



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ref: RDLG 7/17/46 Vol. II

30th January, 2020

Clerk of the House
Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Parliamentary Complex
Cabildo Building
St. Vincent Street,
Port of Spain

Attn: Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel

**Re: The Twentieth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on
the Examination into the Approval Process for Land Use in Trinidad and Tobago**

Reference is made to your correspondence, Parl.:5/6/4, dated December 11, 2019 on the above captioned subject.

In that regard, please find attached as requested, a copy of the responses to the recommendations/comments on the Report of the examination into the approval process for land use in Trinidad and Tobago.

For further information or queries you may contact Mrs. Gaynell Andrews-Vegas, Senior Planning Officer at 628-5220 or email: Andrews-Vegasg@gov.tt

Respectfully

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

Office of the Permanent Secretary

Kent House, Long Circular Road, Maraval, Trinidad W.I.

Tel/Fax (868) 622-7410/622-1979 Ext 3202/3207 E-mail: localgovps@gov.tt

Like and Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MOLGTT>

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Response to the Recommendations on:

***The Twentieth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on the Examination into
the Approval Process for Land Use in Trinidad and Tobago***

30th January, 2020

The Twentieth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriation Committee on the Examination into the approval process for land use in Trinidad and Tobago

SUB-HEADING	PAGE REF.	OBSERVATIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSE
The MRDLG's role in the oversight of development control activities	Seventeen (17)	The Engineering Unit of the MRDLG is significantly understaffed and functions with a staff complement of eight (8). The ideal staff complement is twenty-five (25) persons. Furthermore, the LARPU of the Ministry was also understaffed and was functioning with a staff complement of four (4) persons. The ideal staff complement is eight (8) persons.	1. The MRDLG should hire a consulting firm to benchmark the MRDLG's Engineering Unit remuneration plan against others;	The comment is noted. However, the Compensation Management Unit of the Chief Personnel Officer (CPO) is responsible for the determination of remuneration packages for public officers and contract workers as well as re-classification as necessary.
			2. In the short-term, the MRDLG should consider ascertaining from the private sector, information on the ideal number of staff for the oversight and monitoring of development control activities;	The recommendation is noted, however the Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD), of the Ministry of Public Administration, is responsible for the sanctioning of organization structures and ascertaining of staffing requirements of Ministries and Departments.
			3. This information should then be submitted to the Office of the Chief Personnel Officer (CPO) for consideration. With a more attractive remuneration package, the Engineering Unit and the LARPU of the MRDLG would be able to attract and retain suitably qualified and competent professional and technical staff;	The Public Service Commission Department conducts recruitment by advertisement and the recruitment process. Within the public there are many persons qualified and available for employment but the process of advertising and short listing have either not taken place or have not been completed.

			4. The MRDLG should liaise with the relevant agencies to fill vacant positions throughout the Local Area and Regional Planning Unit and the Engineering Unit. Parliament should be provided with an update on the filling of the vacancies by February 28, 2020.	The position of Senior Regional Planner was advertised by the Ministry and would be filled shortly. The MORDLG is liaising with the Director of Personnel Administration for the filling of the Engineering positions. The Human Resources Department would provide to the Parliament, an update on the filling of the vacancies by February 28, 2020.
The absence of an updated National Development Plan	Twenty-One (21)	The Committee noted that due to the delay in the full proclamation of the Planning and Facilitation of Development Act 2014, this has resulted in the delay in the approval of the National Spatial Development Strategy (NSDS) by Parliament.	The MRDLG is in agreement with the Committee's observation on the grounds that Parliament would want to consider an NSDS that is current. This will require that the Planning and Facilitation of Development Act be fully proclaimed; establishment of the National Planning Authority (NPA) and the Municipal Planning Authorities (MPAs); providing the MPAs with the requisite resources to enable the MPAs to undertake its function in accordance with the PAFD Act, which includes regional and local area planning. In light of this, the MPAs will be required to update its Municipal Development Plans (MDPs). These updated MDPs shall benefit from the review and approval from the NPA. In this circumstance, the NSDS will be amended to become current after which the Parliament can consider and approve the NSDS. As an alternative, Parliament can consider and approve the NSDS in its current form. Full proclamation of PAFD Act shall follow. This will	The MRDLG in fiscal 2019 sought to engage a consultant to update the fourteen (14) MDPs. This project was not achieved, as the tenders committee's recommendation came too close to the end of the financial year to facilitate the completion of the project and the application for the release of funds. There is no budgetary allocation for this project in Fiscal 2020.

			form the basis for the MPAs to commence development planning and control as devolved by the NPA. The Parliament can thereafter consider an amendment to the NSDS.	
--	--	--	---	--

SUB HEADING	PAGE REF	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE
Challenges faced by the MRDLG	Twenty-two (22)	1. Lack of funding to carry out routine maintenance work within private and state developments 2. Inability to access official records relating to physical infrastructure and services which in turn, affects the Corporations' duty of assisting with routine maintenance works 3. Lack of coordination between the respective State and private developers 4. Insufficient resources, namely funding, adequately skilled human resources, institutional capacity, equipment, vehicles, substandard infrastructure, and design 5. Impediments to access by the Municipal Corporation, due to boundary walls being constructed onto drains, side walls and gated access restrictions 6. The Council of the Municipal Corporation giving priority to undertake maintenance works on infrastructure which are assets of the Corporation over private and	The MRDLG should submit a report to the Parliament on the status of the initiatives being undertaken to reduce the challenges encountered by February 28, 2020.	The Ministry, through its Local Area Regional Planning and Development Unit would make best endeavours to provide a status report of the initiatives being undertaken to reduce the challenges encountered as they relate to guiding the development of certain land use through regional planning.

		state developments, due to resource constraints 7. Delays in the approval process by other agencies often hindering the execution of maintenance and construction works	
--	--	---	--