

From: [Kristin Koziol](#)
To: [Greg Weiner](#)
Subject: Fw: UST arena proposal - please do not approve
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 8:59:46 AM

From: irene falksen <irenefalksen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 06:46 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: UST arena proposal - please do not approve

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Dear Representative Jalali,

I hope you have taken the time to read the full appeal developed by the ARD which explains why building the proposed multipurpose arena by the University of St. Thomas is a bad idea. Future generations depend on our having the wisdom and vision to protect the environment to the best of our ability. Building the proposed arena in the proposed location is too big of a risk for the river bluff area and has the potential for far reaching harm way beyond the neighborhood.

I am also very concerned about the impact on the surrounding neighborhoods and believe that it will be bad for Saint Paul. Please take time to review the thoughtful appeal that clearly explains the many concerns.

Thank you for serving our city and representing our community.

Sincerely,

Irene Falksen
2128 Fairmount Ave, St Paul, MN 55105

From: [Kristin Koziol](#)
To: [Greg Weiner](#)
Subject: Fw: Appeal of UST's arean site plan
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 8:57:50 AM

From: david O'Brien <davesob1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 06:28 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Appeal of UST's arean site plan

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

I'm writing to ask that the city council reverses its previous decision and does not accept the current site plan for the new St. Thomas arena. That site plan does not adequately address all the consequences of having the new arena on the campus. The negatives of the new arena outweigh the benefits. This is my third letter to Mitra. I have not received any response to the earlier two letters. It seems like the city council person I have voted for twice can't be bothered to listen to and respond to her constituents.

Thank you,
Dave OBrien
2208 Princeton Ave

From: [Julie Bustos](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Re: Strong Support for University of St. Thomas" New Hockey Facility
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 7:48:25 PM

Hello again,

I realize I neglected to include our addresses: the St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association's address is P.O. Box 16382, St. Paul, MN 55116 and my home address is 1780 Goodrich Ave, St. Paul, MN 55105.

Thanks,
Julie

Julie Bustos
President
St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association

(651) 283-6332
stpaulcapitalshockey.com

On Tue, Jun 11, 2024 at 7:35 PM Julie Bustos <president@stpaulcapitalshockey.com> wrote:

Hello,

Please find a letter with the St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association's strong support for the University of St. Thomas' ice arena (re: University of St. Thomas 2260 Summit Avenue Appeal File #: 24-039-050 Site Plan File #: 23-079-985).

Thank you,
Julie

Julie Bustos
President
St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association

(651) 283-6332
stpaulcapitalshockey.com

From: [Julie Bustos](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Strong Support for University of St. Thomas' New Hockey Facility
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 7:37:04 PM
Attachments: [SPCHA UST Facility Letter.docx](#)

Hello,

Please find a letter with the St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association's strong support for the University of St. Thomas' ice arena (re: University of St. Thomas 2260 Summit Avenue Appeal File #: 24-039-050 Site Plan File #: 23-079-985).

Thank you,
Julie

Julie Bustos
President
St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association

(651) 283-6332
stpaulcapitalshockey.com



June 10, 2024

Dear Saint Paul City Council Members,

On behalf of St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association, I write to offer our **strong support** for the University of St. Thomas's plan to build a new indoor hockey facility to support its men's and women's hockey programs as well as offer ice time for community groups like ours.

The St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association serves over 400 youth hockey players every year from eight Saint Paul neighborhoods: Union Park, Summit-University, Macalester Groveland, Summit Hill, Highland Park, West Seventh, West Side, and Downtown. These skaters are currently served by five sheets of ice: two sheets at the Highland arena, and single sheets at Pleasant Arena, West Side Arena, and Saint Paul Academy.

These five sheets of ice also serve five high school programs: Highland/Central Boys Hockey, Cretin-Derham Hall Boys Hockey, Cretin-Derham Hall Girls Hockey, Saint Paul Academy Boys Hockey, and Saint Paul Academy Girls Hockey, as well as the Saint Paul Figure Skating Club, St. Catherine University, and other community skating programs. Simply put, the demands for ice in these eight Saint Paul neighborhoods far exceeds the available ice capacity that five sheets can provide.

St. Thomas' planned hockey facility will add much needed facilities in the State of Hockey's capital city. And while the facility will be the home of the University's men's and women's hockey programs, the University is in active planning with community groups like ours on how to make sure the facility is a community asset.

Adding two additional sheets of ice in our community will increase our neighborhood's ice capacity by 40 percent. This will allow us to do more to achieve our mission of developing youth hockey players in a fun a safe environment. We just concluded celebrating our 50th year of serving Saint Paul families. The once-vibrant Saint Paul youth hockey environment has been reduced to just one standalone program: ours. We need this facility to continue to make hockey accessible to Saint Paul children for the next 50 years.

We urge the Saint Paul City Council to support the University of St. Thomas's plan to build their new hockey facility. This is not just about a university's facility. This is about every Saint Paul kid who looks across the frozen rink and decides to lace up the skates.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Bustos".

Julie Bustos
President
St. Paul Capitals Hockey Association

From: [Kristin Koziol](#)
To: [Greg Weiner](#)
Subject: Fw: Please reject St. Thomas sports complex site plan - wrong project in wrong place
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 9:49:39 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

From: Meg Grove <meg.grove@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 09:43 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Please reject St. Thomas sports complex site plan - wrong project in wrong place

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Councilwoman Jalali:

I am writing to you to express my deep disappointment in how the City has handled concerns associated with the University of St. Thomas' sports complex, most recently issues with the site plan.

I have lived across the street from the South Campus since 1987. I've got lots of experience with St. Thomas and the difference between what it says it will do and what actually happens. I understand that property owners get to do what they want on their own land. It frustrates me though that this tax-exempt institution gets its buildings, leaving the costs in terms of traffic, parking and environmental degradation for the neighborhood and the City to pay.

1. It isn't just sell-out events at the arena that will create traffic and parking problems. St. Thomas insists that traffic and parking will be manageable because of the 66 men's and women's hockey and basketball games it will host per year, only a small number will have maximum attendance of 5,500. However, that ignores traffic/parking problems generated by less-than-sell-out crowds. St. Thomas downplays events attracting say, 3,000 or 5,000 people. It is fair to ask where attendees of all 66 games will park. Assuming these games all occur December through February, that means the neighborhood will be subject to the traffic/parking problems 5-6 times per week.

St. Thomas has also failed to account for traffic/parking problems generated by events other than its games. School staff have admitted the facility will be marketed for a variety of uses year-round. These

might include conventions and high school tournaments – anything to keep the arena generating income. The neighborhood will be expected to keep handling the cost of St. Thomas’ events. In response, St. Thomas provides vague promises about encouraging people to use mass transit and park at campus locations that aren’t adjacent to the arena. The school also speaks in glittering generalities about “monitoring.” Monitoring – how? For what? To what end?

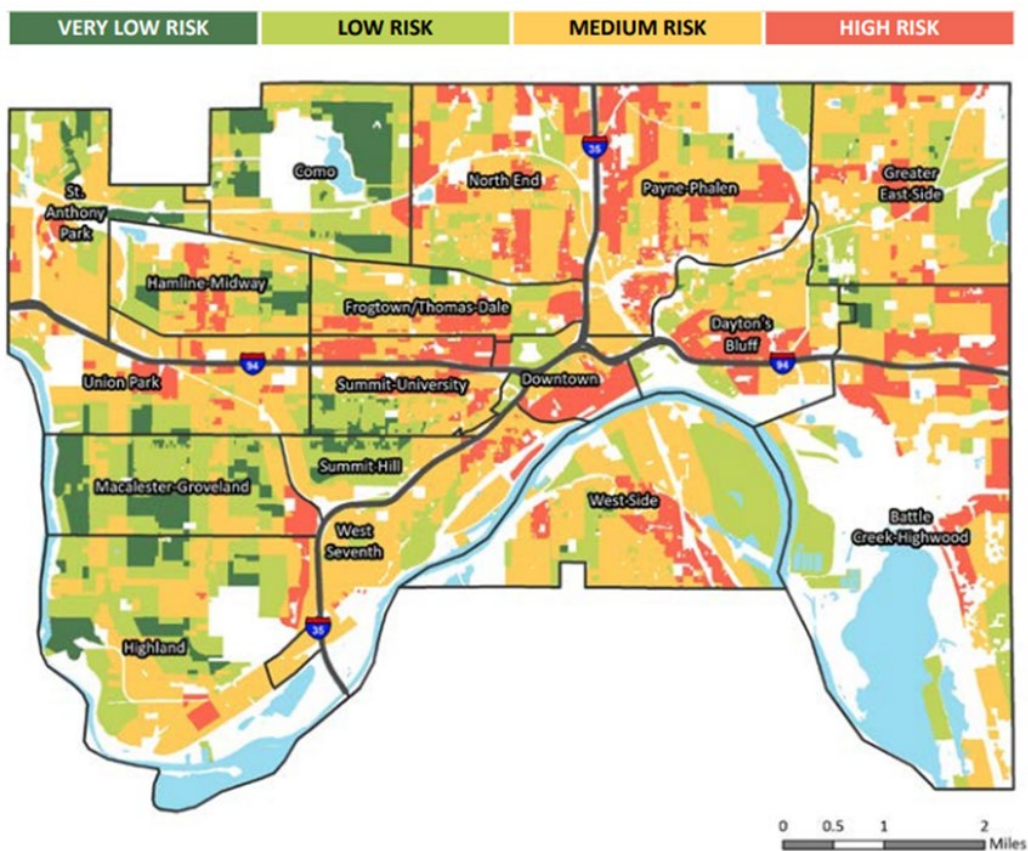
The parking issues and St. Thomas’ mitigation ideas are not new. The 2004 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) signed by the City and St. Thomas contains this language; “St. Thomas agrees to explore and implement policies, such as reducing parking permit fees, that will increase the use of its on-campus parking spaces on evenings and weekends for the 2004-2005 school year. St. Thomas also agrees to explore ways to further increase use of on-campus parking and use of bus passes for all students in the 2005-2006 school year and succeeding years.” Sounds familiar. Didn’t work then (check out my street almost any time of any day of the year). They provide no evidence these ideas will work now.

2. The arena is in direct conflict with the City’s own climate goals. St. Paul has an ambitious and inspiring Climate Action Plan. In Mayor Carter’s words from the plan, “Our collective effort as a community is essential if we hope to preserve natural systems that we depend on and for our health and well-being...” But the plan seems to have been ignored in the case of this arena. Though the Climate Action Plan calls for “...preserving, growing, and diversifying our urban canopy and ground cover on both public and private land...,” City staff approved St. Thomas’ removal of 68 mature trees in favor of the arena. The school claims it will replace the trees in unspecified locations, but it will be decades before those seedlings have the same shade-providing and carbon dioxide-eating power of those cut down.

The Climate Action Plan’s *Building Priorities* relies on engaging “major public and private institutions on climate leadership.” The plan encourages “Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDs) for new development.” St. Thomas hypes the LEED Silver designation of the arena, making it *sound* eco-friendly. But this kind of designation means little when the building itself is optional. It is also worth noting that LEED certification is a *design* tool. It is NOT an indication of what happens when a building is operational. St. Thomas has not discussed the arena’s

day-to-day impact on the environment, but I'm guessing it will not help the City move forward on the Climate Action Plan.

The map below, taken from the Climate Action Plan, shows the area around St. Thomas as being Very Low Risk in terms of exposure to poor air quality, according to work of Saint-Paul Ramsey County Public Health through its Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment in 2016. It makes no sense to site a large arena here, where trees are removed, vehicles and the building itself are generating greenhouse gases. Instead, the City should be seeking to preserve this area – and to use it as a model for other neighborhoods.



An interesting side note: somehow the City of St. Paul has not approved the Mississippi River Critical Corridor Act ordinance. I wonder, had the ordinance with its much stricter development language been adopted, would the sports complex project have been able to sail through City processes as it has under the current language? Assuming the City eventually does adopt the ordinance, what does that say about our true

values?

3. St. Thomas is already out of compliance with the 2004 Conditional Use Permit (CUP), a sign of how little it values its neighborhood. The CUP states "At such time as the University remodels or replaces the Binz Refectory or replaces Grace Hall, the loading drive which currently exists between Goodrich Avenue and the Binz Refectory shall be removed, such that there shall be no vehicular access from Goodrich Avenue to any of the University's buildings on the south campus." School officials now admit that Binz was recently remodeled and is now used for athletics. But the Goodrich driveway remains and continues to be used. Just today (Sunday, April 21), I watched as the team bus for the University of South Dakota softball team circled the campus (in front of my house twice) looking for a place to pick up its athletes. It finally settled on the street at the driveway. It idled there for some time, emitting diesel fumes and noise. It is not hard to imagine this kind of thing happening over and over again with an operating arena as trucks and buses attempt to access the site. In fact, the site plan under review appears to show that driveway in place. It seems St. Thomas is ignoring the CUP just as it ignores its neighbors. As they say, actions speak louder than words.

As the neighborhood has been trying to tell the City and elected officials since 2022, this is the wrong building and the wrong site.

Regards,

Meg Grove
2198 Goodrich Avenue
St. Paul 55105

June 4, 2024

Councilmember Hwajeong Kim
320-A City Hall
15 Kellogg Blvd. W.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Vice President Kim,

The Council is being asked to make a very important decision at the June 12 meeting that will have long term impacts on the immediate neighborhood, the broader city and potentially people in other communities. The issue is the University of St Thomas proposed arena and its sighting on UST's South Campus. The neighborhoods are not saying "no" to an arena, they are saying "no" to it at that location.

Please consider:

- 1- Is the proposed location for the athletic and entertainment arena appropriate? It is parallel in capacity to downtown's CHS Field and 40% of the size of the Excel Center, BUT with no immediate access to freeways; adequate car, team or junket bus parking; light rail mass transit or restaurants. Although it is on UST's property, the high intensity access will mainly impact the surrounding low intensity neighborhoods. The area is not an entertainment or commercial district.
- 2- How will the proposed arena impact the Sustainability Goals of the City of St Paul and UST? A parking study and travel demand study cannot adequately address or solve the increased intensity of use (more popular games); increased frequency of use (added concerts, conventions, etc); increased facility & traffic greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3- The arena is poised on the Mississippi River Critical Corridor bluff approximately 150 feet from the river; the Mississippi River Gorge which is unique to St Paul; and a national waterway. There are multiple natural, underground streams flowing into the Mississippi River under the proposed arena. UST's storm water plan uses the Grotto ravine at the edge of the arena for run off. The proposed hockey arena will use highly toxic glycol/ammonia to freeze the 2 sheets of ice. Glycol/ammonia silent leaks and breaches are more frequent than commonly known. (Read appeal data) This potential threat of toxic chemicals leaching into the River can be prevented. Resighting the arena is a more responsible decision for the City of St Paul and more in sync with one of UST's mantras of "for the Common Good."
- 4- UST is tax exempt. Yet they are counting on using 800-1700 in-neighborhood parking spaces depending on the event. The property owners bear the expense of street improvements, annual street maintenance fees, core service taxes, etc. Tax exempt entities already benefit & shouldn't intentionally add more burden to a neighborhood.
- 5- Consider the big picture: UST evolved from D3 to D1 athletic status and needs upgraded athletic facilities. The proposed arena is just the tip of the iceberg for what upgrades they will need. The campus has limited space. Why not find a more accessible location and create an athletic campus for all D1 sports? The former Sears sight would have been ideal. It met UST's 12-15 acre need. Other sites have been proposed and should be considered.
- 6- UST is a valuable, historic, academic asset to St Paul and the surrounding neighborhoods, but the new athletic demands are outgrowing the neighborhood. What is St Paul's priority? Retention of stable, tax paying neighborhoods with long term residents or acceding to the will of a tax exempt institution with a 4 year revolving population? (Whose student body president, at a public hearing, told us to move if we didn't like it. ie: the arena)

I am urging you study the submitted data; the ARD appeal; the lawsuit; chemical leak data (in appeal); and letters and comments from the immediate and broader area. These are valid concerns about a large facility that would be impactful in any area but especially in a primarily residential neighborhood along the River. There is substantial data that bears your full review prior to voting. Please do not base your decision solely on the Zoning or PC vote. At minimum, support an independent EIS vs the existing EAW. I ask that you let me know that you have read this letter.

Please be brave and thoughtful about your vote. UST seems to have more influence than residents have voice.

Thank you,
Marian Biehn - 83 Otis Ave - St Paul, MN 55104 - humanbiehn@msn.com



Gayle Breutzman
151 Woodlawn Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

June 3, 2024

Hwa Jeong Kim, Council Vice-President, Ward 5
320-A City Hall
15 Kellogg Boulevard West
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Vice-President Kim,

I am writing to you regarding the inappropriate plan to site a multipurpose arena on the south campus of the Saint Thomas University in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Specifically, the Traffic Impact Analysis provided in the June 2023 Environmental Assessment Worksheet is inadequate and in no way predicts the consequences of the thousands of pre and post-event trips. Even this flawed study (with consultants hired by UST) graded the Cretin/Grand Avenue intersection as a "F" with no mitigation, which means demand will exceed capacity. As of yet there are no mitigation plans in place to alleviate the congestion, and the pedestrian/bicycle/vehicle accidents that will occur. There will be injuries and deaths, especially when roads are narrowed with snow and become icy. Who is legally liable for the injuries, deaths and damages? As a council member, you can do something! **MANDATE A TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY!!!** And then, **MADNDATE THAT THERE ARE MITIGATION SOLUTIONS IN PLACE BEFORE UST CAN PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION.**

There have been many comments about the neighborhoods surrounding UST as white and upscale. In the case of the multipurpose arena, residents are at risk of having our neighborhoods invaded by traffic, pollution and chaos by a wealthy nonprofit (UST) that has endless funds, and connections that help them achieve their goals. City council members have been elected to support their respective wards, not big money. The council has not provided any direction on how to make the development work safely for the entire community, despite letters and testimony at the Planning Commission Hearing. Currently we, as taxpayers in the neighborhoods surrounding UST, are getting screwed by entities that would not exist without our tax dollars.

In closing, I would request that you please closely study the issues surrounding the UST arena, and come up with specific solutions that might unite, instead of divide, the community.

Sincerely,


Gayle Breutzman