

WRITTEN QUESTION
TUESDAY, 14 MAY 2019

Written Question 105/2019:

Hon. Ratu Suliano Matanitobua to ask the Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Local Government, Housing and Community Development –

Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress with regards to the development plans in place to upgrade the facilities in Navua to become a fully-fledged town?

- Mr. Speaker Sir, I thank the Honourable Member for the question.
- The process to proclaim the Navua Town is progressing. There are infrastructure upgrading requirements that need to be completed before the Town proclamation exercise can be completed.
- In terms of the Local Government Act (Cap 125), the key requirements to complete town declaration include:
 - a. Carrying out public consultations, listening to objections and recommendations following a Public Objection Period from September to November, 2015. Advertisements for the Public Objection Period were placed:
 - Gazette Notice – 18/9/15
 - Fiji Sun – First Publication 18/9/15
 - Second Publication 25/10/15
 - Third Publication 2/11/15
 - Fourth Publication 9/11/15
 - b. The exercise included Local Government Committee members carrying out consultations with stakeholders during the period. A special taskforce committee, headed by the District Officer Navua, was also formed to work with the Local Government Committee. Two public consultations were held with the community and five Stakeholder meetings held. No objections were received by the Local Government Committee at the end of the Public Objection Period.
 - c. Local Government Committee on 3 December 2015 submitted a report at the end of the objection period to the Minister recommending declaration of Navua as a town.
 - d. An appeal period was then opened for 21 days by the Minister in March 2016.

- e. No appeal was received by the Ministers office and the Ministry of Local Government submitted the Navua Town declaration proposal for Cabinet approval in March, 2017. Progress was however delayed given the country had been hit by Cyclone Winston and the recovery phase was prioritized.
 - f. A proclamation order has been prepared and vetted by the Solicitor General.
- Government has established an important principle which is, that before Township declaration, certain basic infrastructure such as roads, footpaths and street lights must be up to the required standards for a town in Fiji.
 - The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, through the Fiji Roads Authority, is in the process of upgrading the infrastructure and the work status currently stands at:
 - a. Road Upgrade – A total of \$10 million has been invested by Fiji Roads Authority to date, with \$3.5m being spent on upgrading Naitonitoni Road; \$1.3m on the Navua Hospital road safety improvements and \$5.2m on rehabilitation of Namelimeli section on Queens Road.

Naitonitoni Rd was reconstructed through Navua Town Area in 2017 with a high quality finish of Asphalt Surfacing, with new footpaths and Streetlights. Plans for sealing of the unsealed portion on Naitonitoni Rd and Thompson Park Rd are however included in the FRA's Forward Work Program for sealing in the coming 2-3yrs, subject to funding from Ministry of Economy and other Government priorities.

- b. Footpaths – have been upgraded with total investment so far standing at \$162,000.
- c. Streetlights – Fiji Roads Authority has installed 120. streetlights within the proposed Navua Township area, 62 on standalone poles and 58 FEA pole mounted streetlights. Total investment so far in street cabling for streetlights has been \$34,000.

Fiji Roads Authority has informed that the balance of road upgrades in within the Town shall be completed over the next two years.

- In addition, land has been acquired at Naitonitoni for construction of a Town Council office. Civil works have been completed, including the Geotech exercise. The concept layout is currently under review by the Construction Implementation Unit and the Construction Implementation Unit confirms that the construction of the Navua Town Council office shall be completed over the next two budget cycles.
- National Fire Authority has acquired a lot adjacent to the proposed Navua Town Council office and the new fire station shall be completed over the next fiscal years.

- Once the Fiji Roads Authority indicates to the Ministry of Local Government that the provision of the agreed infrastructure is complete, we will proceed with formally declaring Navua as a Town.
- In the meantime, basic services including solid waste collection, grass cutting, town cleaning, drainage maintenance, public convenience and market operations are being delivered to Navua by Lami Town Council as part of the extended local authority initiative. An office has been set up at Navua by the Lami Town Council to provide Building and general support services to the people of Navua.
- Navua has been included to be part of the Singaporean Master Planning exercise for the Greater Suva Area. The master plan exercise for Navua will review the current Navua Land Use Advisory Plan and recommend the Central Business District revised layout including proposed locations for the market, bus terminal and other civic amenities.
- Government is interested to ensure that when the infrastructure and amenities are to required standards the Town proclamation process is completed.
- Thank you.