



AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

Suite 1-B, 192 Wyse Road, Dartmouth NS, B3A 1M9 | 902.441.5322 |
asalah@ahans.ca

June 11th, 2020

Carl Purvis
Planning Applications Program Manager
Planning and Development
40 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth

**Re: Development Agreement Amendment Application, 158 Greenhead Road,
Lakeside NS PID: 40050593**

Dear Carl,

The Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS), on behalf of Adsum for Women & Children (Adsum), is pleased to submit the following application for a substantive amendment to their Development Agreement (DA) at 158 Greenhead Road.

To assist with this application submission, the following supporting materials are enclosed:

Appendix A: Site Plan
Appendix B: Servicing Schematic
Appendix C: Traffic Impact Statement
Appendix D: Municipal Buy Back Agreement

1.0 Site Details and Neighbourhood Context

Project Name	Adsum Centre
Street Address	158 Greenhead Road
Municipality	Halifax Regional Municipality
Property Area	5.6 Acres
Existing Structure	6,868 square feet (sf) +/-
PID	40050593
Existing Land Use	Residential Care Facility
Plan Area	Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville
MPS Designation	Urban Residential Designation
LUB Zone	R-2

The subject property in Lakeside is within walking distance of St. Margrets Bay Road where a recreational centre, bus stops, and other commercial destinations are located. It is just over 4 km from the Bayers Lake Business Park and an 18 minute drive to downtown Halifax. Municipal and provincial land borders the property to the South-East, and the Alderwood Trailer Village, with roughly 167 mobile dwellings, is to the North-West.

What was the former Alderwood School was repurposed as a Residential Care Facility by Adsum in 2001. The existing one-storey structure covers approximately 3.0% of the property and contains four self-contained transitional housing units with four beds each (16 beds total), programming spaces, common room, library, and offices. The neighbourhood context is predominantly low density residential consisting of R-2 and R-3 zones. St. Margarets Bay Road contains similar land uses interwoven with R-1, R-4, and community facility zones. The subject property offers multiple advantages to expand the Centre to accommodate the increasing demand for affordable dwelling units for women and children at-risk of homelessness. Advantages include:

- The property is 5.6 acres providing ample space for good siting, setbacks, and driveway access.
- Site location provides privacy and open space for tenants.
- Available municipal services.
- Clear, level land (in front of existing structure) favourable for development that minimizes the impact on existing natural features within the site.
- Success and increasing demand for space at the Centre has outgrown the current dated structure.

- The demand for affordable housing continues to rise throughout the municipality, but increasing costs associated with supply limit non-profit opportunities. Adsum wishes to capitalize on their extensive property to increase the supply.

A need and demand study conducted by AHANS in 2019 considered community and below market rental housing options for households in the Timberlea, Lakeside, Beechville area. Using Statistics Canada and Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Data, the report considered population growth, housing type, rental rates, income, and housing starts. Findings indicated that housing forms are homogenous and lack diverse affordable rental options. Although the population grew by 3.65% between 2011 and 2016, no subsidized or below market rental housing was created. Rising median household income and an increasing number of couples with children indicate a desirable family environment, but low-income households may be priced out of the market. The rate of development taking place between the three communities reinforces the demand for housing units, but increasing rental rates may exclude low-income and vulnerable households from opportunities. Adsum staff have repeatedly witnessed tenants graduate from their transitional units and wish to remain close to the Centre, but are unable to find appropriate affordable housing and forced to relocate. By expanding, Adsum will provide women and children the chance to remain in a desirable community that would otherwise be unattainable given their income.

In the spring of 2019, Adsum successfully accessed CMHC Seed Funding to explore the feasibility of this expansion project. If this application is approved, the organization plans to apply to the National Housing Strategy's (NHS) Co-Investment Fund, being one of the first non-profits in the province to do so.

2.0 Existing Planning Designations & Zoning

The subject property is designated Urban Residential (UR) under the Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and zoned R-2 in the Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville Land Use By-law (LUB). After receiving the property from the municipality, Adsum secured a DA permitting the following uses:

2.2.1 A residential care facility for homeless women with or without children and youth. A maximum of twenty persons (women and their children, youths) who are homeless shall be permitted to reside in the facility.

2.2.2 Accessory buildings and structures shall be permitted on the Lands provided that any such accessory building and structures conform with all requirements applied to the R-2 zone and all other general requirements of the Land Use By-law. All other development and use of the property shall comply with the requirements of the R-2 zone and general requirements of the Land Use By-law.

The MPS provides the opportunity for Council to consider our proposal through a substantive amendment to the existing DA. The following is our assessment of enabling policy UR-17:

UR-17 Notwithstanding Policies UR-1 and CC-1, within the Urban Residential and Commercial Core Designations, it shall be the intention of Council to consider permitting residential care facilities according to the development agreement provisions of the Planning Act. In considering such an agreement, Council shall have regard to the following:

(a) The guidelines of provincial licensing and other regulatory bodies;

Currently the Adsum Centre adheres to the *Homes for Special Care Act* (1989) and the regulations in Section 19 which state:

- 4. (5) The term “community based residential facility” means any building or place where persons receive supervisory care in a residential and family environment and the care is provided by persons who are not their parents.*
- 5. (1) The primary purpose of a community based residential facilities ... shall be to encourage, foster, and promote the social, educational and vocational development and well-being of the residents for the purpose of integrating the residents into the community as self-sufficient and independent individuals.*

Programming and supports at the Centre are designed to nurture and support tenants in a secure environment. On-site supports provided between September 2017 and 2018 include:

- 760 hours of therapeutic and recreational programming
- 470 hours of one-on-one resident meetings
- Supervised access visits between mothers and children
- Strengthening Parenting Skills Program
- Housing plan development

Additionally, the Centre offers support and outreach to women who have exited the Centre and are housed in the private market.

The expansion would provide affordable dwelling options to further Adsum's mission to lead change in housing and provide safe, secure, and affordable housing for women and children.

(b) *Any special need for on-site facilities which may be required for the intended users of the facilities;*

Adsum will develop an internal staffing plan to accommodate the expansion and increased supports for tenants as needed. The Centre will continue to offer the existing programs and supports, integrating new initiatives to meet changing needs.

The proposed expansion also incorporates accessibility measures for tenants with disabilities. In addition to all community and programming space being barrier free, the expansion incorporates five fully accessible dwelling units consistent with accessibility standards set forth in CMHC's NHS.

(c) *The design and scale of building relative to the surrounding residential neighbourhood;*

We believe the design and scale of the proposed expansion is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood and land use requirements. The site plan keeps development confined to a small area of the property limiting the impact on neighbouring residents and maintaining a large forested buffer between properties to the North. We referenced low density land use requirements from the LUB to ensure the design respected surrounding

land use standards. Table 2 is a summary of requirements compared to the proposed expansion on the site:

Table 2: Land Use Requirements Comparison (for central services)

Requirements	R1	R2	R3	Proposed Site Plan
Minimum Lot Area	6,000 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	5.6 Acres
Minimum Frontage	60 feet	60 feet	60 feet	612.5 feet
Minimum Front/ Flankage yard	20 feet	24 feet	20 feet	24 feet
Minimum Rear or Side Yard	8 feet	8 feet	8 feet	47 feet
Maximum Lot Coverage	35%	35%	35%	5%
Maximum Height	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet

(d) Any other considerations relative to the needs and services provided by the specific facility;

When negotiating the original DA, Council agreed that the Adsum Centre would require less parking due to reduced tenant demand. The most frequent use of parking spaces is staff, client supports, and visitors. While expanding the Centre will require additional parking spaces, the demand will remain low. Using this precedence, while considering parking requirements of similar zones, the site plan incorporates 24 parking spaces, including two that are accessible, to meet the demand of tenants and staff. Based on experience, Adsum feels this is an appropriate supply for residents and services. Section 4.0 and 5.0 in the Traffic Impact Statement discusses the trip generation and parking requirements in further detail.

Preliminary conversations with Halifax Water indicated that the Centre's current waste water connection is not consistent with policy and would not

be approved for this expansion. As such, the attached Servicing Schematic demonstrates Adsum’s intension to connect their sanitary lateral to municipal services approximately 200 meters (+/-) down Greenhead Road.

(e) The provisions of Policy IM-12

We have reviewed Policy IM-12 and found our proposal consistent with the provisions a to d.

We believe the proposed expansion of the Adsum Centre is consistent with the land use intent of the Urban Residential Designation stated in the MPS which “encourages a mix of housing types and other compatible institutional uses within the underdeveloped portions of the designation” (p. 46). The success of the Adsum Center for over 15 years demonstrates its compatibility with the surrounding community. The expansion would utilize a section of the undeveloped property to diversify affordable housing opportunities in the community.

3.0 Project Description

Adsum is seeking a substantive amendment to increase the number of women and children permitted to reside on the property from 20 to 47. The stated modest desired density for municipal services in the MPS is 17 persons per acre (ppa). Given this density, the 5.6 acres property can support 95.2 ppa making Adsum’s application within the stated desire of the MPS. Table 3 outlines the proposed unit breakdown to accommodate the increased capacity:

Table 3: Dwelling Unit Breakdown

Dwelling Unit	Number of Units	Residents
1 Bedroom	12	12
2 Bedroom	9	18
3 Bedroom	3	9
	24	39

Adsum wishes to renovate the existing structure, to better suit the needs of residents and accommodate the expansion. The renovation will maintain 2 transitional housing units (8 beds), programming rooms, community space, and offices. The additional 39 tenants plus the remaining 2 transitional units total the requested 47-person capacity. Table 4 outlines proposed building dimensions for project:

Table 4: Proposed New Building Dimensions (Existing + Expansion)

Existing Building	
Building Area	6,868 sf
Demolished Square Footage (%)	1,615 sf (23.5%)
Remaining Area	5,253 sf
New Construction	
Building Area	6,350 sf
Total Floor Area	19,050 sf
Total (New & Old Building)	
Building Area	11,603 sf
Total Floor Area	24,303 sf

Adsum’s project will adhere to affordability, energy efficiency, and accessibility standards under the NHS. Federal funding under the NHS has pivoted towards prioritizing financially sustainable community housing models that offer diverse housing options to the most vulnerable in society. We have worked hard to develop a viable operational budget while maintaining deep affordable rent levels that would allow the Centre to function sustainably. We partnered with architects at Passive Design Solutions to develop an energy efficient design consistent with passive housing standards, and 20% of our units will be fully accessible.

Supporting documents in our submission verify the capacity of the surrounding municipal services such as road and waste water to handle the proposed expansion. As Timberlea, Lakeside, and Beechville are growing communities with several approved and pending planning applications, we feel this is an appropriate expansion to contribute to a healthy and diverse housing-mix for residents.

4.0 Conclusion

Thank you for considering our application. We look forward to working with you, your HRM team, Council, and members of the Lakeside community throughout this process. If you have any questions or require additional information about this application please do not hesitate to reach out to the contact below.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

Adriane Salah
Planner
Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia
asalah@ahans.ca
902.441.5322