



March 9, 2018

Dear Ohio City Stakeholder,

Please find enclosed a copy of the policy that was recently adopted by Ohio City Incorporated's Board of Trustees to support new and existing retail and service-based businesses in the neighborhood.

Under this policy, Ohio City Incorporated will not support the Change of Use from an established Mercantile Use unless the property owner can prove a substantial need for the proposed new use. This policy is aimed to promote sustainable neighborhood development; to preserve existing retail spaces; to attract businesses that provide vital services to residents; and to develop a neighborhood that is walkable and offers a diversity of businesses. This applies to all buildings with a certificate of occupancy and an established Mercantile Use.

While this policy was established to preserve existing retail uses wherever practical, it is understandable that a Change of Use may be best for the property and the neighborhood in some instances. Any property owner seeking Ohio City Incorporated's support for a Change of Use from an established Mercantile Use would be invited to make a presentation at the board's Real Estate and Land Use committee.

In order to provide you with the tools to attract the types of retail and service-based businesses OCI is seeking, this spring we will begin working with The Riddle Company on the development of a retail market analysis and retail attraction strategy for the Ohio City neighborhood. The ultimate objective of this work is to help OCI and investors (businesses and property owners) make better decisions, manage risk, and improve the prospects for success. OCI will work with The Riddle Company, nationally known consultants, to undertake and analyze market research that will help market the neighborhood and strengthen the neighborhood appeal.

As part of this effort, the strategy will provide a synopsis of current trends that might affect the marketplace as well as recommendations that if implemented, will help generate ongoing momentum from general marketing and PR to placemaking and retail attraction. Specifically, this project will:

- Provide an assessment of the market potential for current and potential retail and entertainment uses.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen the merchandise mix.
- Provide recommendations for retail marketing from PR to retail centric marketing collateral that can be used to attract new retail and entertainment uses and position the neighborhood as a desirable place live, visit and, do business.
- Provide a forum for community input into the effort.
- Identify ways to better link the surrounding neighborhoods and downtown.

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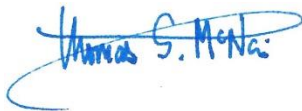
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The Riddle Company is an economic development marketing consulting firm. In practice since 1992, the firm assists public and private clients with retail marketing and attraction through the creation of retail market analyses, sector and project feasibility studies, real estate assessments and analyses, and general retail marketing strategy and attraction. Their work has influenced over seven million square feet of net new retail space in diverse neighborhoods and communities.

If you have any questions or feedback, please contact Ashley Shaw, Economic Development & Planning Manager at 216.781.3222 x104 or ashaw@ohiocity.org.

We thank you for your commitment to Ohio City and look forward to work together in making Ohio City Cleveland's most complete neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Tom McNair
Executive Director
Ohio City Incorporated



Chris Schmitt
President
Board of Trustees



Change of Use retail policy

Ohio City is one of Cleveland's most walkable and diverse neighborhoods. People are drawn to the neighborhood because of the eclectic and high quality small businesses that currently exist here. Ohio City has three growing commercial corridors (West 25th Street, Lorain Avenue, and Detroit Avenue), which are zoned Local Retail Business Districts. In the past five years, 80 new businesses opened in the neighborhood and nearly half have been restaurants, bars, breweries and other food and beverage-oriented businesses.

Ohio City Incorporated believes in order to be vibrant and walkable, the neighborhood must have businesses that provide vital services to residents. Ohio City Incorporated strives to preserve the character of the neighborhood's commercial districts while ensuring the neighborhood has businesses and amenities that serve the different types of people who live, work and visit here. In an effort to protect the neighborhood's existing retail uses and encourage diverse commercial districts, Ohio City Incorporated will not support the Change of Use from an established Mercantile Use, unless the property owner can prove a substantial need for the proposed new use.



Ohio City strives to attract more retail and service-based businesses to complement the quality bars and restaurants that already exist here.

A Change of Use Permit is required when a change in the designated use or a change in the occupancy occurs. Every occupied property must have a designated use. The zoning code spells out the allowed uses for a particular piece of property. While building code use and occupancy classifications address the protection of the people using the building, zoning use classifications focus on the intensity of the use of a property and its impact on surrounding properties.



Small storefronts along Ohio City's commercial corridors provide opportunities for local retailers to thrive.



Wherever possible, landlords are encouraged to seek commercial tenants that provide vital services for residents, especially in storefronts that already have an established retail use.