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On behalf of ON THE BLOCK, LLC  
April 29, 2025

**Lexington-Fayette Urban County Planning Commission**  
101 East Vine Street  
Lexington, KY 40507

**RE: Zone Map Amendment Request – 400 Chestnut Street, Lexington, KY 40508**  
**Proposed Zoning: B-1 (Neighborhood Business)**

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I am writing on behalf of the applicant to formally request a **Zone Map Amendment** for the property located at **400 Chestnut Street, Lexington, KY 40508**. The applicant seeks to rezone the parcel from **R-3 (High-Density Residential)** to **B-1 (Neighborhood Business)** to support a small-scale, walkable, neighborhood-serving commercial use consistent with the area's history, demand, and character.

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### **Historic Use & Neighborhood Compatibility**

The subject property at **400 Chestnut Street** was built in **1930** and has **always operated as a commercial building**. Over its lifetime, it has housed multiple businesses, most recently operating as a **licensed hair salon** with a valid **Certificate of Occupancy**. Crucially, the building has **never been used for residential purposes**.

The structure will **remain as originally built**, and **no exterior construction is necessary** to accommodate business operations. This ensures full compatibility with the surrounding residential scale, character, and streetscape.

The property lies near several other active small businesses—many operating under R-3 zoning—including:

- **Family Dollar at 407 & 421 Race Street** (approx. 350 feet away)
- **M&M Grocery at 398 E Fifth Street**
- **Liquor store at 401–403 E Fifth Street**
- **Martine's Pastries at 400 E Third Street**

Rezoning 400 Chestnut to B-1 aligns with the established **mixed-use nature of this corridor** and will formalize commercial use in a building that has been functioning this way for nearly a century.

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## Community Demand & Transit Access

There is an **expressed community need** for more local commercial options in this area. Numerous neighbors and stakeholders have voiced strong support for additional walkable businesses. The **LexTran bus stop located immediately beside the property** further supports the site's suitability for neighborhood commerce.

The applicant has received **multiple leasing inquiries** from prospective tenants interested in using the building for restaurants, corner stores, clothing shops, and other needed services. These types of low-impact, community-serving businesses align perfectly with the property's layout, size, and location.

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## Consistency with the B-1 Zoning Ordinance (Sec. 8-16)

The proposed rezoning is fully consistent with the **intent and permitted uses of the B-1 (Neighborhood Business) zone**, as outlined in **Sec. 8-16** of the Lexington-Fayette County Zoning Ordinance. The B-1 zone is specifically intended to "**accommodate neighborhood shopping facilities to serve the needs of the surrounding residential area,**" and to "**support and enhance a residential neighborhood**" with small-scale, community-serving businesses.

The subject property is ideally suited for this designation:

- It will house **low-intensity businesses** that do not generate noise, dust, or vibrations perceptible beyond the property line, consistent with the B-1 standards.
- Uses such as **retail stores, restaurants, professional offices, corner stores, or personal service establishments** are explicitly allowed principal uses under **Sec. 8-16(b)** and align precisely with the tenant interest already received for the site.
- The **existing structure will remain unchanged** externally, ensuring the scale, walkability, and neighborhood character intended for the B-1 zone is preserved.

Rezoning 400 Chestnut to B-1 will allow the property to conform with modern zoning requirements while serving the community in accordance with the **specific intent and use standards of the B-1 Neighborhood Business Zone**.

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## Alignment with the Comprehensive Plan & Place Type

The requested zone change supports the goals and policies set forth in the **Imagine Lexington 2045 Comprehensive Plan**, particularly under the **Placebuilder framework**.

The **Place Type most appropriate for this property** is "**Enhanced Neighborhood – Low Density Non-Residential/Mixed Use**". This designation better reflects the site's scale, surrounding development pattern, and walkable proximity to neighborhood-serving uses. It

provides a planning framework that supports low-intensity business activities woven into existing residential neighborhoods.

### **Applicable Placebuilder Objectives:**

#### **LAND USE**

- **A-DS12-1** – Development should be located nearest to neighborhood-serving commercial areas
- **A-DN3-1** – Pedestrian-oriented commercial opportunities should be incorporated within neighborhoods
- **B-SU3-1** – Encourage compact and mixed-use development
- **C-LI7-1** – Promote walkable access to greenspace, businesses, and services
- **E-GR9-2** – Incorporate low-intensity business uses into neighborhoods

#### **TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY**

- **A-DS1-2** – Accessible pedestrian linkages to transit should be provided
- **A-DS5-1** – Provide safe separation for multiple travel modes
- **A-DS10-1** – Ensure connectivity to community anchors
- **C-PS10-1** – Utilize shared and flexible parking

#### **SITE DESIGN**

- **A-DS5-4** – Promote pedestrian-friendly and active streetscapes
- **C-LI8-1** – Enhance public realm with appropriate mixed-use activation

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

- **B-SU4-1** – Avoid unnecessary impervious surface expansion
- **B-SU11-1** – Use native, low-impact landscaping

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### **Conclusion**

Rezoning 400 Chestnut Street to B-1 is **consistent with its historical commercial use**, aligned with current neighborhood activity, **strongly supported by residents**, and positioned for **low-impact, walkable business development**. The building will remain intact as originally built, with **no exterior alterations** required, and will help meet the pressing demand for community-serving retail and service options.

We respectfully request the Planning Commission's **favorable consideration** of this application.

Sincerely,  
**Andrew Mueller**  
*On behalf of ON THE BLOCK, LLC*