



**STATEMENT**  
**Ministry of Commerce, Planning & Infrastructure**

23 October, 2018

Last week Cayman News Service published an article which falsely claimed government plans a mass removal of trees in George Town.

The article misrepresents statements made at the NRA's Road Safety Conference by the team leading the George Town Revitalization Project, and is driven by assumptions and opinions and not fact-based reporting.

At the conference, a presentation was made to give attendees a preview of the strategy behind the revitalization plan, and how road design and safety of all types of traffic was being considered in the context of this project. The presentation also provided an overview of the purpose and intention of the George Town Revitalization Project which is to bring life back into the country's capital.

The redesign of the space will be guided by the principles of New Urbanism, which priorities walkability/connectivity, mixed use and sustainability. Trees, landscaping, green/open spaces will all be an important and prominent aspect of the redesign.

Leading the project is the newly appointment George Town Manager, Colin Lumsden. Mr. Lumsden is the architect who joins us from the Public Works Department, bringing 20+ years of expertise to the project.

To begin the process of the redesign, community and stakeholder involvement and input will be key. In fact, some stakeholder engagement has already taken place, and more is planned to ensure the needs of the people are factored into the redesign.

The project team is also exploring ways in which some immediate changes and improvements can be made; which could include altering sidewalks, in an effort to provide more and safer walking space for pedestrians. In addition, there will be landscaping improvements.

At the conference, it was mentioned that a park in George Town was being beautified as part of the overall revitalization plan. Part of that beautification process would require trimming back shrubbery that is currently blocking one of the monuments in the park. The beautification efforts would not include the mass removal of trees, and would not be done without purpose as implied by the Cayman News Service article.

Creating more green spaces have always been a priority for government. The George Town Revitalization Project aims to create a bustling, vibrant town with lots of greenery, not less trees. We are disappointed that something so positive could be taken out of context and portrayed so negatively.

The revitalization of George Town will take time, but we are committed to ensuring that our people are involved in the process and that it will be sustainable.