

**PROGRAMME FOR  
UPGRADING ROADS  
EFFICIENCY  
PROJECT OUTCOMES AND  
RESEARCH REPORT**

An aerial photograph showing a road construction site. The road is partially paved and has white lane markings. Several yellow construction vehicles, including a bulldozer and a truck, are visible on the road. There are also some cars and a white tent. The background shows a gas station and some buildings. The foreground is a dirt area with a fence and some palm trees.

**MARACAS  
BEACH FACILITY  
IMPROVEMENT  
PROJECT**

# PROGRAMME FOR UPGRADING ROADS EFFICIENCY

## PROJECT OUTCOMES AND RESEARCH REPORT

### MARACAS BEACH FACILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Maracas Beach is the most popular and most frequented beach in Trinidad both for locals and visitors. The Maracas Beach Facility Improvement Project (MBFIP) was a project of the Ministry of Works and Transport being undertaken for the Ministry of Tourism. The PURE Unit under the Ministry of Works and Transport was given the mandate to construct Package 1 of the Maracas Beach Facility Improvement Project which encompassed the widening of the North Coast Road (NCR) and the Upgrade and Expansion of the Car Park along with associated drainage works. This project was intended to develop the facilities of Maracas Beach by enhancing tourism product and user safety.



This report was prepared with the use of questionnaires and on-site visits to the project during its preliminary, progression and completion stages. Data was retrieved from residents, visitors and other stakeholders, reviewed and summarised, to determine if the projected outcomes of the project were achieved upon completion.

Some of the benefits derived from this project are elucidated in this report.



## EXTENDED CARPARK

The carpark at Maracas Beach has always been one of the major issues of concern for beachgoers which resulted from insufficient parking spaces, lack of carpark maintenance and the impractical locations for vending.

Upon completion of the Maracas Beach Facility Improvement Project (MBFIP), the newly rehabilitated carpark has sufficient parking to facilitate the capacity of 352 private passenger vehicles. In addition to this, new light poles have been installed in the car park as well as pedestrian pathways to improve visibility and safety for visitors.

For this survey, individuals were required to rate the level of satisfaction experienced at the pre and post stages of construction. Overall, the data received on project satisfaction indicated that while 70% of respondents prefer to park in the carpark, 30% of respondents prefer to park on the roadway, thus avoiding any fees associated with parking.



## TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT

On the weekends and public holidays, the North Coast Road (NCR) is the most active. However, over a period of time, the number of vehicles traversing this road increased, causing major traffic pile-ups for motorists. To improve the traffic congestion, the PURE Unit, widened the lanes of the roadway, laybys and shoulders. A pedestrian drop-off for offloading goods was also constructed as well as a roundabout east of the car park to facilitate smooth flow traffic at the intersection of the North Coast Road, Grand Fond Road and the new carpark access road.

Based on the survey conducted, 68% agreed and that the construction of the roundabout made a vast improvement with the traffic congestion. Furthermore, after rehabilitation of the car park, 77% of participants stated that the traffic congestion has been reduced due to the upgrade of the North Coast road and access to and from the carpark.

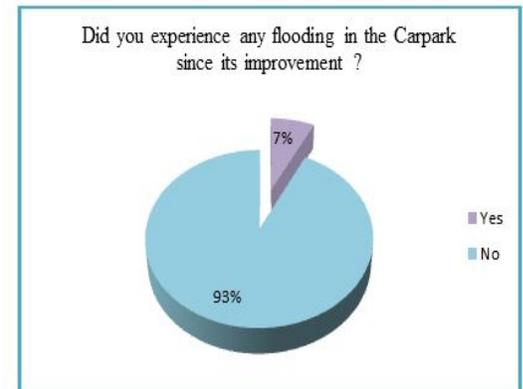


## FLOODING IMPROVEMENT

Over the years, the carpark at Maracas Beach has been known to experience severe flooding due to an inadequate drainage system. Surface run-off would remain in the carpark due to water levels being high in the swampland as a result of high tide. The unkempt box drains were also blocked with sand prohibiting the free flow of surface run off.

To alleviate the flooding situation, a pump was installed to allow run off from the carpark to outfall to the swamp. A berm, detention pond and upgraded drainage were constructed at the western end of the carpark to further manage the runoff, which will in turn, limit the possibility of flooding.

According to the survey conducted, 93% of the participants indicated that as a result of the improved drainage works, they have not experienced any flooding.

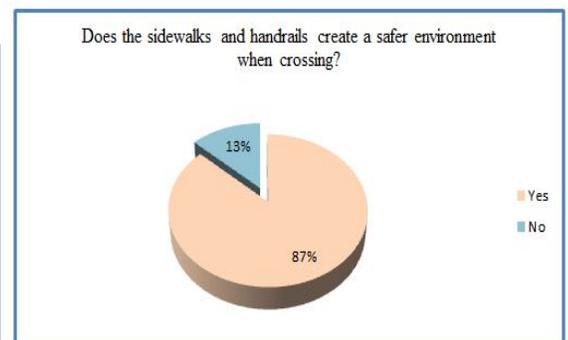
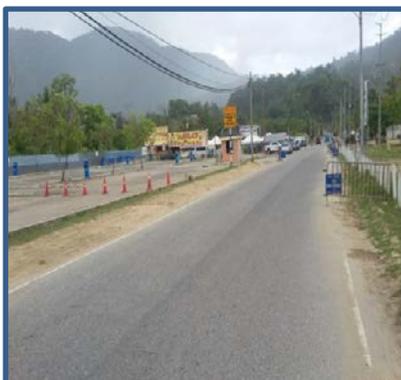


## INADEQUATE SAFETY

Maracas Beach best known for a good family outing. It is usually filled with visitors, all participating in the food delights and spending time with family and friends. However, with the excess traffic congestion and road side parking woes, inconsiderate drivers made it unsafe for beach goers when crossing the North Coast Road.

The PURE Unit, with the objective of eliminating traffic congestion and providing safety to pedestrians, constructed 287 metres of solid sidewalk, along with the installation of hand railings and pedestrian crossings at strategic locations across the North Coast Road, in order to streamline pedestrians to specific access points when crossing.

According to the survey conducted, 87 % of the participants now felt safer when crossing the Maracas Beach, North Coast road.



## Conclusion

This project was divided into three (3) packages. Package I, consisted of widening of the North Coast Road (NCR) and the Upgrade and Expansion of the Car Park along with associated drainage works, which was undertaken by the Ministry of Works and Transport, PURE Unit. Package II, is the construction and completion of the building works; vending booths and bathrooms which are currently ongoing by NIDCO. Package III, entails the design and construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and upgrade of the water and sewer lines, which is also to be undertaken by NIDCO.

The PURE Unit embarked on this project to achieve its objective of developing Maracas Beach and environs to enhance tourism and safety. According to the survey, the PURE Unit has met its objectives in making the road safer for residents, visitors and tourists to the beach. The development of the Maracas Beach Facilities went on to create forty-five (45) jobs for the residents of Maracas Village. The newly rehabilitated car park has been increased to accommodate more vehicles comfortably and the road upgrades have significantly reduced traffic congestion to the beach facilities. In addition, the drainage improvements implemented has mitigated the flooding problems.

Furthermore, the safety of the pedestrians was substantially improved by the installation of handrails, cross walks and pedestrian crossing lights.

Overall, the Maracas Beach Facility Improvement project contributes significantly to the Vision 2030 National Development Strategy under the *Thematic Area: Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transportation- Theme 3*. It is mentioned, “High quality infrastructure unlocks economic potential, ensures an equitable distribution of growth and opportunities throughout the country and creates networks that bind us together.”

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