

**From:** [Gayle Breutzman](#)  
**To:** [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** UST Multipurpose arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 29, 2024 4:06:20 PM

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May 10, 2024

St.Paul City Council Members,

You will soon be voting on the UST multipurpose arena site. The site is absolutely inappropriate for a 5500-6000 seat sports and entertainment arena. You are all surely aware that the hazardous chemical, anhydrous ammonia, will be used in the Mississippi River Critical Corridor Area. Its potential for leaks and damage, including death, is well-documented with OSHA and in the press.

The 800-1700 vehicles, in addition to the regular traffic on Cretin Avenue, is going to cause major chaos, pollution, injuries and deaths. Emergency vehicles will likely be prevented from accessing the neighborhoods due to excessive and illegal parking because St. Thomas is not being required to find solutions to these issues before arena construction. There was an accident at St. Thomas on Cretin Avenue just last night.

The deceptive nature of the EAW process, and its approval without neighborhood notice, should be illegal. UST Board of Trustees returned, unopened, letters from the neighbors asking for a meeting to address the arena issues. The unwillingness of ELECTED City Council Members to address the individuals they represent to address arena concerns is entirely unacceptable and will be remembered in the next city council election cycle.

Prior to my involvement in trying to address the traffic, pollution and hazardous chemical usage of the proposed arena site, I held a belief that the political process was fair and just. I have now experienced the inequity in the political system personally. The Court of Appeals hearing regarding the extremely insufficient Environmental Assessment Worksheet(EAW) was ridiculous, as the attorneys for both sides were unable to present their arguments because they were interrupted so frequently by the judges. The Zoning Commission Hearing for our site appeal was strategically started at 3:30. Why such a late start (and we were the second case) for such an important and controversial appeal? The Zoning Committee Members were tired and wanted to go home. I, personally, prepared for days to get information on ammonia toxicity into my allotted TWO-MINUTES! As someone was researching ordinances and zoning regulations for the committee members while they were discussing our issues, it did not appear likely that the Zoning Committee had prepared prior to the hearing. And, if they did have concerns, why would they make a decision at the hearing, without taking adequate time to formulate a well-researched and thoughtful decision on issues that are going to affect thousands of people for decades? Very few of the appellants grievances were even addressed. The hearing was obviously about legality only; not about humanity.

I request that the elected City Council members put some additional thought and time into the UST arena site decision. When I vote, I elect individuals who will speak for the benefit of the greater public. The currently proposed University of St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena site should be voted down for many reasons: it is environmentally damaging, it is a safety risk to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists and it does not belong in a residential neighborhood. Another site for the proposed arena should be required.

Respectfully,  
Gayle Breutzman  
Macalester-Groveland Resident