



*"Building a green future via Service, Innovation & Transformation!"*

## THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES, ENERGY, LOGISTICS & E-GOVERNANCE

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Esteemed Guests,

Welcome to our beautiful nation of Belize.

As the Minister with responsibility for the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance, I am excited and thankful for the opportunity to cultivate partnerships and investment opportunities.

The Ministry provides a wide range of investment opportunities across various sectors. Some of our key focus areas are Renewable Energy, Information Technology, Digital Services, as well as Port and Postal Services.

This catalog offers a comprehensive overview of the Ministry's mission and responsibilities, a concise summary of our ongoing and future projects, as well as an introduction to the Units and departments that contribute to the fulfillment of our mandate. Our intention is for this catalog to serve as a convenient source of information for our valued Stakeholders. Throughout the years, the Ministry has made significant progress in fulfilling its responsibilities by offering policy guidance that has resulted in notable accomplishments in the advancement of our nation's economic growth. We have collaborated with various government ministries, local authorities, agencies, development partners, and the private sector. Our dedication lies in fostering positive working relationships with stakeholders and partners, as well as promoting mutual support and cooperation.

The Government has effectively established a favorable investment environment by implementing legislative changes, implementing prudent policies, and engaging in strategic planning.

The investment opportunities in Belize are abundant and we look forward to welcoming your business to our jewel!



**Hon. Michel Chebat, SC.**

Minister of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance



## BELIZE: A LAND OF DIVERSITY AND NATURAL BEAUTY

**Belize is a Caribbean and Central American country on the north-eastern coast of Central America.**

Belize is bordered by Mexico to the north, the Caribbean Sea to the east, and Guatemala to the west and south. It also shares a sea boundary with Honduras to the southeast. It has an area of 8,867 sq mi (22,970 square kilometres) and a population of 441,471. Its mainland is 180 miles long (290 km) and 68 mi wide (110 km). Belize is often thought of as a Caribbean country in Central America because it has a history similar to that of English-speaking Caribbean nations. Belize's institutions and official language reflect its history as a British colony.

Belize is a country known for its diverse culture, languages, and ethnic groups. The population consists of Creole, Garifuna, Mestizo, Spanish, Maya, English, Mennonite, Lebanese, Chinese, and East Indian communities. Through racial harmony and religious tolerance, these various elements have successfully mixed and blended, earning Belize a well-deserved reputation for its friendly people.





# BEAUTIFUL BELIZE

Belize is renowned for its remarkable biodiversity and unique ecosystems. Along the coast, you'll find a lush coastal plain adorned with mangrove swamps. In the southern and interior regions, hills and low mountains grace the landscape. As part of the Mesoamerican biodiversity hotspot, Belize is home to awe-inspiring jungles, wildlife reserves, and a vast array of plant and animal species. Notably, it houses the largest cave system in Central America. Among the remarkable flora and fauna found in Belize, you can discover the enchanting black orchid, the majestic mahogany tree, the vibrant toucan, and the iconic tapir.



## THE PEOPLE

In Belize, our traditions and customs encompass a rich tapestry of over eight distinct cultures. Throughout generations, the people of Belize have shown a strong dedication to preserving the country's unique allure. The Belizean population is composed of Maya, Mestizo, Kriol, Garifuna, East Indian, Mennonite, Arab, and Chinese communities.

This blending of cultures has fostered a harmonious and content society, earning Belize a well-deserved reputation as one of the friendliest tourist destinations in the world.

## CURRENCY

The currency of Belize is the dollar (ISO code BZD), divided into 100 cents. The Belizean dollar, sometimes written as "BZ\$1" or just as a dollar sign: "\$" – has been fixed to the US dollar (USD) at a 2:1 ratio since 1978 (i.e. BZ\$2 = US\$1). Because of this consistent exchange rate, US dollars are widely accepted. Belize dollars come in denominations of BZ\$2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100. B\$1 and smaller amounts are coins. The 25-cent coin is often called a "shilling."

## GOVERNMENT

Belize's government operates under the British parliamentary system. The constitution of 1981 establishes a bicameral National Assembly, which comprises an elected House of Representatives and an appointed Senate. Members of both the House and the Senate serve terms of five years. The governor-general, a Belizean national representing the British crown, formally appoints the prime minister (the leader of the majority party in the House) and the opposition leader (the leader of the main minority party). The prime minister, in turn, selects the cabinet.

At the local level, governance is carried out by the Belize City Council and various town boards, which possess authority over most municipal matters. The majority of villages have their own councils, while certain Mayan villages have an alcalde, a traditional leader elected by the community.





# The Belize Energy Unit

In February 2012, the Government of Belize endorsed the National Energy Policy and Planning Framework (NEP). This document was created to assess the country's energy sector and propose a pathway for its evolution.

The NEP highlighted the need for energy planning which propelled the creation of the Energy Unit. The Energy Unit is the administrative agent of the energy and public utilities portfolio with responsibility for planning and policymaking. The Energy Unit currently operates within the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance.

The foundation of the Energy Unit's work to enhance the energy sector and improve access to modern and sustainable energy is based on 7 objectives:

- ✓ Improving Governance in the Energy Sector
- ✓ Strengthen Energy Management Capabilities
- ✓ Increase Access to Energy Information
- ✓ Reduce Cost of Energy Services

Increase Indigenous Energy Sources in the Energy Supply Mix

## OBJECTIVES

The Energy Unit's Mission statement is to plan, promote, and effectively manage the production, delivery and use of energy through Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Cleaner Production interventions for the sustainable development of Belize.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Completion of Indian Creek Micro Grid
- ✓ Inauguration of E-Mobility Pilot Program for City and Highway Electric Buses
- ✓ Finalization of Pre-Feasibility study of organic waste to energy
- ✓ Energy Policy 2-23-2040
- ✓ Enhancement of Energy Statistics
- ✓ Resource mapping of surface manifestation of geothermal hot springs



## European Development Fund (EDF-11) Energy Programme

### COMPONENT 1 - ENERGY ACCESS

The Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance has been engaged with the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF-11) project since 2019 upon the signing of the financing agreement for a total of €13.5M. The EDF-11 project can be broken into three project components and component 1 is to increase energy access across the country.

The main objective of the EDF-11 Energy Access project is to create a National Rural Electrification Plan by identifying communities that are not connected to the national grid due to geographic and economic constraints. In total, thirty-six (36) communities were identified, and twenty-eight (28) communities were interested in receiving power to their communities.

Funds have been allocated to start electrifying some of the communities with the intention of seeking more funds to electrify the remaining communities. The Belize Electricity Limited (BEL), on the behalf of the Government, has signed a grant agreement with the European Union, €4.5M and €0.5M co-financing from BEL, to electrify five (5) communities using renewable energy. The Energy Access program is set to be completed in 2024. These projects are energy sustainable projects since they will be operated and managed by BEL. This is in line with Plan Belize to improve the quality of the low-income in the rural population.

### COMPONENT 2 - ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Government of Belize has received funding from the European Union through the 11th European Development Fund and intends to apply a part of those funds towards the implementation of the project entitled "EDF11-Energy Efficiency in Buildings"

The main objective of the EDF11-Energy Efficiency in Buildings Project is the promotion of sustainable energy use in buildings through interventions that constitute energy efficiency applications within Belize. The Energy Efficiency in Buildings Project activities are intended to reduce electricity use by 20 per cent from the business as usual (BAU) scenario at the end of the project period in 2024. The mainstreaming of sustainable energy use within the building sector in Belize has the potential to significantly reduce energy use.

**Some national benefits expected from this initiative include:**

- (i) the delay or avoidance of new power generation infrastructure to match rising demand;
- (ii) reduction in electricity consumption by the commercial (including public) and residential building sectors;
- (iii) mitigation of the fiscal burden that is caused by the importation of expensive fossil fuels, with increased fiscal space and foreign exchange savings expected from the reduction in imports;
- (iv) enhanced energy security;
- (v) carbon emissions reductions.





## Energy Policy and Act

As in the case of small countries worldwide - and particularly for Small Island Developing States - Belize faces profound development challenges. Inevitably and significantly, the role of energy services and the provision of energy services directly affect how the country faces and manages the challenges. The need for a clear and forward-looking energy policy and legislative framework for guiding and managing the energy services sector is increasingly evident as the environmental, social, and economic challenges mount. Fortunately, innovations in the provision of energy services - in terms of technology, business models, financing, and partnerships - provide opportunities that invite pro-active and visionary responses.

The Government of Belize, GoB, wishes to establish a national energy policy that reflects the national goals in terms of the national development objectives over the medium to long term while recognising the prevailing constraints and opportunities. The current policy document is the National Energy Policy Framework that was last updated a decade ago in 2012.

Furthermore, the GoB wishes to enact legislation in the form of an energy act of parliament that will establish the institutional and legislative basis for implementing the national energy policy.

Project activities in 2021 included: The creation of the TOR for the Energy Policy and Energy act contactors. Also, the ideas and views of what the Policy and Act must achieve was discussed.

Projected 2022 Goals: The creation of the Energy Act and updating of the Energy Policy.

Consequently, Government of Belize is in the process of introducing renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency measures into the NEMO, Magistrate and Supreme Court Buildings.

### ELECTRIC MOBILITY:

In March 2021, the European Union (EU) Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) in collaboration with the Ministry realized a pre-feasibility study on electric mobility in Belize. The study's result is a project proposal that introduces electric mobility in the national public transportation sector. The planned pilot project "Towards Low Carbon Transport: Piloting e-mobility within Belize's Public Transport System" was launched in February 2022 and will introduce the operation of electric buses within Belize's Public Transport Network, focusing on intercity travel within Belize's Western Corridor and intra-urban public transportation in Belize City.

The project supports the Government's commitment to the modernization of the transport sector and the implementation of Belize's raised ambition Nationally Determined Contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and associated Low Emission Development Strategy (LEDS). In addition, the project aims to achieve long-term co-benefits and presents a good opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants related to road transport, deploy new and cleaner technologies, create new business opportunities and job creation.

Therefore, the decarbonization of the transport sector is critical to the success of transitioning to a low-carbon sustainable energy pathway.

The electric mobility project is funded by the European Union and will be administered by the UNDP Belize Country Office and values approximately 4.5 million Euros (approximately USD 5.3 Million).

### COMPONENT 3 - LAIT UP BELIZE PROJECT POLICY, COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY:

The LAIT UP BELIZE! project has a clear mandate to undertake Policy development, Communication and Visibility (C&V) activities to support the overall objectives of the Technical Assistance activities in addition to liaising and supporting the overall C&V activities.

#### The objectives of the Communication and Visibility Plan for the LAIT UP BELIZE! Project include:

✓ Creating awareness and excitement to stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the Belizean populace about the LAIT UP BELIZE! project by providing proper and effective communication and visibility to develop a clear identity of the Project.

✓ Engaging in dialogue and Informing stakeholders about the aims, objectives, progress, outputs, activities, and outlook for the LAIT UP BELIZE! project.

✓ Providing awareness of energy efficiency and energy access.







# E-Governance and Digitalization Department

Established in 2020 under the first-ever Ministry of E-Governance, the E-Governance and Digitalization Department is responsible for coordinating the planning and implementation of e-Governance in Belize

We do this by empowering public sector organizations to design and implement digital transformation projects and creating the enabling environment and infrastructure for a digital government. We take the leading role in designing and implementing Belize's National Digital Agenda, our digital transformation roadmap.

Through the Digital Government Act, a first of its kind in the region, the E-Governance and Digitalization Unit evolved into a department with the overall task to promote and lead E-Governance efforts with specific responsibilities in the areas of digital infrastructure, digital Government and digital transformation.

## We execute projects focused on:

- ✓ Delivering online public services
- ✓ Building digital capacity in public sector
- ✓ Improving the policy and legal environment
- ✓ Developing infrastructure and shared services
- ✓ Fostering a digital society

## Success & Milestones

See the list of key milestones the EGDU has achieved towards a Digital Belize.

- ✓ Belize's First National Agenda
- ✓ Comprehensive Legal Reform
- ✓ Public Sector Data Sharing Act
- ✓ Data Protection Act
- ✓ Digital Government Act
- ✓ National Identification Strategy
- ✓ Enhanced Online Permit Application & Licensing System for the Department of Environment
- ✓ Cybersafety for Youths Campaign
- ✓ Launch of Belize's Digital Transformation Course
- ✓ Launch of Belize Electronic Licenses and Permits System for the Supplies Control Unit
- ✓ Launch of Belize Motor Vehicle Registration and License System for the Department of Transport
- ✓ Supporting Electronic Payment Solutions: Piloting Mobile Wallet for Online Public Service Payment







## Initiatives In Progress

### Public Service Leave Management System

Through a consultative process with the HRMIS Unit and their internal administrative officers, the Ministry supported the design and development of the automated leave management platform. The platform achieves the automation of sick and vacation leave applications, recommendations, approval, and cancellation for all public officers. The system automatically calculates the defined rules that are put in place to control vacation days and will send notifications via email to inform of mandatory and accumulated leave. Periodic and historical reports will be available for viewing, exporting, and printing.

The project is currently in the deployment phase.

### Police Electronic Record Management System

The Application for a Record of Conduct, commonly known as a “Police Record,” is one of the most frequently utilized government services in the nation of Belize. While applying for a job or other official documents, you must submit the Record of Conduct. The administrative process is currently concentrated at the Belmopan Police Station and is entirely manual for Record of Conduct applications.

To increase access and efficiency and reduce costs, it is necessary to automate the delivery of the service by the Police Department. The project is currently in the software design phase.

### Digital Inclusion Program

The Digital Inclusion Program, which falls under the National Digital Agenda, seeks to facilitate access, adoption, and application of information and communication technologies to marginalized communities as a means for socio-economic prosperity. With that, a digital society depends on digital talent and skills, yet there is a widening digital gap due to new technology and consumer demands. As such, this project aims to support access to online government services while supporting country-wide capacity building in the IT field. The Digital Inclusion Program activities include (i) establishing digital connect centers across rural communities; and (ii) conducting digital skills and literacy training for youths, women, and the elderly. The initial phases of this initiative are being funded through Taiwan’s International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in collaboration with the Government of Belize.

### Strengthening Civil Registry Project

An effective Civil Registry System is crucial in ensuring an individual’s right to a legal identity. The system should support the development of vital statistics by covering all live births, deaths, marriages, and adoptions occurring in an area.

✓ To achieve a well-functioning and efficient civil registry, the Unit designed a comprehensive digital transformation program with the following objectives:

✓ To strengthen the legal environment in Belize relating to vital events to align with best practices;

✓ To strengthen the human resources and IT infrastructure to support a modern civil registry system;

✓ To increase birth registry coverage and awareness of all services;

✓ To simplify and re-engineer the business process of all services;

✓ To support the transition to a full online application platform;

✓ To improve the general public’s perception of the Vital Statistics Unit; and

✓ To promote collaboration and interoperability between public sector agencies.

### E-Portal Project

The E-Services Portal will serve as a hub for digital government services where citizens will be able to access these services from one online platform and sign-in process.

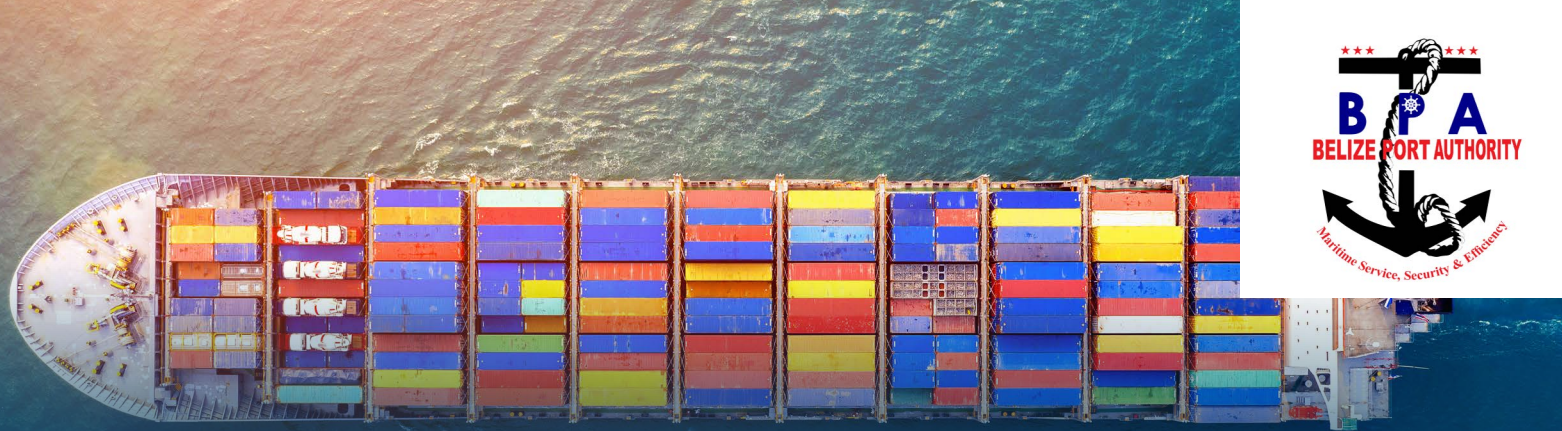
**The main components of this project include:**

(i) the development of a tool for information exchange among key government services

(ii) the delivery of an Electronic Portal to access all government services,

(iii) the digitalization of important government services. Overall, this will significantly improve the efficiency of the government system and provide a better experience for citizens accessing public services.





# Belize Port Authority

The Belize Port Authority (BPA) is a statutory body established by the Belize Port Authority Act to regulate shipping, ports and related auxiliary services. The Authority serves its customers at strategic locations: Belize City (HQ), San Pedro, Big Creek, Placencia and Punta Gorda. BPA has a total staff of 89, in various locations.

## OBJECTIVES

The BPA's objectives are to promote the development of Belize's maritime and port sectors in line with international standards. This will ensure the sector is poised to aid nation-building by providing users with safe, efficient, sustainable maritime and port services.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The BPA's objectives Since 2020, the BPA has endeavoured to strengthen the company to meet our international obligations and to better serve our customers. The Authority has a strong policy and legislative update agenda that will see amendments to the Parent Act, the BPA Act, and relevant and subsidiary legislation.

Similarly, at the policy level, the BPA, in conjunction with relevant maritime agencies, has commenced work toward creating and implementing a national maritime transportation policy and has developed a draft ports policy to guide the sector.

In addition to the legislative and policy agenda, BPA continues to improve its human capital by aligning annual work plans to the needs of the company and to meet the International Maritime Organization (IMO) audit in 2024.

## Short-term Projects

### DIGITALIZATION OF BPA SERVICES:

Ongoing digitalization and decentralization of maritime services for the domestic registry. This will ensure that services are efficiently streamlined in each strategic location and accessible to all maritime users.

### DIGITIZATION FOR DOMESTIC FERRY PASSENGERS:

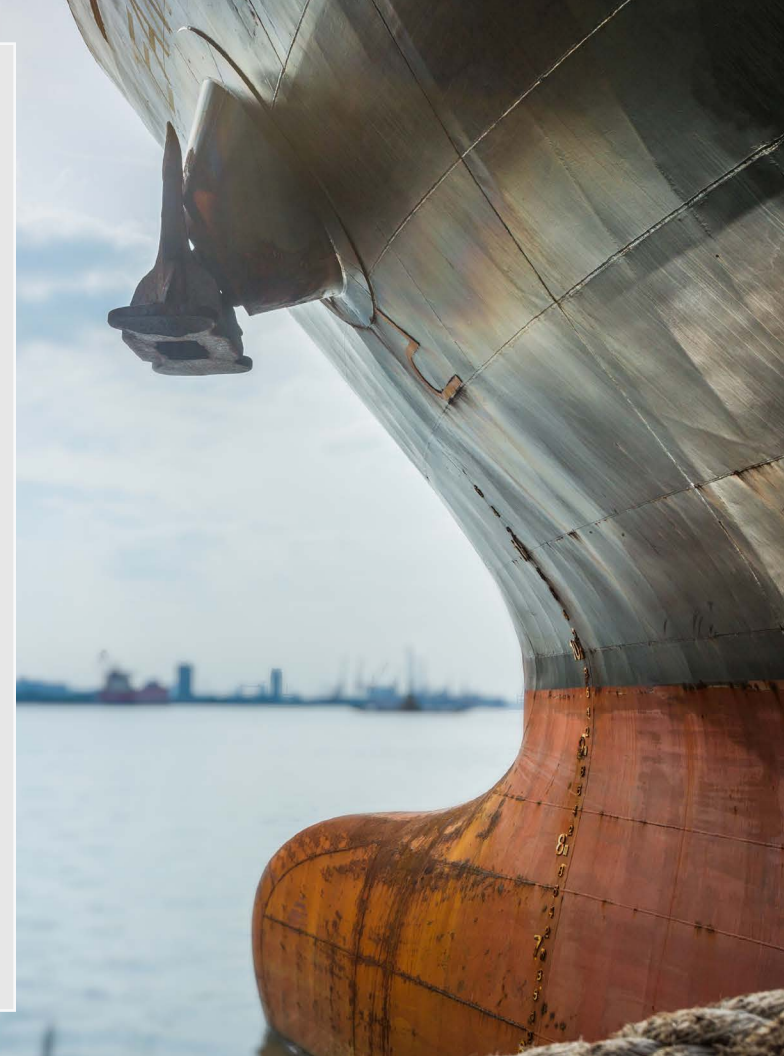
Additionally, digitization and enhanced safety for water taxi users through electronically generated manifests and real-time data capture for water taxi operations: vessels, masters, crews, and passengers which will provide more accurate statistics and real-time data in the event of

## Long-term Project

### PORT DIGITALIZATION:

which aligns with international convention standards (FAL Convention) through adopting the Maritime Single Window and a long-term view to adopt industry standards such as the Port Community System.

This will ensure efficient data exchange and collaboration among port community users. This platform will ensure efficient cargo and passenger movement planning through maritime ports. Additionally, these tools will help decision-makers with real-time data for more effective interventions.







# EXPERIENCE YOU CAN TRUST.

We'll take you Global!



## The Belize Postal Services

The Belize Postal Service has impacted the lives of many Belizeans since its establishment on 7th January, 1830. We remain committed to our core purpose of serving the needs of our citizens, businesses, and government. However, with our many challenges, we continue to deliver our mandate as effectively and efficiently.

Whilst there exists a great opportunity for growth within the Post, it has its limitations and hindrances. The challenges that the Post Office currently faces stem from a lack of resources such as financial, human, and technical resources.

Our financial position has been severely impacted due to the COVID -19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown domestically and internationally. Belize Postal Service is faced with a choice to continue operating in its traditional setting or to be transformed and become more responsive to the evolving needs of our customers and also for long-term viability and sustainability.

Belize Postal Service has established its long-term strategy. The strategy aims to reorganize the Belize Postal Service into a modernized Postal Courier, that adequately serves the needs of the Belizean populace in a sustainable and viable manner. In addition, with the advancement of technology, and surge in the e-Commerce trade, Belize Postal Service wants to seize this opportunity as a major priority for growth. Looking at the Belizean Economy, there has been major development as it relates to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It is seemingly obvious that technological application is an important feature for the global economy and opportunities abound in developing countries like Belize. It is envisaged that by 2027, the Belize Postal Service brand would have developed enough market equity.

The Post Office is no longer in the era of letters services, we need to create new opportunities as we shift to online transactions and digital communication. The world has evolved with many people conducting business online through mediums of buying and selling, therefore parcels need to be delivered worldwide and countrywide.

*We connect people with each other and the world. Everyone Matters, Everyone Prospers, Everyone Thrives, everyone is included. Our people, our customers, our community, our environment, and our suppliers.*

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ We were contacted by Royal Mail to pickup and delivery of the Queens Baton.
- ✓ New revenue streams for parking area at the Post office by Caribbean Sprinter customers.
- ✓ The Post started to transport some of FEDEX parcels.
- ✓ The Postmaster attended Postal Day in Miami, to view the Miami Dade postal operations and Postal Shops.
- ✓ Universal Postal Union (UPU) visited Belize to conduct a study on Documents vs. Goods from January 31st to February 1st, 2023. In which UPU highlighted that processes done at Belize Postal Service is highly manual.

### Main Specification

One main location for the Post office - The main office is operated from 2 different locations. Currently, there is renovation at the Biddles building, however, the initial renovation plan will require modification. The 2-story building being renovated will require much more spacing to accommodate the staff and storerooms required. On the ground floor, we are recommending being a tourist attraction and having a wall of stamp museums to attract tourists and students.







**Belizeans first choice, and trusted in the provision of postal services, while transforming Belize's Post Office into the Digital realm with its quality solutions from well-trained employees.**



## **THE WAY FORWARD**

**The Belize Postal Service wants to ensure the following going forward:**

- ✓ Improve its operating systems through; Revision of all its processes (consultant), Upgrading from manual to automated process using technology, Delivery Application (tracking system), Xray Scanning machines, Surveillance Cameras and Scales.
- ✓ Implementation of GICS System.
- ✓ Training of all employees.
- ✓ Certification Courses.
- ✓ Increase in employees to help promote the Post, as well as for timelier distribution of services. In areas of Marketing, Sales, Customer Service, IT, Drivers, Securities and Delivery Units.
- ✓ Finalize Ground Floor of Biddle's Building to move in our Counter and Parcel Sections.
- ✓ Renovation of Post office Building countrywide.
- ✓ Transportation route to Central & South America.
- ✓ Offer new service options for SME businesses and customers (Flat rate boxes and prepaid envelopes).
- ✓ Increasing cost of services to become financially viable.





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