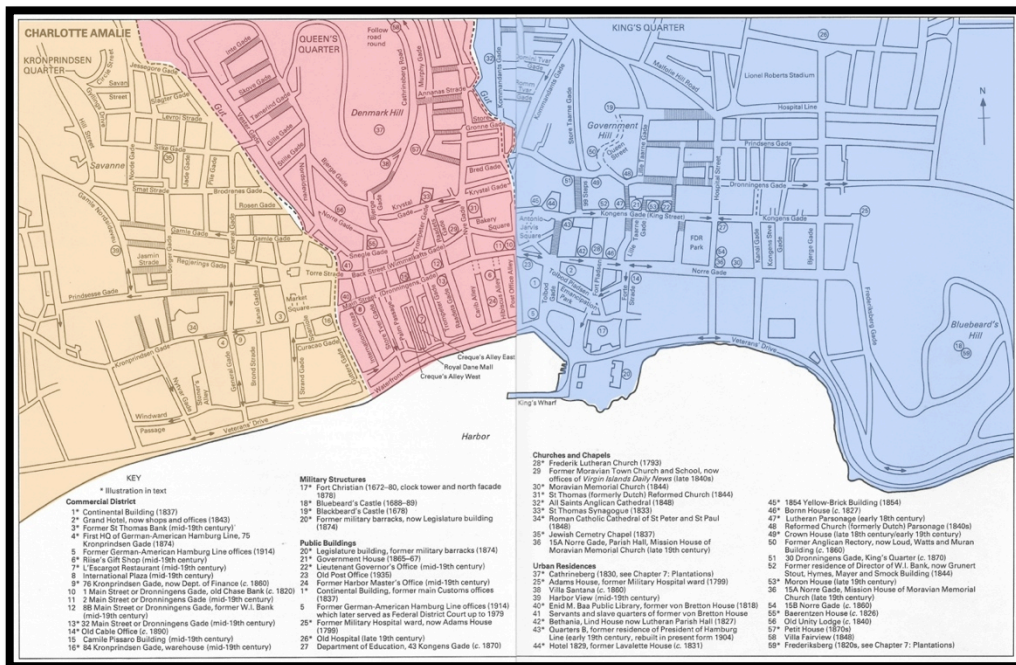


Fig. 6. Charlotte Amalie represented by the three quarters Kronprindsens Quarter (left), Dronningens Quarter (middle) and Kongens Quarter (right).

Source: Frederik C. Gjessing and William P. MacLean. *Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St. John.*

There were three main quarters that made up Charlotte Amalie, Kronprindsens (Crown Prince's) Quarter to the west, Dronningens (Queen's) Quarter in the center and Kongens (King's) Quarter to the east. The quarters were separated by guts (stream beds) that ran from the mountaintops to the harbor; they acted as boundaries separating the quarters, which have since been covered. Many residents of Kronprindsens Quarter were either of French origin, living around Frenchman's Hill, or freed slaves living in Savanne, with its narrow streets located in the northern section of the quarter. Dronningens Quarter, the main commercial area of town, accommodated most of the warehouses. Local merchants and the Jewish community resided in this quarter. Kongens Quarter, the oldest of all the quarters, was not developed in the same pattern along the waterfront as Dronningens and Kronprindsens

⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

Quarters.⁹ Fort Christian was one of the first structures in this quarter along with early residences and administrative buildings running along Government Hill. Most of the residents were Danish officials.

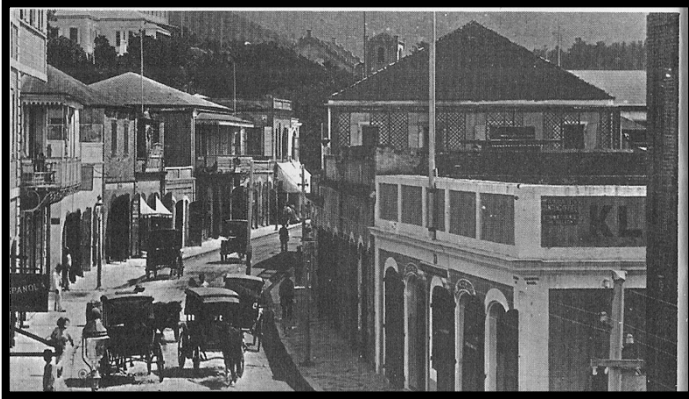


Fig. 7. Dronningens Gade, Main Street, in Dronningens Quarter in 1900.

Source: *The Danish West Indies in Old Pictures: Dansk Vestindien i Gamle Billeder.*



Fig. 8. A passageway by the warehouses showing a gut (in the center) dividing two quarters in 1900.

Source: *The Danish West Indies in Old Pictures: Dansk Vestindien i Gamle Billeder.*

⁹ Ibid., 18.

King Frederik V of Denmark bought out all the shares of the West India Company, making St. Thomas and the other islands crown colonies in 1755.¹⁰ The colonies' capital moved to Christiansted, St. Croix, which had become a larger town, but this was short-lived and was soon returned to Charlotte Amalie for good. With great power and wealth also came wars and battles with England. St. Thomas not only witnessed changes in ruling, but there were physical changes occurring as well. The new immigrants to the island from the mainland were not prepared for natural disasters prone to the area, such as earthquakes and hurricanes. Buildings and infrastructure were not built in mind to withstand such disasters and events. Also, there were no set building codes at this time, which became problematic as several series of fires broke out causing extensive damage to the town's structures.

Much of present-day Charlotte Amalie was rebuilt during the 19th century due to numerous fires. The most famous of these fires took place on Old Years Night, December 31, 1831. This fire destroyed much of the architectural character of the capital.¹¹ It was after this that the government saw the need to set up strict building codes to aid in the protection of the town's heritage and wellbeing. These codes also included the planning for cisterns; as potable water was a scarcity, each structure was to have its own water collection system and storage. Wood structures became prohibited on main streets and commonly used wood shingles were phased out with slate or tile. Tax-free loans were given out as initiative to transfer to the new masonry construction codes. In 1837, when rebuilding had commenced, it was recorded that Charlotte Amalie had a total of 66 streets and narrow passageways.

Commerce became formally established in 1837 in Charlotte Amalie through the St. Thomas National Bank and The British West Indian Colonial Bank. The town had accumulated a significant amount of wealth from all the ongoing trading and this had impacted not only merchants but other professionals as well, not to mention the town and its vitality. It was written that:

The stores and shops were well stocked with goods, and filled with buyers. The confusion of tongues and colors is among the firsts that attract the noise of a

¹⁰ "A Brief History of the Danish West Indies, 1666-1917," Virgin Island History, accessed June 27, 2014, http://www.virgin-islands-history.dk/eng/vi_hist.asp.

¹¹ Woods, *The Royal Three Quarters of the Town of Charlotte Amalie*, 5.

stranger. You see and hear people of every color speaking in almost every language. The Negroes speak two and sometimes three or four languages.¹²



Fig. 9. The St. Thomas National Bank located in Kronprindsens Quarter. Market Square, to the right, was originally a slave block and after emancipation it was where local farmers would sell fresh produce.

Source: *The Danish West Indies in Old Pictures: Dansk Vestindien i Gamle Billeder.*

Religion also played a very important role in the development of Charlotte Amalie, as the Danes were accepting of most religions and beliefs, allowing the diverse population freedom to follow their own faiths and ideologies. Most of the major religious groups had established themselves by the late 18th century, with locations in or nearby town. Collectively, the churches found throughout the Virgin Islands “constitute what historians call a unique resource – an important collection of 18th, 19th and 20th century religious buildings, each representative of different aspects of the cultural and religious life of the islands over the period and significant for what they tell us about the aspirations and intentions of their buildings.”¹³

The United States purchased the Virgin Islands on January 17, 1917, after decades of negotiating with the Danish government. It was not until after the Civil War that the United States recognized the possibility for the establishment of naval bases in the Caribbean, and the islands proved to be strategic to their plans.¹⁴ Considering that international commerce was what originally put the Virgin Islands on the map, it is what continues to keep these

¹² Ibid., 1.

¹³ William Chapman and William Taylor, *Historic Churches of the Virgin Islands*. (The Saint Croix Landmarks Society: 1986), 5.

¹⁴ Gjessing, Frederik C. and William P. MacLean, *Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St John*, 13

islands active and afloat to this day. Since Charlotte Amalie was developed in such a way in which it hugs the harbor, it has remained a heavily trafficked port, bringing in thousands of tourists daily. Downtown retains much of its original design and function with shops on the ground level and offices, rentals or living quarters on the second level. It is because of the influx of international visitors that the economy is stabilized, through exchange in commerce and high amount of resorts found on island.



Fig. 10. Aerial view of Charlotte Amalie with Fort Christian to the mid-right.

Source: Frederik C. Gjessing and William P. MacLean. Historic Buildings of St. Thomas and St. John.

The only drawback is that the town's dependency on tourists has become unbalanced. No longer does Charlotte Amalie cater to tourists and locals alike. At one point in time there were pharmacies, grocery stores, fabric stores, bookstores, coffee shops, bakeries, and many more local services accessible to the locals, as well as the visiting tourists. Residents were more involved in the community, local businesses were booming, there were more activities happening throughout the days and weeks and all of this had an impact on there being less crime and violence.

Part III: Summary of Current Situation

Charlotte Amalie is currently facing a fork in the road: one way is the path to an increase in tourism and the other the resurgence of local involvement downtown. The strengthened dependency of Charlotte Amalie on the tourism sector has caused further disconnect between the downtown urban fabric and local residents as a shifted concentration has left downtown rampant with nothing more than duty-free shops and jewelry stores. As the local government's focus is to attract more tourists, most of the revitalization efforts to date have been almost futile as they discredit the need for community involvement in the planning phase.



Fig. 11. A typical scene on Dronningens Gade when tourists are on-island. The many duty-free shops and jewelry shops are open and full of potential buyers. The narrow sidewalks can barely accommodate the pedestrian traffic, and the increase of vehicular traffic transporting cruise patrons from the port to downtown can create heavier traffic patterns. This area is usually avoided by locals during weekly afternoons because of the traffic.

Source:
(<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/stthomasphotos/queenstreet.jpg>)

The reliance on tourism has affected not just the local economy but also the structure of downtown. Allen Chastanet, the former chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Organization, had previously said, "With five cruise ships coming in [to Charlotte Amalie] on most days, the question becomes the capacity to absorb that business."¹⁵ It should be noted that winter is the high tourist season and there can sometimes be up to seven ships a day.¹⁶ With an

¹⁵ Bill Kossler and Molly Morris, "To Tourism: Coordinate Cruise Ships, Transportation, Retail," *V.I. Source*, March 20, 2012, accessed July 18, 2014, <http://stthomassource.com/content/news/local-news/2012/03/20/tourism-coordinate-cruise-ships-transportation-retail>.

¹⁶ David Swanson, "How to enjoy the Caribbean's busiest cruise ports while avoiding cruise-ship passengers," *Miami Herald*, June 21, 2014, accessed July 23, 2014, <http://www.miamiherald.com/2014/06/21/4188987/how-to-enjoy-the-caribbeans-busiest.html>.

overall island size of 31 square miles, a population of 51,181 and a downtown population of 18,914 in 2000, it is no surprise that an annual average of 1.9 million tourists' a year (as calculated in 2013) will cause a major surge to the island's already crowded population.¹⁷ The cruise ships taking dock on-island can carry anywhere "between 2,000 and 5,000 passengers apiece."¹⁸



Fig. 12. Cruise ships docked on one of the ports in the harbor.

Source:
(http://i1.trekearth.com/photos/113518/st_thomas_have_night_port.jpg)

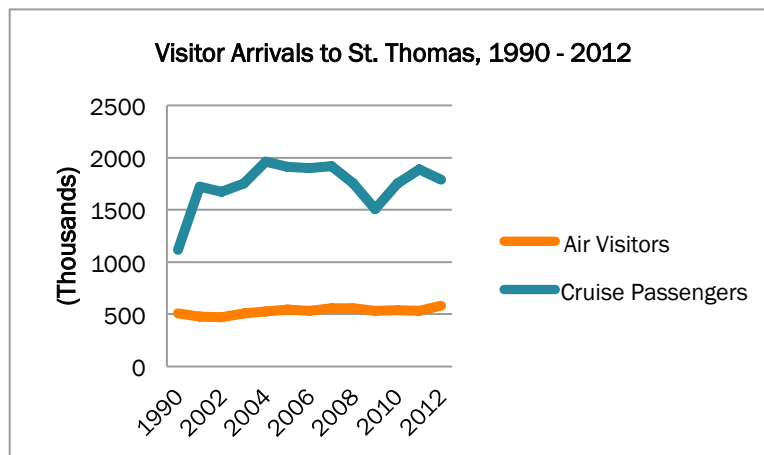


Figure 13. Source: VI Bureau of Economic Research

¹⁷ U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000: Social, Economic and Housing Characteristics: U.S. Virgin Islands. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2003).

¹⁸ Swanson, "How to enjoy the Caribbean's busiest cruise ports while avoiding cruise-ship passengers."

To further entice tourists to visit, the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism has advertised several promotions including the latest, Virgin Islands Nice, which offers tourists staying a minimum of five nights, \$500 in cash credit that can be used at local shops, restaurants and some attractions.¹⁹ This promotion also includes one of the area's top reggae singers, Pressure, who was approached by the Department of Tourism to write a song promoting the area, fittingly titled Virgin Islands Nice. As the island has become synonymous with its shopping deals it is known as the "duty-free shopping capital of the world."²⁰ There are over 400 shops on Dronningens Gade (main street running from Norre Gade) which focus on the tourism sector exclusively, not to mention other shops located on the downtown fringe. Downtown shops are typically open Mondays through Saturdays from 9 am to 5 pm and sometimes on Sundays, but this is only if there are cruise-ships in port. There are many times that these downtown shops will not even open for lack of tourists on island.



Fig. 14. Promotions for the area has recently hit the music scene, as local artist Pressure highlights the 'niceness' of the Virgin Islands, playing into the new slogan, Virgin Islands Nice.

Source: (<http://reggaelizeit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Pressure-Virgin-Islands-Nice-VIDEO.jpg>)



Fig. 15. Virgin Islands Nice promotional campaign.

Source:

http://www.visitusvi.com/sites/all/themes/usvi/images/common/homehero/homeslider_nice.jpg?timestamp=1406223706382)

¹⁹ "Packages & Promotions," Visit USVI, accessed July 22, 2014, http://www.visitusvi.com/package_and_promotions.

²⁰ "Port of Call: Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas," Royal Caribbean International, accessed July 22, 2014, <http://www.royalcaribbean.com/findacruise/ports/group/home.do?portCode=STT>.

Being that the island has grown a bit too reliant on the tourism industry, the local economy is not that strong and has only weakened as the recession has taken its toll; basically, as tourism falters, so does the local economy. Many residents make their living by running hotels, inns, bed & breakfasts, attractions, tour companies, tourist shops, duty free shops, jewelry shops, taxi companies, etc. This is not to say that other sectors and businesses are not taking place, which they are, but at a smaller scale. Federal funding is limited and there is also the big issue of mismanagement and differing agendas of the local government. These problems have been met with much disappointment and frustration from the public as they feel the local government is skirting the main issues afflicting the area by focusing on other matters that are less pertinent.

According to the 2000 US Census for the Virgin Islands, Charlotte Amalie's population was 18,914, with the average age being 33 and the largest represented age group being those between 5 and 17 years of age (4,242 residents) and the least represented age group being 85 and older (204 residents).²¹ Rising crime rates have caused negative impacts to both local life as well as the tourism sector. "Of the U.S. Virgin Islands, St. Thomas has the highest crime rate [with] most problems occur[ing] in Charlotte Amalie."²² Just four years ago a 14-year-old cruise patron, on vacation with her family, was shot and killed in a crossfire shootout at a popular beach.²³ Two years later, two tourists who were at a local nightclub were injured after leaving and were followed by "a group of men who opened fire on their vehicles."²⁴ Local crime and violence is too extensive to bring into this report, needless to say. It is a serious problem plaguing the territory and the fact that it has affected visiting tourists is a real sign that it has gotten out of control. Keeping things in perspective though, crime and violence plague just about every city in the world, but the fact that St. Thomas is so small and such a

²¹ *U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000: Social, Economic and Housing Characteristics: U.S. Virgin Islands* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2003).

²² "The USVI Crime," All About Crime in the USVI, accessed July 24, 2014, <http://caribya.com/usvi/crime/>.

²³ Kelly Banson, "Teenage Cruise Passenger Tragically Killed in St. Thomas Shooting," *Cruise News*, July 13, 2010, accessed July 23, 2014, <http://www.cruisecritic.co.uk/news/news.cfm?ID=3985>.

²⁴ Jenny Kane, "V.I. government strips Metropolis Lounge of license Metropolis is not only nightclub plagued by trouble with crime, violence A timeline of events leading up to the closure of Metropolis Lounge," *Virgin Islands Daily News*, August 30, 2013, accessed July 23, 2014, <http://virginislandsdailynews.com/news/v-i-government-strips-metropolis-lounge-of-license-metropolis-is-not-only-nightclub-plagued-by-trouble-with-crime-violence-a-timeline-of-events-leading-up-to-the-closure-of-metropolis-lounge-1.1544306>.

tourist hub, it can sometimes be pictured worse than it truly is (that is, in comparison to other places).



Fig. 16. Charlotte Amalie saw a lot of damage from the aftermath of Hurricane Marilyn in 1995.

Source:
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Marilyn#mediaviewer/File:Marilyn-Damage-2.jpg)

Natural and environmental factors facing Charlotte Amalie are mainly developmental issues or natural disasters such as hurricanes and the occasional earthquake. The hurricanes and earthquakes are expected and have become a norm in this region. Residents are well versed on hurricane preparedness and during hurricane season everyone is on watch since they are not taken lightly and so much damage has already taken place throughout the years. As with any small island, development needs to be regulated and kept within check, to avoid over-development, damage of natural resources, and to ensure that there is a proper protocol being observed. Natural reef barriers surround the island as well as important mangroves and special marine habitats that sustain the local environment and are quite necessary to the local ecological cycle. Since most hotels and resorts are positioned so near the water's edge they can trigger negative consequences to these aquatic environments. In the same breath, as it has been in the past, hotel and resort developers will rush to construct these large resorts without paying much mind to the fact that the land tends to be covered with many buried artifacts from the previous indigenous tribes. Just recently during construction work downtown by Market Square, several pre-Columbian artifacts were discovered.²⁵

²⁵Molly Morris, "Market Square Dig Reveals St. Thomas History," *V.I. Source*, January 24, 2014, accessed July 23, 2014, <http://stthomassource.com/content/news/local-news/2014/01/24/market-square-dig-reveals-st-thomas-history>.



Fig. 17. Construction work in Market Square was halted due to the discovery of pre-Columbian artifacts earlier this year. Specialists were called in to excavate the findings.

Source:
(<http://stthomassource.com/files/userfiles/image/0014%20January/dig%20site.jpeg>)

The Downtown Revitalization Inc. group has made great efforts since 2010 to create an open dialogue among public and private sectors and residents. This is a great breakthrough, considering nothing like this was ever taking place. As David Bornn, the president of the group stated, “The deterioration of the infrastructure in the three quarters of Charlotte Amalie and its immediate surroundings has made life difficult for those who must now travel for shopping, government offices, doctors, services and other basic needs. Revitalization involves more than the physical aspects of our town. It is also achieved through celebrations of our history, our culture, our foods, our businesses and our entertainment. Revitalization enables the town and the territory to grow.”²⁶

There have been four ongoing planned projects that are expected to have beneficial outcomes in the near future: the Veteran’s Drive Project, the Main Street Enhancement Project, the Harbor Transportation Project, and the building of a new pier to accommodate even more cruise-ships. The Virgin Islands Public Works Department is spurring the majority of these projects. They are proposing to “turn Veteran’s Drive into a safer, more attractive and

²⁶ David Bornn, "Charlotte Amalie downtown revitalization needs participation, ideas and energy from all," *Virgin Islands Daily News*, April 9, 2013, accessed July 18, 2014, <http://virginislandsdailynews.com/op-ed/charlotte-amalie-downtown-revitalization-needs-participation-ideas-and-energy-from-all-1.1469867>.

more spacious roadway for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic,” by expanding lanes from two to four and expanding “a promenade into the harbor.”²⁷ The Main Street Enhancement Project is a bona fide beautification project, aiming to “widen and beautify main street from Post Office Square to the Enid Baa Library by placing above-ground power lines underground,” and implementing palm trees throughout the area.²⁸ The Harbor Transportation, although yet to be actually approved, is planning to provide “alternative transportation to the district with five stopping points for ferry vessels that can carry between 50 and 100 passengers.”²⁹ Lastly, in an attempt to compete with neighboring islands that are taking measures to accommodate the ever-expanding size of newer cruise-ships, a new pier is expected to “accommodate larger Oasis-class cruise-ships which carry about 5,000 passengers.”³⁰



Fig. 18. A proposal of the Veteran's Drive Project. Roads will be widened to four lanes and rerouted from their current adjacency to Fort Christian to that of the Legislature Building. Designated crosswalks will be added as well as sleeping policeman to deter speeding vehicles.

Source: *The Town's Blueprint*. Coral Gables, Florida: Dover, Kohl & Partners, 2011.

Although it sounds like a promising endeavor for the bordering major roadway and harbor, many key issues still have not been properly addressed such as the relevancy of downtown,

²⁷ Jenny Kane, "Public Works submits comprehensive proposal for waterfront renovations, street widening to CZM," *Virgin Islands Daily News*, July 16, 2014, accessed July 19, 2014, <http://virginislandsdailynews.com/news/public-works-submits-comprehensive-proposal-for-waterfront-renovations-street-widening-to-czm-1.1720072>.

²⁸ Amanda Norris, "Forum updates public on status of 4 ongoing downtown projects," *Virgin Islands Daily News*, November 22, 2013, accessed July 18, 2014, <http://virginislandsdailynews.com/news/forum-updates-public-on-status-of-4-ongoing-downtown-projects-1.1589760>.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

crime prevention measures, how traffic patterns or the dire need for more parking will affect downtown, ways to promote rehabilitation efforts in downtown incorporating local needs, ways to make Charlotte Amalie a more attractive venue for evening activities, etc. Charlotte Amalie has yet to truly embrace itself and its potential despite these current efforts. Not to deny any of these efforts, as they are wonderful initiatives, but they are still too superficial. Before the above-mentioned issues are resolved, Charlotte Amalie will continue on this same path of disconnect and not realize its full potential as a well-rounded and vibrant district.

Part IV: Summary of Issues and Solutions

The main issues affecting Charlotte Amalie are low economic development, a high crime rate, an overreliance on tourism, little to no commercial and retail diversity downtown, natural disasters, faulty utility services, high traffic patterns, lack of activities and little local involvement within the downtown core. These issues together have had a negative impact on the vitality of Charlotte Amalie and have greatly influenced the public's perception of town as lifeless, dangerous, and for the most part, a tourist trap. It is hoped that through the application of concepts and strategies of the Main Street Four Point Approach, that solutions can be discovered to remedy these plaguing issues.



Fig. 19. Downtown Revitalization Inc. Logo.

Source:

<http://downtownrevitalizationinc.com/sites/www.downtownrevitalizationinc.com/files/DRI2-01.gif>

Considering that the local revitalization group, Downtown Revitalization Inc., is already in formation and actively trying to bring these issues to the forefront of the community's attention, it would make sense to look into ways to garner further community involvement. This community inclusion would entail local government and legislators, officials, police, community leaders, teachers, tourist-affiliated individuals, professionals, business owners, property owners, safari (taxi) drivers and operators; basically, key stakeholders who will assist in realizing the solution of these issues. As it stands the group advertises most of their

meetings ahead of time in the local newspaper, as well as the online newspapers, but they are still lacking this key support. It may prove more effective to seek different outreach and promotional activities such as one-to-one interaction and a more comprehensive explanation of their mission and agenda with these key community members. If the additional support could be obtained then I think more areas could be covered easier, including the formation of committees and furthering of fundraising efforts, all of which could lead to a successfully operated volunteer program.

The biggest issue to address downtown is that of economic restructuring, as most of the duty-free shops and jewelry stores have been in place for several decades and have been rather successful catering solely to tourists. This is not to say that locals never shop downtown, they have their time usually during the holidays, but for an every day situation it is not justified. Therefore, it is vital that an uncompromising approach be applied which will aid in transitioning these repetitive types of businesses. I believe that market research will be instrumental in the public's actual realization to many of these issues that need to change, as well as a basic business and building inventory. All of which could be accomplished through obtaining grants to fund these endeavors. With the initial focus being given to existing business owners, there can be a framework established as to what direction should be taken to shift the heavily tourist-focused downtown into a more balanced focus. Considering the difficulty of this specific situation, it may be key to implement certain taxes downtown to diversify the market, creating actual incentives for other services to be introduced. Likewise, incentives should be considered for residents, giving them reason to want to shop downtown, such as local discount or appreciation programs.

Businesses that would benefit the local district would be those offering varied services and goods to attract both locals and tourists alike. Examples would be that of a grocery store, catering mainly to residents living on the west end who are farther away from basic necessities, or a bakery, catering to residents and tourists by offering local specialties. Businesses that offer further activity throughout the day and evenings would be valuable, such as a bookstore offering readings with local and regional authors or book clubs, and possibly live local music on the weekends. Artist studios and galleries would be another great introduction downtown, as there are local artists that could benefit from having a downtown studio space. The introduction of a local arts program could also encourage youth involvement in the arts which could evolve out of this endeavor. An incentive for this could be

the subsidization of studio spaces in exchange for the development of a youth program. Professional services in the downtown core would also prove advantageous for the restructuring of Charlotte Amalie, and would encourage more interaction in town between these servers and their users while also promoting business opportunities to prevent the regional problem of brain drain.

It will be advisable for the organization to concentrate on the strengths of downtown, highlighting assets such as its public spaces, historic built framework, adjacency to the harbor, centralized location on-island, local artists and artisans, various cultures, current activities such as Carnival or Christmas functions, etc. These strengths can also be incorporated into a new focus for downtown. Promotional activities can bring these activities and specific areas into the public's attention and begin highlighting the new initiatives taking shape, whether through daytime, evening, weekly, or weekend events. To encourage public participation during these events it will be necessary to implement safety measures to discourage occurrences of possible crime or violence, such as police presence around the area, ensuring the area is well-lit, and encouraging a citizen's watch. These crime prevention measures could be realized through the use of a Tax-Incentive Financing (TIF) program; however, the only way this can occur is if the police decide to truly enforce certain measures and if some of the local corruption can be curtailed.

Fig. 20. The Children's Parade is held downtown during Carnival.

Source:
<http://cdn.c.photoshelter.com/img-get2/I0000LlrAUOp00Yw/fit=1000x750/CParade-38.jpg>



Fig. 21. Christmas events include this children's steel drum parade downtown.

Source:
<http://www.domagoj-babic.com/uploads/Traveling/VI/PC180095.jpg>



Promotional activities that could be introduced downtown to attract more involvement could be a weekly, Friday evening event in town where the activities, vendors, music, local businesses and restaurants stay open until 9pm; an annual cultural heritage week where local culture and heritage is highlighted and incorporated into activities downtown; a restaurant tour, where some of the best restaurants can be highlighted and promoted; weekly

movies in the park; church sponsored activities; etc. These activities would be a welcome diversion in town and with the right level of safety measures in place, resident participation downtown could be enhanced.

Current measures are already being implemented to beautify Charlotte Amalie and change the traffic patterns, through the expansion of Veteran's Drive, the adjacent highway along the harbor. These measures will address the high traffic patterns as well as further enhance the economic restructuring and boost the current design and feeling of downtown. Improvement of the local utilities including electricity and water access is greatly needed. WAPA, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, is renowned for having faulty and expensive service, leaving many on-island without basic access to water or electricity, which is only worsened by hurricanes. Enhancements to their system would render benefit not just for locals and tourists, but downtown business owners and merchants as well, as faulty service has a negative impact on them performing their businesses properly. As sunshine is easy to come by, natural energy resources could also be implemented, such as solar power, especially in the downtown core, to prevent high generator costs or total outages.

Given the region's vulnerability to hurricanes and earthquakes, and that it is more than a thousand miles away from the mainland of the United States, it is imperative that emergency planning be implemented. There is currently no island-wide or region-wide plan in place, and residents usually take care of procedures on their own, while tourists either head home or are left to the responsibility of hoteliers or in some cases, are on their own. Considering the distance and the fact that these are scattered islands heavily reliant on imported foods and goods, it is a good idea to have a plan in place to ensure safety and self-sufficiency in the event of a worst-case scenario (such as Hurricane Marilyn or Hurricane Hugo). Unfortunately, these natural disasters are not avoidable or preventable, but there are ways in which their damaging affects can be better mitigated.

The greatest feat of downtown will be the ability to diversify. It will take great effort and strides to accomplish, as the overall perception of merchants and locals needs a transformation. Like any effective planning initiative, the longer it takes to build support and implement these changes the better, otherwise it risks being a rushed and superficial initiative with no long-lasting effects. In all honesty, this shift will be the biggest and most influencing step. If the downtown business owners can agree that a divergence is needed to restore locality and

once again foster a communal downtown, and can actually push to make it happen then the emergence of a vibrant downtown Charlotte Amalie is not out of reach. Other beneficial tools that may help Charlotte Amalie is that of a Business-Improvement District (BID) to facilitate some of these other necessary changes, and low-interest loans or grants, as a more affordable option for new businesses.

Due to lack of foresight and early planning, the tourism industry has run amuck on St. Thomas. Many of these previously listed issues have transpired from a response to the chaos of an unforeseen mass tourism product. Therefore, out of all of these issues, dealing directly with tourism would influence solutions to many of these other issues. Unfortunately with an island so dependent upon tourism, and frankly somewhat comfortable with this dependency, it would take a near revolution to change this structure. I believe a step in the right direction towards a more authentic tourism product would need to incorporate the above-mentioned solutions. Consequently it turns into a chain reaction, without one the other cannot function. These changes would promote a better environment and downtown for local residents, reviving a sense of locality that has been forgotten, which in turn, would provide an authentic experience for visiting tourists. Instead of the unnecessary bombardment of tourist related services, tourists could learn more about local culture and norms through a more diverse mixture downtown.

It is hoped that one day other services and businesses will be implemented and received well in town to positively shift the current trends and ideology of and about downtown, to the point that it can make downtown once again relevant to those who should be dependent and supportive of it.

Part V: Comprehensive Strategy

The following is a comprehensive strategy approach to the main issue facing downtown Charlotte Amalie, which is low economic development. Possible solutions that were identified are interrelated and interconnected. They are government and community involvement, connected with economic restructuring through changes in the tax code and zoning

ordinances along with education of the Main Street Four Point Approach, focusing on Economic Restructuring.

Mission Statement of the Downtown Revitalization Inc.

"We must undertake and commit to downtown revitalization for the benefit of our residents first and foremost; and if our residents are attracted to our downtown... so too will our visitors. It is a matter of quality of life and quality of place to do business for the private sector and the Government."³¹

Comprehensive Strategy for Charlotte Amalie Downtown Revitalization

Organization

Goal: Increase involvement and support of the Downtown Revitalization Inc.

Objectives:

1. Establish clear objectives, focus and refine actual mission statement to ensure it is fully encompassing all goals and objectives.
2. Increase community and local government involvement.
3. Obtain and increase funding.
4. Develop a five-year plan.
5. Develop committees.
6. Recruit volunteers, organize a volunteer database and recognition system.

Promotion

Goal: Promote downtown Charlotte Amalie as the social, cultural, and economic center.

Objectives:

1. Market a positive Image of downtown Charlotte Amalie.

³¹ David A. Bornn, "DRI testimony at March 20, 2013 Senate Committee meeting," Downtown Revitalization, Inc., accessed August 21, 2014, <http://downtownrevitalizationinc.com/content/dri-testimony-march-20-2013-senate-committee-meeting>.

2. Encourage locality through shopping, commerce, services, entertainment, activities, etc.
3. Continue and strengthen existing promotional activities that have proven successful.
4. Develop a way to evaluate promotional activities.

Design

Goal: Facilitate public understanding of appropriate design and preservation objectives for downtown Charlotte Amalie

Objectives:

1. Public education about proper design objectives for downtown Charlotte Amalie.
2. Organize a design review process.

Economic Restructuring

Goal: Diversify and strengthen the economic development of downtown Charlotte Amalie

Objectives:

1. Develop an inventory system to provide downtown vacancy and sale information.
 2. Develop a market profile and recruitment plan for new businesses.
 3. Develop taxes and incentives to encourage diversification downtown.
 4. Develop an educational platform focused on good business practices.
 5. Educating merchants and building owners on available grants, loans and possible incentives.
 6. Crime prevention measures
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Detailed Description, Explanation and Expected Outcome of the Comprehensive Strategy

Organization

Goal: Increase involvement and support of the Downtown Revitalization Inc.

Expected Outcome: A well-defined organization, with a strong volunteer base, that has attracted an involved and vocal community that is in support of a more balanced and vibrant downtown Charlotte Amalie.

Objective 1: Establish clear objectives, focus and refine actual mission statement to ensure it is fully encompassing all goals and objectives.

- To increase local government and community involvement and support of the Downtown Revitalization Inc it will be beneficial to clarify objectives, focus and ensure the organization's mission statement is verbally supporting these elements and focus.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Organization's Board of Directors
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 1 month.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** A well-defined organization.

Objective 2: Increase community and local government involvement.

- This information (of the organization's mission statement, objectives and focus) can then be compiled and presented in a clear format which can then be shared with the public through their website, the local newspaper, brochures and flyers, radio programming, television programming, visits with downtown merchants, local residents and government and finally by word of mouth to advertise and promote meetings which will be held monthly.
 - ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Collaboration between the Organization Committee with (1) local graphic design businesses such as Cool Signs, Island Business Graphics, and Media Marketing Inc.; (2) the local newspapers of The Daily News newspaper and The St. Thomas Source online newspaper; (3) printing businesses such as Staples, Preferred Print and Supreme Printing; (4) local radio programming channels such as WVGN 107.3 FM, WUVI 1090 AM, WWTI 1000 AM, WSTA 1340 AM, WVJZ 105.3 FM, WGOD 97.9 FM, WTJC-LP 96.9 FM, etc.; (5) local television programming such as WTJX V.I. Public Television, WFIG-LP ABC affiliate, WVGN-LD NBC affiliate, and WMNS-LP CBS affiliate.
 - ❖ **Time Frame:** 1 month to obtain materials to campaign organization, while the media campaign will be ongoing.
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- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Widespread media campaign that will allow for greater knowledge and understanding of the organization, attracting a diverse range of interested and supportive community leaders and members.
 - Key members of society to target for support and inclusion will be local government and legislators, chamber of commerce members, police, community leaders, teachers, tourist-affiliated individuals, professionals, business owners, property owners, safari (taxi) drivers and operators, etc.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Key community members such as John deJongh (Governor), Gregory Francis (Lieutenant Governor) Daryll Smalls (Dept. of Public Works Commissioner); Sebastiano Paiewpnsky Cassinelli (President of Chamber of Commerce); Beverly Nicholson Doty (Tourism Commissioner and chairman of Caribbean Tourism Organization); Albert Bryan Jr. (chairman of Economic Development Authority); Lynn Millin Maduro, Esq. (Attorney and Commissioner of the Dept. of Property and Procurement); Rodney Querrard Sr. (V.I.P.D. Police Commissioner); Yvonne Thraen (University of the Virgin Islands Board of Trustees and V.I. Port Authority Board); Carlton Dowe (Executive Director of the V.I. Port Authority); Alicia Barnes (former Dept. of Planning and Natural Resources Commissioner); Sean Krigger (Acting Director of VISHPO); Ronnie Lockhart (President of the St. Thomas Historical Trust); WAPA Governing Board members (V.I. Water and Power Authority); Virgin Islands Bar and Restaurant Association; V.I. Taxi Association, etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Up to 3 months to obtain support of key community members.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Perhaps through these key individuals further attention could be garnered for solving WAPA utility issues and the development of a community natural disaster plan for hurricanes and earthquakes.

Objective 3: Obtain and increase funding.

- Sources to focus on would be inclusive of local corporations, companies and businesses; governmental agencies
 - ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Collaboration between Directors and the Organization Committee and key financial resources such as the Department of Public Works; U.S.V.I. Economic Development Authority; Community Development Block Grants – Insular Areas; Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands; International Capital and Management Company; Division of Coastal Resources – Region 2 Superfund; Art Place America Grants; and local banks.
 - ❖ **Time Frame:** Annually, 3 to 6 months up to 1 year depending on funding options.
 - ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Obtain funding to either supplement, match or cover organizational obligations and projects.
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Objective 4: Develop a five-year plan.

- A five-year plan, mapping out every objective to reach each of these goals will be an essential resource to assist the organization in maintaining focus and direction. This plan should indicate the necessary steps to ensure a slow but steady revitalization and the expected outcomes.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Input could be obtained from the Organization Committee, organization members and community members while the organization's Board of Directors would be responsible for this plan.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 3 to 4 months to outline a five-year plan.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** A comprehensive five-year plan that includes developmental activities to strengthen Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring of downtown Charlotte Amalie

Objective 5: Develop committees.

- Committees should be formed around the Four Point Approach of the Main Street Program: Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring. It will be important to choose well-rounded individuals that have been involved with and support the Downtown Revitalization Inc. and that also have a vested interest in this revitalization as Committee Leaders.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 1 to 2 months.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Committee leaders will be appointed to each of the committees. Another fifth committee may be found necessary to cover crime prevention measures.

Objective 6: Recruit volunteers, organize a volunteer database and recognition system.

- Recruitment can be achieved through networking within the organization with members, local community leaders, students, government, et al. and outside individuals and groups.
 - Databases of volunteers will aid in tracking activities and assistance.
 - Volunteer recognition can be given through sponsored gifts of appreciation and/or thank you cards personally showing appreciation to ensure support is not overlooked or underappreciated. Also ask for feedback from volunteers about their experience.
 - ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Outside groups such as Rotary Club Charlotte Amalie, My Brother's Workshop, Arts Alive, Citizens Coalition for Better Government, Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, Habitat for Humanity of the Virgin Islands, Island
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Resources Foundation, Lions Club Charlotte Amalie, V.I. Territorial Association of Realtors, The Young Professionals Network, University of the Virgin Islands, etc.

- ❖ **Time Frame:** Year-round volunteer recruitment depending on projects being carried out. The volunteer database will be ongoing. The volunteer recognition system will be an annual event to highlight volunteers' efforts.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** A strong and diverse volunteer base will be developed to carry out various initiatives, events and activities. An organized database of volunteers along with an appropriately planned annual recognition event will be implemented.

Promotion

Goal: Promote downtown Charlotte Amalie as the social, cultural, and economic center.

Expected Outcome: Downtown Charlotte Amalie will become a social and cultural focus on-island, which will increase economic redevelopment and create a healthy and vibrant center

Objective 1: Market a positive Image of downtown Charlotte Amalie.

- The first step in a successful positive marketing campaign will be to establish an identity for downtown. This can be achieved through focus groups or surveys among residents, merchants, organization members and other community members. Images or words can then be decided upon to create a brand and identity for downtown.
- This brand and identity can be put toward media campaigns, image-building events and/or products, special events and retail and business activities. It will be important that the same messages and images be used throughout every campaign effort as an effort to rebrand a positive image of downtown.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Organization's Board of Directors and marketing companies.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Image or branding will take 1 to 2 months to decide. Media campaigning will continue for 6 months to 1 year. If events are proven successful they can carry on beyond the initial 3 to 6 months.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** It will take time, but downtown will be positively rebranded as the place to be with something for everyone.

Objective 2: Encourage locality through shopping, commerce, services, entertainment, activities, etc.

- Introducing locally directed initiatives such as a local's discount program or a rewards program will be beneficial in attracting more local activity downtown.
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- Businesses will need to be encouraged to plan and implement events and promotions geared towards locals.
- A downtown calendar will aid in alerting residents and members about events and activities taking place downtown.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Collaborating with local radio and television programming companies, community leaders, involvement with the management of the major downtown stores such as Cardow Jewelers, A.H. Riise, Little Switzerland, etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Local's discount program or rewards program will be an ongoing venture. Events and promotional activities can continue on beyond the initial 3 to 6 months if proven successful. A downtown calendar will be an annually published calendar.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** A more local focus will be instilled downtown, garnering further business downtown and increase economic redevelopment.

Objective 3: Continue and strengthen existing promotional activities that have proven successful.

- Successful and existing downtown activities such as Carnival, held in April, and Christmas activities, in December can be further promoted, while new activities are introduced, such as be a weekly, Friday evening event in town where the activities, vendors, music, local businesses and restaurants stay open until 9pm; an annual cultural heritage week where local culture and heritage is highlighted and incorporated into activities downtown; a restaurant tour, where some of the best restaurants can be highlighted and promoted; monthly movies in the park; church sponsored activities; etc.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Virgin Islands Bar and Restaurant Association; V.I. Taxi Association; Organization Board of Directors; Virgin Islands Hotel Association; V.I. Port Authority; management of major downtown shops and businesses; Virgin Islands Dept. of Education; Virgin Islands Department of Tourism; various church leaders, etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Carnival is held for a week in April. Christmas activities are held for the last 2 weeks of December. Friday night events will be held weekly. Cultural Heritage Week will be held annually around 31 March, Transfer Day. Restaurant tours can be held monthly or bi-monthly. Movies in the park can be a monthly event throughout the year and in the summertime, a weekly event. Church sponsored activities can be monthly and activity planning shared among all the churches in the downtown area.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Downtown will be a safe and attractive place for all ages at any time. Activities and events will further promote economic redevelopment and highlight ongoing changes downtown.

Objective 4: Develop a way to evaluate promotional activities.

- After events, activities and promotions take place, feedback can be obtained from participants to gauge success.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Volunteers to canvas participants with appropriate surveys.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** After events, activities and promotions.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** More accurate analysis of public's perception of events and activities.

Design

Goal: Facilitate public understanding of appropriate design and preservation objectives for downtown Charlotte Amalie.

Expected Outcome: Educated community advocates for appropriate design and preservation objectives downtown.

Objective 1: Public education about proper design objectives for downtown Charlotte Amalie.

- Design education workshops can be planned for organization members, merchants, building owners, and residents. These activities can be about appropriate design objectives required downtown as well as proper preservation applications. The local VISHPO, architects, interior designers, landscapers and planners can facilitate activities to give a better understanding of the necessary downtown design components that should be in place or that needs to be implemented.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** VISHPO; local architecture offices such as Jaredian Design Group, Springline Architects, deJongh Group, The Bourne Group; interior design offices such as Lagappe Custom Interiors and The Bourne Group; landscaping offices such as Boschulte Landscaping, Franklin Schulerbrandt Landscaping, etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Bi-annually or annually.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** A greater awareness in the community of the importance of improved and appealing design in downtown as well as knowledgeable community members that will encourage preservation efforts.

Objective 2: Organize a design review process.

- A design review process can be organized to create a framework for checks and balances of what is required. This can be with input from the same individuals and groups facilitating the education activities. A booklet can be compiled online and
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published to act as a resource for these organization members, merchants, building owners, and residents.

- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** VISHPO; local architecture offices such as Jaredian Design Group, Springline Architects, deJongh Group, The Bourne Group; interior design offices such as Lagappe Custom Interiors and The Bourne Group; landscaping offices such as Boschulte Landscaping, Franklin Schulerbrandt Landscaping, etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 3 to 6 months to organize and compile materials and guidelines into a book format available in print and online.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** An easier system to realize design objectives downtown. Making local design and preservation guidelines an accessible instrument to the public.

Economic Restructuring

Goal: Diversify and strengthen the economic development of downtown Charlotte Amalie.

Expected Outcome: Establishment of a vibrant and healthy downtown that is attractive to tourists and locals alike and that provides necessary services.

Objective 1: Develop an inventory system to provide downtown vacancy and sale information.

- Organize volunteers to collaborate with downtown property owners and businesses to create an up-to-date inventory system of available buildings, current businesses in place, vacancies, and current ownership status.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Collaboration between volunteers and downtown merchants and property owners will be necessary to obtain vital information. This information can be compiled into a database available to the public through print or online.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 1 to 2 months to compile findings into a database. Database will require constant monitoring and managing to ensure it is up-to-date.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** An up-to-date database of the buildings downtown providing for better real-estate opportunities, business development plans, and better analysis of downtown.

Objective 2: Develop a market profile and recruitment plan for new businesses.

- Market research through surveys, focus groups and interviews will help in organizing what is wanted and needed downtown. From this information, new businesses can be targeted and recruited as additions to the downtown community.
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- A recruitment plan can be implemented to aid in diversifying the downtown retail mix. The findings from the market research along with the needs of residents can be useful in knowing which types of businesses will be most successful and those which are desired downtown.
- Businesses that would benefit the local district would be those offering varied services and goods to attract both locals and tourists alike, such as a grocery store, bakery, bookstore and artist studios. An arts program could also be promoted downtown.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** This information can be obtained from consumers, merchants, residents, business owners, community members, et al through the assistance of volunteers. The businesses such as a grocery store, bakery, bookstore and artist studios and an arts program could be surveyed as well to decipher public acceptance.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 3 to 6 months to interview, survey and organize research findings and then as needed, annually. However, It will take about 1 to 2 years for the recruitment plan and incorporation of new businesses downtown to fully take effect. It will require constant monitoring and managing to ensure it is up-to-date.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** New and different businesses can find their fit downtown, increasing a diverse economic redevelopment.

Objective 3: Develop taxes and incentives to encourage diversification downtown.

- Taxes could be implemented on these jewelry and duty-free shops as a way to diversify the current tourist focus of downtown. Incentives could also be introduced as a way to get business owners to diversify their services.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Virgin Islands Internal Revenue Bureau; community leaders; organization's board of directors; major business leaders, etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** 1 to 2 years.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** It will take some time, but with the right mix of incentives and taxes, more diversification of businesses can begin taking shape. Necessary services will be better balanced with existing tourist-focused shops.

Objective 4: Develop an educational platform focused on good business practices.

- Workshops focusing on good business practices can be held for merchants and building owners. Key professionals on-island as well as professors from the University of the Virgin Islands can facilitate these workshops.
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- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** University of the Virgin Islands Business School professors; regional officers of local, regional and international businesses; high school business teachers (accounting, management, economics, etc.); Chamber of Commerce; Economic Development Authority; related government agencies; merchants; business owners; etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Monthly or bi-monthly.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Business owners and merchants will be able to apply more useful tactics in their business outlooks providing them better chances of success.

Objective 5: Educating merchants and building owners on available grants, loans and possible incentives.

- At the monthly organization meetings, merchants and building owners could be informed about funding options available to them through grants, low-income loans and other possible incentives. Through these funding options they could begin the transition to diversify their services or businesses.
- ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Virgin Islands Dept. of Finance; University of the Virgin Islands School of Business and Finance; grant-writers at Dept. of Education; Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands; etc.
- ❖ **Time Frame:** Monthly or bi-monthly.
- ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Merchants and building owners can properly maintain and/or update their buildings and interiors with available funding which will encourage the downtown image increasing economic redevelopment.

Objective 6: Crime prevention measures

- Implement a citizen's watch through the support and involvement of local residents, merchants, and property owners.
 - Ensure downtown is well-lit
 - Encourage police presence downtown.
 - ❖ **Necessary Resources:** Business owners; Virgin Islands Police Department; property owners; local residents; WAPA; VITELCO; community leaders; local government.
 - ❖ **Time Frame:** 1 year until the measures can be analyzed for affectivity.
 - ❖ **Expected Outcome:** Downtown will become a safer place and more synonymous with activities and events free from fear of crime or violence.
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