

The best of times, the worst of times: the department store reshuffle in Canada

Friday, October 24, 2025 2:10 PM (20 minutes)

For many years department stores anchored the shopping mall business model. Department stores were seen as pivotal to the success of enclosed shopping centres across North America. The retail scale and consumer attraction associated with these major retailers formed the basis for long-term leasing models. The mix of department stores was a major determinant of the rents paid by the non-anchor tenants. This paper provides insights into the rise, fall and rebirth of department stores in Canada. Based on a set of vignette case studies the paper chronicles department stores at varying points in the life stage of retail operation. The analysis addresses the real estate impact of the department store reshuffle and explores the future for department stores in Canada. The paper highlights the value-add of an applied geographic perspective to understanding the trajectory of a business through growth, decline and reinvention.

Organized Session Details

Business & Retail Geography

Is there a SINGLE day you are unavailable to present?

October 25, 2025

Is there a time of day you are unavailable to present?

Morning

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