

September 17, 2025

Honorable Senate President Milton E. Potter

36<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands

The Capital Building

Charlotte Amalie, U.S. Virgin Islands 00802

Re: Major Coastal Zone Permit No. CZT-08-21(W) granted to Lime Out 2. LLC

Dear Honorable President Milton E Potter and Members of the 36th Legislature,

## **Introduction and recognition**

First off I want to thank Mr. President Milton E Potter and the members of the committee of the whole of the 36th legislature of the US Virgin Islands, legislative staff, DPNR commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriol and his staff of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Marlon Hibbert and his staff at Coastal Zone Management, as well as members of the viewing public, for all the hard work and time put into our project thus far.

My name is Chelsea Baranowski, and I am a founding member of Lime Out. I appear here before you on behalf of Lime Out 2, St Thomas accompanied by my partners Richard Baranowski, Dane Tarr, Valerie Tarr, Angelo Raimondi, and Cameron Raimondi.

It is my honor to provide testimony for the ratification of the Major Coastal Zone permit CTZ-08-21W to be granted to Lime Out 2, LLC.

## **About Lime Out St. John**

I will begin this testimony with the origin story of Lime Out St. John.

In 1984 one of the best things that could have happened to the future me and my future children, did - my parents, Rich and Chris Meyer, moved to the Virgin Islands and bought the Lime Inn restaurant in Cruz Bay. My parents worked incredibly hard and were tirelessly committed to their local and visiting guests and their surrounding community. Many St. Johnians have a story of the Lime Inn, whether as patrons or employees.

After 30 years at the helm, my husband and I took over and began our journey as small business owners, aiming to continue their legacy of community impact. In 2018, through the onset of parenthood and the devastation of hurricanes, we took a leap of faith, with 3 of our childhood friends, to open a little green floating taco boat. Lime Inn remained in operation and was also tasked as the base kitchen for Lime Out. We dreamed of promoting marine tourism in the territory by providing a unique experience. We are here today because that dream was not only realized but beyond what we could have ever imagined.

*Lime Out St. John* is more than a restaurant; it is an internationally recognized destination that highlights the innovation and appeal of the Virgin Islands. Since its opening, *Lime Out* has served nearly one million tacos and has become a model of efficiency for water-based dining.

Our concept has received global recognition, including features in leading travel publications, most notably named by *Time Magazine* as one of the *Top 100 Places in the World to Visit*. We are currently ranked as the #1 restaurant on TripAdvisor and consistently listed among the top 10 restaurants in the Caribbean.

What sets *Lime Out* apart is not only its uniqueness as the region's only floating taco bar but also its role in promoting U.S. Virgin Islands tourism. Visitors enjoy a safe, efficient, and memorable experience while engaging directly with the natural beauty of the United States Virgin Islands.

*Lime Out St. John* was the catalyst for an organically developed economic ecosystem. It provided a destination and dining experience for locals and guests not only in the Coral Bay area, but both St. Thomas and St. John. Multiple local businesses were created and thrive around the *Lime Out St. John* attraction including but not limited to; land based taxis, water shuttle services, term and day charter boats, just to name a few. *Lime Out St. John* simultaneously creates more commerce in the surrounding area to nearby shops, restaurants, and Watersports companies.

Building on this proven success, we are now working to establish *Lime Out 2* on St Thomas, which will further enhance the territory's tourism profile and deliver the same international recognition and economic benefits as our St. John location.

*Lime Out* is not just a floating taco bar, it is an experience where core memories are made.

## **Proposal for Limeout II – Lindbergh Bay**

We are excited to have reached this stage in our journey to bring *Limeout 2* into existence. Having started this project five years ago, we are now proud to present it to you.

We propose to establish a floating take-out restaurant in Lindbergh Bay, modeled after our successful location in Coral Bay. This new venture builds on the knowledge and experience we've gained operating *Lime Out St John*. To protect the environment, we will install 10 moorings for visiting vessels to minimize anchoring. The restaurant itself will measure 53 feet in length 16 feet in width, and will be secured with four helix anchors to reduce impact on the seafloor. Most importantly, it will be located in an area that avoids benthic resources.

The restaurant will operate in conjunction with an onshore prep kitchen, where most heavy lifting on the cooking side will be done as well as where the majority of dishwashing will be handled. The restaurant will be powered by solar energy and equipped with a small

1,000-gallon per day reverse osmosis plant to provide freshwater. It will include a single restroom with a specialized zero waste maine head, and a 200 gallon gray water tank to collect water used for handwashing and limited dishwashing. This tank will also be emptied daily. At no point will the restaurant discharge waste into the marine environment.

Our anticipated hours of operation will be from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## **Environmental Stewardship & Community Commitment**

We are deeply invested in protecting Lindbergh Bay. At *Lime Out St. John*, we have established a reputation as responsible stewards of Coral Bay, educating clients on safe boating practices, proper bay usage, and appreciation of the marine environment. We regularly communicate with the local boating community through monthly emails, and actively use social media platforms to promote responsible practices.

We have already built strong partnerships with Lindbergh Bay leaseholders and business owners. Cruise ship tour operators are eager for new attractions nearby, and the Virgin Islands Tourism Board is excited to collaborate with us on marketing initiatives that showcase all that our islands have to offer.

Our roots run deep in the Virgin Islands with our ownership team consisting of 4 local families born and raised here on St Thomas and St John. We are passionate about investing in the island's youth and future. Recently, our annual fundraiser, which consisted of all gross profits for the day at the boat and online, benefited the St. John School of the Arts, which directly supports local in-school and after-school programming. Our St. John locations, which include Lime Inn, have donated and raised close to half a million dollars for local non profits, schools, and scholarships in the last 6 years.

As owners, we have worked hundreds of hours in community service and are committed at our businesses to well compensated positions that include health benefits and paid time off. We take pride in providing career pathways for Virgin Islands youth. Many of our employees have been with us for more than four years. Some began as teenagers—busing tables—and are now stepping into leadership roles. I would like to highlight one of our incredible young employees who started with us at the age 15 and will be managing our Lime Inn location in the 2025–2026 season, at the age of 22.

## **Economic Impact**

We estimate this project will create 50–75 direct and indirect jobs. It will also benefit local vendors and resorts by drawing additional visitors to the area. By offering an attractive alternative to excursions to the BVI, *Lime Out 2* will help keep tourism dollars within the U.S. Virgin Islands, supporting local charter companies and small businesses alike.

Our culture is deeply rooted in community support. We provide multiple annual scholarships to local schools, sponsor numerous charity events, and organize initiatives such as

wreck removal and bay restoration programs. *Lime Out St. John* has already proven to be an internationally recognized tourist destination that brings visitors from across the globe to the Virgin Islands. Our strong social media presence further promotes VI tourism. Establishing a location on St. Thomas will create a much needed accessibility option for locals, guests, and cruise ship passengers to have the Lime Out experience.

## **Current Status**

Currently Lime Out STT is nearing the end of its build process with hopes of being operational in November for the 2025 / 2026 tourism season.

## **Closing Remarks**

In closing, I would like to personally thank the members of this body for the opportunity to present this before you today. We sincerely appreciate your time and consideration. We respectfully request your approval of permit number CTZ-08-21W Lime Out 2, LLC.

Chelsea Baranowski,

Lime Out 2 LLC