



# DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

## American Samoa Government



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In reply refer to:  
Serial No: DOC.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

#### Tramway continues its facelift as Samoana NHS Pitches In

*Utulei, American Samoa – January 27, 2015* – The Governor’s Office, through the ASG Department of Commerce, partnering agencies (ASPA, DPW, ASVB, Department of Parks & Recreation) and the Village of Utulei continue their efforts to restore the Utulei Tramway site. This past Saturday, students from the Samoana National Honor Society joined in the effort as part of a community service project. This Saturday’s work was done in preparation for the arrival of the first cruise ships of the year, which are scheduled to arrive this Friday and Saturday.

“The work started in October of last year and we are making good progress.” says David Herdrich, Executive Director of the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office. “While the Department of Commerce continues its efforts to conduct an in depth feasibility study to restore the aerial tramway or cable car, the Utulei site can still serve as one of the premier visitor destinations in American Samoa. The views from up there are priceless!”

The Economic Development Implementation Plan (EDIP), which was recently published by the EDIP Task Force, cites the 2010 Tourism Master Plan’s recommendation that a detailed feasibility study be completed to assess whether the aerial tramway project should be pursued. The once world-renowned tramway was an iconic figure in the Territory and surrounding region. It has been inoperable since 1992, after being destroyed by Hurricane Val.

“We realize that in order to improve our Tourism industry, a great deal of work lies ahead. We are exploring every possibility to remedy our air transportation challenges. We are also in the process of redeveloping the old Rainmaker hotel site and will be considering options and soliciting investors. These challenges take time, however there is still a lot of work we can do in the mean time to improve what we can to enhance the tourist’s experience while here. Redeveloping visitor destinations like the tramway site in Utulei, along with creating new sites, is part of the work that we must continue.” says Department of Commerce Director Keniseli Lafaele.

Samoana National Honor Society Advisor Ailua Leota, who accompanied the students conducting the cleanup, said the students enjoyed the project. “It was a great experience for many of them who have never seen the tramway site. Some students wanted to know if they could show the tourists around, sharing the history of the tramway. Others wanted to begin fundraising.” said Mrs. Leota.

When asked if there are any plans to continue to collaborate with DOC, Mrs. Leota said they do hope to continue the service project. “The students were ecstatic and want to do it again.”

For more information regarding the Tramway Restoration project, please contact the Department of Commerce at 633-5155.



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