



A project of the St. Croix Foundation

WALKABILITY MAP SURVEY

New insights to new paths
for improving walking, biking, & transit
on St. Croix

*A collaborative effort of the
Virgin Islands Trail Alliance & Community Partners*



SUMMARY

- The Virgin Islands Trail Alliance (VITAL) works, along with its many partners, to improve walkability and connectivity on St. Croix.
- VITAL wished to learn where members of the community wanted to see new bike paths or walkways.
- A booth was set up at the Agricultural Fair in February 2019 to collect feedback.
- Two hundred and seventy-five visitors to the booth indicated on a map where they would like to walk or bike on St. Croix if it was safe.
- Two hundred people also signed a petition in support of the 14-mile South Shore Multi-use Pathway.
- After analyzing the results from this survey, VITAL:
 - Updated their Concept Plan with four new pathways
 - Shared the findings with local decision-makers
 - Delivered the petition to the Dept. of Public Works

INTRODUCTION


The Virgin Islands Trail Alliance (VITAL) corporation was created to identify, plan, develop, build, and manage a system of interconnecting multi-use pathways, green spaces, walking paths, and biking trails across the island of St. Croix.

In the territory, safe walking and biking trails do exist, but they are limited, inconvenient, disconnected. Furthermore, the roads and traffic patterns do not support a pedestrian friendly environment. Building multi-use pathways will create new opportunities and add unique value to the territory by enhancing its infrastructure and connecting people to services, daily living, and recreation.

VITAL recognizes that the community is the largest stakeholder, and therefore community engagement is key to the success of any multi-use pathway project. In order to inform our planning and advocacy efforts, VITAL, in collaboration with the walkability team on St. Croix, the Department of Public Works (DPW), the Urban and Community Forestry Program, the Cruzan Pathways Inc. and many other organizations, sought feedback from members of the community on where they wanted to see new walkways and bike paths.

DATA COLLECTION

In order to quickly collect data from a large sample of locals, a booth was set up at the Agricultural Fair, which ran from February 16-18, 2019. The Agricultural Fair is known to attract large numbers of fair-goers, with an estimated 15,000 people of varying ages over the three-day event.



VI TRAIL ALLIANCE

VITAL

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Good Afternoon;

The Virgin Islands Trail Alliance along with our partners from the St. Croix Walkability Team, DPW, the Urban & Community Forestry Program and the Cruzan Pathways who originated the 14-mile South Shore Bike Path Project are inviting you to come to the Agricultural Fair. Our organizations are promoting walkability and pathway projects for the Island of St. Croix.

Stop by and take part in a community poll and support Pathways, Trails and Park Projects across St. Croix.

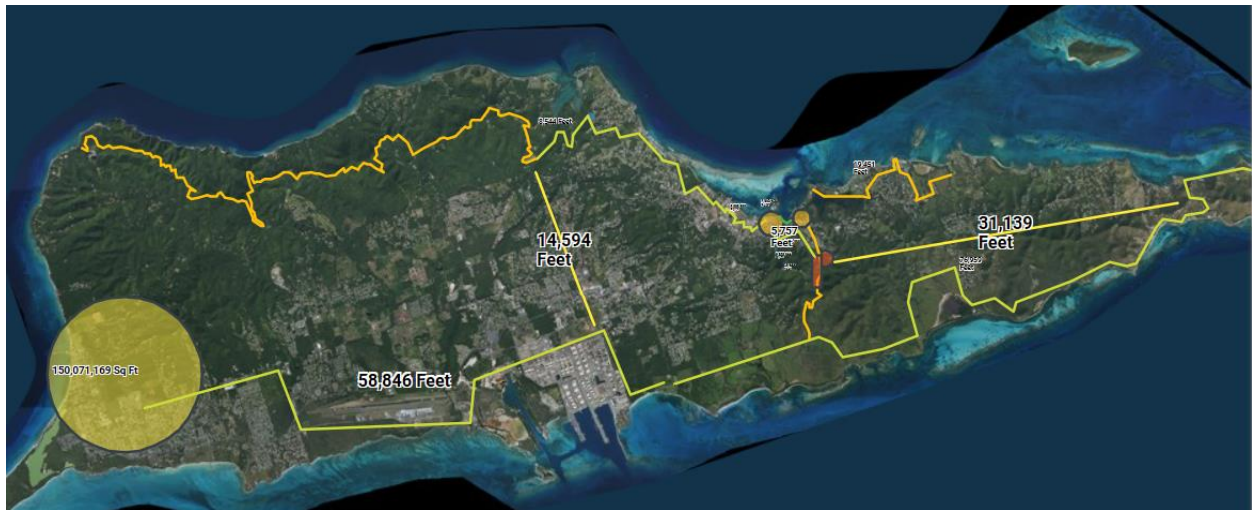
- Take part in a poll
- Visit our new web page: vitrails.org
- Share suggestions
- Volunteer / Donate

WORK WITH US TO DO SOMETHING GREAT FOR OUR BELOVED ISLAND AND PEOPLE

ALMA WINKFIELD
VP VITAL

Flyer circulated before the Agricultural Fair.

The location of the booth on the fairgrounds was set to the side; while it did not receive the direct entrance traffic, the flow of people was constant. Visitors were greeted by volunteers and presented with the VITAL Concept Map with pathway segments marked in color. These marked pathway segments represent the location of many local roads that people are familiar with.



The original VITAL Concept Map.

The map was displayed each day from 9 AM to 5:30 PM and was covered during fair closure hours.



VITAL booth at the beginning of the Fair on February 16, 2019, at 9 AM.

The Fair is an active environment with many sights and sounds to explore. In order to maintain fair-goers' attention, we decided to ask each visitor only one, simple question:

Where would you like to walk or bike if there was a safe sidewalk or multi-use pathway?

Visitors were encouraged to:

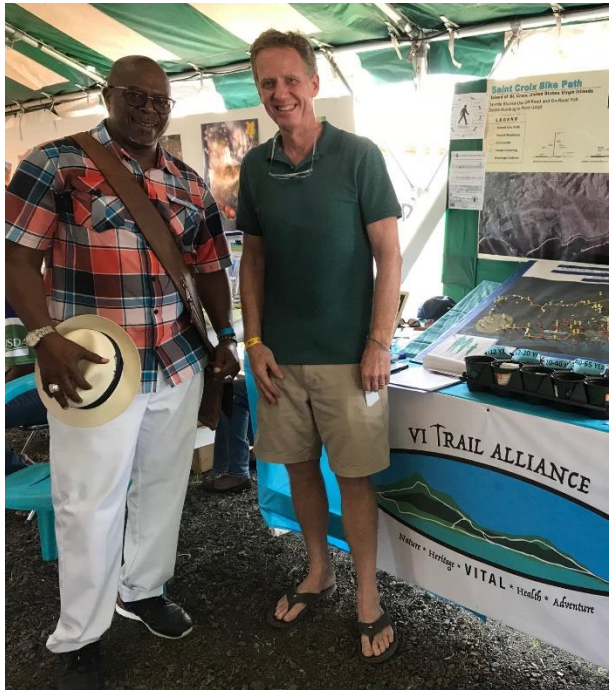
- 1) Choose the thumbtack that represented their age group.



- 2) Place it at a location on the map where they would like to walk or bike if it was safe.

The booth was monitored by project partners. They assisted people to find locations if they asked, but otherwise did not influence where the participants placed their pin on the map.

In addition, visitors had the option to sign a petition in support of the 14-mile South Shore Multi-use Pathway, an already-approved pedestrian project that has been slow to develop.



Participants and booth monitors at the Fair.

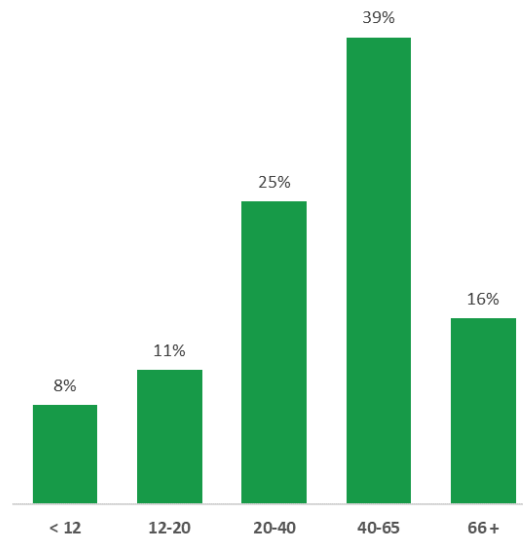
By the end of the third day, the VITAL Concept Map was full of colorful pins.



Concept Map at the end of the Fair, February 18, 2019, at 5:30 PM.

FINDINGS

Two hundred and seventy-five visitors participated over the three-day event. Most of them were in the 20-65 age range.



The majority of the pins were clustered around existing roads and popular areas, while 45 pins were placed at miscellaneous hillsides and coastlines. The number of pins, the age group they represent, and their location are provided in the heat map below:

	<12	12-20	20-40	40-65	66+
14-Mile South Shore Multi-Use Bike Path	2	2	11	20	3
Hotel/Restaurant link from the Lagoon to Chenay Bay	0	0	8	5	4
Frederiksted to Scenic Road water-side	4	1	8	10	4
Scenic Road: 14-Mile Road	2	0	3	19	4
Frederiksted / Airport / Lime Tree Terminal	0	4	6	3	0
Lime Tree Terminal / Sunny Isles / Hospital	6	1	5	2	1
Center Line Rd from Sunny Isles to Frederiksted	4	7	13	19	3
Gallows Bay / Christiansted / Judith Fancy	3	0	9	7	10
Spring Gut Road	0	2	3	6	5

The VITAL team identified trends among the different age groups regarding where they wanted to walk or bike.

Age Group	Trend	Explanation
Under 12	Clustered around the Sunny Isles Shopping Center and Movie Theater	The Sunny Isles Shopping Center has the Kmart stores, Clothing Shops, Food Venues, open theater and play center along with a new Movie Theater. These venues support young children who accompany parents for items of daily needs.
12 – 20	Supported a pathway from the Center Line Road from Sunny Isles to Frederiksted.	This age group are attending schools and have increased freedom of movement. The Center Line Road has the University and High Schools along its route. It also has food vendors, Shopping Malls with 2 Kmart Stores.
20 – 40	Evenly distributed throughout the Island with a strong clustering in both Historical Towns, Frederiksted to the West and Christiansted in the East.	These are young adults who are attending advanced schooling, raising families and working. They are active on weekends and dating plus enjoying water sports and friends. This supports the data of them having access throughout the island.
40 – 65	Increased concentration on the 14-Mile Scenic Road and the 14-Mile South Shore Pathway locations.	This age group has older children or nearing retirement and many people can be seen walking quiet remote areas of the Island such as the Scenic Road and enjoying the Restaurants and waterfront venues in Frederiksted town.
66+	Increased concentration in the Christiansted Town and the Spring Gut Road Areas.	This age group are mainly retired with some aging issues such as changes to their motor abilities. Many people in February travel to St. Croix from the mainland and enjoy a warm winter. They enjoy the Christiansted Town and remote walking along Spring Gut Road and the By Pass Sidewalk.

In addition, **200 signatures** were collected for the petition in support of the 14-mile South Shore Multi-use Pathway.

NEXT STEPS

Updated Concept Plan

Feedback from the community was used to update VITAL's Concept Map with 21 new miles of bike and pedestrian-friendly pathways. The orange paths below represent the pathway segments that are now included in the design work being done on DPW road projects since the fair.



These four new pathways were added to the Concept Map:

- Frederiksted Waterfront – Ham's Bluff to Frederiksted
- Northside Road – Villa Lorraine intersection to Bassine Triangle in Christiansted
- Centerline Road – Frederiksted to Sunny Isles Shopping Center
- Gallows Bay – a Circle pathway on the outer limits of Gallows Bay

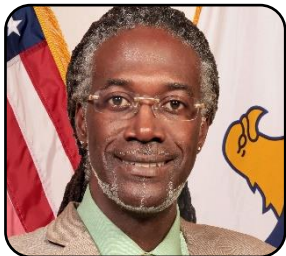
Shared Results

We shared the findings of the Walkability Map Survey with local decision-makers. They were able to see the importance of these new pathways to the people of St. Croix and took new steps to improve walkability on the island.



**Nelson Petty,
Commissioner of DPW**

- Added multi-use pathways to four major road projects
- Reviewed 14-Mile South Shore Pathway
- Will support educating staff and community leaders to prepare for pathway designs



**Positive Nelson,
Commissioner of Agriculture**

- Promoting the National Livable Communities Program with the Governor & First Lady
- Promoting new 50 acre public park & conservation site



**Stacey Plaskett,
VI Delegate to Congress**

- Has begun work to locate funding for pathway and greenspace projects

AARP of the Virgin Islands

- Promoting Livable Communities in the Territory
- A community partner of the VITAL projects

Petition

The following was hand-delivered in a letter to the Commissioner of Public Works, Nelson Petty, after the Fair, along with the 200 signatures that we gathered:

A petition was also activated over the 3-day fair in support for the 14-mile south shore multiuse pathway that has been on the public works approved project list for many years. The people were enthusiastic and very supportive of the project and excited at the concept to develop a safe pathway around St. Croix.

200 persons signed this petition and it is attached to this letter. VITAL took this action in response to the process made by the PDW in preparing the application for the 2019 year (BUILD DOT). We understand that this project is in competition with other projects. This petition is an attempt to gain your support. The funding need for this project is escalated when viewed from the framework of the pathway concept plan.

The 14-mile south shore bike pathway will lead to an island wide pedestrian support infrastructure that people need for health and enjoyment. We hope this action is helpful to stimulate the needed funding for this project.

Community Support

We were very encouraged by the enthusiasm we encountered while collecting data at the Agricultural Fair. The following comments were shared with us by booth monitors.

- “I was impressed with the response we got from passers-by. The majority were intrigued by the idea of a bike path. Pretty much everybody who stopped agreed that there needs to be more availability of walking paths, sidewalks, and places to ride bikes. When asked to place a pin, I was impressed that people wanted to explore new areas.”
- “The highlight of my time there was a visit from Sen. Myron Jackson who says he is planning a hearing in March and wanted to have VITAL representation.”
- “My biggest take away from the Ag Fair presentation for VITAL was connecting with key people who have an interest in what we’re doing... both locals and tourists alike who support VITAL’s mission.”

Pathways affect people of all ages and abilities every day of their lives!

VITAL would like to thank the following collaborators for their efforts in this project:

- The USVI Department of Public Works
- The Walkability Institute
- Cruzan Pathways Inc.
- SP&R
- Urban and Community Forestry Program
- Survey participants who gave their time and input

