



1290 Williams St, Ste 102 
Denver, CO 80218 
303.830.1651 
chun@chundenver.org 
www.chundenver.org

March 30, 2020

Tracey Huggins, Executive Director
Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA)
1555 California Street #200
Denver, CO 80202

RE: 1840 Grant Street – Letter of Support

Dear Ms. Huggins:

Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods, Inc. (“CHUN”), Denver’s largest, oldest registered neighborhood organization (RNO), is excited to support the historic preservation, renovation, and redevelopment of the property located at 1840 Grant Street, Denver, CO 80203. More specifically, we cite the following reasons for this support:

- **Public-private partnerships are essential to Denver’s future.** Leveraging resources made available through DURA, and GFI Development, LLC’s own expertise, is a smart approach to bring renewed vitality and new uses to the property.
- **DURA and GFI Development, LLC’s outreach to CHUN demonstrates a commitment to RNOs.** Encouraging community investments with neighborhood organizations in mind is paramount.
- **Our board believes in preserving historic assets throughout CHUN’s ten neighborhoods.** The redevelopment of the property is consistent with our organizational goals to save historic, architecturally significant assets. As a secular and fully inclusive organization, the past religious uses of property did not factor in this decision-making process.
- **Activating community spaces and bringing Denverites together is critical.** This project will provide unique, public spaces for the Uptown neighborhood; it should be open and accessible to all.
- **The proposal aligns with the City and County of Denver’s planning documents, such as Comprehensive Plan 2040 and Blueprint Denver.** The project addresses our interest in creating a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible community destination.
- **Innovative design and creating multiple uses in the Uptown Neighborhood make sense.** Uses such as public event space, hotel accommodations, destination restaurant and retail space, and other uses will be permitted in an area of Denver long requiring needed attention and design.

CHUN’s mission is *Preserving the Past, Improving the Present, and Planning for the Future of Greater Capitol Hill* through historic preservation, affordable housing and tackling homelessness, promoting smart land use and zoning, advancing public safety, and encouraging community enhancements through volunteerism and civic engagement. **We are excited to see this project through to completion.**

For Denver,

Travis Leiker, MPA
President, Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods, INC



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 16, 2020

TO: Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods
Travis Leiker, President

FROM: Denver Urban Renewal Authority

SUBJECT: Support for the 1840 Grant Street Redevelopment Project

Background

The Denver Urban Renewal Authority (“DURA”) is requesting a letter of support from the Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (“CHUN”) for the redevelopment project located at 1840 Grant Street, 370 19th Avenue and 1855 Logan Street. The project site is notable for the existence of two historically significant buildings; The Cathedral High School and Sister of Charity Convent Building and The Oscar Malo Jr. Memorial Hall Gymnasium (the “Historic Structures”).

In 2010, the property owner of the project site entered into a purchase agreement with a potential developer. The development proposal contemplated demolishing the Historic Structures and constructing a new residential tower. In response to the proposal, and an application submitted for a certificate of non-historic status, a coalition of community organizations and historic advocacy groups, including CHUN, submitted landmark designation applications for the Historic Structures. The potential developer cancelled the purchase agreement due to the community backlash to the demolition proposal.

In December 2016, RAFMO LLC (the “Redeveloper”) purchased the three parcels with a full understanding of the community’s dedication to preserving these historic assets. The Redeveloper is committed to preserving and activating the Historic Structures as part of their development plan.

Proposed Redevelopment Project

The Redeveloper will rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the Historic Structures and construct a new eleven-story, approximately 212,000 sf, tower replacing the surface parking lot at 370 19th Avenue (the “Project”).

The new tower will contain:

- A 170-room hotel operated by Ace Group International (“Ace”)
- Approximately 4,500 sf of leased small-shop retail on the first floor
- Approximately 35,000 sf of office space on the 2nd and 3rd levels
- 65 below-grade parking stalls

The convent and school building will include:

- 17 guest rooms associated with the Ace managed hotel on the 2nd and 3rd floor
- A destination restaurant with seasonal outdoor seating in the courtyard fronting Grant Street and multiple beverage outlets and social gathering areas on the first floor

The gymnasium will be repurposed into an approximately 6,700 sf event space.

DURA's Involvement

DURA is seeking to assist the Redeveloper in the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the Historic Structures through the adoption of the 1840 Grant Street Urban Redevelopment Plan and establishment of the 1840 Grant Street Urban Redevelopment Area. The adoption of the 1840 Grant Street Urban Redevelopment Plan would authorize DURA to use property and sales tax increment financing to reimburse the Redeveloper for eligible costs associated with the historic rehabilitation. The tax increment areas would be coterminous with the 1840 Grant Street Urban Redevelopment Area boundary displayed below, which only includes the Project site. At CHUN's January Board meeting, DURA introduced the Project, outlined the urban renewal process and shared evidence of the deteriorated condition of the Historic Structures. DURA and the Redeveloper would revere CHUN's support for the Project which seeks to rehabilitate the deteriorated Historic Structures and transform the underutilized area into a vital asset to the community.



1840 Grant Street Urban Redevelopment Area