

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 10:23 AM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: MDP Comment submission

Hello,

I would like to voice my opposition to the MDP regarding a change in land status for the parcel of land directly north of the Okotoks Airport.

Currently it is beautiful farmland.

I do not want this land changed to "future employment lands".

This would change the beauty and atmosphere of Air Ranch and drastically effect my property value and all property values for residents in Air Ranch. I will remind you I already pay excessively high property taxes.

I am growing tired of the constant so called improvements in Okotoks that are resulting in the degradation of our town that could be described as "quaint" and "small town". I don't want a town that feels like Calgary.

Perhaps we need new representation in Okotoks town council.

Chria Lyons

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 9:51 PM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: Okotoks Municipal Development Plan

September 7, 2020

Okotoks Town Council,

Re: Okotoks Municipal Development Plan

Reading through the 'Draft – Municipal Development Plan (MDP) I have concerns about the lack of back-up supporting a number of the planning areas. Rather than a list, I ask Council to review the following four issues.

First

Page Xi, The first sentence in GOALS states, "The goals for the MDP are adapted from the One Planet Living Framework."
The charity, Bioregional, has since July 2019, received financial support for this program from KR Foundation. The Foundation's mission is "Address the root causes of Climate Change and environmental degradation." "Keeping fossil fuels in the ground." Check the websites of both Bioregional and KR Foundation.
Given the MDP is a statutory plan and the Province of Alberta is a major 'fossil fuel' resource, are there not other similar programs which could be utilized?

Second

Page Xiii Zero Carbon Energy 'Okotoks is a leader in net zero carbon energy'
Does this statement refer to the community of Okotoks or only the facilities and equipment owned and operated by the Town of Okotoks?
Looking at my own situation I don't feel included, nor do I sense the balance of residences and commercial buildings or School Board buildings and equipment fit that statement.

Third & Fourth

We also need to question the ability to achieve Zero Waste and how to eradicate Poverty. Both have been a fact of life for millennia.
I somehow doubt mankind has ever been without dealing with waste and having a segment of the population living in relative poverty.
For some, poverty is a matter of circumstance and for others it is a matter of choices made or not made.

Thank you for considering this input towards this important next step for the citizens of Okotoks.

Russ Wheatley
[REDACTED], Okotoks AB

From: Steven Gilks <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 2:14 PM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: MDP - Air Ranch & Ranchers Rise Concerns

Hello,

Our family and the community as a whole have concerns regarding density build up and the issues arising from that. Here is a list we've talked about:

1. From our community looking west, many of us (including myself) purchased homes that have views of the mountains. Future development to the west should not have tall structures that would impede said views.
2. 48 Street E, and traffic issues. Speaking with other members of the community there was a great deal of miscommunication regarding 48 St E. Most were either not aware or were told when buying/building that 48 St was not going to connect to Milligan Dr. Since the joining of 48 St and Milligan Dr the traffic on 48 St has spiked and along with that the sound volume has increased. All backing onto 48 St have had their quiet homes now penetrated with traffic sound. This goes for many residences in Drake landing as well. With future builds on the east side of 48 St the amount of traffic will only increase, and it will be a loss of rich Alberta prairie views to the community as well. At the very least a sound wall should be constructed to help with the traffic volume. Even better with conjunction of the sound wall the road should be moved east, giving greater distance from the road for sound travel and safety.
3. There doesn't seem to be much of a buffer between the Future Employment Zone and our community. Which will again have a traffic impact as well as a potential decrease in our property values. With more need of a sound wall and further spacing from the road.

Many have moved into Ranchers Rise with the dream of a quiet community with generous space to raise our children and get away from the big city feel. That was lost when 48 St and Milligan became connected. Please help and understand our concerns as to mitigate future loss. Thank you.

Regards,

Steven Gilks

Cell (403) [REDACTED]

From: Alex Ross <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 5:17 PM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: RE: MDP

To Mayor and Council of the Town of Okotoks

I hereby oppose the suggested MDP for the area north and south east of Air Ranch/Ranchers Rise – along 48th Street. The “future employment zone” or “non-residential” suggests industrial use beside a high-end residential area. Not only will this development further increase the traffic in this area, but will also reduce the value of our properties.

A mixed residential development along 48th street and commercial zoning in between the residential and the industrial zone , towards Highway 2 would serve the residents in this area much better. It would act as a buffer towards the industrial zoning that is supposed to be accessed from highway 2.

Alternatively, switching the quarter section of non-residential zone closer to highway 2 and keep 48th St. residential with a retail commercial component catering to a complete community in this neighbourhood would be an improvement of the current MDP.

Best regards,

A. Ross

[REDACTED]

Okotoks

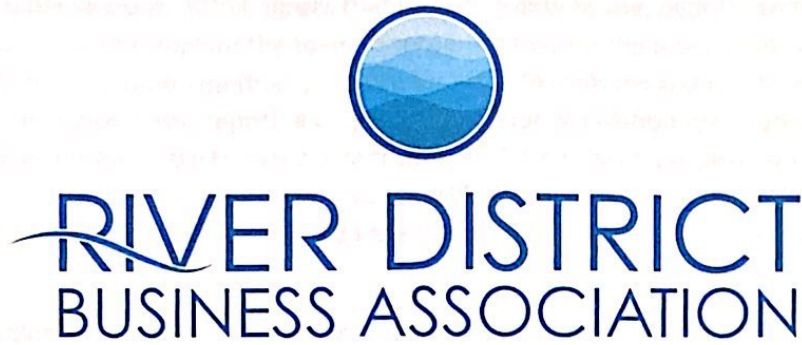
From: Mandy Patterson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 9:33 PM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: RDBA - MDP Feedback

Hello,

Please find attached a report prepared by the River District Business Association in regards to the Municipal Development Plan.

Colleen Thome asked that we submit it so that it could be added to the other documents for Town Councils consideration.

Mandy Patterson
President
River District Business Association



September 4th, 2020

Re: Feedback regarding the Municipal Development plan

To Whom It May Concern:

I write on behalf of the River District Business Association, to provide feedback and concerns regarding the MDP as requested by the Town of Okotoks Administration. The document was forwarded to RDBA and other OEE Stakeholders on August 6th, with a note to expect further instructions and clarification on August 13th. We were asked during the August 13th meeting to forward the documentation to our Boards for review and to respond with feedback by September 4th. The RDBA is thrilled to be asked to provide feedback and would like to point out that this timeline only provided us with 3 weeks to read the 250-page document, meet as a Board to determine our position and create this report. If given more time, we could have provided you with a more comprehensive response. With that said, I hope that this report, along with others can help to create a vibrant and thriving town.

Our first impressions of the MDP is that the primary overarching priority is the environment and a net zero philosophy. Although we agree that this holds some importance, we would like to point out that Canada is responsible for 1.6% of global Greenhouse Gas emissions, and Okotoks approximately .000012% of global GHG emissions. We believe, priority should be given to a thriving downtown, affordability, improved service delivery, reduction in taxes and red tape without unnecessary restrictions and unattainable environmental goals. We believe that these priorities will all contribute to our community and economic viability and vitality.

2.3.4 – There is some concern that neighborhood hubs would potentially deter people from coming downtown. If all the amenities one would need are less than 800 meters away from home, why would people travel elsewhere? The MDP consistently states that downtown is the heart of the town and needs to be the 'go to' destination in Okotoks. We would ask that the potential negative effects of this initiative also be considered. This would also require a grocery store downtown, as that is clearly a missing amenity. Clarification on what types of amenities are required in each Hub would be helpful.

2.5.1 – RDBA is in favour of developing unique and appropriate housing options in Okotoks. Redevelopment in these older areas can be difficult and comes with unique challenges. The Town needs to make the process easier and more predictable in order to encourage more investment and redevelopment in the River District.

3 – Integrated Transportation is of great concern to us. This entire section, with the exception of 3.1.3 describes a concept that is only viable in the summer months. Figure 2: Transportation Hierarchy can only be used comfortably for 2-4 months of the year, and only by our local population. With the exception of a fat bike and a healthy individual, it is impossible for anyone to travel any significant distance in the winter, nor will they willingly expose themselves to the

chilly fall and spring shoulder seasons. RDBA agrees that providing easy to use, pedestrian friendly corridors and sidewalks is very important, and we implore the town to recognize that for the foreseeable future, the single occupancy vehicle is going to be the transportation method of choice for most Okotokians and for the rural population surrounding the town. Furthermore, as stated in this report, a large portion of our population commutes to Calgary every day. The probability of an individual coming home from work or from their farm or acreage, parking their car and walking downtown or to a neighborhood hub is likely zero. This report highlights adding to and improving the pedestrian infrastructure while reducing convenient parking and ease of vehicle access, this will surely discourage many individuals from shopping local.

3.3.2 – Although this section aims at reducing parking standards, we would argue, that if and when ongoing reviews are done regarding car ownership and trip rates, it is more likely the number will increase over the years, not decrease. The RDBA does agree with the reduction in parking requirements in some cases. For example, Elma street cannot develop unique mixed-use projects with stringent parking requirements in place. Innovative parking solutions are required for downtown, not a reduction in overall parking standards.

Special note on parking: RDBA is of the opinion that lack of parking is one of the greatest concerns to business owners and customers in the River District. The MDP projects that Okotoks will have a population of merely 68,000 by 2076, and yet discusses transportation options that will likely not be used by residents. For example, dedicating spaces for ride sharing. The effort it would take individuals to coordinate a ride share within Okotoks, would take longer than the 7-10 minute drive to their destination. Furthermore, reducing parking standards for multi-residential developments would discourage individuals from moving to Okotoks and would create chaos on side streets and within communities. This is already apparent at current developments: Turnbury at Crystal Shores and Mesa Condos are examples of constant spill out onto side streets and neighboring communities. Okotoks is located in North America, where inclement weather and freezing temperatures dominate our forecast. It is impractical to assume that we will become less dependent on vehicles. Recent reports submitted by Roger Brooks made several suggestions to alleviate the parking issues in the River District. We suggest those reports be revisited and several suggestions be adopted into this and other relevant planning documents. RDBA would be willing to form a parking subcommittee in order to find innovative parking solutions in the River District.

4 – RDBA has concerns that developers will not invest in Okotoks, as the utilization of a 'climate lens' creates more difficult, less lucrative projects here and they will develop elsewhere.

4.3.1 – Here again we see reference to creating expensive and challenging guidelines to reduce over heating of buildings during a very short 8-week period when we experience any kind of extremely hot weather.

5 – We agree with increasing the variety of housing options throughout the community. This initiative would improve the vibrancy and economic vitality of the River District in particular. The regulations and restrictions surrounding the development of diverse and mixed-use housing must not be such that they dissuade individuals and developers from building or redeveloping existing housing. RDBA has a strong interest in being a key partner in the review and update of the land use bylaw.

8.1.1– RDBA is excited and encouraged by the creation of an ARP and hopes to be a key partner in the development of the plan.

8.1.2 – Gateways into downtown are essential, as is all wayfinding in Okotoks. RDBA is proud to be involved in the ongoing wayfinding discussions with the Town of Okotoks.

8.1.4 – Elma Street is a very unique district that requires the right balance of maintaining its heritage and evolving into a true mixed-use district. RDBA believes that their partnership with the Town regarding regulations, land use bylaw and an overall future plan for Elma street is crucial. We believe that working with business owners and residents of Elma Street to create realistic regulations will increase land values and improve business viability and vitality.

8.2 – We are pleased and excited to continue to work with the Town to develop plans and programs to support downtown.

8.2.2 – The plans to animate and redevelop downtown are supported by RDBA, although we do not agree with a pedestrian focused design unless the Town has a plan for parking and develops the plans in such a way that businesses are easily accessible by vehicle during the 6-8 months of the year when people will only drive or take the bus downtown because they are the only reasonable modes of transportation.

8.3.2 – Pedestrian streets can only be used for a short window of time in the summer, designating streets as pedestrian only would result in the closure of many small businesses in downtown. Examples of successful street closures would include places like Canmore and Banff. Both of these locations are tourist destinations that offer experiences that Okotoks will never be able offer. Skiing, hiking, lake sports, wilderness camping, helicopter tours etc. Often times, the less adventurous stay behind to shop and eat in town, and at the end of the day, the shops are full of those coming back to their hotels and Air BnB's. Okotoks not only lacks the outdoor experiences listed above, they lack hotels and unique Air BnB locations to accommodate mass tourism. Important to note, that both locations have created temporary parking installations situated close to the closed street to accommodate tourist parking. And perhaps less relevant, but extremely important to note, every single tourist who visits Canmore and Banff has arrived there by heavily emitting transportation methods. Automobiles, diesel tour buses, helicopters and planes from across the world. If tourism is the focus for downtown, then environmental initiatives will not speak to that industry sector. Nor do they speak to the overwhelming majority of Okotokians who commute to Calgary and those who live on farms and acreage on the outskirts of Okotoks.

Business in Okotoks cannot rely on tourism in the summer months to keep their businesses open. Locals choosing to spend their money in Okotoks and to come downtown will continue to make up the majority of spending. Creating an easy and pleasurable experience for those individuals will ensure economic vitality in the heart of Okotoks.

8.3.3 – Activating side streets is a great way to revitalize and enhance some of the less desirable areas downtown. Careful consideration needs to be taken when planning for these areas, especially if the main thoroughfares are going to become less vehicle friendly. An example of this is Daggett Street, west of Veterans Way. The median on Elizabeth street has reduced lane width to such a size that larger vehicles/delivery trucks cannot navigate comfortably. They choose instead to use Daggett Street, which is quite an unsightly street, but very practical. If both streets become pedestrian centric, deliveries and parking lot access will become even more difficult. Many of the large parking lots that service Elizabeth Street businesses are only accessible from Daggett Street. There is no question that Daggett Street requires a facelift and has extraordinary opportunity to become a beautiful and unique street, we ask only that the businesses along that street be a partner in creating the vision.

We hope that the suggestions in this report will help to shed light on some very important issues that must be addressed. If you require more information about the River District Business Association, please contact me via email at riverdistrictbusiness@gmail.com or by phone 403- [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Mandy Patterson
President,
River District Business Association

From: Lara McCully <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 11:20 AM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: Proposed MDP in Air Ranch

Dear Honorable Mayor Robertson and Okotoks Town Council:

This letter is to inform you that we are in opposition to the proposed MDP for the area north and south east of Air Ranch/Ranchers Rise (along 48th Street).

A future 'employment zone/non- residential' area implies industrial use. To build this beside one of the few picturesque and peaceful high-end residential areas in Okotoks, filled with seniors and wildlife is not congruent to making Okotoks a desirable destination or future home for more families.

It will further increase our already dangerous traffic and speeding issue on 48th street and severely reduce the value of our homes (and so many of us are already tremendously struggling with the oil industry downturn and then Covid-19).

With just a small amount of effort, I am certain we can collaborate on a new and better idea for land use (members of this community have many excellent ideas on how to create a win-win for both ourselves and the town of Okotoks). I'm excited to find a solutions that allow me to continue to boast about Okotoks and bring new families here, knowing (as a Realtor) I am being truthful when I say they will LOVE where they live.

Kindest Thoughts,

Lara McCully

[REDACTED]

Okotoks

From: Debbie Russell <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 11:39 AM
To: LegislativeServices <legislativeservices@okotoks.ca>
Subject: Proposed MDP in Air Ranch

To Mayor and Council of the Town of Okotoks

We hereby oppose the suggested MDP for the area north and south east of Air Ranch/Ranchers Rise - along 48th Street.

The residential area here is high end and any industrial area here will increase traffic and reduce our property values even further.

It makes much more sense to have additional residential and retail along 48th Street.

This would also be a positive move for the Air Ranch/Ranchers Rise and Future Ranch communities.

Sincerely
Debbie and Dave Russell
[REDACTED]