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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 15, 2020
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University District Rooming House Becomes First Nuisance Property Boarded Up this Year

Duplex was the scene of multiple disturbances, including vehicle theft, underage drinking, sexual assault, and gunfire

COLUMBUS — Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that the City of Columbus secured an emergency court order to board-up a property in the University District east of Ohio State University after the Columbus Division of Police responded to a series of complaints beginning last October. It is the first property the City Attorney's office has shut down this year after obtaining court injunctions against 30 drug-related nuisance properties in 2020.

Immediately after the Franklin County Environmental Court granted Klein's motion for an *ex parte* temporary restraining order this morning, officers from the Columbus Division of Police evacuated [298 East Seventeenth Avenue](#) and enforced the court's order to board up the premises.

"This emergency order may be the first of the year, but certainly won't be the last, as we continue to use our legal authority to help protect neighborhoods against violence and crime," Klein said. "This property was clearly a danger to the surrounding area and we're grateful the court agreed with us."

According to court documents, on October 7, 2020, officers responded to the premises on a call of a stolen vehicle. The vehicle was subsequently recovered.

On October 16, 2020 the police dispatch center received a call for service regarding a loud party with underage drinking.

The following day, officers responded after a victim reported she was sexually assaulted by a male at the premises. In an attempt to get away, the victim stated that she punched the male in the face. The male then threatened to shoot her as she fled. Another victim reported that she was assaulted by a group of females in the rear of the premises. While the officers were documenting the incidents, an individual, who was later found to have been involved in a fight, crashed his vehicle into a parked car after attempting to drive around a police cruiser.

On December 21, 2020, police received a call for service regarding loud noises coming from the premises.

On December 27, 2020, officers responded to a report of a male with a gun at the premises.

On January 1, 2021, police received a call regarding an individual operating a vehicle while under the influence at the premises.

On January 2, 2021, police received a call for service for loud music at the property.

On January 9, 2021, officers responded to a report of a shooting after police dispatch received several calls regarding gunfire coming from a house party at the premises. Multiple partygoers fled from the residence by jumping through windows. During the investigation, detectives learned that the shooting started outside the residence and may have included two groups of people shooting at each other. Multiple vehicles as well as two residences were struck by gunfire.

“The pattern of violence and crime at this property posed an ongoing threat to the area and a drain on public resources,” said Assistant City Attorney Chassidy Barham, who is the Zone Initiative attorney assigned to Police Zone Four, which includes the University District. “We greatly appreciate the court granting the order and want to thank the Columbus Division of Police for their diligent work in helping us build our case.”

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[Copy of the signed order is attached](#)