



*Sent via Email - [legislativeservices@okotoks.ca](mailto:legislativeservices@okotoks.ca)*

**April 8, 2025**

**The Town of Okotoks  
5 Elizabeth Street  
PO Box 20, Station Main  
Okotoks AB T1S 1K1**

**To Whom It May Concern;**


**Re: Objection to Proposed Redesignation under Bylaw 08-25 (Lot 11, Block 1, Plan 051 3261)**


I write on behalf of the Westmount Centre Owners Association Society in respect of Bylaw 08-25, which proposes the redesignation of a portion of Lot 11, Block 1, Plan 051 3261 from "General Commercial (GC) District" to "Neighbourhood Core (NC) District."

As you are aware, Land Use Bylaw 17-21, which Bylaw 08-25 seeks to amend, contemplates that the primary purpose of lands designated GC is to provide employment opportunities through a variety of commercial and office uses, while also accommodating higher-density residential developments. This designation promotes a balanced, mixed-use approach that integrates office, commercial, and multi-unit residential uses on-site or within close proximity, supporting both town-wide and neighbourhood destinations.

By contrast, the NC District is primarily intended to support diverse housing options and a central neighbourhood hub, where residential developments are predominantly attached or multi-unit in form, and where non-commercial activities prevail.

While there are certain similarities between the permitted, discretionary, and prohibited uses within the GC and NC Districts, there are notable distinctions that merit attention. Specifically:

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- In GC Districts, Entertainment Establishments are Permitted Uses, and Light Industrial, Large Retail and Service, and Dwelling Units are Discretionary Uses.
- In NC Districts, Dwelling Units are a Permitted Use, and Entertainment Establishments are only Discretionary Uses. Notably, Large Retail and Service uses, such as grocery stores, and Light Industrial uses are Prohibited.


As an adjacent landowner, the Westmount Centre Owners Association Society acquired its property with the understanding and expectation that the area in question would remain commercially zoned. We have actively pursued opportunities for additional commercial acquisitions in the area and are aware of pending interest from potential developers seeking to establish Entertainment Establishments, including a movie theatre, which would bring significant cultural and economic benefits to the Town of Okotoks.

Furthermore, we understand that a grocery retailer is seeking to enter the local market. The introduction of a new grocery store would enhance competition, contributing to more competitive pricing and improving access to essential goods for residents. However, under the proposed NC designation, such a use would be categorically prohibited, thereby undermining these potential benefits.

Redesignating the subject lands to NC would unnecessarily constrain the scope of permissible uses. While both GC and NC Districts accommodate residential dwellings, the GC District offers critical flexibility, preserving the ability to integrate residential uses while supporting a broader array of commercial activities. Maintaining the GC designation will better facilitate job creation, enhance municipal tax revenues, and allow for thoughtful, responsive development that can evolve with the community's needs.

Moreover, from a land-use planning perspective, it is more appropriate to direct residential intensification to areas of Okotoks already suited for such growth, such as Darcy Ranch, where NC zoning would be more consistent with the existing and planned land use patterns.

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In our view, the proposed rezoning and subdivision are not in the long-term interest of the Town. It risks contributing to avoidable congestion and forfeiting the substantial economic and community benefits associated with retaining the GC designation.


Unlike larger external corporations such as RONA, our association comprises local retailers, landowners, and developers whose families live, work, and invest in Okotoks. We possess an intimate understanding of the community and its needs. We are firmly of the view that preserving the commercial potential of these lands is essential to fostering sustainable economic development and supporting the community's prosperity.


Accordingly, and in the best interest of the residents of Okotoks, we respectfully urge Council to reject the proposed redesignation of the subject lands under Bylaw 08-25.

Finally, should Council decide to redesignate the subject lands under Bylaw 08-25, we would request a property tax abatement for a period of 3 years as compensation. This compensation is justified as we purchased the land and intended on placing our stores there under the assumption that this would remain a retail area. Redesignating the area would hinder the economic opportunity that was anticipated and thus compensation is warranted should Bylaw 08-25 pass.

Yours Truly,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Geoff Stewart

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