



ZACH KLEIN

COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, October 29, 2024
Contact: Pete Shipley, 614.965.0203
Email: pishipley@columbus.gov

City Attorney Zach Klein's Property Action Team Files Lawsuit against Sullivant Ave. Market Known for Violence, Drugs and Prostitution

Klein says Rosco's Market has reputation for prostitution and drug activity that threatens public safety and hurts residents and families in the Hilltop

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced that the Property Action Team filed a lawsuit against the owners of Rosco's Market, located at 2500 Sullivant Ave. in the Hilltop. The property has been a haven for prostitution, drug-related activity and violence in recent years. According to court documents, the store sells drug paraphernalia and is located just a few blocks away from Burroughs Elementary School. In its lawsuit, the City is asking the Court to declare Rosco's a public nuisance and have the store shut down.

"We want small businesses to succeed, but not at the expense of the health and safety of the communities they operate in. This market is a nuisance to the Hilltop, and as soon as the Property Action Team gathered enough evidence to build a case, we filed our lawsuit," said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **"We will continue to listen to community input and work with the Division of Police to hold property owners accountable when they threaten public safety. That remains our priority."**

CPD has conducted numerous covert prostitution investigations and made multiple drug arrests at the premises over the past two years. Additionally, the City has received a number of community complaints about frequent loitering by apparent sex workers in the store's parking lot.

On multiple occasions, CPD officers witnessed or responded to reports of robberies, drug and sexual activity, solicitation, and violence over the past two years. The level of criminal activity at the premises got to be so bad that CPD dispatchers noted that all runs to the property needed at least two responding officers to be dispatched.

Court documents also indicate the property is a site of routine illegal dumping.

The Property Action Team also noted several code violations related to Ohio liquor laws, fire-prevention, and other state and local codes, including unsanitary conditions and violations on the exterior of the building and in the parking lot. The market was cited by CFD for three fire code violations during an August 2024 inspection. A re-inspection by CFD found the same three violations were not remedied.

“Public safety is our top priority, so when a business or property owner threatens that safety, we step in to take action and hold them accountable,” said Property Action Team Attorney Rob Doersam. **“Filing this lawsuit is just one step to make Sullivant Avenue safer, and I encourage any resident or community member who sees an unsafe or nuisance property in the Hilltop—or any Columbus neighborhood—to reach out and report it to 311. The majority of our cases begin with community tips.”**