DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS
2025 CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT

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About DPL

The Department of Public Lands (DPL), established in 2006 under Public Law 15-2, succeeded the Marianas Public Land Corporation created in 1979 pursuant to Article XI of the CNMI Constitution. As trustee of the Commonwealth's public lands, DPL manages these lands for the benefit of individuals of Northern Marianas Descent.

DPL provides homestead lots to qualified families, leases land for public and private development, and designates sites for essential community needs such as schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. Through responsible land management that balances economic growth with cultural and environmental preservation, and by generating revenues invested by the Marianas Public Land Trust, DPL ensures that Northern Marianas Descent lands continue to benefit present and future generations.

Our Vision

To be a trusted steward of the Commonwealth's Northern Marianas Descent lands—protecting our cultural heritage, supporting community growth, and creating opportunities for a sustainable and prosperous future for all people of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Our Mission

As trustee of the CNMI's Northern Marianas Descent lands, the DPL is dedicated to ensuring the equitable, transparent, and sustainable management of these lands for the benefit of individuals of Northern Marianas Descent. Guided by the strategic Land Use Plan and in consultation with the Public Lands Advisory Board, DPL oversees homesteading, leasing, land claims, and land designations to support balanced development and preserve the Commonwealth's cultural and environmental integrity.

Enhanced 2025 CCR

Additional 2025 CCR Resources

DPL's Applications/Forms

Total Employees
- Saipan-61
- Tinian-3
- Rota-4

Gender
- Female-33
- Male-35

Age Range
- 18-30:6
- 31-50:31
- 51 and over:31

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HOMESTEAD

Homestead Permits issued:

Village	Saipan – 1; Tinian – 0; Rota – 0
Agricultural	Rota - 9

Quitclaim Deed Issued:

Village	Saipan – 2; Tinian – 9; Rota – 9
Agricultural	Tinian – 2; Rota - 0

Pending Homestead Applications:

Village	Saipan – 2123; Tinian – 542; Rota – 723
Agricultural	Tinian – 571; Rota - 755

Request for Proposal (RFP) for the former Rota Resort and Country Club, issued and closed on June 23, 2025, followed by a Notice of Intent to Award (NTA); scheduled for an award before the end of the year 2025.

The Managaha Pier Rehabilitation Project's main goal was to revitalize and restore the pier. This project was completed as of July 2025, a joint effort between DPL, OIA, DPW, BECQ, and DLNR.

PLANNING

The Planning Division is responsible for the planning, homestead development, surveys and maintenance of land information functions. Land use reviews are performed for either government, commercial, or private land use request.

Survey & Mapping	**19**
As-Built	**9**
Stake Out	**17**
Retracement	**32**
Topographic	**0**
Designations	**27**
TOA	**67**
LUR	**43**
Reconveyance	**2**

DPL issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Managaha Island Master Concession. Submission of proposals closed on May 5, 2025. Operation start date scheduled due February 2026, after renovation completion.

DPL and Suwaso Corporation dba Coral Ocean Resort executed a new lease for another 40 years (PL20-84) this past February 2025.

Leases and Temporary Occupancy Agreements

The Department of Public Lands (DPL) manages a total of **78** active commercial leases across the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. These leases encompass a wide range of land uses that support tourism, education, recreation, and economic development, generating significant revenue for the Commonwealth and providing long-term community benefits.

Leased properties include major hospitality, recreational, and educational establishments such as:

- Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan
- Portions of the Pacific Islands Club (PIC)
- Kanoa Resort
- Laolao Bay Golf & Resort
- Grace Christian Academy
- Marianas Beach Resort (formerly Hyatt Regency Saipan)
- Saipan World Resort
- Coral Ocean Resort
- Kingfisher Golf Links
- Brilliant Star Montessori School

In addition, DPL currently oversees **108** active Temporary Occupancy Agreements (TOAs). These agreements authorize short-term or limited-purpose use of public lands for activities such as beach concessions, roadside vending, quarry operations, parking, encroachment, maintenance, telecommunications infrastructure, and subsistence agriculture and grazing. The Compliance Division ensures that all land leases, permits, and TOAs are followed in accordance with the terms set by DPL's Real Estate Division, promoting accountability and fair use of public lands.

FINANCES

- Budget: Increased by $605,194 (12%), supporting expanded operational activities and capital project needs.
- Total Revenue: Decreased by $524,257 (–8%), mainly due to slower lease collections and the temporary absence of concession income from Managaha Island, where DPL is currently absorbing maintenance costs.
- Total Expense: Increased by $1.11 million (26%), driven by capital project expenditures, personnel needs, and additional costs such as security for the Kanoa Resort property (whose lease has expired).
- Net Revenue: Declined by $1.63 million, as operational and maintenance obligations rose faster than revenue inflows.

Category	FY 2024 (Unaudited)	FY 2025 (Unaudited)	Change ($)	Trend
Budget	**$4,960,881**	**$5,566,075**	$605,194	↑ Increase
Total Revenue	$6,644,574	$6,120,317	$-524,257	↓ Decrease
Total Expense	$4,221,894	$5,332,004	$1,110,110	↑ Increase
Net Revenue	$2,422,680	$788,313	$-1,634,367	↓ Decrease

The Department of Public Lands (DPL) recorded an overall increase in its FY 2025 budget from $4.96 million to $5.57 million, reflecting continued investment in operations and modernization. However, total revenue decreased slightly (from $6.64 million to $6.12 million) due to timing of lease and BGR collections, while expenses rose from $4.22 million to $5.33 million, driven by higher personnel and maintenance costs. As a result, net revenue declined from $2.42 million in FY 2024 to $0.79 million in FY 2025. Despite these shifts, DPL maintained its fiscal discipline and transparency, emphasizing the importance of improved revenue capture and cost management to strengthen future financial stability.

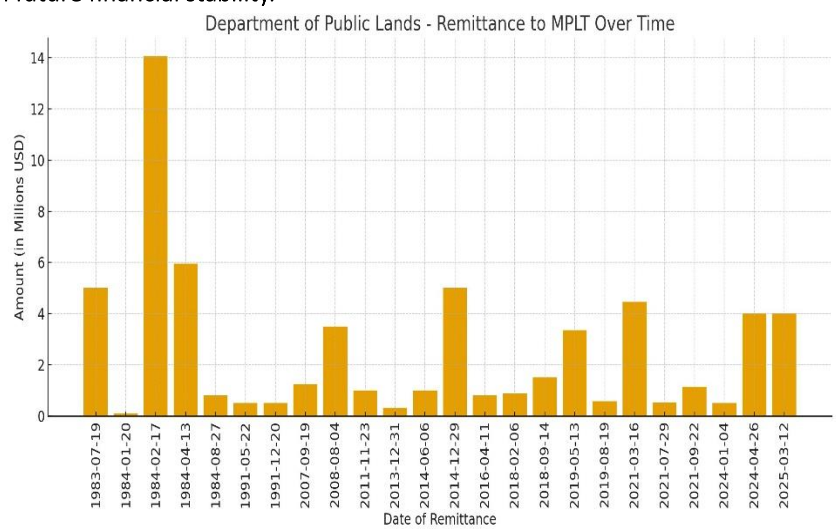
REMITTANCE TO MPLT

DPL and MPLT have a longstanding "co-fiduciary" relationship of receiving and managing funds from public land leases and permits as mandated under Article XI of the CNMI Constitution. MPLT receives and invests the revenues as a trustee for the people of Northern Marianas Descent.

The Department of Public Lands (DPL) has remitted a **total of $63,100,948.39** to the Marianas Public Land Trust (MPLT) since 1983, inclusive of Advance Transfers for FY2024-2025 of $8 million.
Major remittances occurred during two key periods:

- **Initial transfers (1983–1984):** Approximately $25.9 million was remitted during the establishment of MPLC, forming the foundation of the Trust.
- **Renewed transfers (2011–2025):** Steady remittances tied to annual audits and fund transfers resumed, including large deposits in 2014 ($5 million), 2019 ($4.45 million), and 2024–2025 advance remittances totaling $8 million.

DPL's fiduciary framework ensures that only operationally approved expenditures are retained, with all remaining trust revenues transmitted to MPLT for investment on behalf of Northern Marianas Descent beneficiaries.



6th ✓

consecutive years (2017-2022) of unqualified audit opinions on its financial statements — a reflection of the Department's strong internal controls and sound fiscal management practices.

Each year, following the close of the fiscal period, DPL commissions an independent audit to review its financial performance and ensure compliance with government accounting standards. This ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability underscores the Department's dedication to fiscal responsibility and public trust.

CHALLENGES

- Due to the lack of legislative appropriation funding, payments for land compensation are currently on hold, creating fiscal uncertainty and potential delays; strategic forecasts indicate escalating financial, legal, and reputational risks if funding is not secured within the next budget cycle.
- Lack of appropriation funding for homestead infrastructure; subdivision projects on hold for Saipan, Tinian and Rota.
- A decline in overall revenue collections, driven by a weakening economy, is straining fiscal stability and limiting DPL's ability to fund pending projects.
- The absence of a full-time, in-house System Administrator/IT staff has led to ongoing issues with DPL's network and computer systems, reducing operational efficiency and increasing system vulnerability.
- The opening and maintenance of DPL's Agricultural Homestead access road in Rota have been delayed due to DPW's lack of funding for fuel and equipment repairs, hindering land accessibility and development.
- The lack of funding to construct DPL's office buildings on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota has delayed the establishment of permanent workspaces, limiting operational efficiency and service delivery across the islands.

GOALS

Develop a strategic plan to address the challenge of suspended land compensation payments resulting from the lack of legislative appropriation funding. The goal is to secure timely funding and implement interim financial mechanisms to ensure compensation continuity, and maintain stakeholder trust while mitigating fiscal, legal, and reputational risks.

DPL will need to maintain strategic fiscal forecasting and economic revitalization measures to restore revenue growth and maintain public services.

Request an exemption from the Administration with respect to Executive Order 2021-09-IT, thence, hire or contract a dedicated IT professional, establish proactive system maintenance and cybersecurity protocols, and implement staff training to ensure long-term technological stability and support.

Secure supplemental funding or inter-agency support, explore partnerships with private contractors, and establish a sustainable maintenance plan to ensure consistent road access and agricultural progress.

Secure appropriations or alternative financing sources, such as public-private partnerships or phased construction funding. Achieving this goal involves developing a detailed project proposal with cost estimates, demonstrating operational benefits, and actively engaging with legislators and potential funding partners to obtain the necessary resources.

ADDITIONAL GOALS

Land Use Plan RFP

- Issue a Notice of Intent to Award.
- Issue a contract by early January 2026.
- 6-9 month contract for an update of the 2019 DPL Land Use Plan.

DPL Management System

- Issue a Request for Information (RFI) for an "automated" DPL Management System by January 2026.
- Request for Proposal by June 2026.
- Project start date-October 2026.

Tinian Village and Agricultural Homestead

- Marpo Heights, Tinian-Village homestead Phase 3; Issue Village homestead permits by April 2026.
- Kastiyu, Tinian-Issue all 245 Agricultural homestead permits for the lottery held this past August 2025, by the end of June 2026.