



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPNR LAUNCHES "ZONING 101" PODCAST SERIES

To help residents understand how land use decisions shape the Virgin Islands

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) announces that Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning, is proud to announce the release of its new educational podcast series, "**ZONING 101**," designed to make the Virgin Islands Zoning Code more understandable and accessible to residents, property owners, developers, business owners, and community stakeholders.

The multi-episode series can be found on the departments Facebook page www.facebook.com/VIDPNR and YouTube channel [ZONING 101 - YouTube](#). The series breaks down the complexities of zoning into easy-to-understand discussions that explain how land use regulations affect where people live, work, invest, and build throughout the Territory. The podcast explores the history, purpose, and practical application of zoning while highlighting how planning decisions influence community growth, housing, business development, environmental protection, and quality of life.

"Many people first encounter zoning when they are preparing to build, purchase property, start a business, or navigate a development project," said DPNR Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol. "The Zoning 101 podcast series was created to help residents better understand the rules that guide development and empower them to participate more effectively in planning decisions that shape our communities."

Throughout the series, listeners are introduced to key zoning concepts, including:

- The relationship between planning and zoning.
- The history and evolution of the Virgin Islands zoning system.
- Zoning districts and maps.
- Property rights and permitted uses.
- Development standards such as setbacks, density, lot coverage, and building height.
- Home occupations and accessory uses.
- Parking and access requirements.

- Subdivision regulations.
- Appeals, variances, and rezonings.
- The role of planners and the Planning Office in administering the zoning program.

The series also addresses contemporary planning issues facing the Territory, including housing needs, short-term rentals, renewable energy development, infrastructure planning, environmental stewardship, and ongoing efforts to modernize the zoning framework to better reflect current community needs and future development goals.

Organized into themed episodes using the concepts of a building's foundation, walls, roof, finishings, occupancy, maintenance, and subdivision, the podcast guides listeners through the structure of the Virgin Islands Zoning Code in a logical and engaging format.

According to DPNR planners, the series serves as a public education initiative aimed at increasing transparency and strengthening public participation in land use decisions. By translating technical zoning terminology into everyday language, the podcast helps demystify a regulatory system that affects nearly every property owner and resident in the Territory.

"Zoning influences everything from neighborhood character and property values to economic development and environmental protection," said the Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning. "When residents understand how the system works, they are better equipped to make informed decisions and engage in meaningful conversations about the future of the Virgin Islands."

The Department encourages residents, civic organizations, professionals, students, and community groups to listen to the series and share the information with others interested in learning more about planning and development in the U.S. Virgin Islands.