



To: Planning Committee, City of Tupelo

From: Kevan Kirkpatrick, Executive Director

Date: August 5, 2026

Re: Concerns Regarding Proposed Children's Daycare at 205 Commerce Street, Tupelo

I am writing to formally express the Huntington Bank Arena & Conference Center's concerns regarding the proposed conversion or operation of the property at 205 Commerce Street, Tupelo, as a children's daycare with operating hours of 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. While we recognize the need for quality childcare options in the community, the proposed hours and stated intention to provide after-hours daycare for downtown events, as well as "Parents' Night Out" services during concerts and other events at the Arena, raise significant operational, safety, and logistical concerns for our facility and the surrounding downtown area.

Primary Concerns

1. After-Hours and Event-Related Daycare Operations

Offering extended or special after-hours care tied to downtown events and Arena concerts creates potential conflicts with the high volume of pedestrian and vehicle traffic, noise, and security requirements associated with large public gatherings. The proximity of a daycare serving young children during peak event times could present safety risks that have not been adequately addressed.

2. Claimed Parking Agreement

The property owner, Michael Walden, has stated that he holds a written agreement with the Arena for overflow parking. No such agreement has been located or submitted by the current Arena administration.

If a written agreement existed in prior years, it would no longer be valid. The business operations and management of the Arena have changed. Also, the business at 205 Commerce Street has changed multiple times over the past years. Any prior informal or written arrangements from previous Directors do not bind the current entity and cannot be relied upon for parking or other operational purposes.

I request that the City Council accept and consider an appeal of the Planning Committee's decision based on these issues, particularly the extended hours and event-related services. We further request that any claims of existing agreements with the Arena be thoroughly verified and that no reliance be placed on outdated or unsubstantiated parking arrangements.

The Huntington Bank Arena & Conference Center remains committed to being a good neighbor and partner in downtown Tupelo's continued growth. We are available to meet with the Committee or provide additional information as needed.