# **Honorable City Planning Commission Cincinnati, Ohio**

**SUBJECT:** A report and recommendation on a proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Planned Development #64 (PD-64), Oakley Station, Phase 2B, to eliminate the proposed office building and add a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex in Oakley.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

Location:

3065 Vandercar Way, west of the Anthem office building on the south side of

Vandercar Way

Owner:

USS Realty, LLC

9900 Springboro Pike Miamisburg, OH 45342

Applicant:

McBride Dale Clarion

5721 Dragon Way, Suite 300 Cincinnati, Ohio 45227

Request:

The applicant is requesting approval of a proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Planned Development #64 (PD-64), Oakley Station, to develop a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex in lieu of a previously proposed 90,000 sq. ft. office building on the site.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Provided in addition to this report are:

- Attachment 1 Most recent Major Amendment from 2015
- Attachment 2 Major Amendment to Concept Plan and Development Program Statement
- Attachment A Site Survey
- Attachment B Site Plan
- Attachment C Engineering Plans
- Attachment D Open Space
- Attachment E Schematic Building Plans
- Attachment F Oakley Community Council Letter
- Attachment G- Coordinated Site Review letter
- Attachment H Oakley Station History
- Attachment I Department of Community and Economic Development Economic Analysis
- Attachment J Letter from USS Realty, LLC

#### **BACKGROUND:**

On July 15, 2022, the City Planning Commission heard the proposal for this Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Planned Development #64 (PD-64), Oakley Station, Phase 2B, to eliminate the proposed office building and add a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex in Oakley. Commission members had several inquiries for the Department of Community and Economic Development Department regarding the

## following:

- What is the amount of investment made by both the City and the developer thus far for the development of Oakley Station?
- Were prior City incentives/investments granted based on the expectation of jobs/payroll associated with the proposed office developments?
- What is the economic impact of eliminating the office pad and allowing the bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex?
- Did the developer consider housing, primarily affordable housing, on the site?

Two additional attachments "H" and "I" have been added to this report. Attachment H summarizes the history of PD-64, Oakley Station, such as when and what was originally approved in May 2011, all five of the Major Amendments approved by City Council from 2012-2017, and what has been built to date. In May 2011, City Council approved a zone change to create Planned Development #64 (PD-64), Oakley Station. On October 21, 2015, City Council approved a Major Amendment for a 90,000 square foot office building within PD-64 on this site at 3065 Vandercar Way. The proposed office building has not been built and the site is currently vacant (Attachment 1). Additional history of PD-64 can be found in Attachment H.

Attachment I (Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Economic Analysis) summarizes the investment made by the City and the developer since 2011, the projection of job creation and actual jobs created, changes to the development and an analysis of the office market. DCED does not make a recommendation on the Major Amendment proposals but defers to the Department of City Planning and Engagement.

## ADJACENT LAND USE AND ZONING:

North: Community General Auto-oriented (CG-A), office East: Community General Auto-oriented (CG-A), office

West: Planned Development #89 (PD-89), Graphite Oakley, residential

South: Planned Development #88 (PD-88), Three Oaks, residential, Manufacturing General

(MG), light industrial

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONCEPT PLAN:**

USS Realty, LLC, owns the entirety of the 3.44-acre site and has proposed a Major Amendment to Phase 2B of PD-64 to not construct an office building as originally shown in the approved Concept Plan, but instead to develop a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex which are approved uses in the PD-64. The applicant is proposing two 18-hole miniature golf courses on the western portion of the site. The miniature golf area, which utilizes approximately one acre of the site, will have different skill levels on the two courses and will closely resemble a traditional golf course in appearance.

To the east of the golf courses the applicant is proposing a 8,500 square foot "Food Hall" which will contain a bar, four food vendors, restrooms, and a seating area. Adjacent to the "Food Hall" to the east they are proposing a 1,430 square foot outdoor area for enjoying food and beverages. Further to the east and north, along the perimeter of the site, they are proposing a series of 12 shipping containers, which will be used as a gathering spot for visitors. This perimeter area will also feature a playground and a 550 square foot stage for live music. Enclosed within this area, "The Yard" will

contain outdoor seating, TV screens, and outdoor games. The miniature golf courses, as well as "The Yard" area used for gathering and games, will be a permeable surface. The proposed development will be served by 102 parking spaces on the southern portion of the site, plus there is a public parking garage with 383 spaces next to the site. Entry to the development will be on the south side of the courtyard, east of the "Food Hall."

The 2015 Major Amendment to the Concept Plan called for an office building on this particular site, not a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, outdoor eating and drinking establishments/recreation areas have become popular. As of 2015, there have been significant changes to the office market and the site remains largely vacant.

## § 1429-12 AMENDMENTS TO A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN:

The Cincinnati Zoning Code allows for amendments to a Concept Plan. Amendments that change the uses allowed or change the density of the development by more than ten percent must be approved by the City Planning Commission and Council as a zoning map Amendment.

Concept Plans may be amended as follows:

- (a) Minor Amendments. The Director of City Planning may approve minor amendments provided that they do not change building heights by more than ten percent, floor area by more than five percent, decrease parking spaces by more than ten percent or allow buildings or accessory uses closer to the perimeter property lines.
- (b) Major Amendments. Amendments to any Concept Plan other than a minor amendment must be approved by the City Planning Commission. Amendments that change the uses allowed or change the density of the development by more than ten percent require approval of the City Planning Commission and Council as a zoning map amendment.

A Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and the Development Program Statement has been requested for the following reason:

1. To allow for a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex on this site instead of the previously proposed 90,000 square foot office building.

# CONCEPT PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM STATEMENT REQUIREMENTS:

According to § 1429-09 of the Cincinnati Zoning Code, Concept Plan and Development Program Statement, a petition to rezone a property to PD must include a Concept Plan and Development Program Statement (Attachment 2). The purpose is to describe the proposed us or uses to be conducted in the PD District. The Concept Plan and Development Program Statement must include text or diagrams that specify:

a. Plan Elements. A survey of the tract to be developed, providing a metes and bounds description of the property and the survey of property lines and total acreage. Additionally, the plan should include the location in general terms, of land areas to be developed, including: type and description of proposed land uses, buildings and structures; street rights-of-way and driveways; parcel boundaries and proposed lots, including set back lines; building heights;

pedestrian circulation systems and open space or other facilities; and proposed topography, drainage, landscaping and buffer plantings.

A metes and bounds description, site plan including existing conditions and the proposed development showing new driveways, parcel boundaries, setback lines, building heights, pedestrian circulation, open space, drainage and landscaping are included in Attachments A-E.

b. Ownership. Evidence that the applicant has sufficient control over the tract of land to effect the proposed plan, including a list of all ownership and beneficial interests in the tract of land and the proposed development.

USS Realty, LLC currently owns the property and after construction the property will be transferred to Curo, the developer of the site.

c. Schedule. Time schedule of projected development, if the total site is to be developed in phases or if construction is to extend beyond a two-year time period.

The applicant/developer has a schedule to complete the proposed development in one phase commencing construction in late 2022 and completing construction by the end of 2023. (Attachment 2).

d. Preliminary Reviews. A preliminary review of geo-technical, sewage, water, drainage and refuse collection.

All the preliminary reviews noted above have been reviewed through the CSR process. On the initial department review, there does not appear to be any major issues, and any minor issues can be worked through prior to applying for building permits.

e. Density and Open Space. Calculations of density and open space area.

Open spaces include 2 golf courses, outdoor patio and eating areas and landscaping. The overall site is 3.44 acres and 60 percent will be green space. More detail is shown in Attachment B and Attachment D.

f. Other Information. Any other information requested by the Director of City Planning or the City Planning Commission.

There was no additional information requested by the Department of City Planning and Engagement.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT AND NOTIFICATION:**

The Department of City Planning and Engagement held a public staff conference on the proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for the bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex on June 16, 2022. Notice of the public staff

conference was mailed out 14 days in advance to property owners within 400-feet of the boundary of PD-64, as well as the Oakley Community Council.

Aside from the applicants, only two other persons attended the staff conference and they just wanted to learn about the proposal. There were no concerns. Attached is a letter of support from the Oakley Community Council (Attachment F).

## **DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW AND COMMENTS:**

The applicants participated in the City's Coordinated Site Review (CSR) process and a final recommendation letter is attached. The CSR process is designed to help developers identify any regulatory conditions that may affect their project. There were no major issues, and any minor issues can be worked through prior to applying for building permits.

## **ANALYSIS:**

The staff of the Department of City Planning and Engagement supports the proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and the Development Program Statement for Phase 2B, which includes the necessary elements of Section 1429-09- Concept Plan and Development Program Statement (a-e) which includes the plan elements, ownership, schedule, preliminary reviews, and density and open space. The office market has suffered severely since COVID, yet there is still a market for a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex especially with outdoor space. The only other recreational use is indoor batting cages within PD-64, and this proposed complex allows for outdoor recreational uses. This use will add jobs, helping the economy while adding outdoor recreation areas to Oakley Station. The proposed Major Amendment will not negatively impact the existing character of the surrounding area. The implementation of this project will be a benefit for the Oakley community and the City of Cincinnati, respectively. The proposal is consistent with *Plan Cincinnati* (2012) and the *Oakley Master Plan* (2019) and is supported by the Oakley Community Council.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS:**

Plan Cincinnati (2012)

The proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan is consistent with the Compete Initiative Area, particularly within the Goal to "Cultivate our position as the most vibrant and economically healthiest part of our region" (page 114). The proposed bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex will be the first such development in Oakley Station, aside from the indoor batting cages complex, and will add some variety to the area.

## Oakley Master Plan (2019)

The proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan is consistent with the *Oakley Master Plan* (2019), particularly with the Managing our Future Growth Focus Area and Goal 1 to "Assure that future growth is guided by zoning and planning that will preserve Oakley as a thriving, unique, and pedestrian-scaled urban neighborhood" (page 80). This complex will provide a gathering spot for Oakley residents and visitors, whether they are coming by car, bike, or foot.

## **FINDINGS:**

It is the opinion of the staff of the Department of City Planning and Engagement that the proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Phase 2B of PD-64 is in compliance with the requirements of §1429-12 Amendments to a Planned Development Concept Plan of the Cincinnati Zoning Code. The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Planned

Development District Regulations. The applicant has successfully met all basic requirements of the Planned Development District. The Major Amendment will not negatively impact the existing character of the surrounding area.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

The staff of the Department of City Planning and Engagement supports the proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for the proposed bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex in PD-64 for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal will not negatively impact the existing character of the surrounding area;
- 2. The proposal will provide a new variety of uses in the City;
- 3. The proposal is supported by the Oakley Community Council; and
- 4. The proposal is consistent with *Plan Cincinnati* (2012) and the *Oakley Master Plan* (2019).

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The staff of the Department of City Planning and Engagement recommends that the City Planning Commission take the following actions:

- 1. **APPROVE** a Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Planned Development #64, Oakley Station, Phase 2B, to eliminate an office building and add a bar/restaurant/recreational/entertainment complex in Oakley.
- 2. **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement findings as detailed on page 5 of this report.

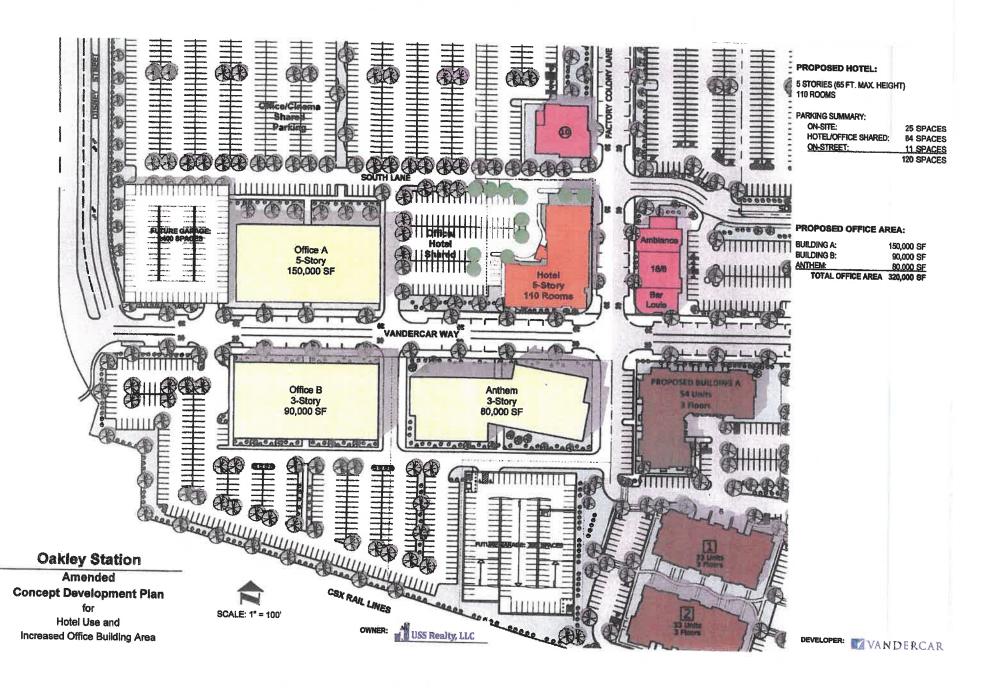
Approved:

Respectfully submitted:

Caroline Hardy Kellam, Senior City Planner Department of City Planning and Engagement There lough

Katherine Keough-Jurs, FAICP, Director Department of City Planning and Engagement

Major Amendment to PD-64 (Oakley Station) for Oakley Yards in Oakley सिसंस्था दिल्ला प्र CG-A Vandereer Wy PD-64 3065 Vandercar Way FORRER ST MG Verne Av VERNE AV Legend Property Location cinc\_neighborhoods **Subject Properties** 



## Oakley Yard Program Statement

In May of 2011, the City of Cincinnati approved PD #64, which was a 73 acre planned mixed use development in Oakley that was to include retail, restaurants, offices, entertainment, and residential uses. Since its approval, PD# 64 has had a number of amendments approved to allow the large development to remain responsive to the changing development environment. The 13.6 acres contained in Auditors Parcel 051-0001-0071-00 at 3065 Vandercar Way was designated on the PD #64 Concept Plan as part of the Office "B" site. Since this approval, there have been significant changes to the office market, and the site remains largely vacant with some off-street parking.

Curō has obtained the opportunity to develop 3.44 acres of the 13.6 acre parcel as an entertainment/recreation venue. As the developers of Covington Yard, at 401 Greenup Street in Covington, the proposed development group has established a successful record of creating fun entertainment venues that offer a variety of food and activity options. The development would include two 18 hole miniature golf courses on the western portion of the site. The miniature golf area, which utilizes approximately one acre of the site, will have different skill levels on the two courses and will more closely resemble a traditional golf course in appearance. To the east of the golf courses will be an 8,500 square Food Hall which contains a bar, four food vendors, restrooms, and seating area. Adjacent to the Food Hall to the east will be a 1,430 square foot outdoor area for enjoying food and beverages. Further to the east and north, along the perimeter of the site, there will be a series of 12 shipping containers which will be used as gathering spots for visitors. This perimeter area will also feature a playground and a 550 square foot stage for live music. Enclosed within this area, "The Yard" will contain outdoor seating, TV screens, and outdoor games. The miniature golf courses, as well as "The Yard" area used for gathering and games, will all be permeable surface. The development will be served by 102 parking spaces on the southern portion of the site. Entry to the development will be on the south side of the courtyard, east of the Food Hall.

The proposed development is consistent with a number of recommendations contained in plans adopted by the City.

#### Oakley Master Plan 2019:

- 1) The Oakley Yard development is to be just east of the proposed pedestrian tunnel under the railroad tracks, allowing residents to the south of Oakley Station to enjoy the same walkability/connectivity as those located within Oakley Station. This will increase the volume of pedestrians within the area and connect to the site via existing sidewalks.
- 2) Bike racks will be provided at Oakley Yard in anticipation of the number of customers who will choose biking as a means to visit the site.
- 3) Oakley has a vision of growing a strong collection of local businesses which are unique to Oakley. Oakley Yard would add an entertainment venue not currently available in the community.



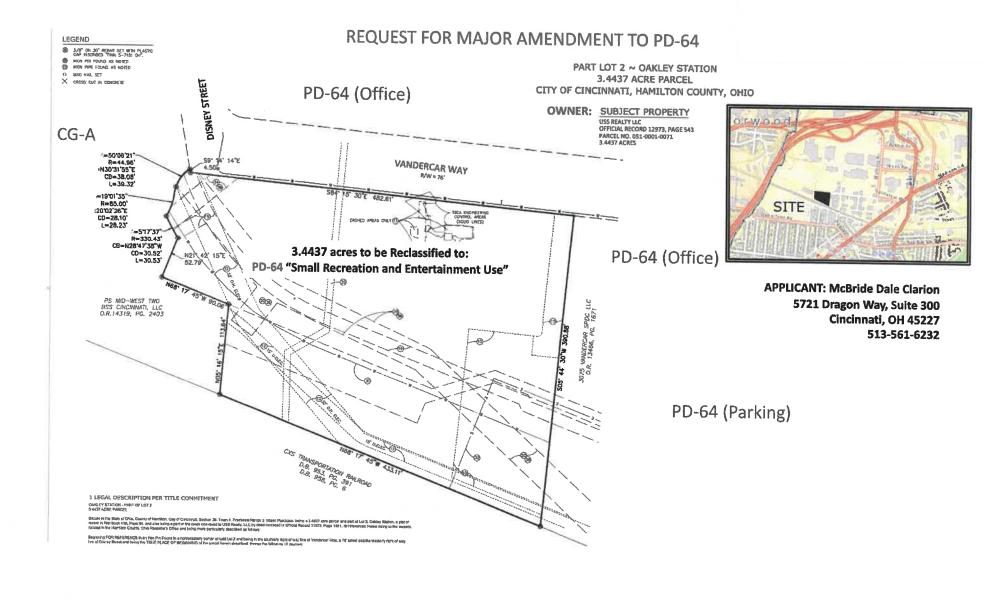
4) The developers of Oakley Yard met with the Oakley Community Council on a number of occasions, and have responded to suggestions regarding the development, obtaining the Community Council's support for the project.

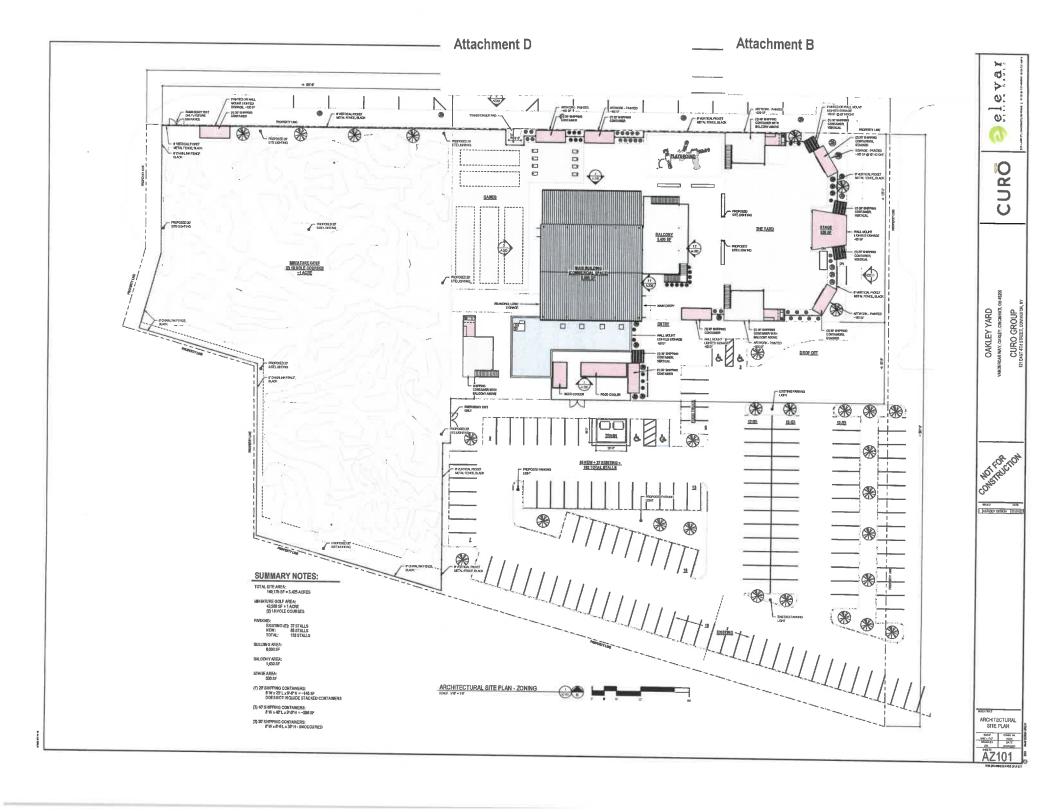
#### Plan Cincinnati 2012:

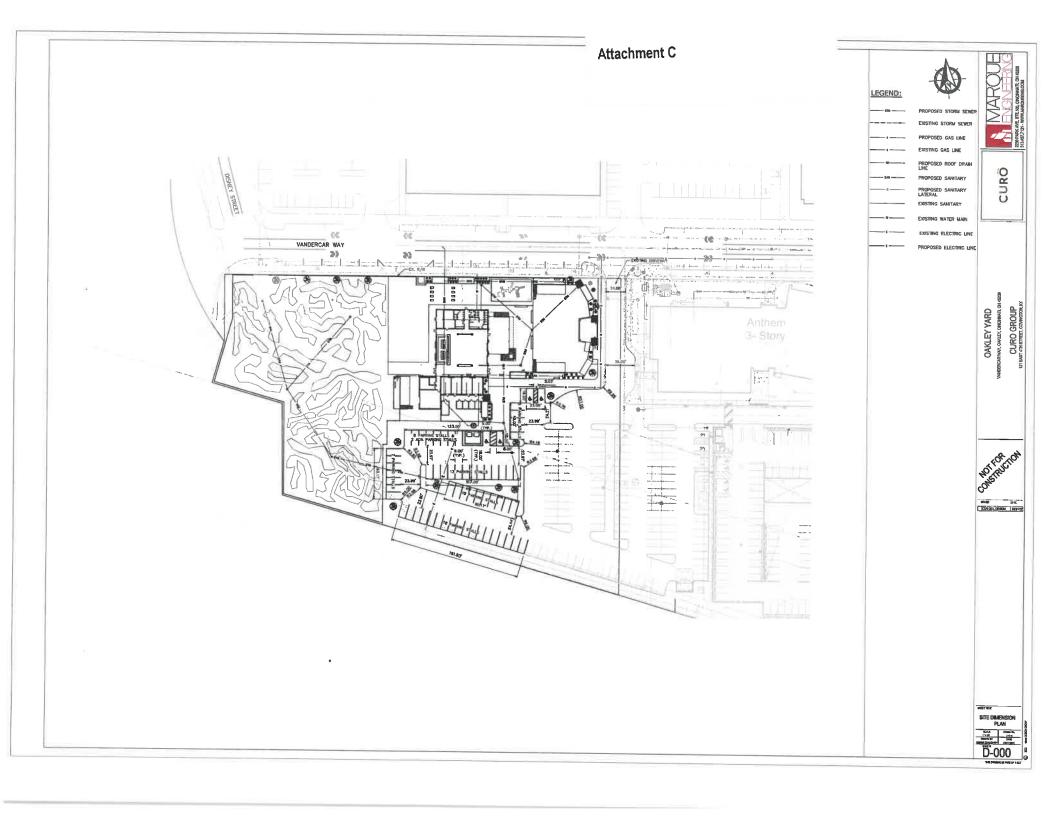
- 1) Focus revitalization on existing venues of activity, of which Oakley is one. The Oakley Station development has been one of the most significant revitalization efforts in the City and certainly within the Oakley community. Bringing Oakley Yard to the development adds an entertainment element currently not available.
- 2) The Oakley Station development is included in the "Madison Road Corridor" which is identified as one of three corridors where strategic growth is designated to occur.
- 3) Provisions have been made adjacent to and within the development to promote both pedestrian and bike transportation to Oakley Station and the proposed development.
- 4) The development of a community gathering place for entertainment, recreation, and socializing promotes the creation of a more robust public life.

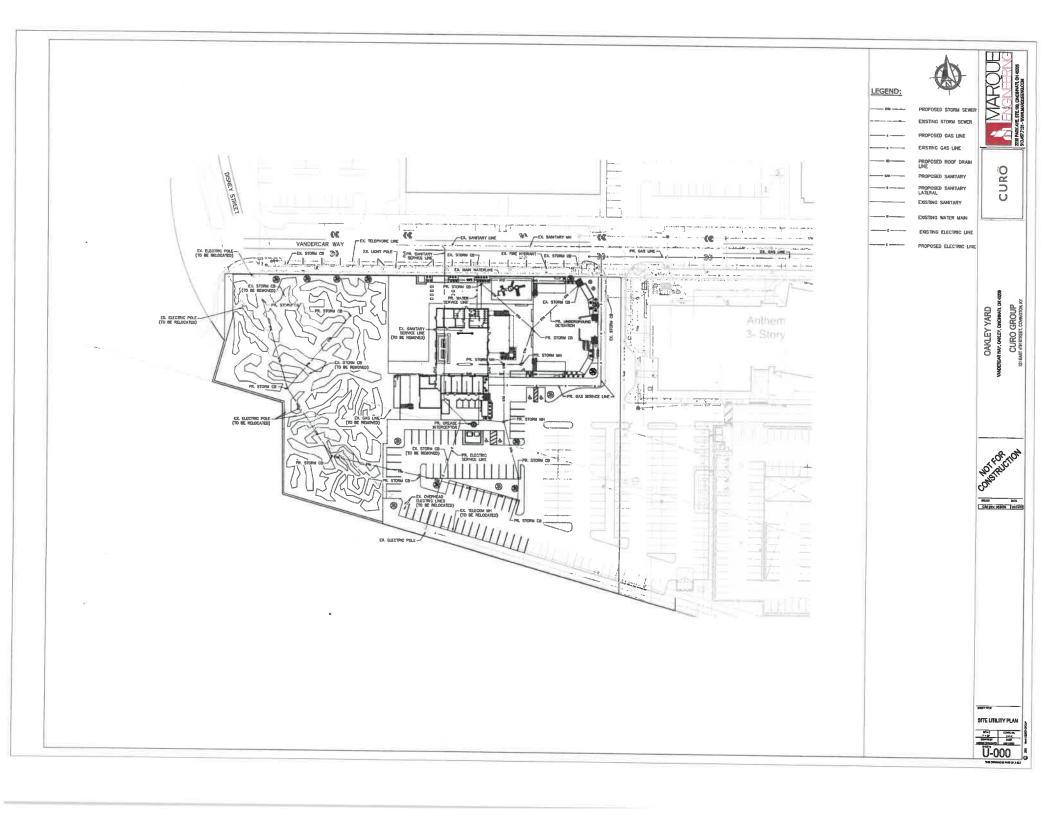
To allow the Oakley Yard development to move forward, a Major Amendment to PD #64 is being requested to change a portion of the approved Concept Plan from "Office" to "Recreation and Entertainment with food" and approve the Concept Plan for Oakley Yard. As mentioned, Curō has met on several occasions with the Oakley Community Council. At their December 7, 2021 meeting, the Council voted to support the Major Amendment to PD #64 to allow the site to be developed as an eating and outdoor entertainment venue. If the Major Amendment is approved, Curō anticipates beginning construction upon receiving the necessary permits from the City, and opening Spring of 2023.

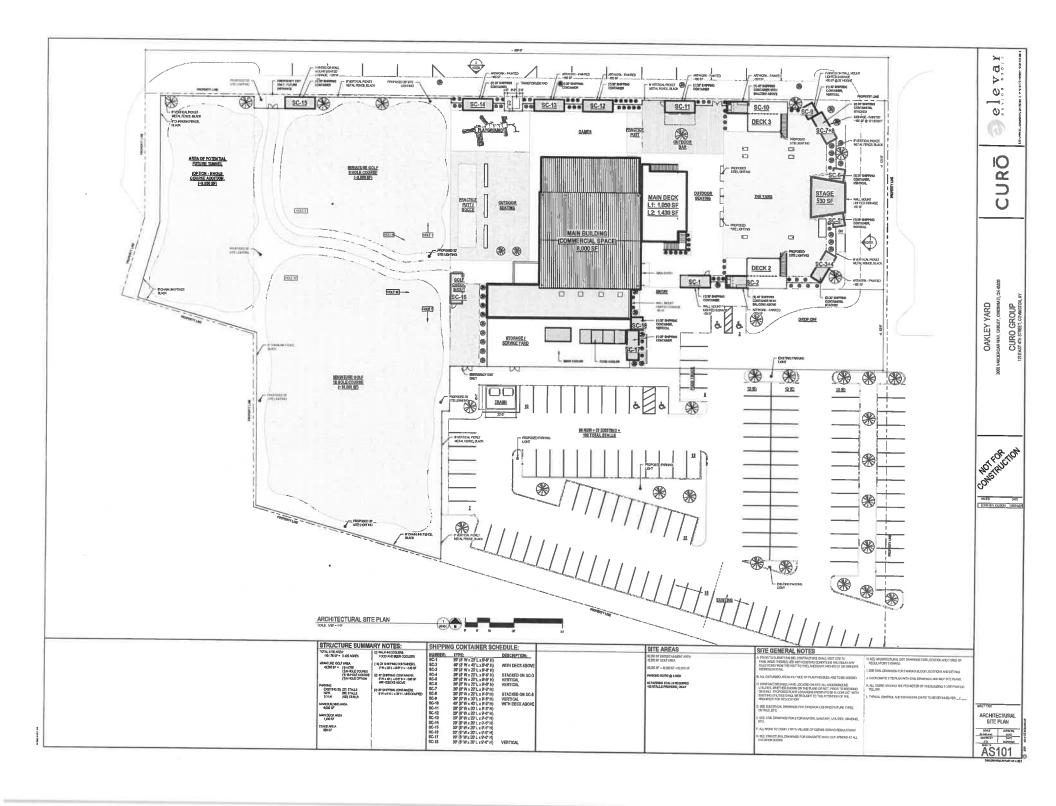
We believe that the requested modification to PD #64 will allow for the development of a unique entertainment venue that will be a contributing focal point for the Oakley community. Given its location, the Oakley Yard will provide a gathering spot for Oakley residents and visitors, whether they are coming by car, bike, or on foot. This unique use will add another opportunity to strengthen and promote the wonderful place Oakley has become to live, work, and play.

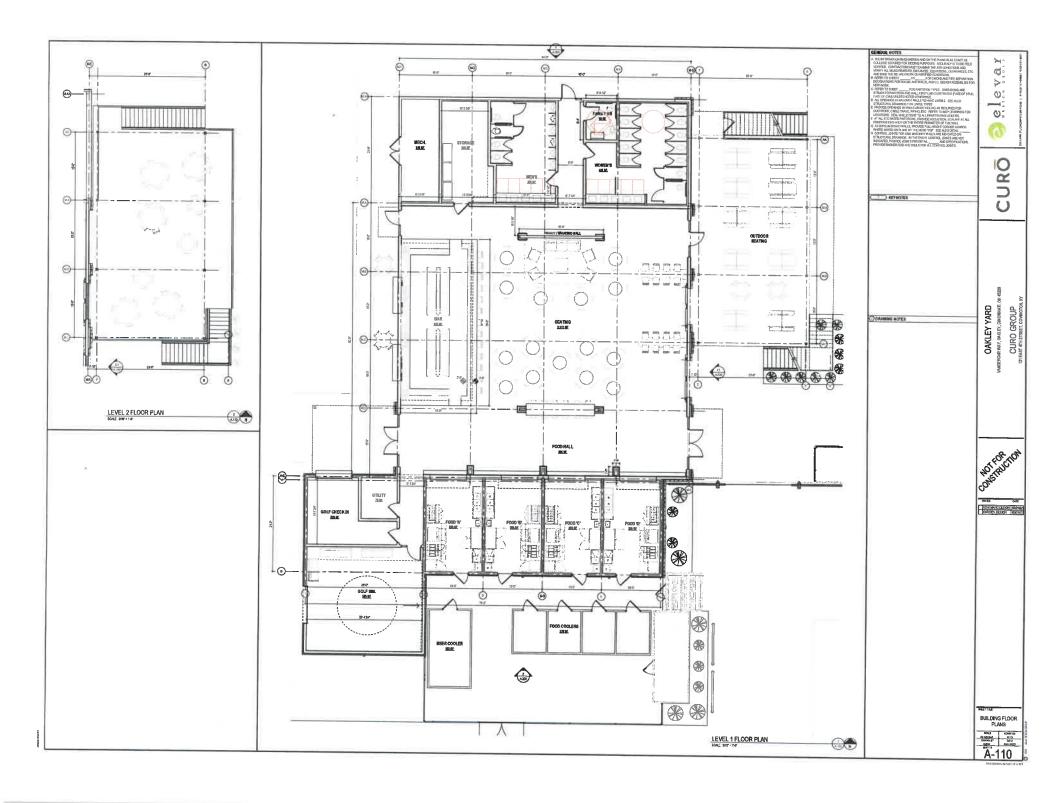


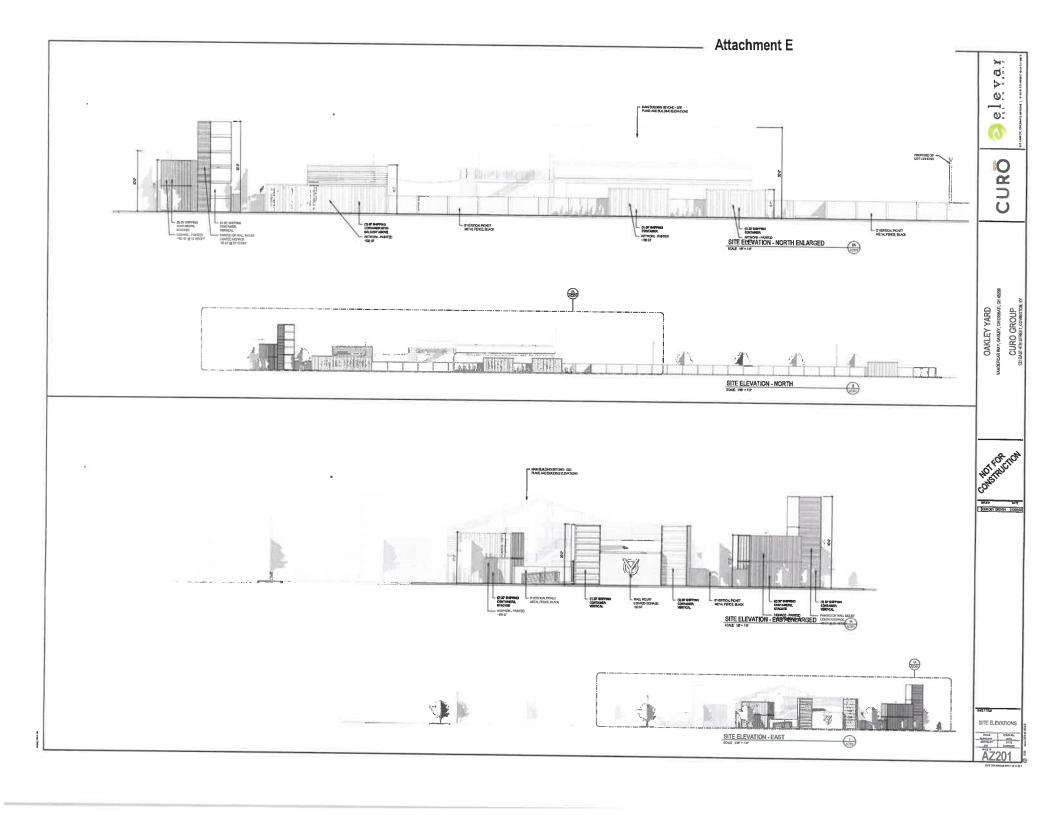


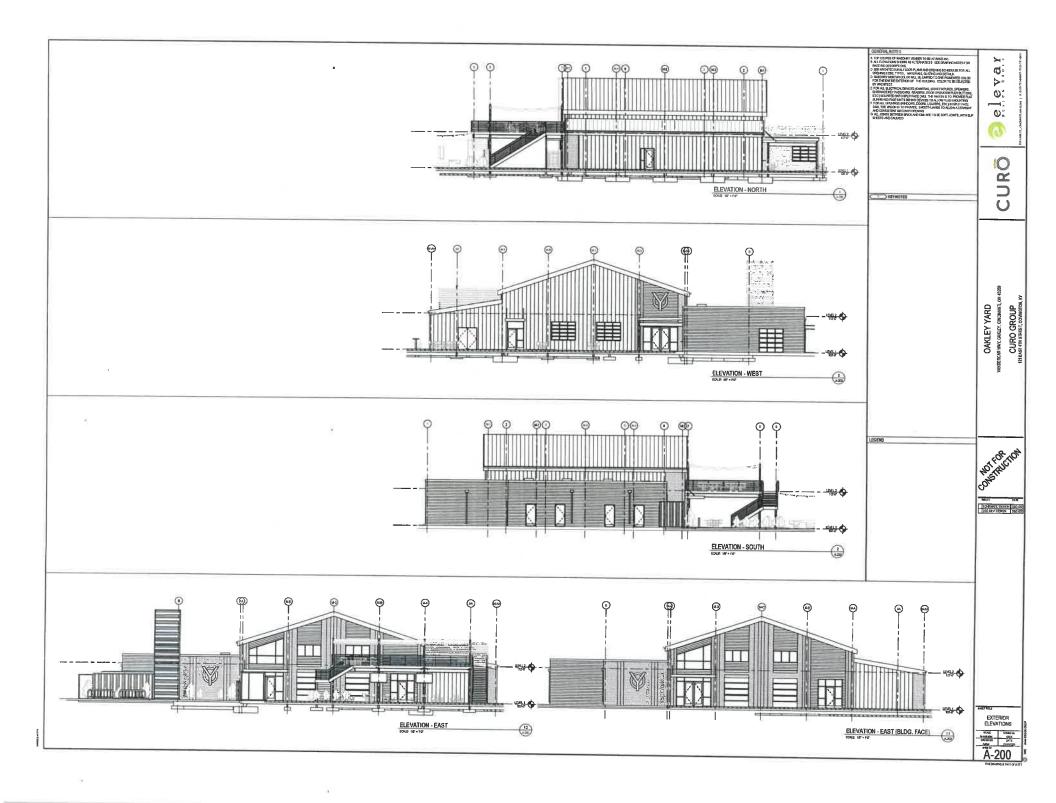












#### Attachment F



PO Box 9244 Cincinnati OH 45209 oakleynow.com

December 21, 2021

Ms. Katherine Keough-Juris, AICP
Planning Director
Department of City Planning
City of Cincinnati
Two Centennial Plaza
805 Central Avenue, Suite 700
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
katherine.keough-jurs@cincinnati-oh.gov

RE: Curo Brkg Request to Amend the Concept Plan for PD #64

Dear Ms. Keough-Juris:

At the December 7, 2021 meeting of the Oakley Community Council, representatives of Curo Brkg were present to provide a presentation to the Trustees and members on their plans for an eating and outdoor entertainment venue in Oakley Station. The Trustees were advised that a change to the Concept Plan for PD #64 from office use to outdoor and entertainment venue was required. Mr. Mark Hemberger made a request of the Board of Trustees for a Letter of Support for such change.

The following motion was made at the January 7, 2020 OCC meeting: "[m]otion to support a Major Amendment to the Concept Plan for PD #64 to allow for the site, which was originally designated for office use, to be developed as an eating and outdoor entertainment venue." As reflected in the OCC meeting minutes, the motion passed unanimously, with two abstentions.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. If you need any further information or have any questions, I can be reached at <a href="mailto:seth.shaifer@oakleynow.com">seth.shaifer@oakleynow.com</a>

Sincerely,

Seth Shaifer

Seth Shaifer Zoning Committee Chair OCC Trustee

Attachment

CC: OCC File

Mark Hemberger



May 5, 2022

Mrs. Anne F. McBride McBride Dale Clarion 5721 Dragon Way, Suite 300 Cincinnati, Ohio 45227

Re: 3065 Vandercar Way | Oakley Yard (D) – (CPRE220028) Final Recommendations

Dear Mrs. McBride.

This letter is to inform you that our CSR Advisory-TEAM and CSPRO Committee has reviewed your proposed project at <u>3065 Vandercar Way</u> in the Community of Oakley. The information provided is the recommendations of the City of Cincinnati and must be followed as you move forward with your project. As a reminder, we will have a <u>WebEx conference call meeting</u> with you on <u>May 10, 2022 @ 1:30 pm</u> to discuss this information. Please see the feedback listed below. Thank you for developing within the City of Cincinnati.

### **City Planning & Engagement Department**

#### Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

 Complete application for a Major Amendment to the PD Concept Plan and a Final Development Plan. Support in writing from the Oakley Community Council.

#### Requirements to obtain permits:

1. Approval needed from City Planning Commission and City Council.

#### Recommendations:

None

#### Contact:

Caroline Kellam | City Planning | 513-352-4840 | caroline.kellam@cincinnati-oh.gov

## City Planning & Engagement Department - Zoning

#### Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

This site is zoned PD and thus the City Planning staff will manage the review and approval.
 The Zoning staff has no comment.

## Requirements to obtain permits:

None

#### Recommendations:

None

#### Contact:

Wes Munzel | ZPE | 513-352-2442 | weston.munzel@cincinnati-oh.gov



## Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD)

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

#### Requirements to obtain permits:

- Your project may change flow to a sewer overflow. Please complete the Request for Availability of Sewer Service Form online. The link to the online form can be found at http://www.msdgc.org/customer\_care/development\_services/index.html Email questions to MSDAvailability@cincinnati-oh.gov
- 2. An approved site utility plan will be required for building to receive approved permit.
- 3. Your project will require a grease trap review. The application and instructions can be found at https://msdgc.org/customer\_care/development\_services/index.html Submit the application, plans, and menu to SewerUseApplications@cincinnati-oh.gov."

#### Recommendations

None

#### Contact:

• Jim Wood | MSD | 513-352-4311 | jim.wood@cincinnati-oh.gov

## Stormwater Management Utility (SMU)

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

## Requirements to obtain permits:

- 1. Detention requirements: design may follow MSD rules, section (combination sewer area, consult with MSD)
  - o Submit detention calculations.
  - o Show details of detention structure. Submit detention shop drawings.
- 2. Utility Plan:
  - Label all proposed storm lines size and material.
  - Where does the proposed Stormwater system outlet into the public sewers?
  - Show downspouts ties to the sewer system.
  - Pipes inside Public Right-of-Ways must be in DIP or RCP material.
- 3. Grading plan: SMU will verify that the proposed system captures all runoff.
- 4. Submit an Erosion/Sediments control plan.
- Include SMU standard Plans Notes https://www.cincinnatioh.gov/stormwater/construction-and-design/standards/smu-standard-plan-notes-april-2022/

#### Recommendation:

- FYI, if your proposed Stormwater system ties into public sewers, SMU will require an As-Built survey at the end of construction. The survey should include the following information:
  - o State Plane Coordinates (N,E) for all MH's and Catch Basins
  - o Inverts and Top elevations for all MHs and Catch Basins
  - o Slopes, sizes, and materials for all storm lines.

#### Contact:

Saidou Wane | SMU | 513-591-7819 | saidou.wane@cincinnati-oh.gov



#### **Water Works**

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

#### Requirements to obtain permits:

- 1. The new water service branch(es) can be connected to the existing 12-inch public water main in Vandercar Way.
- 2. Must have proper backflow preventer per Greater Cincinnati Water Works Rules and Regulations 401-125 and Ohio EPA Chapter 3745-95 of Ohio Administrative Code, contact Premise Services, Ben McQueary 513-591-7835.
- 3. Will need a hot box for the backflow preventer. The backflow preventer should be right behind the meter setting.
- 4. Greater Cincinnati Water Works Standard drawings. (https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/sites/water/assets/File/Engineering/StandardDrawingsRevised7-12-19 Signed.pdf).
- Greater Cincinnati Water Works Service Branch and Meter Procedures (https://www.cincinnatioh.gov/sites/water/assets/File/Engineering/CURRENT\_BRANCH\_AND\_METER\_PROC EDURES.pdf).

#### Recommendations:

- 1. The Owner(s)/Developer(s) will need to hire a Greater Cincinnati Water Works certified licensed and bonded plumber to perform the private water service branch design work and installation.
- 2. The Owner(s)/Developer(s) must have a licensed plumber that is bonded and certified with GCWW and fill out the Online Branch application https://www.cincinnatioh.gov/water/engineering-construction/forms-specifications/ for water service.

#### Contact

• Rick Roell | WaterWorks | 513-591-7858 | richard.roell@gcww.cincinnati-oh.gov

#### Fire Department

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

- 1. A site plan is needed showing 2 Fire Hydrants within 400 feet of all sides of your project. The site plan should show the location of any FDC's. A Fire hydrant should be located within 50 feet of the FDC.
- 2. The minimum fire flow requirements for Commercial structures is a minimum of 2,000 gallons/per/minutes (GPM) @ 20 pressure/per/square inch (psi) (138Kpa).

## Requirements to obtain Permits:

- 1. Your site plan should show the width of the entrance / exits to the parking lot. The site plan should show the width of the actual driving area in the parking lot.
- 2. Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet **Contact:** 
  - Robert Hart | Fire Dept. | 513-352-7597 | robert.hart@cincinnati-oh.gov



## Office of Environment and Sustainability (OES)

## Immediate Requirements to move forward with project:

None

#### Requirements to obtain permits:

Commercial waste, including construction and demolition debris, generated during this
development project must utilize a City franchised commercial waste collection service
per Cincinnati Municipal Code Chapter 730. Additional information can be found at
https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/oes/commercial-waste-hauler-program/.

#### Recommendations:

- 1. The following recommendations are based on adopted City of Cincinnati environmental and sustainability policies:
  - a. The development goal should be to earn at a minimum the LEED Certified rating level.
  - b. Rooftop solar should be considered in the design as a renewable energy source.
  - c. Site parking should include electric vehicle charging stations.
  - d. Site areas designated for trash dumpsters should also have at least equal space designated for recycling dumpsters.
  - e. The use of trees in the landscape design should be included to enhance urban forestry.
  - f. The use of pervious surfaces should be maximized to the extent practical in the design.

#### Contact:

Howard Miller | OES | 513-352-6999 | howard.miller@cincinnati-oh.gov

## Parks Department (Urban Forestry)

#### Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

## Requirements to obtain permits:

1. No trees in the sidewalk cut-outs in the ROW are to be touched or removed.

#### Recommendations:

1. None

#### Contact:

Marianne Prue | Urban Forestry | 513-861-9070 | marianne.prue@cincinnati-oh.gov

## **Department of Transportation & Engineering (DOTE)**

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

## Requirements to obtain permits:

- 1. Coordinate with the Oakley Community Council and DCED regarding the pedestrian tunnel.
- 2. No vehicular access is permitted on Vandercar with the plan as shown.
- 3. All work in the right of way will require a DOTE permit.
- 4. Assigned address is 3065 Vandercar Wy. Once site is constructed, the address number must be posted and visible from the street.



#### Recommendations:

None

#### Contact:

Morgan Kolks | DOTE | 513-335-7322 | morgan.kolks@cincinnati-oh.gov

## **Buildings & Inspections – Buildings**

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

## Requirements to obtain permits:

- 1. Each structure requires its own permit application
- 2. The assembly building requires suppression
- 3. 2017 OBC section 503.1.2 Buildings on the same lot may be regulated as one building or as separate buildings with imaginary property lines which require fire separation and opening restrictions.
- 4. Shipping containers must conform to the attached BBS memo. Containers must conform to all 2017 OBC requirements.
- 5. A Statement of Special Inspections will be required for each shipping container structure.

#### Recommendations:

None

#### Contact:

• Robert Martin | B&I Plans Exam | 513-352-2456 | robert.martin@cincinnati-oh.gov

#### Law Department

## Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

No comments at this time

#### Requirements to obtain permits:

None

### **Recommendations:**

None

### Contact:

• Charles Martinez | Law | 513-352-3359 | charles.martinez@cincinnati-oh.gov

## **Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED)**

Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

## Requirements to obtain permits:

None

#### Recommendations:

None

## Contact:

• Katrina Gragston | DCED | 513-352-6250 | katrina.gragston@cincinnati-oh.gov



## **Health Department**

### Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None

## Requirements to obtain permits:

A food facility plan review by the Cincinnati Health Department (CHD) will be required if
future or current space (or tenant) is licensable (or is currently licensed) as a food service
operation (FSO) or retail food establishment (RFE). If licensable, plumbing will not issue
permits until CHD has completed the food facility review and approved the project.

#### Recommendations:

1. For assistance in determining whether facility is licensable as an FSO/RFE or not, please contact me to discuss.

#### Contact:

• Trisha Blake | Health Dept. | 513-352-2447 | trisha.blake@cincinnati-oh.gov

#### **Police Department**

Immediate Requirements to move the project forward:

None currently.

#### Requirements to obtain permits:

No comments.

#### Recommendations:

None

#### Contact:

- Katalin Howard | Police Dept. | 513-352-3298 | katalin.howard@cincinnati-oh.gov
- Brandon Kyle | Police Dept. | 513-564-1870 | brandon.kyle@cincinnati-oh.gov

FINAL ACTION: The CSR Advisory-TEAM and CSPRO Committee believes that the proposed project plans are moving in the appropriate direction and recommends that the project move forward to City Planning Commission subject to the following condition.

 The subject development must follow the requirements listed above to ensure that the development meets the requirements of all agencies as they apply for all permits.

Sincerely,

Art Dahlberg,

Director of Buildings and Inspections Department

& 1ben

& CSPRO Committee Chair

Rodney D. Ringer,

Development Manager

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (PD-64) OAKLEY STATION HISTORY

- May 2011 PD-64, Oakley Station (74-acre site) created by Zone Change Concept Plan and Program Development Statement approval
- 2. October 2011 Oakley Station Final Development Plan approval by the Planning Commission

## PD-64 - Final Development Plan proposal included:

- 250 Residential units
- 300,000 sq. ft. Office space
- 350,000 sq. ft. Retail space
- 55,000 sq. ft. Movie Theater

# Major Amendments to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement PD-64 Approved by City Council since 2011

- Ordinance 43-2012
   Increase residential from 250 units to 307 units Phase 1B
- Ordinance 179-2013
   Permit fuel sales at Kroger Phase 1C
- Ordinance 240-2015
   Expand residential for an additional 148 units. Parking garage with 385 spaces to serve future office uses Phase 2A
- Ordinance 333-2015
   Three Office Buildings 320,000 sq. ft., parking garage, 120 room hotel Phase 2B
- 7. Ordinance 10-2017 Mike's Car Wash – Phase 1L

## Comparison 2011 to 2022

Category	Initial Concept	Actual	Difference
Commercial (sq.ft.)	350,000	261,658	(88,342)
Office (sq.ft.)	300,000	84,252	(115,748)
Movie Theatre (sq.ft.)	55,000	53,995	(1,005)
Residential (units)	250	457	207
Hotel (rooms)	0	108	108
Garage (spaces)	0	385	385



August 5, 2022

To:

Ms. Katherine Keough-Jurs

Director, Department of City Planning & Engagement

From:

Markiea L. Carter

Director, Department of Community & Economic Development

Subject:

**Economic Analysis of Oakley Station** 

## **BACKGROUND**

Oakley Station is a 74-acre redevelopment of the former Milacron factory site in the Oakley neighborhood of Cincinnati. The City facilitated the demolition of existing manufacturing buildings on the site, associated environmental clean-up, and construction of new public infrastructure through an incentive package as follows:

Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund (CORF) Grant via State of Ohio: \$3,000,000 Clean Ohio Assistance Fund (COAF) Grant via State of Ohio: \$300,000 Project Based Tax Increment Financing Cash - \$2,997,045 Project Based Tax Increment Financing Bond Proceeds - \$5,000,000 Total Assistance City of Cincinnati/State of Ohio - \$10,997,045

The assistance of roughly \$11,000,000 provided a site-ready development originally planned to contain 200 apartments, 250,000 square feet of office space, 350,000 square feet of retail space, and a movie theater. Since the initial project concept was established in the Development Agreement, the Developer has sought and received several modifications to the Planned Development that 1. Increased the number of apartments 2. Decreased the amount of commercial space and 3. Added a public parking garage. Below is a summary of what has been constructed compared to the initial project concept outlined in the Development Agreement between the City and USS Realty:

Category	Initial Concept	Actual	Difference
Commercial (sqft)	350,000	261,658	(88,342)
Office (sqft)	250,000	84,252	(165,748)
Movie Theatre (sqft)	55,000	53,995	(1,005)
Residential (units)	250	457	207
Hotel (rooms)	0	108	108
Garage (spaces)	0	385	385

Since 2012, the Developer has pursued a series of additional financial incentives for the new private improvements at Oakley Station and other financing incentives for Public Improvements. The Developer sought and received CRA tax abatements for the first and second phases of Apartments, the Kroger Marketplace, the Anthem Office Building, and the Homewood Suites Hotel. One commercial tenant (Olive Garden) applied for but did not ultimately receive a CRA tax abatement. In 2015, the Developer requested and received an additional \$6,243,600 in Project Based Tax Increment Financing for constructing a new public parking garage to support the office portion of the development. This brought the City's total direct investment (cash and bonds) to Oakley Station to a total amount of \$17,540,645. This amount does not include the forgone TIF revenues from the above listed CRA tax abatements.

## **Economic Benefits of Current Project**

At the time of Agreement execution, the Developer anticipated the development would create 1,700 jobs A. From the reporting requirements of the various incentives provided and DCED's estimates regarding parts of the Project that do not have reporting requirements, DCED estimates that the Project has created at least 832 FTE jobs. The Developer estimates that 1,300 jobs have been created but this figure includes many part-time positions B. In either calculation, the shortfall from the initial estimate is primarily due to the commercial to apartment conversion and that 2/3 of the office development had not been constructed due to a lack of end users. Of the proposed 1,700 jobs to be created, 1,000 jobs were to come from the office portion of the development. Only the office building occupied by Anthem Insurance has been built, which has reported 492 jobs.

## **ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF CURRENT REQUESTS**

The Developer has requested modifications to the site plan that would 1. Reduce the remaining square footage of office buildings to be constructed and 2. Reduce the available parking that would be committed to the remaining office building footprint.

## Past Marketing Attempts for Office:

By providing financial incentives to facilitate the original concept plan for the Oakley Station Development, the City was following its GO Cincinnati Strategy, where the Madison Road corridor was cited as a "prime location for a complex office/retail/high density housing concentration. This area can provide the "drivable suburban" office location that the City is currently lacking and mix it in with a walkable redevelopment of Historic Madisonville. Due to its proximity to I-71, the CBD, and large swaths of excellent demographics, this corridor has a strong opportunity to capture growth in office and supporting retail demand." The Strategy called for the City to "actively compete for modern office demand; provide land and development support" and to "potentially secure larger sites (3+ acres) to make them readily available to office developers". The City was implementing this strategy with its financial support for the Oakley Station development and its inclusion of 250,000

A Total jobs were expected to include full-time & part-time employees.

B DCED calculated jobs based on incentive reports & estimates of 1 job per 1,000 square feet of retail space. The Developer used current reports & a 2018 employment survey with updates that estimated 1/3 of the total at full-time & 2/3 at half-time.

square feet of office space spread over three office pads. The City has had overall success within the Madison Road Corridor. In addition to Anthem Insurance (located within Oakley Station), the City has assisted Cincinnati Federal Credit Union and Hubbard Radio with securing development sites along the Kennedy Connector totaling 50,000 square feet. Furthermore, the City assisted with two phases of office space for Medpace, totaling 450,000 square feet.

The Developer of Oakley Station has undertaken substantial efforts to land office users, often in close coordination with DCED. The development site was often the only location within the City in competition for users primarily seeking a suburban office product with access to I-71. Despite these efforts, the only end user to build in Oakley Station to date was Anthem Insurance, which opted to locate to Oakley Station instead of leaving the City for a comparable suburban office campus.

## **Current Office Market**

The office market for Cincinnati remains a challenge as office users continue to simultaneously make decisions on their square footage needs and alter their remote/in-person work schedules to fit the needs of their business. Recent market studies have supported this claim and have shown that the need for additional office space remains uncertain. Office subleasing has neared record highs in the past three years, but more tenants are choosing to sublease available space. Many users focus on plug-and-play subleases with furniture as well as Class A+ properties with substantial amenities. Available space being leased is also rising but is still lagging due to economic recovery.

It is DCED's understanding that the majority of current market demand for new office construction will come from a limited pool of end users that desire a specific location within the City. It is also DCED's understanding that suburban-style office is not in as high demand as an office sub-type as it was 15 years ago within the City when the GO Cincinnati Study was authored. While Oakley Station's office pads are attractive to users who desire new construction with access to I-71 and a suburban office campus feeling, the pool of potential users seeking those amenities in the current market may be limited.

# Economic impact of eliminating the office pad and allowing the bar/entertainment venue

As currently accepted within the Planned Development, office pad B would contain a 3-story, 90,000 square foot office building. If office pad B were to perform the same as the similar-sized Anthem Building, it would be assumed that 500 jobs would be created with an estimated annual income tax of \$657,000. However, the relocation of Anthem Insurance to the Oakley Station site did require significant public incentives in the form of a CRA tax abatement, Job Creation Tax Credit, and direct financial assistance for the construction of the new public garage; so the new income tax received would be offset by tax incentives offered for the development.

If the Applicant's proposed bar/entertainment venue were approved, 20 retail jobs would be created with an estimated annual income tax of \$29,520. Though the bar/entertainment venue would provide substantially less income tax to the City, the development would be an \$8,000,000 investment into Oakley Station, providing \$125,000 in annual property taxes (est. \$4MM valuation) and \$325,000 in annual sales taxes.

# Economic impact of reducing the office pad, eliminating the parking garage, and allowing the additional hotel

As currently accepted within the Planned Development, office pad A would contain a 3-5 story, 150,000 square foot office building. If office pad A were to perform proportional to the Anthem Building, it would be assumed that 834 jobs would be created with an estimated annual income tax of about \$1,000,000. However, as noted above, the relocation of Anthem Insurance to the Oakley Station site did require significant public incentives in the form of a CRA tax abatement, Job Creation Tax Credit, and direct financial assistance for the construction of the new public garage so the new income tax received would be offset by any tax incentives offered for the potential development. An additional garage for this office building would likely require a larger footprint or parking arrangements with adjacent property owners for shared parking.

If the proposed reduction of office pad A to 125,000 square feet were approved, it would be assumed that 500 jobs could be created with an estimated annual income tax of \$657,000 at the site if/when an office building is constructed <sup>C</sup>. Furthermore, if the proposed hotel were approved, 15 additional jobs would be created with an annual income tax of \$13,050.

The Applicant did provide DCED with a market demand and economic feasibility report of an additional hotel in Oakley Station. The report found that the current hotel in Oakley Station (Homewood Suites) had an average occupancy rate of 83.7% in the first quarter of 2022 and had been consistently above 70% since April 2021. Market research shows that the ideal occupancy rate range is between 70-90%. Additionally, it was found that there had been an increase in total occupancy but not in the total availability of hotel rooms within the Midtown area of Cincinnati.

While the hotel developer has requested a CRA tax abatement, the City has determined not to offer this incentive due to its location within a Project TIF and lesser benefits provided than the initially anticipated office use for this portion of the site. If the hotel moves forward as planned, all these benefits will be realized without tax incentives. Provided there remains an office component of the Oakley Station development, the City remains committed to considering tax incentives to potential office users for the 120,000 square foot site that will provide substantial income tax benefits to the City as noted above in this analysis.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>C</sup> Developer provided job totals per proposed amendment. DCED estimated annual income tax using Anthem's current JCTC report.

## CONCLUSION

DCED does not provide recommendations for Planned Development modification requests but provides the above analysis for use by City Planning & Engagement staff and the City Planning Commission. Furthermore, DCED is not offering financial incentives for either of the proposed uses due to the factors as mentioned above. Both proposed Project amendments would not be offered any tax incentives to proceed, so all benefits listed will be fully realized if both Projects were to progress.

Copy: Markiea L. Carter, Director, Department of Community and Economic Development



August 4, 2022

Ms. Caroline Kellam
City of Cincinnati
Department of City Planning and Engagement
805 Central Ave, Centennial II, Ste. 700
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

RE: Cincinnati Planning Commission Meeting of July 15, 2022
Oakley Station CDP Amendments

Dear Ms. Kellam:

In follow-up to the July 15, 2022 meeting of the Cincinnati Planning Commission I am providing this letter to more fully respond to questions posed by the Planning Commission and to provide additional information that may be relevant to its decisions in the cases related to the Oakley Station development. I thought it would be useful to provide a comparison of the project's actual performance to-date in with that anticipated at the origination of the redevelopment concept.

In January of 2011, USS Realty entered a Development Agreement with the City of Cincinnati for the redevelopment of the project now known as Oakley Station. The project required acquisition of 74 acres of land from multiple owners containing almost 2,000,000 sq. ft. of nearly vacant, deteriorating, obsolete and environmentally contaminated industrial facilities. As part of the Development Agreement, USS Realty committed to pursuing a mixed-use development of an approximate value of \$93,000,000. Additionally, as part of the Development Agreement, USS Realty anticipated job creation of approximately 1,700 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs from the project. The City of Cincinnati agreed to participate by providing tax increment financing (TIF) funds of approximately \$8,000,000 for public improvements. Additionally, the City agreed to cooperate with the developer in pursuing State of Ohio funding to support a portion of the environmental cleanup of the site.

To date, the Oakley Station project has produced private development totaling more than \$144,000,000 as more fully broken down in the attached table. Based on the current proposed CDP Amendments for Oakley Yard and the Fairfield and Towneplace Suites hotel, at full buildout the project will result in a value of nearly \$190,000,000 – more than double that anticipated by the Development Agreement. Based on feedback from Oakley Station tenants surveyed in 2018 and supplemented by estimates from similar businesses, Oakley Station currently supports approximately 1,300 FTEs. Assuming project



Ms. Caroline Kellam City of Cincinnati August 4, 2022

Page 2

completion in accordance with the two proposed amendments the job creation at Oakley Station will total more than 1,840 FTEs exceeding the projection from 2011.

USS Realty, the owner of the Oakley Station development, and Vandercar, the master developer of the project, used the TIF funding outlined in the Development Agreement to construct, reconstruct and improve new and existing City public streets and utilities necessary to support redevelopment of the Oakley Station site and surrounding properties. This included \$3,000,000 to rebuild and improve utility infrastructure in the dilapidated Disney Street using surplus funds from property taxes generated from the adjacent Center of Cincinnati developments developed by Vandercar in the early 2000's and accumulating in the Center of Cincinnati Project TIFs. Additionally, \$5,000,000 was invested to improve and extend public streets and utility infrastructure through and around the perimeter of Oakley Station to serve the redevelopment and surrounding properties. This \$5 MM of TIF funding was provided from a new Oakley Station Project TIF supported by property taxes to be generated from the value of the proposed private improvements and further backed by a special assessment placed on the USS Realty properties to backstop any potential shortfall. No TIF funding was utilized from the Oakley District TIF.

USS Realty and the City of Cincinnati were successful in securing two grants from the State of Ohio totaling \$3,300,000 to assist in the asbestos abatement, demolition, and soils remediation necessary to make the property available for redevelopment. As part of that process, USS Realty successfully brought the cleanup effort through the State's Voluntary Action Program and received a No Further Action Letter and Covenant Not to Sue, making the property viable for the private investment and commercial lending necessary to achieve the value creation we've seen to date. The City's participation as cooperating applicant was critical to receiving these grants; however, no City financial investment was required as the extensive environmental study, testing, investigation, and grant application package was funded by USS Realty, and any associated City efforts were reimbursed from the proceeds of the grants.

In 2015, the City of Cincinnati entered a separate Development Agreement with Oakley Office Partners associated with construction of a \$6.2 MM parking structure to support development of the approximately 80,000 sq. ft. office building located in Oakley Station to retain Anthem Insurance's offices in the City following their planned exit from their existing East Walnut Hills offices. Again, this \$6.2 MM was provided from surplus funds generated by the Center of Cincinnati Project TIFs. Additionally, USS Realty, Vandercar, and its partners worked with Anthem to purchase its existing East Walnut Hills property to facilitate the Oakley office move. That site is currently being redeveloped as Woodburn Exchange, bringing more than 300 new residential apartments to the East Walnut Hills neighborhood.



Ms. Caroline Kellam City of Cincinnati August 4, 2022

Page 3

Overall, we view the Oakley Station development as tremendous success and a valuable contributor to the Oakley neighborhood and the City of Cincinnati as a whole. Approval of the two proposed CDP Amendments will provide the remaining development much needed momentum coming out of the extremely difficult circumstances driven by the pandemic with projects both unanimously supported by the neighborhood community council. It is important to the viability of both projects that they move forward without further delays. With that in mind, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (513) 600-7370 or by email at <a href="mailto:sdragon@vanhold.com">sdragon@vanhold.com</a> with any additional questions or requests for information.

Sincerely, USS REALTY, LLC

Steven N. Dragon, P.E.

Attachment