



## COVID-19 HEALTH REPORT

## The Collectivité mobilized for its citizens

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## THE REHABILITATION OF THE ROAD NETWORK The 1<sup>st</sup> phase is completed!



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# A Word From The President



Fellow citizens,

After an especially difficult year marked by the global health crisis, I feel it is important to present you a report of our activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic through this quarterly newsletter.

As you know, since the beginning of this worldwide crisis in March 2020, your local government has done everything possible to organize the administration in consequence and protect both the personnel and the general public in contact with our public services.

Christiane Ayache, our Head of the General Directorate, launched the PRA (Plan to Reinitiate the Administration), to respond to administrative emergencies and ensure the continuity of public services. This was a condition sine qua non for the Collectivité of Saint Martin. Since the beginning of the lockdown last spring to this day and throughout this long crisis, the Collectivité of Saint Martin has lived up to its responsibilities and responded concretely in every area of its competences, often going beyond its jurisdiction. In fact, the Collectivité contributed to the acquisition of testing equipment for our hospital.

My team and I have maintained our development program for Saint Martin despite the ongoing covid-19 crisis management which not only required financial and technical resources but as well as a great deal of energy on a daily basis.

We have over 170 public tenders currently underway, from structural reconstruction projects to new development projects created during our term in office such as those outlined in our Multi-Year Investment Plan (PPI) over three years. The health crisis slowed down our progress, but we are none-the-less advancing in a pragmatic manner and we will soon see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Due to the economic crisis that has hit us hard this year and the decrease in revenue, the 2021 provisional budget will be reduced. We are however committed to pursuing our efforts to institute policies that will not only benefit all of our citizens, but are as well realistic, financially possible, and can be completed in a reasonable time-frame. In addition, we are reforming our administration, particularly in terms of purchasing contracts and creating stronger internal operations, thus optimizing public service. Those are the challenges of the final part of our mandate!

My team and I remain fully committed at your side to make Saint Martin the friendly and prosperous island to which we all aspire. Remain strong and keep your faith in the future. As with any crisis, this one will also be behind us one day. I wish you all happy holidays and my best wishes for the New Year.

Daniel GIBBS

## Newsletter of the Collectivité of Saint-Martin

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# ECONOMIC REPORT



## COVID-19

### A focus on economic programs to help our businesses

In his speech on March 16, 2020, French President Emmanuel Macron stated: “No employee or business will be left by the side of the road.” From the beginning of the lockdown, the government put in place several financial assistance programs for businesses: Partial Unemployment Benefits, guaranteed government loans, and a two-part solidarity fund (part 1 at 1500€/ month and part 2 up to 5000€). Locally, delays in the payment of these subsidies were encountered.

The Economic Development Delegation of the Collectivité led by Vice President Yawo Nyuiadzi was immediately implicated on the local level as soon as these financial measures were announced.

#### At the height of the crisis, more than 50% of employees were working part-time

The plan for partial unemployment was accessible to all companies with at least one employee and had its own specific parameters related to the lockdown period. In reality, the French government ensured payment of 100% of net salaries up to 4.5 times the minimum wage, or 70% of gross

salaries. This extraordinary governmental measure is in effect until December 31, 2020 and May 2021 for some specific sectors of activities. After that, the government ensured 85% of net salaries, or 60% of gross salary. For the months of March, April, May, and June, 1,132 companies benefitted from this partial unemployment national program. This comprised 5,952 employees, or more than a third of the island’s working population and more than 50% of those currently employed on the island. In fact, according to the 2018 IEDOM report, Saint Martin has a working population of

approximately 17,750 people, 11,500 of which are employed by the 5,187 businesses listed at that time, and 6,250 additional people seeking employment. With 5,952 employees on partial unemployment, that represents 33.62% of the working population, or more than a third, as well as more than 50% of those earning a salary on the island. The top three sectors with the highest level of demand for partial unemployment were, first, accommodations and restaurants (35% of the employees got partial unemployment benefits), the second was trade (17%) and third, construction (13%).

## Specific measures for hotels, restaurants, cafes, tourism, events, sports, and cultural sector

For these hard-hit economic sectors, 100% coverage remained in place until September 2020. Businesses in these sectors of activity as well as artists and authors can also benefit from the solidarity funds until December 2020. The program was extended June 1st specifically to companies with fewer than

20 employees (compared to 10 employees previously) and earning up to 2M€ (rather than the prior limit of 1M€). Companies in these hard-hit sectors could benefit of this Financial aid during this second phase as much as 10,000€ without the condition of having a bank loan refused.



## Delays In Receiving Solidarity Funds

As the Collectivité of Saint-Martin has fiscal jurisdiction, local businesses were the first to experience delays in the processing of their requests for the Solidarity Funds. The problem was due to the difference in software which required synching with Bercy's digital procedures.

President Gibbs along with Territorial Councilor Marie-Dominique Ramphort and 2nd Vice President Yawo Nyuiadzi, did their utmost for those funds to be allocated to those businesses. The DGFIP (General Directorate of Public Finances) and the French state services finally created a form that allowed local businesses to apply as of April 15.

Those eligible for the first part of the Solidarity Funds were companies with fewer than 10 employees generating an annual turnover of less than 1M€. In addition, they

had to have been closed during the lockdown period, implying a 50% decrease in revenue for the month of March 2020, and then for April 2020, once the government decided to extend this program for a second month.

To receive these Solidarity Funds, the sine qua non condition for the companies was to be up to date with their social charges and fiscal payments. Yet on May 15, closing deadline for the first phase funds, there were a number of claims rejected by the General Direction of Public Finances: out of 1,248 applications received, 364 were refused, or in other words 44%. The Collectivité requested from the Public Finance Department a clarification on the rejections. It appears that the majority of the rejections were due to the lack of payment of the 2019 License fee and the Patent contribution (DLCP).

Consequently, the Collectivité quickly reacted by creating the CARE platform to assist businesses regularize their situation.

As of April 29, 2020, 829 businesses had requested aid during the first phase for loss of income in March 2020, corresponding to 1,153,122€.

Additional money (phase 2 of the Solidarity Funds), comprising between 2000€ and 5000€, was made available as of May 1, 2020, for companies with fewer than 10 employees, who had benefitted from phase 1, and who were refused a loan of a reasonable amount by their bank, or had not received a reply within a period of 10 days.

The Collectivité matched this program for a sum of 123,000€.

# CARE, a consulting unit to help businesses get in order

Many local businesses that were not up to date in their fiscal and social benefits payments were not eligible for the Solidarity Funds allocated by the government. The Collectivité created a dedicated territorial consulting unit, CARE, with the goal of helping these companies get their finances in order. The CCISM, a key partner in this program, provided logistical help for the businesses to straighten out their affairs. At the same time, the services of the Collectivité worked with their institutional partners to put moratoriums in place and provide access to targeted help according to need.

In addition to being eligible to various financial aid packages, having their fiscal and social obligations in order also permitted these companies to compete for public bids launched by French collectivités and territories.

Furthermore, once again in partnership with the CCISM, a Master Class in business management was created.

To obtain support for your business from CARE, please write to the following:

[care@com-saint-martin.fr](mailto:care@com-saint-martin.fr).



## The Collectivité makes 5M€ available to support businesses

To assist micro-businesses, independents, and companies of all sizes having been subject to a major loss of revenue during the lockdown, the Collectivité made 5M€ available that was distributed via a three-part program. The Territorial Council approved this funding on May 20, 2020.

Two associations handled the funds : Initiatives Saint-Martin Active (ISMA) and the Association For The Right Of Economic Initiative (ADIE).

These associations were responsible for processing zero-interest loans applications for any company with fewer than 20 employees created before February 1, 2020, that had not necessarily used the support offered by ISMA or ADIE and faced hardships due to the health crisis. These loans can be up to 15,000€ with differed reimbursement plans.





# The BPI France rebound loan, solid help for our businesses

During these difficult times, companies were able to apply for a “rebound loan” as established by BPI France. The advantage of this zero- interest loan was that the request could be made directly on a digital platform with a response given within 48 hours. The loans ranged from 10,000 € to 50,000€, with a grace period of 24 months and reimbursement over five years. To be eligible, the companies must be in business in Saint Martin for at least one year and face difficulties caused by the current situation. The Executive Council of the Collectivité de

Saint-Martin’s voted on July 1, 2020 the creation of an agreement with BPI France to activate the rebound loan.

As such, the Collectivité allocated 800,000€ to BPI in support to Saint-Martin’s businesses. This allocation made it possible for a line of credit of 2,120,000M€ from BPI France to help the island’s companies in need.

**Additional information is available online at:** <https://www.bpifrance.fr/Toutes-nos-solutions/Prets/Prets-regionaux/Pret-Rebond> or by contacting the CCISM.



## The COM votes tax deferral for businesses

On April 14, the Territorial Council met via videoconference and adopted fiscal measures to help businesses in difficulty. As a result, the payment of the TGCA (corporate tax) for the months of January, February, March and April was postponed to December 31, 2020.

Occupancy taxes, and rental car taxes for the months of January, February, March, and April 2020 were also postponed to December 31, 2020.

Finally, payment of business taxes due on December 31, 2020 and the payment of business taxes are also postponed until March 31, 2021.

### Decrease of 27.7% of revenue for the Collectivité

In addition to a major decrease in local spending due to the lockdown, these fiscal measures significantly impacted the Collectivité’s annual revenue.

According to figures from our fiscal services, during the period from January 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020, the Collectivité’s fiscal revenue significantly decreased by 15M€ compared to the same period in 2019. In other words, 52.6M€ of revenue during that period in 2020, compared to 67.19M € in 2019, for a loss of 27.7% of the income. The decreases were primarily due to corporate taxes and income taxes, which represent half of the Collectivité’s revenue.

While the Territorial Council voted on the budget in March for 2020, they were being

realistic but optimistic, and had to revise this fiscal roadmap in May.

### 17M€ deducted from the COM’s 2020 budget

The impact of the lockdown on the Collectivité’s revenue was evaluated at 12M€ (10M€ loss in licence fees, 2M€ loss in business taxes). In addition to these 12M€, another 5M€ has to be counted for the exceptional territorial funds made available; which accounts for the 17M€ that the Collectivité should deduct from its 2020 budget.

### The 2020 Budget amended

The Territorial Council met on Wednesday, May 20, to reexamine the 2020 budget to balance the income and expenses. The COVID- 19 pandemic added expenses that were not initially planned in the 2020 budget, (5M€ for financial aid to businesses,

purchasing of testing equipment, food aid operations for vulnerable residents, etc.) along with a considerable decrease in fiscal revenue (some tax payments delayed until the end of 2020 and others until March 2021, and a massive slowdown in the economy...). While the financial context is complicated, the Collectivité is committed to a multi-annual investment plan (PPI) of 230M€ until 2023, which is important to maintain in order to continue improving the quality of life of the population. These public procurements will also help jump start the local economic activity.

Regarding the 2020 budget and the PPI, there are still 22M€ set aside for investments this year, including 5.2M€ for the rebuilding of schools, 3.7M€ for sports facilities such as the Thelbert Carti stadium and the nautical complex, 4.2M€ for public works (Marina Fort Louis, public lighting...), 1.7M€ for public spaces improvements and 2.5M€ for repaving of roads and road signage.

After these modifications, the 2020 budget is balanced with 60M€ for investments and 157M€ for operations. The Territorial Council voted unanimously in favor of the modifications.



# The Collectivité Creates « Mon beau Commerce » To Support Businesses In Marigot, Grand Case, and Howell Center

In December 2019, the Collectivité created a financial aid program to support the renovation and security of storefronts, as well as the rehabilitating of signs for shops in the center of Marigot and on the Grand Case Boulevard. This project initially concerned only the renovation of commercial facades in these two locations.

On September 2, 2020, the Executive Council voted favorably to modify the regulations that define the geographic areas eligible to this program. Namely: Marigot – Howell Center – Bertin Maurice Boulevard in Grand Case.

For work and investment on the exterior façade of a commercial building, all businesses in the aforementioned neighborhoods are now eligible.

For interior renovations, this public aid provided by the Collectivité de Saint-Martin is limited to retail shops and restaurants.

The goal of the “Mon Beau Commerce” project is to allow these businesses to improve their visibility, while offering better quality goods and a better level of service to their clients.

This aid is extended as well to interior remodeling, decorating, equipment and fixtures, or buying furniture. The Collectivité participates up to 50% of the overall investment with a limit of 10,000€.

**MON BEAU COMMERCE**

COMMERÇANTS DE MARIGOT,  
HOWELL CENTER & GRAND-CASE

***Vous envisagez  
d'embellir votre  
commerce ?***

**La Collectivité de Saint-Martin vous accompagne !**

Participation à hauteur de 50%  
dans la limite de 10 000€

Rénovation des façades commerciales  
Rénovation de votre boutique  
ou restaurant

Renseignements et souscription :  
**DÉLÉGATION ECONOMIQUE  
SERVICE CITY MANAGER**  
31, Jean-Jacques FAYEL  
97150 SAINT MARTIN  
Tél : 0690 66 10 96  
Mail : [citymanager@com-saint-martin.fr](mailto:citymanager@com-saint-martin.fr)

**Businesses interested in participating in this project are invited to contact  
the Economic Development Delegation of the Collectivité:**

***Economic Delegation - City Manager Service***  
31, Jean-Jacques FAYEL – 97150 SAINT MARTIN  
Tél : 0690 66 10 96  
Mail : [citymanager@com-saint-martin.fr](mailto:citymanager@com-saint-martin.fr)



# The Convergence and Transformation Contract (CCT)

**On June 22, 2020, first day that flights were once again allowed to fly from France to Saint Martin, French overseas Minister Annick Girardin came to the island as part of an official visit which included Guyana. She brought with her the CCT, an agreement between the Collectivité and the French government for the period of 2019-2022, amounting to 159M€ for Saint Martin.**

President Gibbs and Minister Girardin officially signed this contract at the Hôtel de la Collectivité. The signing of this contract took place later than for other overseas Collectivités.

The post-Irma period, during which there were additional agreements for financial aid negotiated with the French government for reconstruction projects; as well as in addition, the revision of the PPRN and "certain misunderstandings between the government and the COM," admits the overseas Minister, contributed to the delay.

**Two main themes: financing "post-Irma" reconstruction and the implementation of modernization projects in priority neighborhoods and tourist sectors, comprising forty development projects deemed most important by the Collectivité.**

The Convergence and Transformation Contract focuses on the implementation of 40 growth-generating projects specific to the needs of Saint Martin. These projects are based on the Overseas Trajectory 5.0 project (Zero carbon, Zero waste, Zero agricultural pollution, Zero exclusion and Zero vulnerability).

**The following projects are co-financed through the Convergence and Transformation Contract:**

- **Rehabilitation of public spaces in Marigot and Grand Case:** 6.85M€ (3.4M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Revitalization of the Marigot waterfront:** 6M€ (2.5M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Reconstruction of Galisbay Sports Center, including a hurricane shelter:** 6.2M€ (6M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Reconstruction of Thelbert Carti Stadium in French Quarter:** 3.48M€ (1.7M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Waste management and environmental activities:** 3.1M€ (2M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Renovation of the French Quarter Middle School:** 8.85M€ (3.15M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Major roadwork improvements:** 8.6M€ (2.24M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Rainwater management:** 3.05M€ (2.025M€ co-financed by the French government)
- **Video protection:** 1.27M€ (600,000€ co-financed by the French government)

The Convergence Contract was fully integrated into the Multi-Year Investment Plan for the Collectivité (PPI 2019-2023) and represents one of its major sources of financing.

During Minister Girardin's visit, Daniel Gibbs noted: *"We have been waiting several months for this contract to be signed. It will allow us to move forward through 2022, in a true spirit of partnership... The 47.2M€ of investment funds from the government are essential. It is not only imperative for us to accelerate our reconstruction, but also make up for lost time in terms of developing our infrastructures..."*







# By 2021, 99% of the 250 km of EDF cables in Saint Martin will be **underground**

**A major priority for President Daniel Gibbs and his team is to guarantee that all electrical and fiber optic cables are underground, to better withstand the force of a natural catastrophe.**

Since early 2018, soon after hurricane Irma, EDF started the massive project of completely undergrounding all of its network on the territory. The climate consequences had already encouraged this national carrier to progressively put two thirds of its cables underground on the island, which represents 150 km, for 12,000 clients. The work that was started after Irma concerns the remaining 100 km of overhead wires for 6,000 additional clients. So far, 80 km have been buried since Irma, leaving only the final 20 km to put underground.

This large project will be finished in the first quarter of 2021 as scheduled confirmed Laurent Veguer, mission head for the reconstruction of the network in the Northern Islands for EDF Archipel Guadeloupe.

The cost of the project: 23 million euros for Saint Martin, financed by the Collectivité through the Rural Electrification Funds For Collectivités (FACÉ) and from EDF.

## 18,000 clients connected to the underground network

In reality, the job starts with the digging of a trench for the electric cables, closing it up, then adding low-voltage cables and making the connections, one by one, street by street, customer by customer, moving from the old overhead wires to the new ones that are underground. Until the last of the 18,000 clients in Saint Martin benefit from this installation, it will be necessary to maintain the overhead wires and all of the electric poles, which are scheduled to almost completely disappear in 2021, unless they also support another network, such as public lighting or telecommunications. This painstaking job, which will have taken over three years, will limit the amount of damage caused by hurricanes. Burying the wires does not guarantee perfection, as



*Putting EDF wires and fiber-optic cables underground*

some damage might always take place on individual boxes or localized installations, but the overall grids are protected and any eventual repairs will be easier and therefore quicker. Furthermore, if the hurricanes are not too powerful, the island might not even lose power for a minute!

EDF sincerely thanks the technical services of the Collectivité, which provided support for this project, especially in terms of traffic patterns and work at night, as it was recently the case on the Morne Valois road. At the same time, EDF also collaborated with the service providers, who were able to bury part of their fiber-optic network in coordination with the electrical wires.





# The COM Commits To 100% Underground Fiber Optic cables

Underground cables, whatever they may be for, provide the safest solution to protect against hurricanes. This was proven post-Irma by EDF, as well as for telecommunications providers.



Jean-Sébastien Hamlet in a data center  
(Saint-Martin)

On September 6, 2017, hurricane Irma destroyed close to half of the overhead telecommunications network representing 90 km of cables that provide telephone and internet cutting off half of the homes on the island from the outside world. A lot to repair! By opting for fiber optics, the idea was to improve the networks by burying a maximum of the cables via underground ducts, as indicates Jean-Sébastien Hamlet, the Council Member in charge of the new technologies and audio-visual commission.

To accomplish this, the Collectivité decided to accelerate its goal of guaranteeing high-speed access for everyone, as announced in its digital blueprint for the island in 2015. Due to the consequences of Irma, this document was updated in February 2020 to take into account the new variable of putting all fiber optic cables underground. And thus, avoid the installation of 3,000 new poles.

The Collectivité collaborates with three competing service providers —Orange, Dauphin, and THDTEL—all of which have the same goal, and have the support of the French government and its promise of very high-speed bandwidth for 100% of residents and professionals in 2022. This is part of the national

high-speed project carried out by the French Digital Agency.

## A network to build, finance and exploit

The project still needs to be financed, especially the burying of the optical fiber, the additional cost of which is estimated between 12.5 and 15.5 million euros. Furthermore, the coordination of the reconstruction, grouping the undergrounding work, and facilitating fiber deployment work remain... The SDTAN advocated the creation of a company in charge of building, financing and operating a civil engineering network that would be made available to all operators under neutral, transparent and non-discriminatory conditions. Therefore, the SAS Tintamarre was created after it was approved by the Territorial Council on June 30, 2020, in accordance with the provisions of the « Pintât law » of December 17, 2009 on the fight against digital divide. It is in this capacity that the Collectivité participates up to 40% of the shared capital, alongside and equally with Banque des Territoires, and Dauphin Telecom with 20% of the shares. The overall capital amounts to 120,000€. The financing is shared between the State, Europe, the Banque des Territoires, the Collectivité and the private operators.

## Completion by 2023

Undergrounding work has already started and some operators have even installed optical fiber in neighborhoods where underground ducts exist. Also, under the supervision of EDF, operators have pooled in segments where it made sense. Now, SAS Tintamarre will have to plan the work in coordination with the operators and managers of the public domain: EDF, EEASM ... It is precisely this

work that will define the milestones of the project. We already know that the majority of deployments will take place underground, but in certain cases the connection to buildings may require an installation on the façade. Completion of the work is set for 2023, placing Saint-Martin at the top of the overseas territories fully connected to fiber-optic to this date. Through the SDTAN and SAS Tintamarre, the Collectivité is deploying digital infrastructures to address the shortage of competences in digital professions and succeeding in the challenge of the digital transformation of our territory. The recent pandemic has shown how fragile the tourism industry is, it is more than imperative today to diversify our economy!

## Where does optical fiber come from?

The island of Saint Martin is served by 3 submarine cables, partly French: ECFS, SMPR and GCN. These cables connect the territory to two major international traffic exchange nodes: Miami and Puerto Rico.

## Additional information

The territorial master plan for digital development details the state of play of this development and defines the strategic objectives for 2023. It is a public document that can be found on the Collectivité of Saint-Martin's website <http://www.com-saint-martin.fr/ressources/SDTAN-2020-valide-en-CT-et-au-controle-de-legalite.pdf>



# President Gibbs announces resurfacing of roads and lays down the rules with the operators carrying out the work



In late September 2020, President Daniel Gibbs met with the companies that handle the undergrounding of electrical wires and fiber-optic cables, as well as those that are upgrading the water network and sewage pipes. Team Gibbs launched these projects after hurricane Irma hit the island in 2017.

The directors of Dauphin Télécom, MSR Cable TV, EDF, and SAUR were all present. President Gibbs had two goals: to announce the start of the first phase of the repaving of the roads and to set a calendar and coordinate the work between all the companies involved.

## A first resurfacing phase from Agrément to Oyster Pond in 2020 and 2021

In early November, the Collectivité launched its plans for 2020-2021 to resurface the main roads leading from Agrément to Oyster Pond. The cost is estimated at 3M€.

President Gibbs reminded those companies involved that once these sections of the road

are resurfaced, it will be strictly forbidden to dig trenches in the asphalt without prior authorization from the Collectivité (signed by the President). With this authorization in hand, the company (electricity, fiber, water, cable TV) will have to restore the road

### Resurfacing Schedule :

**November 17-28, 2020:** A period of 15 days with work done at night (9pm-6am)

- Repaving of the RN7: diverse zones between the Agrément roundabout and French Quarter
- Paving of the de Cul-de-Sac road

**November 30- December 9, 2020:** A 15 days period of road repairs done during daytime (7am-4pm):

- The Grand-Case road, between the bridge and Route de l'Espérance
- Route de Grand-Caye
- Route de l'Espérance
- Route de Coralita
- Route de Colombier
- Route de Friar's Bay
- RN7, Belle-Plaine French Quarter

**December 9 & 10, 2020:** Asphalt paving was done at night (9pm-4am) on the RN7, from the intersection of the Grand-Case Boulevard as far as "La rue des Ecoles"



exactly as found with a new surface. It was made clear that each company would use asphalt to fill holes and not just concrete. The President also requested that the companies fill all the holes in the road immediately after their work was finished.

*“You also have your responsibility. I request that you proceed systematically to fill all holes as required, for the safety of our fellow citizens,”* noted the president of Collectivité.

## A second phase of repaving of the RN7 from the Lowlands to Agrément during the 2021-2023 period

The Executive Council has approved the next resurfacing phase of the roads for 2021-

2023, along the RN7 from the Lowlands border to Agrément. Other than resurfacing (asphalt) and the creation of sidewalks, this project also includes structural reinforcement, diverse maintenance, signage, and repairing safety barriers, all for an overall cost of 2M€. Funds will be requested as part of the Convergence Contract (50% State/ 50% COM).

The work will be done in sections, and begin in the second quarter of 2021.

**President Daniel Gibbs and his Vice President Patrick Steven remind the population that the resurfacing of the roads comes after 36 months of intensive work to put electrical wires and fiber-optic cables underground. This work requires a few more months for completion, but does not prevent the paving of the roads to begin especially in areas where the cables have already been buried.**

## A brand new Grand-Case boulevard!

After several months of work to bury electrical wires and fiber-optic cables and the creation of a new wastewater system in the center of Grand-Case, the Collectivité was finally able to pour asphalt on the Bertin-Maurice Boulevard, on Monday, November 16, 2020. This marks a crucial step for the merchants and residents of the area who were eagerly waiting for things to be back to normal.

Additional work is still required on the Bertin-Maurice Boulevard, primarily to finalize the placement of manholes.

The Collectivité had concentrated its efforts on the RN7 between Agrément and French Quarter, while the Cul-de-Sac road, and that of Espérance, were also on the schedule. The goal was to pave zones with asphalt that were in bad shape for the safety of drivers.







**Un dispositif  
pour booster  
l'économie locale.**

**I Am  
Saint-Martin  
STAY  
CATION  
CONSOMMEZ LOCAL !**

## **The tourist office launched a clever promotion for local spending in July and August**

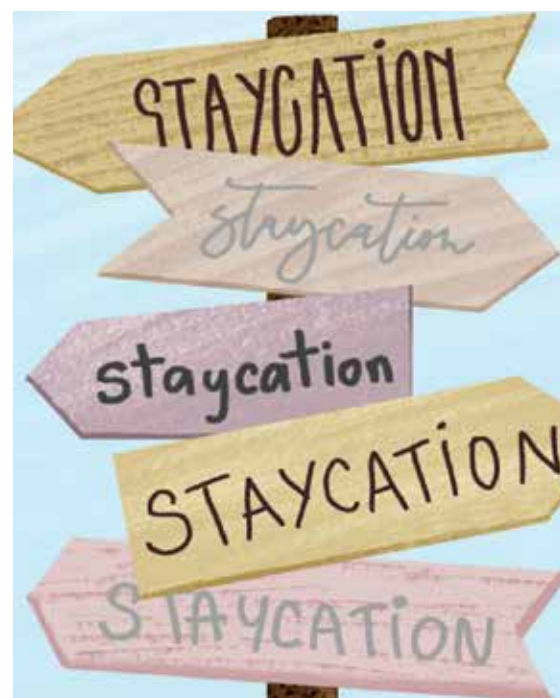
In support of the local economy and those who depend on tourism activities during the months of July and August, a difficult period in 2020 due to the covid-19 travel restrictions, the tourist office created a fund of 500,000€ to launch the project "I am Saint Martin Staycation," in partnership with the CCISM. A group of 40 businesses, restaurants, hotels and guest houses, shops and leisure activities participated. Consumers who signed up in advance on the "I am Saint Martin Staycation" platform received discount vouchers worth 170€ for two months, or 340€ per person: two vouchers of 30€ to use in restaurants; two vouchers of 30€ for a leisure activity; two vouchers of 100€ for accommodations; and two vouchers of 10€ to use in shops.

A total of 13,500 of these discount vouchers were given away in Saint Martin/Sint Maarten, Saint Barths, as well as in Guadeloupe and Martinique. That represents a total of 5,000 vouchers of 30€ for use in restaurants, 5,000

vouchers of 30€ for leisure activities, 1,500 vouchers of 10€ for shopping, and 2,000 vouchers of 100€ to stay in hotels and guest houses. This was the first time that such a promotion was offered, whose sole objective was to incite residents and regional tourists to spend money locally and participate in activities on the island.

This event was affected by the closing of the border on July 31, preventing residents from the south side of the island to go to the north side. The division of the island throughout the month of August made it less attractive for regional tourism.

Valérie Damaseau, President of the Tourist Office, indicated in late October, that the Staycation project had injected 1 million euros into the economy of Saint Martin at a time that was essential for local businesses. The project was supported by the Collectivité, which finances the annual budget of the Tourist Office as well as that of the CCISM.



# HEALTH CRISIS

## March 16, the day when **everything** changed!

**Monday, March 16, early afternoon local time, the island went into lockdown as announced by President Macron, as he declared war against the COVID-19 virus. A lockdown that was applicable immediately throughout all of France.**

After three active cases of the virus in Saint Martin early March, the island did not have any more cases by March 16. Yet the population accepted this decision as of the next day, Tuesday, March 17, when all non-essential businesses closed their doors and the population was confined to their homes. Initially announced for two weeks, this unusual period of confinement was extended to May 11, 2020. Close to two months when everyone was restricted to their homes, only allowed to go out as strictly necessary, when children had to experience distance learning, and the entire economy of the island was plunged into darkness.

The population of Saint Martin accepted this new hardship, barely three years after the devastation caused by hurricane Irma. But they stood strong and helped each other, as the population proved its solidarity in every neighborhood.

Team Gibbs, representing the majority of the Territorial Council, and the staff of the Collectivité spared no effort in creating a Solidarity Pact to help those in need.

President Gibbs expressed his appreciation to the people of Saint Martin, commending their sense of responsibility and unique capacity of resilience.

Excerpts from President's Gibbs speech on

March 17, 2020:

*"My fellow citizens,  
We are facing a new crisis, a health crisis of such large magnitude that the global repercussions are without precedent... Once again, our self-sacrifice is going to be tested as we deal with an invisible threat, but one that is real, and can directly impact that which is most precious to us: our health..."*

*The situation is critical and we must accept that this threat is serious and act with responsibility, as we have always done in different circumstances..."*





# Solidarity Pact

**The brutal shutdown of all activity evidently had severe consequences for the most fragile of families.**

During the very first hours of this terrible crisis, that would once again impact the island, the local politicians got to work to establish plans to support those who are the most fragile and vulnerable, while also enacting the steps taken by the French government.

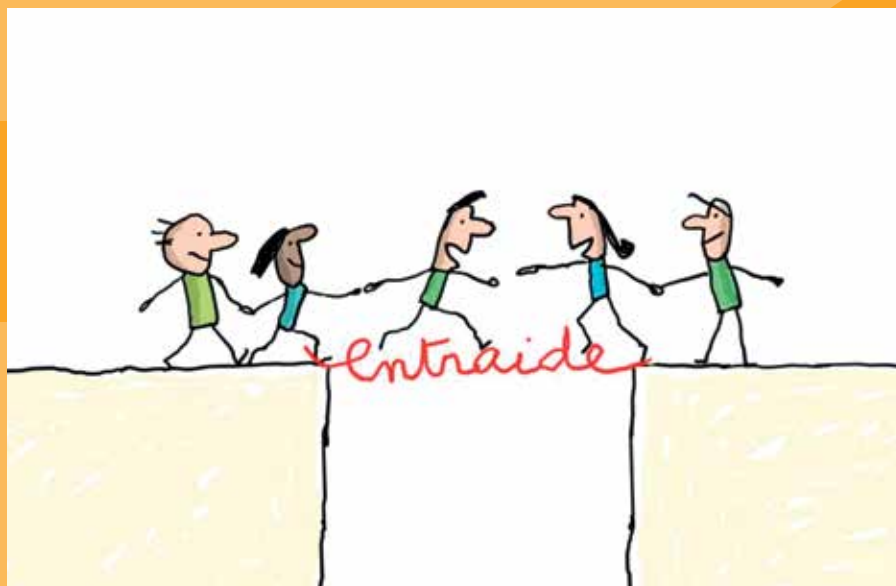
## Preventing isolation

On March 30, the Collectivité, under the guidance of third Vice President Annick Pétrus and the Solidarity and Family Services, created a Solidarity Pact. Its first priority was to help students in difficulty who were off island, then broadening to help those in a vulnerable situation: senior citizens, people with handicaps, families in difficulty, or those who were isolated.

Emergency provisions were delivered daily to homes in need, including hot meals prepared by the CTOS for the modest price of 3.50€, as well as food baskets prepared in collaboration with the Red Cross. The Solidarity Pact also allowed for home deliveries of groceries by

partnering associations, Sandy Ground On the Move and COBRACED. This program continued through the lockdown period and, ended May 31, 2020. The Solidarity and Family Services continues to monitor and provide help for these families in need that were identified during this time.

In order to help those with limited mobility, due to their advanced age or a handicap, who had trouble getting to the supermarket or the pharmacy due to the lockdown, the Collectivité with the help of the French government and the logistical help of the association COBRACED, established a home delivery service for necessities (food and medication...). Psychological support for this segment of the population was also available via COBRACED.



## The Solidarity Pact Report

The Solidarity Pact assisted 2,225 people throughout the health crisis.

Between April 3 and May 31, 2020, the Collectivité of Saint-Martin distributed 1,841 food baskets for a cost of 32,000€ covered by the Collectivité

Between April 3 and May 31, 2020, the CTOS distributed 80 meals per day to homes equivalent to 4,800 meals for a cost of 14,000€; plus 180 baskets per week containing meals for the week. The total overall cost for the CTOS was 92,000€.

The home delivery of these meals and food baskets were made possible by the incredible solidarity shown by various groups and associations that were part of the Pact: The Red Cross, Le Manteau de Saint-Martin, the District councils, associations such as COBRACED and Sandy Ground on the Move, as well as the councillors and staff of the Collectivité and the CTOS.

The Maternal and Child Protection service also put in place consultations and social services for children as well as childcare facilities for the children of health workers during the crisis.

The President and the entire Territorial Council extended their sincere thanks to everyone, MERCI!

# Operation “A Mask For Everyone”



After some hesitation at a higher level over wearing a protective mask, it was finally decided it was a good way to fight against the propagation of the virus. Once again, the solidarity network came into play.

In mid-April, the Collectivité and the Préfecture launched a call for the manufacturing and contribution of reusable masks that met French standards.

As a result, 52 people volunteered to sew 40,000 cloth masks. The CAF of Saint -Martin provided two sewing machines, and the staff of Home Couture at Hope Estate took care of cutting the fabric and delivering it to the volunteers.

These masks first were distributed to children in school as of May 18. Then, they were given out in various neighborhoods. This program was made possible thanks to a partnership between the French government, the Collectivité, Initiative Saint-Martin (ISMA) and the Fondation de France.

Under the authority of the Head of the General Directorate, Christiane Ayache, the Collectivité also placed an order for 24,000 masks that were distributed with priority given to first-line workers in contact with the public (staff of the Family and Solidarity Service, the CTOS, those delivering groceries or meals to homes, etc...) and to those associations helping those who were the most vulnerable on a daily basis.



## The “Friendly Student” Program

Many students from Saint Martin who were abroad found themselves in complicated personal or financial situations. In addition to the stress of being confined, they were no longer able to do the little jobs that most of them had to earn extra money and lighten the financial burden for their families. Conscious of this stressful situation, the Collectivité, as part of its island’s social services, launched the Friendly Student Program.

The Executive Council voted a one-time 500€ grant to help those 340 students already getting financial aid and/or identified as facing difficulties. In addition, quarterly grants were made available in advance. This aid for students represents a financial package of 186,000€.

## Bringing Students Home From Canada



Students from Saint-Martin found themselves confined for several weeks in Canada, without any possibility of getting home as the borders were closed. Some of them had rental leases that were up and the university dorms had closed. An emergency partnership was initiated to get these students back home, with the Region of Guadeloupe, the Collectivité of Martinique, the Collectivités of Saint Barths and Saint Martin and Air Caraïbes, which chartered a flight that allowed 283 students to come home. The operation took four days.

The Collectivité de Saint-Martin had identified 25 students who were in a difficult situation in Canada when a survey was done during the lockdown. Starting on Monday, June 1, they were contacted individually to offer them the chance to fly home via Guadeloupe on Saturday, June 6.

A total of 12 students from Saint Martin benefitted from this group repatriation, as the others opted to stay where they were, afraid they would not be able to return to Canada in time to continue their classes.

Once they arrived in Guadeloupe, these 12 students were taken care of officially and spent two nights at a hotel since the Guadeloupe’s airport Pôle Caraïbes was closed. They were finally able to land in Grand Case on Monday, June 8. President Daniel Gibbs, along with Vice President Annick Pétrus and Parliamentarian Claire Guion-Firmin were there to welcome them.

Prior to their departure from Canada, these students were tested and then again five days later. They also respected a strict, seven-day confinement period once home.



# The Collectivité Acquires screening equipment



Though health is a State competence, it remains a shared concern. From the beginning of the health crisis, the Collectivité quickly assumed its part by bearing the costs of screening equipment, thanks to European funding. The general management of the Collectivité quickly put in place emergency purchasing procedures to acquire equipment: screening machines and ventilators for the laboratories and the hospital for people with symptoms, as well as 2400 serological test kits for the random detection of antibodies. Concretely, it is the laboratories and the hospital that handled the testing on infected persons. On the other hand, general

practitioners administered the serological tests according to the medical protocol predefined by health actors, in conjunction with the Regional Health Agency, the sole authority responsible for validating these procedures. The objective was to systematically identify symptoms, and isolate carriers of the virus to treat them and protect our population as much as possible. In addition to this equipment, masks and protective gear acquired costing overall 332,000 euros. While these additional expenditures are eligible for European funds they however were not accounted for in the 2020 budget initially voted.

## Screening Campaigns

The Collectivité of Saint-Martin was actively involved alongside the Regional Health Agency and the State to control the spread of the coronavirus on the territory. As of May 4, a mobile screening facility led by our hospital, was set up to test symptomatic persons.

Moreover, the Collectivité was also highly involved in the screening campaigns that were held in the different districts and which were initiated by the Regional Health Agency in partnership with the Red Cross and hospital doctors. The Department of Communications of the Collectivité relayed the information.

The Collectivité affirmed its unwavering support to the different organizations in charge of implementing these health measures.



# YOUTH PROGRAMS

## A priority for the President's team

### Education, youth and sports :

## A digital middle school in French Quarter

**When schools go back in session in January 2022 at the latest, French Quarter will have a 100% digital middle school. Construction set to beginning in early 2021.**

Originally built for a limited time using prefab modules in a flood zone, the French Quarter middle school was destroyed by hurricane Irma and will soon be torn down. It will be replaced by a new, modern school, which meets all the requirements of its status as a REP+ (Priority Education Reference System). This project, originated from an exchange between President Daniel Gibbs and representatives of the National Board of Education, will benefit from a budget of 10M€.

Financial support comes from the Overseas Ministry (3.2M€), Europe via the ERDF (5.2M€), and the Collectivité contributing 1.6M€. This new middle school will accommodate 600 students in 34 classes. As required by the REP+ status, smaller classrooms with personalized support and help given to students with their homework

can easily be accomplished in new and well-equipped facilities.

#### Student's comfort taken into account

Entirely digital, connected to fiber optics, the school will provide each student with a tablet and the classrooms will be integrally equipped with digital blackboards and projectors. Those with special educational needs will have access to specific teaching in two sectors : botanical gardens/horticulture and fast food. Giving these students the opportunity to prepare for the job market. The architectural competition was launched on December 18, 2019, and after the administrative and technical phases, the

winner was unanimously selected on July 7, 2020. The pandemic has caused a delay of four months, but work will get underway so that the school can open as soon as possible.

Didier Rouault's West Indies Architecture firm proposal was granted the project as the proposal gave priority to the comfort of the students. The school will be completely air-conditioned and have a convivial space for meals as well as lots of room for gardens. In terms of physical education, the gym and the dojo (the only one on the island) are close to the school and will remain open on weekends for use by gymnasts and those who practice martial arts. Finally, the building will be raised to avoid any flooding. A beautiful new school should lend itself to the academic success of the students in French Quarter.





# A nautical center for the youth of Saint Martin

**Three pools for children on the island to learn to swim! A project that has been discussed for decades will finally see the light of day. Having a nautical center is a necessity, and a large majority of overseas territories have them. This type of infrastructure allows for an initiation to swimming as part of the scholastic program, and for the organization of annual competitions.**

Based on the fact that 82% of the 9,000 students on the island from pre-school thru high school do not know how to swim, Daniel Gibbs and his team decided to create an important nautical center with housing for athletes visiting the island. This nautical center will also fill the legal requirements for teaching swimming in school and will be open to the youth of Saint Martin on the weekends and holidays.

This 6M€ project was financed by the Ministry of Overseas for 3.9M€, the Collectivité for 900,000€ and Europe for 1.5M€.

## Three pools for swimmers of all ages

Accepted by the Executive Council, the project for the nautical center started with the architectural competition last July. The winning architect will be announced in January 2021 and the opening of the nautical center, located in the La Savane sector, is scheduled for the first quarter of 2022.

The large-scale nautical center project, voted after a year of planning studies, will provide Saint Martin with a new facility in the form of a new aquatic center with two 25-meter pools, respectively 25 and 15 meters wide, a 60 sq meter paddling pool for babies and toddlers, dressing rooms, and a snack area open to everyone, all set within three acres of gardens. The construction of twenty rental studios will allow visiting teams to have lodging for competitions, while making the studios profitable. The Executive Council and Territorial Assembly will decide next year on the management plan for the center.

## Creation of new jobs

Though ensuring the safety of everyone in the aquatic environment is a priority which is also located on an island—it is clear that learning to swim creates job opportunities in the tourism sector which are not available to those who do not know how to swim. In terms of creating new jobs, the Collectivité is preparing an outline for a yearlong training program of eight lifeguards needed for the opening of the nautical sports center. At the same time, five to six technicians will be dedicated to the technical maintenance of the pools. Five to six others jobs will be required for the management of the rental studios for athletes and an additional 15 positions for maintaining the buildings and gardens will complete the staff of the nautical center. In addition, a security squad will be created for the safe use of the center and prevent vandalism.

The pools will be open to students in the morning and the afternoon, with recreational swimming at lunchtime, and training for clubs in the evening. Training of divers and firemen, as well as examinations can also take place here. The public will be able to enjoy a day at the pool on Wednesdays, weekends, and as well as during school vacations.



# A middle-school catering to 900 students in La Savane

**An exciting project to shape the future for the young people in and around Grand Case, that's what's on the books with the construction of a middle school for 900 students in La Savane.**

The destruction of Soualiga middle school by hurricane Irma led to the displacement of its 600 students to the Cité Scolaire of La Savane, which currently caters to 1,620 students at its middle school and high school while its original capacity was limited to 954 places. The construction of a new school was necessary and the option was for a middle school of a capacity 900 seats. When it opens, it will allow the Cité Scolaire Robert Weinum to be transformed into a general education and technology high school, and comfortably accommodate the 850 current high school students on the island.

This new middle school, like the one in French Quarter, will also have 100% digital technology, thanks to an interconnection between the students' tablets and their teacher's computer, as well as a digital blackboard connected to a rear projector in each classroom.

Physical education is also on the menu, with a sports field close to the fire station. The four architects retained after the first phase of the selection process have submitted their completed projects and the opening of the school is expected in the last quarter of 2022 at the latest. The final phase of the architectural competition is underway, and we will share the results with you as soon as the winner is chosen.

This infrastructure requires an investment of more than 25M€. The financing has been provided by the Ministry of National Education for 15M€, the Ministry of Overseas for 5.5M€, and the Collectivité for 4.7M€.



# A Wonderful Way To Transform The Media Library

**Transform a media library damaged by hurricane Irma into a fun, multi-cultural space open to everyone: that is the goal set by the Collectivité, which is collaborating with the French government on this innovative project.**

The Media Library of Saint Martin unfortunately did not sustain hurricane Irma.

Why not transform it into something more appealing, while keeping its cultural personality? The first decision made by Daniel Gibbs, an architect, and Jean Roca, who works for the French agency that develops projects financed by the government, was to save only the structural concrete of the building to solve the problems caused by the consequences of hurricane Irma and get it back in use. A report by an expert will attest the safety of the structure. The roof that covered the third floor, where the library was located, as well as the glass wall that enclosed the media library, will not be kept. The new building will only comprise of two stories with a rooftop terrace.

## Micro-Folie: a digital technology for art!

The ground floor, partially underground, will comprise a hurricane shelter. It will be equipped with a medical unit ready to treat potential patients during a hurricane or if there are problems at the hospital close by. The existing theatre, not yet in use and built on a slight slope, will serve as access with the upper floor. With seating for 250 persons, this performance hall which has been anxiously awaited on our island, can also serve as a movie theater and conference center.

On the upper floor, the Micro-Folie project, carried by Vice President Valérie Damaseau, will be dedicated to a center inspired by the same name at La Villette in Paris. Its

goal is to bring the best art collections to the islands, by way of a digital museum. A great way to bring such masterpieces closer geographically, but that's not all. There will also be various workshops for the visual arts, music, and dance... according to requests by the public. The hall, with an open roof, will be transformed as part of the renovation project into an esplanade and terrace for the future «Café Folie» a charming space where visitors can meet and exchange ideas about art and culture.



## Micro-Folie: follow the guide!

<p><b>Franck Riester : «Les Micro-Folies. C'est un moyen formidable de cohésion sociale.»</b> - 15 avril 2019 - <b>Marianne</b></p>	<p><b>« Un moyen de ramener la culture dans nos villes. »</b> - 17 novembre 2018 - <b>Le Parisien</b></p>	<p><b>« Les jeunes s'y précipitent, les générations se mélangent, la convivialité se cultive avec la créativité et l'éducation. »</b> - 12 mars 2018 - <b>LE FIGARO</b></p>	<p><b>« Le méga succès de la Micro-Folie. La Culture en banlieue, ça marche. »</b> - mars 2017 - <b>Le Parisien</b></p>
<p><b>« Une structure culturelle innovante. »</b> - 16 janvier 2017 - <b>Le Monde</b></p>	<p><b>« Lutter contre les déserts culturels. »</b> - 15 mars 2018 - <b>Libération</b></p>	<p><b>« Micro-Folie, sorte de Musée du futur : ce n'est pas le public qui vient à l'art mais l'art qui vient au public. »</b> - 30 janvier 2019 - <b>Les Echos</b></p>	<p><b>« Le numérique se met au service de l'art. »</b> - 24 décembre 2018 - <b>L'ÉCHO RÉPUBLICAIN</b></p>
<p><b>« Des univers virtuels à 360 degrés : une vraie expérience sensorielle. »</b> - décembre 2018 - <b>Pratique des ARTS</b></p>	<p><b>« Amener la culture là où il n'y en a pas forcément. C'est un outil qui fonctionne partout. »</b> - 30 novembre 2018 - <b>LA VOIX DE LA MER</b></p>	<p><b>« Avec Micro-Folie, le musée vient à vous. »</b> - décembre 2018 - <b>ouest france</b></p>	<p><b>« Adaptés aux enfants et aux adultes. »</b> - 14 décembre 2018 - <b>LE PROGRÈS</b></p>
<p><b>« Favorise l'accès à l'art à des populations qui en sont éloignées. »</b> - 15 décembre 2018 - <b>le courrier</b></p>	<p><b>« Un tiers lieu culturel et économique. »</b> - 14 décembre 2018 - <b>ECO</b></p>	<p><b>« Un musée virtuel qui rend accessible des «trésors». »</b> - 28 septembre 2018 - <b>corse.matin</b></p>	<p><b>« Un espace unique de création, de pratique artistique et d'échange. »</b> - 6 septembre 2018 - <b>Var-matin</b></p>

The Micro-Folie is organized around its digital museum. An innovative cultural experience, this museum unites thousands of masterpieces from many of the best national and international collections. Supported by the Cultural Minister, the Micro-Folie project is coordinated by La Villette, which helps each territory in the

creation of its own Micro-Folie. These new spaces have greatly increased attendance of media libraries in the cities where they are located, and it is expected that there will be 1,000 Micro -Folies by 2023, in France and around the world.

Team Gibbs is very hopeful that these

projects will be completed in 2022 and doing its utmost for the Micro-Folie media library and other projects for young people to see the light of day as quickly as possible. A considerable effort will also be put on training, with an island-wide effort to train professionals as well as provide financial aid for students.



COLLECTIVITÉ DE SAINT-MARTIN



# PROTÉGEONS NOTRE ENVIRONNEMENT !

Après les sacs en plastique  
en juillet 2016,  
c'est la fin de la vaisselle jetable !

Depuis le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2020,  
les gobelets, verres et assiettes  
à usage unique sont interdits.



**INTERDIT DEPUIS LE 1<sup>ER</sup> JANVIER 2020  
PROHIBITED SINCE JANUARY 1, 2020**

## I PROTECT MY ENVIRONMENT!

The end of all plastic bags  
is in effect since July 2016.



Now, as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2020,  
it's the end of all single use cups,  
plates containers and plastic utensils.



*"Saint-Martin Plastic-free by 2023"*





COLLECTIVITÉ DE SAINT-MARTIN

J'AIME  
MON ILE

JE LA  
PROTÈGE !



LE BON GESTE  
CITOYEN  
POUR PROTÉGER  
SAINT-MARTIN !

