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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## City Attorney Targeting Weinland Park Carry Out

*Gangs, drugs, shootings, and repeated underage alcohol sales posed threat to community*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—The days may finally be numbered for a notorious carryout that has plagued Columbus' Weinland Park neighborhood for years. City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. filed a complaint in the Franklin County Environmental Court earlier today against Natalia's Carry Out (1293 Summit Street), seeking an injunction against the business deemed to be a harbor for illegal activity that threatens the "public decency, sobriety, peace and good order of the Weinland Park community."

Longstanding problems at the property—which is located at the intersection of Summit Street and Sixth Avenue, directly across the street from Weinland Park, Weinland Park Elementary School, and The Ohio State University's Schoenbaum Family Center and Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy—also led to the city formally objecting to the renewal of their liquor license this past December.

**"This is another example where citizen complaints and the fine investigative work of the Columbus Police Division led to the evidence we need as attorneys to shut down chronic nuisance properties," said Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.**

Over the past two years, police responded to the carry out on reports of shootings, assaults, disturbances, weapons offenses, and illegal drug activity. On September 19, 2015 an individual was shot in front of Natalia's Carry Out. On July 18, 2016 police were dispatched to the carry out on a report of a shooting and found an individual shot just west of Sixth Avenue and Summit Street.

On October 7, 2016 a customer of Natalia's Carry Out offered to sell drugs to an undercover police officer inside the store within "earshot" of the store's operator. The same operator has a well-established history of violations, having been charged with underage alcohol sales at the premises in November 2012, twice in April 2015, again in September 2016, October 2016, and twice in November 2016.

Police issued several certified letters to the owner of the premises notifying her that the repeated underage sales could subject her property to nuisance abatement action if the illegal activity continued. The owner signed certifications acknowledging receipt of the letters and also discussed the content of the letters with a police detective on at least two separate occasions.

**"Unfortunately, even after repeated warnings, the owner and operator of Natalia's Carry Out failed to stop the illegal nuisance activity occurring on the premises," said Assistant City Attorney Katarina Karac. "We're hopeful the court will take our**

**evidence into account and provide relief to the Weinland Park community.”**

A hearing for a preliminary and permanent injunction against the owner and operator of Natalia’s Carry Out is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Friday, January 20, 2017.

If the property is ultimately declared to be a statutorily defined public nuisance, state law grants the court authority to order the premises shut down for up to one year. The owners also would be permanently enjoined from “conducting, maintaining, using, occupying, or in any way permitting” a public nuisance anywhere else in Franklin County, Ohio.

In order to secure closure of the business, Karac, who is the Zone Initiative Attorney assigned to the Weinland Park area of Columbus, is seeking to prove that the owner and operator are guilty of maintaining a nuisance by establishing that they, as owner/operator of the premises, “knew of, participated in, or acquiesced to the activity which constituted the nuisance” as prescribed by [Chapter 3767](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

Copies of the city’s [complaint](#) and the [court’s order](#) are available online.

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