



**VIRGIN ISLANDS
HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY**
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
3202 Demarara Plaza · Suite 200
St. Thomas, USVI 00802-6447
Telephone: (340) 777-4432 · Fax: (340) 775-7913

NEWS RELEASE

December 6, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Keva D. Muller
Communications Manager
(340) 772-4432 ext. 3258
(340) 777-4655 cell
media@vihfa.gov
www.vihfa.gov

**VIRGIN ISLANDS HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY PURCHASES
A ST. CROIX LANDMARK TO PROVIDE HOUSING FOR HOMELESS**

ST. CROIX, USVI – The Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority (VIHFA) has recently finalized the purchase of the Villa Morales property in St. Croix with 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. A total of \$600,000 was allocated for the acquisition, architectural services and rehabilitation. The facility will provide up to 20 emergency shelter beds, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing for the homeless.

“We’re excited about the acquisition of the Villa Morales property, which will provide shelter for the homeless population on St. Croix,” said VIHFA Executive Director Daryl Griffith. “The Authority is committed to helping reduce homelessness throughout the Territory. I co-chair the Virgin Islands Interagency Council on Homelessness, which was recently re-established by Governor Albert Bryan. I am happy to report back to the Council that the facility will soon be open to house our most vulnerable. We will be able to transform this cultural landmark into a shelter that directly benefits the St. Croix community.”

The Authority will enter into a collaborative partnership with a non-profit, community-based organization to manage the facility and provide wrap-around services. A portion of the facility is projected to be in service in early 2020, following some minor rehabilitation to the property.

The property, formerly known as the Villa Morales Restaurant and Guesthouse, located at 82A, B & C Estate Whim, includes a single-family residence; one two-story guesthouse with eight efficiency housing units; one main restaurant building with a large dining area and adjacent outdoor decks; and a several outbuildings, and storage areas. The property also has a vast area of vacant land prime for future development.



St. Croix Office: 100 Lagoon Complex · Suite 4 · Frederiksted, VI 00840-3912 | Tel: (340) 772-4432

Closing the sale of the property has been in process for over a year. The acquisition is a part of the 2018 Community Development Block Grant cycle, administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through VIHFA.

The project was delivered on time in accordance with the December 31, 2019 target date outlined in the Action Plan.

###

