

# Forum

Forum House at Brookfield Place  
East Podium, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
181 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M5J 2T3

October 27, 2023

Mary Medeiros  
City Clerk, City Clerk Services  
City of Oshawa 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Rundle Tower, City Hall  
50 Centre Street South  
Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7

**Re: Urban Growth Centre Community Improvement Plan  
Increased Assessment Grant Program for 161 Athol Street East, Oshawa, ON**

ALMA Oshawa GP Inc. ("Forum") is the owner of 161 Athol Street East ("Subject Property"). Forum acquired the subject property from 161 Athol Street GP Ltd. ("Previous Owners") on August 31, 2023. Forum intends on investing meaningful capital to reposition the asset back to its originally intended approved use, a student housing accommodation, by adding an additional eight (8) units within the existing building, renovating key amenity areas, and common spaces including corridors and the lobby. The Subject Property is in downtown Oshawa, across the street from Ontario Tech University's Charles Hall and in proximity to many downtown amenities while also benefiting from existing efficient transit systems.

## Subject Property Background

The Subject Property occupied in Spring of 2020 was originally approved and intended to be marketed to students. Unfortunately, due to a lack of operating experience, the Previous Owners pivoted to allow leases and tenants from both students and other demographics of renters.

With previous historical approvals supportive of student housing as a use in this location, Forum completed an assessment of the property and its operations to determine the appropriate changes, alterations and improvements needed to deliver a solely student housing accommodation. As one of the largest owners and developers of student housing across the country, Forum quickly identified the needed changes and potential efficiencies to ensure success for a positive student experience. These alterations align with Forum's ALMA brand, a student housing community focused on delivering contemporary student accommodations located near post-secondary institutions, amenities, and transit.

One of the identified immediate needs was to increase the number of units provided in areas of underutilized space. Subsequently, Forum submitted and obtained the required planning approvals to add 8 additional residential units in small, unneeded, and unsuccessful amenity space. In Oshawa, as in many other municipalities, finds itself amid a housing crisis for all demographics. Adding purpose-built student housing units across the country will address a "two birds with one stone" approach. This approach provides much needed student specific housing, designed for students

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with amenities geared for their specific needs, while freeing up other inventory in apartment buildings and low-rise communities currently utilized as a supplement for students that is gravely needed by families and other demographics.

As noted, amenities specifically designed for students needs are an important feature in purpose-built student accommodations. Further renovations and alterations will be completed in all corridors, vestibules, the lobby, operational spaces as well as all indoor and outdoor amenity spaces to create, not only operational efficiencies, but to ensure an interactive and sense of community living environment.

Important to note, where existing non-student leases currently exist, Forum will follow the natural evolution of the 12-month lease terms to facilitate the transition.

## Approvals and Submissions

A Minor Variance application was submitted to permit the 8 additional units that went before the Committee of Adjustment on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The requested variances were approved, and a formal decision letter was received on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, following the 20-day appeal period (refer to Appendix A).

Forum has subsequently submitted a building permit application to the City on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to commence construction of the additional eight (8) units. Forum targets the completion of these units prior to September 2024 to ensure they are available for occupancy prior to the start of a new school year cycle.

The approved additional units result in a total of 193 much needed units. As mentioned, additional alterations will be completed in the building which include but are not limited to; additional stackable laundry units, a new storage locker room, updated finishes in all common spaces including the lobby, and fully furnished indoor and outdoor amenity spaces. It is also worth noting that all units, existing and new, will have furniture, utilities, and all chattels included.

## Approval and Requests for Increased Assessment Grant Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Oshawa and 161 Athol Street GP LTD

The Previous Owner submitted the application for the Increased Assessment Grant under the Urban Growth Centre Community Improvement Plan ("UGC CIP") in December 2017. The Development Services Committee recommended to City Council that the application be approved as it:

- Conforms with the City's UGC CIP;
- Implements intensification and development on underutilized lands within the City's Downtown Urban Growth Centre consistent with the Provincial Growth plan and Oshawa Official Plan;

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- Advances the implementation of residential strategies contained within the Oshawa's Plan Twenty 20;
- Increases the provision of a broader range of accommodations in the Downtown,
- Encourages development that may not otherwise occur; and
- Facilitates construction jobs and material purchases.

This application was approved by the City Council on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

In May 2022, the Previous Owners requested a minor amendment to clause 3.1(d), on page 2 of the Agreement, to allow for the transfer of the benefit to subsequent owners of the property (refer to Appendix B). The request was administrative in nature and preemptive as it was anticipated that a transition of ownership structure may be required given the length of the Agreement. This original request was not requested by Forum and exclusively represented the preferences of the Previous Owners.

In July 2023, the Previous Owners submitted the same request to the Clerk to help ensure and/or facilitate the success of the project. At this time, Forum was in discussions with the Previous Owners regarding the acquisition of the Subject Property.

Forum is submitting this letter, as the current owner of the property, to formally request the City's consent to transfer the grant from the Previous Owners as outlined in the details below referencing the *Urban Growth Centre Community Improvement Plan* and *Part C - Appendix 1 Increased Assessment Grant Program Procedures*.

## **Item 1.3 Eligibility for Grant**

**"The applicants for an Increased Assessment Grant must be the registered owner(s) of the property and must undertake improvements to their buildings and/or property, which shall be of sufficient size and cost to result in a re-assessment of the property."**

As the recent registered owners of the Subject Property, Forum is retrofitting and repositioning the asset back to its originally approved intent by undertaking the following improvements;

- add 8 additional purpose-built student housing units,
- conduct a comprehensive renovation and operational plan and execute immediately on those required renovations all common areas and corridors, and
- create a fully amenitized and thoughtfully programmed student accommodation.

Although the development is relatively new construction, it requires a significant investment, operationally and construction, to properly transition it back to a working order student housing accommodation including the addition of 8, much needed, student housing units as well as the common amenity spaces. The total value of work to be completed is estimated at over \$4 million.

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## **Item 1.4 General Terms of Grant Program**

**“The Increased Assessment Grant applies to the construction/creation of residential, non-residential and mixed-use buildings that result in an increase in assessed value.”**

Same comment as above.

**“If the ownership of rental property changes, in whole or in part, before the grant period lapses, the subsequent owner is not entitled to future grant payments without the City’s consent to transfer the grant payments to the new property owner.”**

Forum is aware that on 2 occasions, requests were submitted by the Previous Owners’ partner, EDEV Inc., for the approval of a minor amendment to clause 3.1(d) on page 2 in the Increased Assessment Grant Agreement, to allow for the transfer of the benefit to subsequent owners of the property. City Council considered this matter on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, where a potential transfer to an unknown owner and the sale was not imminent and therefore, was not approved. This request was made over a year prior to the purchase of the asset by Forum.

A subsequent request was made again by the Previous Owner on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to revisit the transfer of the grant to a new owner restating the importance. The Clerk advised that since Council already took a position on the request the year prior with the Previous Owner, it was not forwarded to Council but appeared on the INFO Package.

## **Alignment with UGC CIP’s Goals and Objectives**

The renovation program and repositioning strategy of the Subject Property back to a student housing asset are in alignment with the UGC CIP objective of achieving a combined density of 166 persons/jobs per hectare by 2026, and 200 persons/jobs per hectare by 2031 in several ways:

- **Maximizes Land Use Potential:** Forum’s retrofit/renovation program and repositioning strategy identifies and repurposes currently underutilized spaces, such as amenity areas on floors 2 to 8, into functional and livable units. This approach not only addresses the demands of a supply constrained housing market but also optimizes the property’s capacity to accommodate a greater student population in Oshawa’s Urban Growth Centre.
- **Increases Economic Activity:** The student population contributes significantly to the local economy by creating employment opportunities in service sectors, including retail, food services, and entertainment. An increased student population will lead to growth of businesses and services located within downtown Oshawa.
- **Enhances Existing Knowledge Clusters:** Oshawa is already home to several academic institutions, such as Durham College, Ontario Tech University, and Trent University Durham. The addition of student housing complements these institutions and enhances the innovation, research, and technology hubs. The presence of these hubs further attracts

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businesses and professionals, all of which contribute to an increase in job opportunities and residents within Oshawa.

Forum, with its fulsome retrofit/renovation and repositioning program of adding 8 new residential units in a highly supply constrained student housing market, a market that has significantly changed since the approval of the grant with greater risk following the effects caused by the pandemic, formally request Council to approve the transfer of the remaining grant payments.

The request is aligned with the UGC CIP goals; which include:

- Encouraging both residential and non-residential development in the UGC, and
- Recognizing the relationship between the Provincial Growth Plan, the Durham Regional Official Plan and the Oshawa Official Plan.

We continue to undertake improvements at ALMA Oshawa. Forum notes that the grant rebate was already in the budget following the approval of the original application by City Council on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The alignment between improvements Forum is undertaking and the original application submitted by the Previous Owners is evident. Acknowledging the current economic market conditions and housing crisis, we are seeking a cooperative solution with the City's financial support to achieve a shared objective towards economic prosperity and financial stewardship in the City of Oshawa.

We trust the enclosed letter and supporting documents and correspondences supports your review of our request for the City's consent to transfer the grant agreement from the Previous Owners to Forum. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at (416) 587-7283 or [daynag@forumam.com](mailto:daynag@forumam.com).

Yours truly,



Dayna Gilbert  
Managing Director, Real Estate Development

**Forum Asset Management**

M: 416-587-7283

[daynag@forumam.com](mailto:daynag@forumam.com)

[LinkedIn](#) | [Website](#)

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## Appendix A – Committee of Adjustments Approval for Minor Variance Application



File: **A-2023-101**  
Ward: **4**

### MINUTES UNDER THE PLANNING ACT

#### Committee of Adjustment Application for 161 Athol Street East

An application has been submitted by **Alma Oshawa GP Inc. on behalf of 161 Athol Street GP Ltd.** for variances from the City's Zoning By-law 60-94.

The application relates to **161 Athol Street East** (PL 335 SHEET 17 PT LTS C31 TO C33 RP 40R30010 PTS 2 TO 4 6), Oshawa, Ontario.

The purpose and effect of the application is to permit an apartment building with the variances in Column 1 below, instead of the requirements in Column 2 below, as required by Zoning By-law 60-94 for an apartment building in a R6-D(3) (Residential) Zone.

Zoning Item	Column 1	Column 2
Maximum Density – Dwelling Units per Hectare	893	857
Maximum Number of Dwelling Units in an Apartment Building	193	185
Minimum Number of Resident Parking Spaces for Rental Apartment Building	34 (0.178 spaces per unit)	34 (0.185 spaces per unit)
Minimum Number of Visitor Parking Spaces for Rental Apartment Building	9 (0.049 spaces per unit)	9 (0.05 spaces per unit)

A meeting of the Oshawa Committee of Adjustment was held on September 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the "C" Wing Committee Meeting Room, City Hall, Oshawa, Ontario.

Present: A. Johnson, R. Adams, D. Thomson  
E. Kohek, D. Sappleton

Absent: F. Eismont, D. Lindsay

Also Present: S. Zhang, GHD, 65 Sunray St, Whitby, ON  
S. Edwards, GHD, 65 Sunray St, Whitby, ON

A report received from the Economic and Development Services Department stated no objection to the approval of this application.

S. Zhang provided an overview of the application. The proposed units will be located within the existing building by converting unused common spaces into new units.

Moved by A. Johnson, seconded by D. Thomson,

"THAT the application by **Alma Oshawa GP Inc. on behalf of 161 Athol Street GP Ltd.** for 161 Athol Street East, Oshawa, Ontario, be approved."

Affirmative – A. Johnson, R. Adams, D. Thomson

Negative – None

CARRIED.

The Chair declared that the application BE APPROVED.

The APPROVAL of the application granted herein is based upon the following reasons:

1. The Committee is of the opinion that the variances granted are minor in nature.

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The Corporation of the City of Oshawa, 50 Centre Street South, Oshawa, Ontario L1H 3Z7  
Phone 905-436-3853 1-800-667-4292 Fax 905-436-5699 www.oshawa.ca/cofa

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Page 2

File: **A-2023-101**  
**161 Athol St E**

2. The Committee is of the opinion that the variances granted are desirable for the appropriate development of the subject property.
3. The Committee is of the opinion that the granting of the variances maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law.



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Erika Kohek, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

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Feasibility plan submitted with Minor Variance application.



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Look and feel of the furnishings and fixtures for the renovation plan.


### Lobby Ground Floor










Existing tile floor to remain  
Existing light wood millwork to remain  
New wall-covering  
New feature lighting  
New paint (white walls to be replaced with PT-2)  
Remove existing surface mount lights

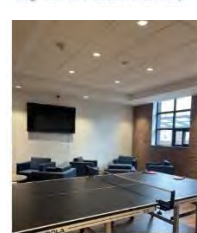
### Public Corridors Ground Floor






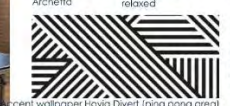




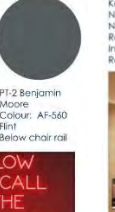


Existing tile floor to remain  
Existing light wood millwork to remain  
Existing penny round tile to remain  
New wall-covering  
New surface mount lighting  
New paint (white walls to be replaced with PT-2)  
Install framed art


### Party Room Ground Floor




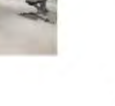
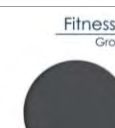
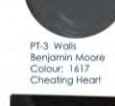


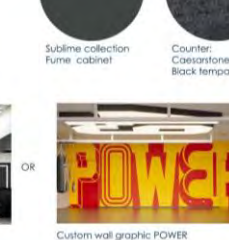
Existing Space  
Keep brick veneer wall  
Keep ping pong table  
Install kitchenette  
Mix of furniture - dining & lounge  
Potentially keep existing floor or replace with polished concrete?  
Replace lighting  
Relocate TV

### Fitness Room Ground Floor



Existing Space  
Keep existing rubber floor  
Keep existing brick veneer  
Paint all walls PT-3  
Keep existing ceiling and lighting  
New wall paint  
New Millwork to house Sanitizer, Wll, paper towel etc.  
Revise equipment layout  
In-wall water bottle fill station  
Remove some mirror and install wall mural

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Existing tile floor to remain  
Box out wall around units  
New paint  
New millwork  
Paint exposed ceiling white  
May require some gyp bulkheads



Reference image. Install counter - space permitting.

## Laundry Room Ground Floor



Track Lighting - Stanpro & Juno Track TL22 & Trac Master Black



Accent Sconce  
Kuzco Globe Black



PT-5 Wall Colour  
Benjamin Moore  
467 High Park



PT-1 Wall colour  
Benjamin Moore  
CC-40 Cloud White



P-Lam - Wilsonart  
Sap Walnut



Existing  
Paint concrete slab  
Install new planters to differentiate space  
New lounge & dining furniture.  
New party string lights  
BBQ



## Outdoor Patio Ground Floor



String light reference



Paint the concrete slab



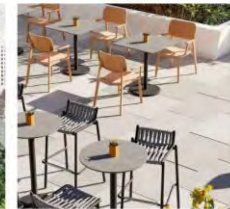
OR



Furniture reference



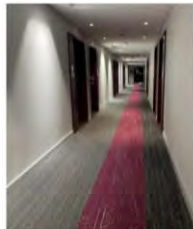
Planters reference image



Furniture reference

## Public Corridors

2nd- Top Fl



Existing Ceiling & Lighting to Remain  
Existing textured wall paint to remain  
Paint Doors & frames  
New Carpet Tile



Keep existing wall tile  
& LVT and millwork  
paneling



Paint existing elevator doors & frames  
PT-3



Interface - Open Air Neutras - Flannel



PT-3 Doors & Frames  
Benjamin Moore  
Colour: 1617  
Cheating Heart

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## Appendix B - Previous Owner's Request for an Amendment to the CIP Agreement

CNCL-22-51

**From:** [Mark Cairns](#)  
**To:** [Laura Moebis](#)  
**Cc:** [Tom Copeland](#) **M.F.I.P.P.A. Sec 14 (1)**  
**Subject:** 157 to 163 Athol St. E, Oshawa Increased Assessment Grant Agreement  
**Date:** Friday, May 27, 2022 3:19:06 PM

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Dear Laura,

Please find the formal letter requesting the amendment to the CIP Agreement and the CIP agreement itself attached.

This request is administrative in nature and contemplates the transition of the property from its development and construction phase to its stabilized operation. Given the length of the agreement its anticipated that a transition of ownership structure may be required. In order to keep the CIP agreement in proper alignment with this administrative change the minor amendment would work to facilitate a smooth transition.

Also, please note that ownership of 161 was working diligently prior to securing approval of the CIP to ensure that the building met or exceeded City of Oshawa OADS requirements and in doing so incurred great expense to meet this standard.

Your assistance to bring this request forward to Development Services Committee and City Council for approval next month is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark Cairns

**Mark Cairns**  
General Partner

120 Adelaide St W, Suite 803  
Toronto, ON M5H 1T1  
416-459-1315





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Toronto, ON M5J 2T3

**161 Athol St.GP. Ltd**  
**120 Adelaide St.W., Suite 803**  
**Toronto, Ontario**  
**M5H 1T1**

May 27, 2022

Ms. Laura Moebs,  
Principal Planner  
City of Oshawa

Dear Ms. Moebs,

Further to our discussions regarding the CIP agreement relating to 161 Athol St. in the City of Oshawa, please accept this letter as a formal request to approve a minor amendment to the Increased Assessment Grant Agreement attached.

We respectfully request a minor amendment to clause 3.1(d) on page 2, the proposed amendment would allow for the transfer of the benefit to subsequent owners of the property.

Your assistance facilitating this request through Development Services Committee and City Council would be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,



Mark Cairns

President, 161 Athol St. GP. Ltd

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Toronto, ON M5J 2T3

**From:** [Mark Cairns](#)  
**To:** [Meaghan Harrington](#)  
**Cc:** [Laura Moebis](#); [Tom Copeland](#) **M.F.I.P.A. Sec 14 (1)**  
**Subject:** RE: 161 Athol St CIP Amendment - Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 8, 2022 5:32:30 PM

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Hi Meaghan,

Further to your questions, please find our response below:

1. We do not currently have an offer on the property, we anticipate transferring the property at some point later in 2022.
2. Currently, we do not have a company in place to receive the transfer of the property, a transfer of the property was not known back in 2018.
3. We understand we would not include any information regarding the CIP before this matter goes before council.

I hope these responses address your questions. Please feel free to contact me directly for further clarification if needed.

Thanks and Best Regards,

Mark  
**M.F.I.P.A. Sec 14 (1)**

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Corporate Services Department  
City Clerk Services

File: 03-05

June 24, 2022

**DELIVERED BY E-MAIL**  
**(mcairns@edevinc.com)**

Mark Cairns

Re: Mark Cairns, General Partner, EDEV Inc. - Requesting an Amendment to the Increased Assessment Grant Agreement at 157-163 Athol Street East

This is in response to your correspondence of May 27, 2022 to the Oshawa City Council concerning the above-referenced matter.

Oshawa City Council considered the above matter at its meeting of June 20, 2022 and adopted the following recommendation:

"That Correspondence CNCL-22-51 from Mark Cairns, General Partner, EDEV Inc requesting an amendment to the Increased Assessment Grant Agreement for lands located at 157-163 Athol Street East be received for information."

If you need further assistance concerning the above matter, please contact Warren Munro, Commissioner, Development Services Department at the address listed below or by telephone at 905-436-3311.

Mary Medeiros  
City Clerk

/jl

c. Development Services Department

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The Corporation of the City of Oshawa, 50 Centre Street South, Oshawa, Ontario L1H 3Z7  
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