

Angela Stoeckman  
1934 Portland Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104

April 22, 2024

City of St. Paul Zoning Committee  
City Hall  
15 Kellogg Blvd. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Objection to the Proposed St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
Project Address: 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN  
File Number: 24-029-110

Dear Chair Taghioff and Zoning Committee Members:

I object to the site plan approval for the proposed St. Thomas multipurpose arena. My primary objection is that the project will permanently damage a precious and fragile site that is critical to wildlife, plant communities, and ecological habitats.

The proposed site for the arena is a place where birds, insects – including the endangered Rusty Patched Bumblebee, animals and raptors live. It is a rare, fragile, and precious place. In addition, the arena would disturb water flow and endanger the bluff, as well as create significant risks that polluted water will flow into the Mississippi from the toxic chemicals used for ice arena refrigerants.

Allowing the arena to be placed in the proposed site would endanger the wildlife who live there and forever harm sensitive ecological resources at the site. For these reasons, the project site plan should not be approved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela K. Stoeckman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Stoeckman

**From:** [L.Allison.Swan](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Neighborhood opposition to St. Thomas arena.  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 11:40:39 AM

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St. Thomas address: 2260 Summit, St. Paul

File Number 24-029-110

From: Allison Swan, 2224 Riverwood Place, St. Paul, MN 55104

The St. Thomas mission statement includes the following:

"Our convictions call us to protect and enhance the dignity of every human and to work for a more just and equitable society."

I have lived a block from St. Thomas for over 20 years and found St. Thomas to be arrogant, entitled and clueless as to their impact on the surrounding neighborhood and environment.

Case in point is the UST site plan for the arena. The destruction to the environment and quality of life for surrounding neighbors will be devastating.

The neighborhood already suffers from the impact of the football stadium with Intolerable noise levels, parking nightmares and destruction to our property by drunk and unruly UST fans.

Please consider the surrounding neighborhood and environment. There are countless other options for UST to pursue an arena elsewhere. As part of their mission statement, it is time for the UST to act for the good of ALL, not just themselves.

Allison Swan

**From:** [amwachter@aol.com](mailto:amwachter@aol.com)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Arena: file # 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 24, 2024 9:42:37 AM

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Project address:  
St. Thomas  
2260 Summit Ave

FILE number: 24-029-110

Dear Zoning Committee members,

I would like to take this opportunity to voice concern regarding the St Thomas Site Plan for their new arena.

Pedestrian, vehicle and bicycle traffic associated with the many events planned for the Arena is a primary concern. It doesn't seem to me that upwards of 5000 people coming to and leaving games at the same time is something that can be **safely** managed in such a small area. As you know Cretin is a regular city street and is the main north/south route leading to the freeway. It wasn't designed to handle high traffic volume. An additional hazard would be cars trying to turn onto Cretin from one of the east/west side streets...probably all but impossible on game nights.

Another concern is for the environment. The aforementioned traffic volume impacts air quality and the environment. Additionally, safeguards for any accidental release of ammonia and ethylene glycol do not seem fully protective of the environment especially the Mississippi. The proximity of such a large building so close to the gorge and the river seems unwise.

Thank you,  
Alice Wachter

2199 Sargent Ave.  
St. Paul, MN. 55105

**From:** [andrewwaldo1574@gmail.com](mailto:andrewwaldo1574@gmail.com)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony re: Project Address: 2260 Summit Ave, File #24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 11:14:10 AM

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To members of the St. Paul Zoning Committee:

I retired on 1 January 2022 after 34 years' service as an ordained person in the Episcopal Church. My last position was as Bishop Diocesan in the Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina. We had always wanted to move back to Minnesota, where I had served from 1994-2010. A home location priority we had never previously succeeded in fulfilling was to a) live on a quiet, non-busy street and b) to be near flowing water.

The home we purchased in April 2022 at 2244 Sargent Avenue fit the bill perfectly. We were even grateful to be near the University of St Thomas, thinking there would be lifelong learning opportunities.

Then, in late 2023, we heard about the planned stadium. In educating ourselves about the proposal, we were shocked to hear that St. Paul had allowed the project to proceed without a full environmental impact study, that UST's planning for event parking assumed neighborhood streets, and that the project would in fact *eliminate* more than two hundred existing parking spaces.

When we moved here, we had long had the impression that St. Paul, as a city, was disciplined and neighborhood-oriented about matters that affect the communities it serves. We believe that critically important steps have however been skipped in these matters. From our perspective, the environmental impact studies must be thoroughly engaged and findings implemented, and that UST must come up with and include in current project plans—parking solutions that provide for parking that doesn't fill our neighborhood with wall-to-wall parked cars—*on existing university land and before* construction proceeds any further. Such solutions should also provide for UST students, who will otherwise also be on the hunt for parking after the elimination of existing spaces.

Please hear us.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Waldo  
2244 Sargent Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105



**From:** [Bruce Berrens](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST Site Plan for Stadium  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 9:37:20 AM

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From: Bruce Berrens, 2112 Lincoln Ave, St Paul, MN  
Regarding: UST Stadium build, 2260 Summit Ave, St Paul, MN. File number 24-0290110

I am writing to state my concerns about the University of St Thomas's process and plan for building a large stadium near the Mac/Groveland neighborhood and the bluffs by the Mississippi river.

The plan appears to have been pushed through with insufficient regard or outright dismissiveness to expressed issues and concerns, including environmental, quality of life for the local area, safety, and appropriateness of location given reasonable alternatives.

- An appropriate environmental impact study must be performed that honestly and comprehensively addresses how the local environment, including underground springs, erosion of bluffs, and increased automotive pollution and traffic would impact the natural and neighborhood areas.
- We who live close to UST are already impacted by illegal and/or inconsiderate student and student-associated parking in our neighborhood. As an example, after UST games and events we are often left with empty or broken beer and alcohol bottles and other trash to clean up by our homes. When we have expressed our concerns to UST, the only action we have seen has been at best receiving form-letters that barely recognizes the issues and don't show any apparent real concern or care to resolve the problems. Having such a large stadium with the number of projected games and events and actually decreasing available parking (as stated in the current plan) with no realistic strategy to address large increases in traffic and parking needs will only exacerbate these issues.
- There are better places for this stadium, including those that are located adjacent to light-rail mass transit options and existing sports venues. Please reopen consideration to stadium locations that don't so significantly impact a local residential neighborhood and surrounding environmentally sensitive area.

Thank you,

Bruce Berrens

**From:** [rhb@homecustomizers.com](mailto:rhb@homecustomizers.com)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](mailto:*CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** St Thomas permit  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 3:38:12 PM

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To whom it may concern,

This note is to state my objections to the proposed UST arena project.

First, this will cost UST about 230 already too precious parking spaces forcing event goers into the neighboring streets to park. This gaudy new ego boosting project will also bring in other users throughout the year as UST will rent out the arena for other things. Neighborhoods near the UST campus already suffer from parking problems caused by student parking. These problems will only worsen.

Second, we have been informed that bus entry and exit from the arena pre-game and post-game will spill out onto both Cretin and Summit Avenues. That and the hundreds of cars leaving the venue will place ever more extraordinary pedestrian safety pressures at all nearby intersections. These intersections are already dangerous for pedestrians as any neighborhood walker will attest.

Third, the arena will encroach very near the Mississippi River gorge with still unknown water quality and erosion issues. There are underground springs which are found all along the Mississippi River gorge. These could easily affect homes on the project's southern boundary. There were water intrusion problems on the north side of Summit when UST did its most recent massive classroom building. UST's environmental review process has been pushed through too

quickly. This project needs to be halted until all City, County, and State environmental issues have been addressed and satisfied.

Last, having lived in our current Macalester Groveland home for thirty years now, we've seen UST bully its way at every turn to get building permits for whatever it wants whenever it wants. They pay lip service to meeting with concerned neighbors but rarely seem to do right by said citizens. Also, UST gets state mandated property tax exemptions while spending lavishly on countless projects over the decades. They enjoy incomparable benefits provided at no cost to them while sitting on cash reserves of more than \$65 million at my last accounting. Police, fire, ambulance, street plowing, street sweeping, street maintenance, street lighting, traffic control devices, and street signage are but a few benefits they pay nothing for. One would think they could volunteer to pay some minimal sum to help a struggling city and county whose infrastructure is a shambles. This massive arena will bring enormous amounts of additional strain to St. Paul's already decrepit streets. I heard that UST has refused to belly up to the bar to offset these costs it places directly on us taxpayers.

In addition, they were just given \$75 million from Lee and Penny Anderson specifically for the new \$175 million multi-sports arena. Don't you think some piddling amount of this largest UST grant ever could be dedicated to creating rather than removing parking? I'm sure the Andersons will never be inconvenienced by all the problems their eponymous arena will cause us mere citizens in Saint Paul.

Bob Brereton

Fairmount Avenue

**From:** [Beth Brombach](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** File #24-0290110 2260 Summit  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 2:15:04 PM

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To Whom it May Concern, File #24-029-110 2260 Summit

Is the welfare of the people, who live in the surrounding areas of St. Thomas, not a concern for the city? How can the cumulative effect of all the building that has been done in this area not be considered. We have already seen a huge increase in traffic in our neighborhoods, without the infrastructure to support it. Highland Bridge is a city in itself and St Thomas has already added a behemoth of a building on Summit and large dorms on Cleveland. Now we are supposed to go along with a huge athletic arena without any thought about what this will do to the neighborhoods in the area?

With the loss of several parking lots, to get ready for this arena, we have already experienced a huge increase in the number of people who park in the neighborhood. This will be untenable when they have big events. People don't want to pay for parking and have always parked on side streets. If we didn't have permit parking, people wouldn't be able to park anywhere near their houses. We have also seen the loss of 68 mature trees along a very important migratory flyway. St Thomas is already interfering with important streams that flow into the Mississippi River and the light pollution coming from this monstrously sized complex will not only effect the people who live here, but will also be detrimental to the wildlife that make this area their home.

The city is supposed to protect the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Without that protection, the greedy self interest of institutions like St Thomas, will destroy a very important part of St Paul. We already have seen people selling their homes in anticipation of the effect all this building will have in this area.

There are a thousand reasons why this isn't the place for a huge arena, but I'm sure you'll hear more from other people.

Beth and Bill Brombach  
2214 Goodrich Ave  
St Paul 55105

**From:** [BRUCE PEDALTY](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding the proposed St Thomas University Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:49:01 AM

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Hello. My name is Bruce Pedalty and I live in and own the home at 2234 Fairmount Ave, St Paul Mn. 55105. Regarding the STU Arena project (2260 Summit), File 24-029-110, there are many reasons I believe this project should not be approved. Locating a 5000 seat athletic arena so close to the Mississippi River bluff, and in the midst of a traditional historic and stately St Paul Neighborhood is terrible civic and environmental policy.

There will inevitably be significant air pollution created by cars and busses throughout the area. The large footprint of this arena and associated access roads and walkways will create significant surface water issues, and disrupt underground flow of springs and drainage to the river.

I believe the arena should be re-sited to a location where there is easy access via mass transit, ample parking, and where it will not have such a negative major impact on the residential neighborhoods of our city.

Bruce Pedalty

**Bill Richtman**  
**1939 Portland Avenue**  
**St. Paul, MN 55104**  
[brichtman@aol.com](mailto:brichtman@aol.com)

April 22, 2024

City of St. Paul Zoning Committee  
City Hall  
15 Kellogg Blvd. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Objection to the Proposed St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
Project Address: 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN  
File Number: 24-029-110

Dear Chair Taghioff and Zoning Committee Members:

A review of the University of St. Thomas multi-event arena Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) reveals too many deficiencies and outright omissions for the project to be approved without further clarification and critical information being provided.

There have been myriad valid objections raised by citizens concerned about the City of St. Paul's permitting process. I will only speak to one issue that drew my attention when reading the EAW: the threat to the spring and ravine commonly referred to in the EAW as the Grotto.

The ravine with a stream that currently flows year-round is crossed by the only bridge on the River Road between Marshall Avenue and Ford Parkway. It is critical to the Mississippi River which is its outlet and as such is included in the Mississippi River Critical Conservation Area. It is also a space of spiritual serenity overlooked by the St. Paul Seminary.

The proposed arena sits on a 6-acre site directly over the spring that feeds the Grotto ravine. The arena will consume approximately 1 acre of lawn shaded by mature trees nearest the Grotto. The 6-acre site will have 5.8 acres of impervious surface which is 97% of the total. Ground water lies only 6 to 12 feet below the surface with water seeping through fissures in the bedrock only a few feet below that. I am concerned that the 60,000 cubic yard excavation and the addition of another acre of impervious surface that is required by the current proposal will be detrimental to the natural flow of the Grotto stream.

Respectfully,

Bill Richtman

**From:** [Beth Rozga](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary: Beth Rozga](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony opposing St. Thomas arena at proposed site  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 8:35:03 AM

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Zoning Committee Secretary,

I am writing in opposition to the St. Thomas arena on the proposed site (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110).

I have lived in the Merriam Park/Union Park neighborhood for 19 years, and in that time the traffic congestion and speed have dramatically increased overall, but especially on Cretin Avenue. I am an avid, daily walker, and I no longer walk on the sidewalks on Cretin Avenue because I do not feel safe being in proximity to the heavy flow of traffic and vehicle speeds.

When I heard about the proposed arena site, I could not imagine the increased safety issues related to even more traffic. Then when I heard there was no traffic demand study, I was outraged.

There are incidents every day due to too much traffic for that type of roadway and the speed at which people drive. **The safety of the people who live in this neighborhood and broader area must be not only considered, but championed.** If you want to experience this first hand:

- I would suggest you take the 134 bus south some weekday afternoon, get off at either the stop at Town and Country golf course or Marshall, then attempt to cross Cretin west to east.
- When you are out of breath from racing across the busy roadway, now think about doing this in the evening when it's dark and a rushing group of 5500 people are trying to get to a St. Thomas game. It will be just as bad when the event is over and people are anxious to get home.

The majority of people driving to the event will be descending on the area all within a 1-hour time window. They will be queued up on Cretin to find a parking spot, and when those spots fill up, they will start getting stressed while driving down city streets trying to find a place to park. No one who is rushed/stressed drives their safest, and now we'll have thousands driving through the neighborhood that way.

St. Thomas states there will be a minimum of 35 events a year – obviously those are the basketball and hockey figures – but it will only be a matter of time before St. Thomas recognizes the revenue generating potential of hosting as many events as possible in the arena.

I've also been asked why I moved here knowing that St. Thomas was just blocks away. If you take a map of St. Thomas today vs. when I moved in 19 years ago, it will be abundantly clear that the St. Thomas of 2005 is not the St. Thomas today. At least 50% of the buildings on the current campus did not exist when I moved here.

St. Thomas seems to have carte blanche to expand and build without the same oversight of

other enterprises and institutions in St. Paul. Our City Council representative has been non-existent and disengaged on a matter that directly impacts a huge number of her constituents.

The arena does not belong in the proposed location, and completing environmental, traffic, and safety studies will clearly demonstrate many issues beyond what I outlined above.

Thank you for your consideration,

Beth Rozga  
2147 Carroll Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104



**From:** [Cynthia Levine](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Planning Commission Testimonial for File number24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 5:18:47 PM

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Dear Commission Members,

I have always had a lot of trust and faith in city and state officials (both elected and appointed). It is not a choice that many would make, and I respect those who choose to take on the role to serve the community at large. Because of this long held belief, I was incredibly disappointed to learn that the plans for a sports arena on the campus of St. Thomas University were approved by the city.

My disappointment changed into something greater, more disappointing and confounding, when I learned that not only were those plans approved without an EIS, but before even hearing arguments on the appeal from ARD!

I'm Sad. Angry. And even feeling some betrayal by people I don't even know, but whom I have entrusted to do right by me and my fellow citizens.

Knowing that STU is in violation of the 2004 SCUP (Objection 1 in the appeals brief) and that the city has done nothing about it, greatly challenges my faith in the zoning and permitting processes. It is my great hope that the city will look at all the facts and not allow STU to continue to break statutes and the spirit of the SCUP to build their horribly sited arena on the Mississippi River Watershed.

I believe in and trust the city and its officials to follow state statutes, and to make their best efforts to protect the land we live on and the waters that run through it. The numerous and significant environmental issues and concerns of STU's site plan proposal are clearly outlined in the appeals brief (Objections 2, 4, 6, and 7) and need not be re-stated here. I respectfully plead with all involved in this process to read the brief in its entirety, to inform themselves on what a RC3 zoning district is as well as what the MNRRA and MRCCA are and why they were written. A review of the 2004 SCUP would also be beneficial. St. Thomas University may choose to blatantly overlook whatever they want. They may choose to walk in the world as elitist white men, not caring about the environment or the impact that their actions have on their community at large. In my opinion, city and state officials do not have that luxury when so many people are counting on them to do the right thing.

Lastly, on a traffic note, the "transportation study" that STU provided to the city was an absolute sham. At most times of the day, on both week days and weekends, standing by myself, or even standing with a baby in a stroller, it is rare that I can cross Cretin Ave without going to the light at St.Clair. Even in the pedestrian marked crosswalk on Goodrich, people rarely stop. Traffic is thick, and one must often wait minutes before being able to cross. If Cretin already feels like a freeway now, the impact of the additional traffic a sports arena in the neighborhood would have will be disastrous.

Kindly,  
Cynthia Levine  
2236 Sargent Ave

Objections to Saint Thomas University's proposed sports arena on their S campus and the Mississippi watershed, 2260 Summit, file# 24-029-110

**From:** [Craig Roen](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 4:44:55 PM

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I write to express my objection to the ongoing construction of the UST arena located at 2260 Summit Ave. I agree with the statements made by the Advocates of Responsible Development in their Affidavit of a Zoning Appeal, dated April 15, 2024.

I will not repeat each of the many compelling reasons to shut down this construction project, but I would like to focus on a couple. Although UST has represented that it has engaged the surrounding community in ongoing discussions regarding the arena, the University, as is its typical behavior, has only made misrepresentations and vague assurances that are non-binding and that do not directly address the valid concerns of the surrounding neighbors. As a prime example, UST originally misrepresented the number of capacity events it would host at the arena. That number has dramatically risen without explanation and, apparently, without the City investigating further its overall impact on the surrounding community.

Nor has UST made any effort to meaningfully engage with the neighborhood regarding traffic management and parking issues. I have come to the inescapable conclusion that UST intends to use my neighborhood as a parking lot for UST's sole benefit. Given the very significant deficit of on-campus parking, the overflow will naturally end up in the surrounding neighborhoods. It is not only crystal clear that UST is aware of this inevitable outcome, it is counting on it. Otherwise, the burden would shift to UST to provide adequate parking on its campus - something it plainly does not wish to do. No good will come of this. In addition to the increased pollution from cars circling and idling, a heavy increase in side-street traffic will increase the danger of accidents. I am aware of homeowners on Lincoln Avenue who do not let their children play out front because of the endless flow of cars looking for parking.

If UST were genuinely concerned about the negative impact of increased traffic on the surrounding neighborhoods, it would support 24/7 permit parking area surrounding the campus, a request being made to the City within my parking area. I fully expect UST will oppose it. Again, it wants its fans to have unfettered access to our neighborhood streets.

In the 35 years I have lived in this area it has mystified me why the City seems to be so compliant with UST's various expansions even as they negatively impact the surrounding neighborhoods. I very much hope that this time around the City will see UST's latest expansion as an overbearing, unwelcome effort to cram too much university into too small a footprint.

Craig M. Roen  
183 Mount Curve Blvd.  
St. Paul MN. 55105  
651-329-1241  
[craig.roen@icloud.com](mailto:craig.roen@icloud.com)

**From:** [Christy Shannon](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Comment Regarding Project Address 2260 Summit Avenue, File Number 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 6:31:39 PM

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Re: Comment and opposition regarding project address 2260 Summit Avenue, file number 24-029-110

Dear Zoning Committee,

We, as home owners and community members where the proposed University of St. Thomas sports stadium will be built, oppose this stadium and request that you consider the multiple negative impacts that our community and our surrounding environment would face should this unnecessary stadium be constructed:

- Erosion in grotto due to lack of natural filtration and water absorption
- Loss of 68 mature trees and their environmental benefits
- Loss of habitat for multiple animal species: squirrels, rabbits, turkeys, coyotes, foxes, songbirds, raptors, etc.
- Intrusion into migratory pathway
- Intrusion into views from river corridor; will be highly visible from Minneapolis side of river
- Hardship on tenants, elderly, handicapped if they can't park near homes

This is not even a necessary build – St. Paul already has multiple stadiums supported by our tax dollars that UST could utilize and/or other proposed locations that would not create the environmental harm that this project's construction would, including Herberger's/Allianz, Cleveland and University, or WestRock at Vandalia.

A major part of the appeal of our community is living alongside nature – trees, animals, the Mississippi River. It is unnecessary for UST to create an even greater footprint in our neighborhood when other options are available, and the necessity of the increased sports capacity in our area seems questionable in the first place with the other stadiums we already have. Please be a good neighbor to all living things in our community and stop this unnecessary project.

Sincerely,

Christine Shannon

Sean Samuels

2001 Laurel Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55104

**From:** [Catherine Spaeth](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to St. Thomas plans to build a massive arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 1:02:29 PM

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Re: File 24-029-110 at 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul

Dear Zoning Committee,

I'm writing to strongly oppose St. Thomas's plan to build a huge arena near the Mississippi River. I've been a Merriam Park resident for over 30 years and have watched St. Thomas grow and grow, all the while pushing the boundaries of (or ignoring) their responsibilities and requirements under city law. Laws and conditional use permits are intended to contain St. Thomas's growth to protect the environment and the residential neighborhood it resides in. Such a large structure as an arena will put enormous strain on city streets, water quality, neighbors' quality of life and the surrounding wildlife and natural environment. The arena plan St. Thomas has created clearly cares very little for the deleterious effects on the environment, surrounding infrastructure and its residential neighbors. It also threatens groundwater and the Mississippi River bluff--not to mention putting such an enormous structure in the middle of a residential neighborhood not intended for the increased traffic, risks of toxic leaks, and loss of animal habitat. As a city resident, I see it as the City's responsibility to protect our groundwater, animal habitats, and Mississippi River corridor (in accordance with federal law!) and not allow St. Thomas to continue growing unfettered. I hope you see your role that way as well. I urge you to reject the site plan and rein in St. Thomas.

Catherine Spaeth  
1879 Carroll Avenue  
St. Paul MN

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Catherine Spaeth

**From:** [Caroline Stone](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** ARD member who is strongly opposed to site of the arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:17:25 AM

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>> Hello,

>> My name is Caroline Stone and I live at 210 Woodlawn Avenue. I have been absolutely appalled at the laws that are being broken by the University of St. Thomas in order to try to build an arena on a tiny postage stamp piece of land on campus.

>

>> It states in law Minnesota R 6106.0120 sup 120 B states that there maybe be no impervious surfaces within 40 feet of the bluff line and the driveway is within 40 feet of the surface of the bluff line. There are toxic chemicals from the ice arena that will seep into the Mississippi River. Our drinking water!!

>>

>> Emissions from buses and cars will pollute the air for wildlife and humans. traffic congestion after events will make it almost impossible to drive on Cretin. Parking in front of our home will be impossible as

>> cars and trucks from fans look for places

>> to park. I host book club at my house on Friday nights and now I don't know where my friends will be able to park.

>>

>> This plan to build this huge arena is purely wrong and it needs to be constructed in a place that has ample parking. I completely am against the construction of the arena.

>>

>> Sincerely,

>> Caroline Stone

>> 210Woodlawn Ave

>> Saint Paul, MN55105

>> 651 485 2609

>> Member ARD

> 24-029-110 Project number

> 2260 Summit

>

**From:** [Dave Brudevold](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit Ave File #24-029-110 ARD Appeal of UST arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 11:45:40 PM

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Project address: 2260 Summit Avenue

File Number: File 24-029-110

My name/address: David Brudevold

2208 Sargent Avenue, St Paul MN

Re: ARD appeal to University of St Thomas arena site plan

Living just a few blocks from UST's south campus, I oppose this site for the proposed arena because of its impact on local neighborhood parking/traffic, blockage of groundwater flow, and height.

**Parking/traffic:** Ours is the first block south of the restricted permit parking area, and we like it that way. There's room for homeowners, visitors, tradespersons, persons who walk/jog/bike along the river and, yes, even a few students. Once a year, when the next block east closes for its locally famous "Halloween Block" celebration, we get a taste of just how crazy event parking can get when our block overflows with parents desperate to find a spot to unload their young trick-or-treaters, with cars parked too tight to maneuver and often too tight to pass in opposite directions. It's great fun, but only once a year, and certainly not when our road narrows during the snow/ice weather of basketball and hockey season. Or, when emergency vehicles must get through. Plus, our city officials have discussed single-side parking for the winter season, which would jam parkers into half the space. Reluctantly, one neighbor after another has voiced support for extending permit parking to our block.

**Groundwater flow:** judging from the many sump pumps running in our neighborhood, there's a lot of water flowing towards the river just below our basement floors. Long ago, UST filled in a lake once on the southern edge of their main campus. UST may have forgotten, yet a picture of students paddling canoes on it hangs on a wall of nearby Davanni Pizza shop. There's plenty of water still down there, but I'm afraid such a large building atop the river bluff will disrupt or divert its flow.

**Height:** building height guidelines exist along the river for a reason, as we are reminded by the few tall exceptions grandfathered in which mar the view. Perched high above the existing parking ramp is UST's telescope observatory dome. To my knowledge, no one has objected to its existence. Yet, as high as the observatory is, that there's concern the proposed arena will tower over it and block its view should raise concern that height limits will be way over exceeded. That should not happen along the river.

That UST's good neighbors have had to spend a good amount of their own time and money fighting this is unfair. City officials should just do their job and enforce the rules. Thank you!

Dave Brudevold, joint-homeowner, 2208 Sargent Avenue



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**From:** [deborah.chernick@comcast.net](mailto:deborah.chernick@comcast.net)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for UST Multipurpose Area Appeal 4-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:16:40 AM

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Dear Zoning Commission Members,

Please consider my comments regarding the UST Multipurpose Area Appeal 4-029-110. The project address is 2260 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota. While there are numerous concerns about this project, I will limit my comments to the following:

1. The proposed UST stadium will have a negative impact on the environment, including but not limited to, greenhouses gases from vehicles circulating around and arriving at the stadium.
2. Traffic and parking are already issues at the University of St. Thomas and for the surrounding neighborhood. The addition of the stadium will only increase the severity of these issues.
3. Given the Highland Bridge development, traffic along Cretin Avenue has been and will continue to increase. Clearly the addition of the UST stadium will only increase the traffic all along Cretin, as attendees will also be coming from Highways 62 or 494.

Thank you for thoughtfully considering these concerns,

Deborah Chernick  
2170 Highland Parkway  
Saint Paul, Minnesota

**From:** [david Cummings](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** File # 24-029-110 address: 2260 Summitt Ave.  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 8:52:45 PM

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As a resident of Macalester-Groveland for over 30 years I am dismayed at the lack of concern expressed by St. Thomas for the effect their new building will have on the surrounding neighborhood. If this was simply a new proposed building for a commercial entity not affiliated with St.Thomas, would the commission allow it to be built without mandating sufficient parking be built to accommodate the building's future tenants. I doubt that very much! I hope the commission understands that this proposed arena, as it stands,has generated substantial ill will toward any future plans by the University.

David Cummings  
2091 St. Clair Ave.



**From:** [DIANE HRON](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST proposed arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 6:53:56 PM

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To: St. Paul Zoning Committee,

Project Address: 2260 Summit Ave.,

File 24-029-110

From: Diane Hron, 72 Exeter Place, St. Paul

Dear Committee Members:

I am a neighbor living in the Shadow Falls area of St. Paul (72 Exeter Place). I am writing to object to the Site Plan for the multipurpose arena that UST is proposing to build on the river bluff in St. Paul. The arena that UST proposes is projected to be a 250,000 square-foot complex that can hold 6000 attendees. I am concerned about this massive structure being built for many reasons, but most importantly because of the environmental impact it would have on the river bluff and neighborhood.

My Concerns:

- The plan includes development within the setback area from the Mississippi River, which is prohibited. Congress established the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area to protect, preserve, and enhance the significant values of the waters and land of the Mississippi Corridor within the St. Paul/Mpls Metro area. This arena is in direct opposition to this. The arena would be located just 40 feet from the bluffline of the grotto. This is also the bluffline of the river itself, an ecologically fragile area.
- Having an arena of this size is likely to cause significant pollution - greenhouse gases from the cars and private buses arriving, greenhouse gases from cars circulating, looking for parking, greenhouse gases from trucks and vehicles bringing food/drinks to the arena, risk of ammonia and ethylene glycol leaks (which could contaminate the waterway in the adjacent area and downstream), rerouting groundwater flows, erosion in the grotto due to lack of natural filtration and water absorption, loss of 68 mature trees and their environmental benefits, and loss of habitat for animals.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,  
Diane Hron

April 21, 2024

We are writing in opposition of the proposed construction of the UST Hockey Arena/Athletic Facility located on their St. Paul Campus. **(Project Address: 2260 Summit Ave. ST Paul, MN/ File #24-029-110)**

We live on Princeton Ave., just south of the proposed arena. We and many of my neighbors are concerned about several aspects of the proposal:

**Increased traffic:**

As it is, rush hour in the morning and evening make it almost impossible to turn onto Cretin Ave. from residential streets. With large snowfalls and snow piled by the snow plows at the corners of streets and alleys, it becomes very dangerous to enter the intersection. Increase traffic, especially at night, would make turning onto Cretin very dangerous.

The added traffic from the Highland Bridge Construction and the housing added there has already increased traffic and there is much more construction yet to be done on that site in the future. This will increase the danger of turning onto Cretin from sides street even more.

We are also concerned that all this addition traffic will be backed up at the corners of Cretin and Grand, and at Cretin and Summit, forcing drivers to turn east onto Grand or Summit Ave. to access Highway 94. These two streets also seem too narrow to accommodate the additional traffic.

**Parking:**

Parking for large St Thomas athletic events already causes traffic congestion and parking problem in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus. The addition of another large venue will greatly increase the likelihood of people having to park on surrounding residential streets. Most streets surrounding the campus already have been forced to implement and pay to have permit parking so they can park in front of their own property. The neighborhoods cannot absorb the additional parking required for a large arena on the South Campus. This is especially true in the winter when the streets are very narrow due to plowed snow along the curbs

**Setting of the South Campus:**

As a 37 year neighbor of UST, we have always been proud to be their neighbor. Their campus layout has been beautiful and well laid out. As neighbors, we enjoyed walking through the campus on our daily walks and enjoyed the architectural layout of the buildings. Even when they have built or remodeled existing buildings, they always maintained a well-balanced and seemingly well thought out design. From what we have seen of the new site plan for the South Campus, it seems like they have just decided to fit in as many buildings into the small space as they can, regardless of aesthetics. We are also concerned about the added traffic on the South Campus. From the site plans we have seen, it is clear that there will be a lot of traffic entering from Cretin Ave. and exiting onto Summit Ave. The lights and noise from cars, trucks, and busses will be a great disturbance to residents on these streets as well, especially those on Summit Ave.

We feel that an "Off Campus" location would be more suitable for a venue of this size. Please reconsider adding this arena to the South Campus.

Thank you.  
Daniel S.Klingner  
Kristin K. Klingner  
2180 Princeton Ave.  
St Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [david O'Brien](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** New St. Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:54:43 PM

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This is Dave OBrien. I'm writing to state my opposition the he new arena. The project address is (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110). My name and address are at the end of the email.

I've lived close to St Thomas for many years. It's a great residential area that will be grossly impacted by the addition of the arena. **There is not adequate parking or traffic control for the arena events.** The needs of the residential neighbors need to be considered along with the desire of St Thomas to grow their program.

I don't begrudge St Thomas for trying to change and grow. But that shouldn't need to come at the expense of the neighbors sharing this piece of St. Paul. There is a good alternative to an on campus arena, which is to place it just north of I94. That's just a 5-block walk, and actually a much easier location for commuters, who will be the majority of event attendees.

- There will be 65+ events per year.
- This is very different from the handful of home football games that happen now.
- There will be may events in the winter, where the neighboring streets have a smaller navigable path and driving is more difficult.
- St Thomas has grossly underestimated the number of cars that will be arriving to the events.
- Most of the drivers will struggle finding a place to park. the street I live on will have a huge increase in the number of cars passing by looking for parking spots.
- Cretin Avenue, at the end of my block, will have stopped traffic on a regular basis.

I have spent a lot of time over in the neighborhoods close to the University of Minnesota. All the residential neighbors close to the University's sports venues are gone. Marcey-Holmes in southeast Minneapolis is very different from Mac-Grove. Fortunately the other colleges in St. Paul area have been less impactful on their neighbors. Macalester, St Catherine University, Hamline and Concordia have all managed to limit the impact on their residential neighbors. The UST site plan application did not include a Traffic Demand Management Study (TDMP) as required. The zoning committee should be mindful of the St Thomas neighbors. There needs to be a balance between the needs of St Thomas and the needs of the neighbors. This arena does not reflect any balance. It benefits St. Thomas at the expense of the neighbors.

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Dave OBrien  
2208 Princeton Ave, St Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [DANIEL RILEY](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Appeal of permit for St. Thomas site  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:42:23 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to encourage the zoning committee to reconsider the approval of the St. Thomas basketball court and ice rink arena building project.

The site project address is:

2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota. The file number is File 24-029-110.

My address is below. Currently we live across Cretin Ave. from the St. Thomas football stadium, near the intersection of Riverside and Cretin Avenue. Often buses are idling in our area, in front of or adjacent to the house during football games and other events. This means we are exposed to several hours of diesel fumes on a regular basis. The need for space for idling buses and other vehicles will increase dramatically with the use of additional sports areas at St. Thomas.

Currently traffic is rushing along Cretin Avenue at excessive speeds, making street crossing more unsafe.

In addition, increase in the area traffic will increase difficulties with parking. Currently Saturday afternoons result in traffic jams in the area, even though permit parking is not in effect at those times. Currently St. Thomas has a noise statute waiver for each football game, although hopefully noise pollution will not be as great a factor for the basketball/hockey arena.

In addition, currently traffic greatly impedes emergency vehicles near the football stadium, and a larger area will be affected with the new additional facility.

There are a number of environmental concerns relevant to the proposed St. Thomas site. This site is located on drainage which connects directly to the Mississippi River. The large facility and concrete or pavement parking areas will cause a great deal of runoff to the Grotto area and into the Mississippi. The ice arena will require a great deal of ethylene glycol and ammonia, risking spillage into the area and into the Mississippi River. Thus far, the large paint and organic compound dump at the former Ford plant, now the Highland Bridge site, has not been shown to be associated with Mississippi River contamination, but I would encourage that additional hazardous materials not be used or stored adjacent to the river.

There are a number of other issues of concern, the view from the Minneapolis side, building heights, loss of trees and other issues.

I encourage you to consider these and the many other concerns which have been brought forth and designate an alternative site for the facility.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues and for the attention and effort you put forth on City and community issues.

Respectfully,  
Daniel Riley, MD  
118 Exeter PL.  
St. Paul, MN  
55104

**From:** [Deanna Scher](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Project: 2260 Summit Ave. file#24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:05:58 AM

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Dear Zoning Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns with the siting and operation of the proposed UST arena. These concerns fall into two categories:

#### 1. Parking

I live on the closest non-permit parking block to the UST southern campus (Princeton Ave. between Woodmont and Mt. Curve). I'm 2 blocks to where the stadium will be built. We are already burdened by UST students parking on our block. Some students that live on campus leave their cars parked in front of my house for days. One of the biggest issues that the students don't move their cars during snow emergencies, so the city is unable to plow and clear the road in front of my house. A couple years ago, UST would have a small musical event on the southern campus every Thursday evening. I would come home to find no place to park on my entire block on these evenings. I was willing to tolerate these inconveniences as the price to pay for living near a campus. However, I can't imagine how difficult it will be to park in front of my house once the arena is built. This stadium will likely drive my block to switch to permit-only parking. However, we will have to pay to costs associated with this, for the permits and enough guest permits. UST's plan is to not create any new parking with the addition of the stadium. In fact, they will be taking away parking. Why am I pay the costs associated with being the arena's parking lot instead of UST? According to MDH's public health tracking data access portal, 65% of people in my Census tract already live near busy roads, well above the county average. Why are we being further burdened?

#### 2. Air pollution

Most nights of the week, my neighbors burn wood in their backyard fire pits, fireplaces, and backyard fireplaces. St. Paul does not regulate the burning of wood smoke in dense, residential neighborhoods, despite the known and serious health risks of PM2.5. Compounding this, there are frequently fires burning along the river and most notably, UST students burning fires at the Overlook, which travels to my home on the prevailing winds (I live directly east and southeast of the river/Overlook). St. Paul police do not enforce these illegal fires. My census tract is also already in the top quartile for diesel particulate matter according to the CDC's and EPA's environmental justice tools. My home does not have central air or mini-splits. We rely on window fans to cool down my house during the evening and nights. Oftentimes, we have to close the windows and swelter inside, risking heat stroke, due to woodsmoke getting pulled into the house. My son has asthma. I also have a lung condition. Both my children are immunocompromised. The diesel vehicles serving the arena, and the added traffic from the arena, especially since UST is not providing any parking for it, will add to the already excessive burden of current air pollution in my neighborhood and inside my home. The air pollution along with the noise pollution from cars/people driving on and parking on my block will likely push us over the edge and require us to pay over \$10,000 for a mini-split system to be able to cool our home with windows shut, with us baring this huge cost.

St. Paul prides itself on being the most livable city in America. I don't think putting this enormous arena in a dense residential neighborhood that already bears an unjust burden of traffic and air pollution is a 'livable' decision.

Sincerely,  
Deanna Scher  
2252 Princeton Ave.

**From:** [Daniel Taylor](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to the University of St. Thomas Site Plan Application  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 8:40:22 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee of the City Planning Commission:

I write to express my opposition to the University of St. Thomas' site plan application for their arena at 2260 Summit Avenue (File #24-029-110) . Before taking on the immense project of building a 5,500 seat arena on their campus, it behooves the City of Saint Paul to require a thorough and transparent Environmental Impact Statement for the safety of their citizens, to protect adjacent property, and to ensure no harm to the Mississippi River corridor.

I am concerned that this enormous building will divert the natural underground springs that feed into the river. Any diversion could also impact adjacent property and affect the structural integrity of nearby homes. We need to have an EIS.

I am concerned with traffic and parking for this facility. Having all traffic enter and exit at one signaled intersection (Cretin and Grand) will cause unimaginable gridlock and frustrate drivers. St. Thomas already has a parking problem even without an arena. On any given day, two-thirds of the cars on our block of Dayton Avenue are parked illegally. Permits are required and most cars do not have them. The city of St. Paul does not consistently enforce parking regulations around the UST campus neighborhood. St. Thomas's parking plan for arena events is to simply encourage patrons to park in the neighborhood. The safety of pedestrians crossing Cretin Avenue should be a paramount concern for the city.

Please reject the University of St. Thomas' site plan application so that we can all understand the environmental impact that this colossal building will have on everyone. It really doesn't belong on this site.

Sincerely,

Daniel Taylor  
2127 Dayton Avenue  
(Former Board member and President, Union Park District Council)

**From:** [Edward Martell](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** UST Site Plan project address (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110)  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 1:08:26 PM

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Hi, My name is Edward Martell and I have lived at 2149 Goodrich Ave for 32 years and I am against the current plan for the new arena at 2260 Summit Ave file number 24-029-110.

I was a previous member of WSNAC while the large apartment buildings were being built on Grand Ave. I attended a town and gown at Clemson University with Jim Sachs from St. Thomas and we coordinated several community cleanups showing how we and UST could work together to get a win/win situation and neighborhood balance.

When I had surveyed several neighbors on the impact of the new apartment buildings they had 4 main concerns: Parking, Traffic thru the neighborhood, quality of life crimes, and property values. I spent several days/hours baselining parking data which averaged @175 for area 22, and my son pulled police data for area 22 showing we were green. Our cleanup efforts stressed with student leaders (service fraternity, football team - I am currently wearing a 2016 UST football shirt given me with a thank you note from the coach) if they pick up litter others will follow their lead.

Looking back now our current parking count for area 22 is avg 196 (I just did 21 counts for April, litter is down in our area and at the Speedway store lot, and the neighborhood is peaceful. We have have attained Neighborhood balance so it is possible. However all the UST folks we worked with are gone and history seems to be repeating itself. I don't want us to go back to when we moved in at 2149 Goodrich Ave with street full of cars attending drinking parties down the block, loud cursing, some fights, beer bottles on the front lawn etc. as we UST, students, and Neighbors have worked so hard and come so far. We can do better!!!

Thx Ed



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**From:** [Elizabeth Wittenberg](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Elizabeth Wittenberg](#)  
**Subject:** St Thomas Anderson Arena (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110)  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 9:14:38 PM

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I am writing to voice my concern about and objection to University of St. Thomas' planned building of the Anderson Arena on its south campus. I have lived on Goodrich Avenue, across the street from the planned arena, for 32 years and am concerned that many issues about this development have not been adequately considered. In particular, I am worried about additional burden on the already overloaded Cretin-Summit and Cretin-Grand intersections and the lack of plans for addressing event parking in the area.

Currently, I regularly experience the conflict between pedestrians and motorists at Cretin and Summit. If there is a silver lining to that situation it is that the busiest times are in the daylight hours as students walk to classes and motorists are heading to work. With more events on the south campus in the evening hours, the periods of difficulty will increase and we won't have the benefit of daylight to see each other more clearly. I'm also aware that traffic along Cretin will inevitably increase as Highland Bridge continues to be developed and populated putting even more pressure on the intersections of Cretin with Grand, Summit and East River Road.

I am also currently affected by the traffic and parking issues when there are events like soccer games on the south campus. If the frequency of these events and the numbers they attract increase dramatically, as they will with the development of the planned arena, I expect that this impact will dramatically increase. In particular, I am regularly awakened in the spring time with raucous young people walking along Goodrich at night. With a large event space on the south campus the frequency of this will certainly increase. Having visitors to my own home in the evening will become more difficult if the non-permit parking is already taken by arena patrons. We already struggle with illegal parking on our street (e.g., misuse of resident permits by non-residents). There will likely be more pressure to "trade" in illegal permits if the arena is sited on the south campus.

It seems inevitable that if the arena is built on the south campus St. Thomas will find ways to make use of it to maximize the investment. So despite their estimate of 35 maximum capacity events per year it will likely be more. And even 3 maximum capacity events per month is a lot if you are living right next door to the venue.

The planned arena simply doesn't fit into the south campus footprint, even if it can be wedged in there on paper. St. Thomas has vastly expanded its gross floor area since the CUP was established undermining the spirit of the CUP.

Finally, it seems to me that there are a number of other sites that could meet the needs of St. Thomas without having such a profound impact on the residential neighborhood that it calls home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Wittenberg  
2194 Goodrich Ave.



**From:** [Flannery Delaney](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: UST Multi Purpose Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 7:17:57 PM

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Project address (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110)

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**From:** Flannery Delaney <flannerydelaney@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 22, 2024 7:07 PM  
**To:** ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us <ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us>  
**Subject:** UST Multi Purpose Arena

To Zoning Committee of St. Paul Planning Commission:

We have lived on 2100 block of Lincoln Avenue near UST for exactly 25 years. We can see the stadium footprint from our front porch. We have been caring for the neighborhood, building community, paying taxes and promoting healthy exchange with UST students for all those years. UST's plan for a large arena in the proposed location will irrevocably damage the neighborhood in ways that cannot be reversed. Neighbors put up with a lot living near an institution like UST that and we have been patient with the growth of campus and the building that has already occurred in recent years.

The proposed arena is too big, too close to a residential neighborhood and too close to the Mississippi River, a National Park and national treasure.

We ask you to please consider relocating the arena in an appropriate location where cars, crowds, noise are welcome. In a location where the arena will enhance the neighborhood and bring real economic development around it. The current location does not have the businesses, parking, public transportation or road infrastructure to support this proposed arena.

We have many young families that have moved on to our block in the last 10 years. They are caring for their homes and yards, paying a premium in taxes and generally making this neighborhood viable and sustainable. They want to make this neighborhood home, but UST is making the decision to stay very difficult. Property values are at risk as is the general livability of the neighborhood.

Please consider these concerns, it is in the best interest of St. Paul to require thorough environmental review of this arena.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Flannery Delaney and Paul McCormick  
2126 Lincoln Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Gayle Breutzman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed UST Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:55:23 PM

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RE: 2260 Summit Ave., St.Paul, MN, 55105  
File # 24-029-110

Dear Zoning Committee Members,

The proposed University of St. Thomas(UST) Multipurpose Arena will include two ice rinks. The June 2023 EAW for the arena states that the arena will use ammonia for ice maintenance. Anhydrous Ammonia is used for ice refrigeration, as is ethylene glycol. Ammonia is classified as hazardous by OSHA, ACGIH, DOT, NIOSH, NFPA and the EPA. The chemical is highly toxic with inhalation potentially causing respiratory failure, unconsciousness, skin or eye irritation, freezing injuries or death. There are multiple documented cases of injury and deaths from ammonia exposure. Causes of leaks are not infrequent events in ice rink chiller systems, as ammonia is very caustic, and requires specific materials for storage, transfer and distribution through the chiller system. Improper application or handling of anhydrous ammonia can lead to loss of ammonia gas to the atmosphere. Anhydrous ammonia is heavier than air and will settle in low areas of surrounding landscape.

Leakages of anhydrous ammonia require multiple emergency services to participate in clean up and often require evacuation of surrounding areas. U.S. EPA region 1 (Minnesota is Region 5) passed an "Emergency Planning a Right-to-Know Act" for the safety of persons in the vicinities of businesses using ammonia. The Minnesota Department of Health chapter 4620 designates permanent rules for ice areas, but there is no system in place for public notification. The UST ice arenas can potentially expose the students on the campus and surrounding neighborhood residents, animals and vegetation to a toxic and potentially lethal ammonia leak. In addition, the area is in a Mississippi River Critical Corridor Area, and hazardous waste has the potential to leak into the the surrounding soils and the Mississippi River itself.

Although toxic leaks are not planned, the potential for such an event exists if the University of St. Thomas is allowed to build an arena housing ice rinks refrigerated by hazardous chemicals. It would be negligent not to consider the hazardous chemical usage and potential disastrous implications for the people and environment that would be affected. The use and danger of ammonia is just one of the reasons why I am opposed to the current site for the UST multipurpose arena. There are more appropriate—and much safer— areas to build.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gayle Breutzman  
151 Woodlawn Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Greg Stanek](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Concerning 2260 Summit Ave., File #24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 12:06:04 PM

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PED Zonning Committee Secretary,

I am writing to express my concern with the location of the proposed new St. Thomas stadium at 2260 Summit Avenue. I fear that 5500 additional visitors on a regular basis to this established neighborhood will easily cause an increase in traffic congestion, parking issues, speeding cars, noise, litter, and drunken buffoonery. We already experience excessive noise, parties, beer cans/ bottles in our front yards, broken beer bottles in the alleys, public urination in the alleys, cars illegally parked in our driveways, and restricted access to the alleys on a regular basis, which is only made worse when St. Thomas hosts sporting events at their existing O'Shaughnessy Stadium. These inconsiderate and illegal annoyances will only increase with the new stadium, as will the tension between home owners and St. Thomas students, and complaint calls to the police.

Thank you for your time,

Greg Stanek

2078 Lincoln Avenue, 55105

**From:** [irene.falksen](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Project proposal #24-029-110; at Project address of 2260 Summit Ave, Saint Paul  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 9:33:42 AM

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Dear **St Paul Zoning Committee:**

This letter is in regard to Project proposal #24-029-110; at Project address of 2260 Summit Ave, Saint Paul

I would like to express my opposition and concern regarding the proposed construction of the Hockey/basketball arena by the University of Saint Thomas at its current proposed location. I know many people who share my concerns.

In an effort to be concise, I will limit my comments to my top 3 concerns.

1.

Environmental impact: The proposed site lies near to the Mississippi River and a major migratory route for birds and an important habitat for many animals. The loss of trees, the disruption of groundwaters, addition of greenhouse gasses, and risk for the leakage of toxic chemicals present a significantly greater impact on the environment than if the arena were located away from the Mississippi River bluff area. I believe that the city has been forced to cut down many mature Ash trees due to blight, we need to protect as many mature trees and habitat areas as we can. Some of the other possibilities would be in areas that are situated away from the river bluff and do not require the destruction of mature trees and habitat. A comprehensive Environmental Impact Study has not been conducted.

2.

Safety: This is a residential neighborhood with people trying to walk/bike for exercise or to go to work/school/errands. I am concerned that the added traffic of people coming to the events and cruising the neighborhoods looking for parking, coming and going, etc have not addressed the additional risks presented by placing such a large event magnet in a residential neighborhood. (Recently a neighbor was hit by an inattentive driver when she was walking with the light, in a cross-walk, in daylight.) How much greater the risk will be on dark winter nights with icy, snowy roads. How will the increased traffic

congestion and parking affect the ability of emergency vehicles to get to calls on streets already narrowed by snow and ice in the winter.

3.

Parking: St Thomas has lost many parking spaces despite a shortage already spilling over into the neighborhoods. Part of the plan for event parking is in the surrounding neighborhoods. Many people are dependent on street parking near their homes. Although the inability to park in front of one's home may be an inconvenience for some, for others like the disabled or elderly, the risk of having to walk on icy sidewalks and streets to get to their homes can present a significant safety risk. They may be able to reduce their risk by making sure that their own walk is shoveled, but if forced to park farther away, they may be forced to walk over icy sidewalks, streets, snowbanks near intersections, etc, just to get home.

Please do not approve the plan for this project at the proposed location, especially without further more comprehensive study risks presented.

Sincerely,

Irene Falksen

2128 Fairmount Avenue

Saint Paul, MN 55105

[irenefalksen@gmail.com](mailto:irenefalksen@gmail.com)

**From:** [Ian Rice](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Objection to St. Thomas Proposed Site  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 5:44:11 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I'm writing as a Highland Park resident to voice my objection to the proposed St. Thomas arena in the Highland Bridge development. My main areas of concern relate to traffic, safety, and environmental impacts.

The UST site plan application did not include a Traffic Demand Management Study (TDMP) as required. In my opinion this community does not have the current infrastructure and traffic management to afford another influx of commuters traveling into the area for sporting or other special events. As a resident that lives on Cretin Avenue, I fear to imagine more traffic flowing through our neighborhood. I have two small children and have already witnessed an influx of traffic due to the new development. In many cases, vehicles do not obey speed limits and are not considerate that this is a residential community. Furthermore, there is a lack of police presence in patrolling the streets for careless driving and it's a matter of time when a serious accident is going to occur. I'm writing to inform you that the residents of this area deserve to see a TDMP study.

I'm also concerned about the environmental impacts of the new arena. The proposed site is within 40 feet of the bluff line and puts the existing habitat at risk. We are proud of the natural beauty of our city and would like to keep the Mississippi Gorge area clear of additional pollution. Increased cars, people, and traffic is going to put the environment at risk and elevate the chances of more litter and pollution in the area. In an age of heightened concerns about sustainability and the environment, I urge the location to be reconsidered to use an existing brown space or an area without impacting the Mississippi Gorge ecosystem.

Thank you,

Ian Rice

**From:** [jerome.abrams](mailto:jerome.abrams)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](mailto:*CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary)  
**Subject:** proposed University of St. Thomas arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:58:07 AM

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Project address: 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105  
File 24-029-110

The current plan for the University of St. Thomas (UST) arena has failed to adequately evaluate safety risks. The plan states that neighborhood streets will be used for parking during (UST) arena events. The plan does not include data or estimates of parking density, width of streets with two-sided parking during winter snow, or the time for parked cars to exit the neighborhood streets such that emergency vehicles have neighborhood access. The following discussion assumes an event capacity of 5500 attendees. A UST spokesperson stated in the EQ Monitor that events having 5500 attendees will occur 35 times a year.

We assume that people will choose to park as close to the arena as possible, even if more distant off-street parking is available. This assumption is reasonable, given that hockey and basketball are primarily winter sports, and arena attendees will likely choose to walk no further than necessary in the cold and snow. If UST charges a fee for ramp parking, free city street parking will likely be preferred.

Distance from the curb to the curbside of parked cars and the residual width of the streets with two-sided parking was measured 3/26/2024 following a snowfall. A typical width of a parked car is 5 ft. The measurement did not include the width of parked pick-up trucks, width of 6 ft. 6 inches for a Ford F-150, excluding extended side mirrors.

Making the reasonable assumption that cars will park at the same density as currently measured with UST students and staff parking on the north side of Goodrich Avenue, an average of 56 cars from Mississippi River Boulevard to Cretin Avenue, the neighborhood bordered by Goodrich Avenue, Princeton Avenue, Mississippi River Boulevard, and Cretin Avenue can accommodate over 300 cars. With two-sided parking and narrowing of the streets by snow left at the curbs during winter, measured width of the streets ranges from 15 ft 8 in to 16 ft 5 in. With two-sided parking and travel in one direction, the width was measured at 8 ft 5 in. First responder emergency vehicles are 10 ft wide and require a lane wider than 10 ft when in motion.

Cretin Avenue is the likely choice of exit from the neighborhood. Exit time to Cretin Avenue from, for example Fairmount Avenue, was measured at 2 minute intervals from 4:36 PM to 5:30 PM on 4/9/2024 without a special event in progress. Average delay for cars to enter the traffic flow on Cretin Avenue was 41.4 seconds.

Exit time for parked cars following was modeled using the calculation of Mao et. al. (Mao, X et al., Optimal Evacuation Strategy for Parking Lots Considering the Dynamic Background Traffic Flows, Intl J Environ Res and Public Health, 2019,16:2194) Their model assumes no left turn, no non-motorized or pedestrian traffic, and exit of only one car at a time. Their published numerical simulation for two exits onto a street with background traffic flow that reasonably approximates the conditions of neighborhood parking demonstrated a delay of 17 minutes and 28 minutes, respectively. Using their model, and again assuming one way traffic and no non-motorized traffic, exit time from Fairmount Avenue to Cretin Avenue is calculated at 41 minutes. With two-



way traffic and thousands of pedestrians converging on the neighborhood with an arena event, the delay time is likely to be increased. Details of the calculation are included in the Application for Zoning Appeal submitted by Daniel L.M.Kennedy, 4/15/2024.

American Heart Association guidelines state that for, heart attack, door to treatment time goal is less than 30 minutes. For stroke, door to treatment time goal is less than 60 minutes. These guidelines will be impossible to meet under these conditions. The obstruction to emergency vehicle access to the neighborhood as a result of the arena events risks the lives and health of neighborhood residents.

The residents of St. Paul can reasonably demand that the City of St. Paul government protect the lives, health, and safety of its residents. Please note that the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) identified 1 death and 3 serious crashes without an arena event. The question that needs an explicit answer is how many deaths, serious injuries, and serious crashes the City of St. Paul will endorse as an acceptable price for an entertainment center in a site without adequate infrastructure to support it. The attendees of arena events may willingly accept the increased risks of the current plan. The residents of the adjacent neighborhoods refuse to accept these additional risks.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jerome H. Abrams  
151 Woodlawn Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105-1140

**From:** [Shane Albertson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Opposed to University of St Thomas Arena - 2260 Summit Ave, File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:00:30 AM

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We really enjoy walking, running and biking thru our neighborhood, as long as it is before 7am or after 9pm

Trying to walk, run or bike thru our neighborhood weekdays from 3pm to 6pm is somewhat dangerous due to high traffic volumes and speeding vehicles (cars, pickup trucks, commercial/construction trucks and school busses) on Cretin Ave

As an example, southbound evening rush hour on Cretin and Grand Aves is always the same: many impatient drivers in the southbound slow lane attempt to speed (race) past vehicles in the southbound fast lane where Cretin Ave narrows from 2 lanes to 1 lane

The intersection of Cretin and Grand Aves is also at the entrance to the future St Thomas Arena

The proposed Arena will only make Cretin Ave traffic more congested and dangerous

We anticipate more vehicle crashes and vehicle-pedestrian crashes/deaths due to increased vehicle traffic near St Thomas and the new Arena

John Shane Albertson  
2198 Goodrich Ave  
St Paul, MN 55105

Project address 2260 Summit Ave  
File number 24-029-110

**From:** [Joel Clemmer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** for the Zoning Committee - follow up  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 6:49:46 PM

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My comment refers to project address 2260 Summit and file number File 24-029-110

On Sun, Apr 21, 2024 at 4:03 PM Joel Clemmer <[joel@joelclemmer.org](mailto:joel@joelclemmer.org)> wrote:

April 21, 2024

Dear sir or madam:

I urge the zoning committee to support reasonable growth in Saint Paul by rejecting the University of Saint Thomas's proposed stadium site plan. I am a homeowner living two blocks from the property on which the University intends to place a 5,500 seat stadium.

I am not expert in the details of our zoning ordinances nor the University's conditional use permit but, hopefully, these reflect reasonable limits supporting a peaceful residential neighborhood even as UST pursues its educational mission. The nature of the proposed building, the dynamics of its use, and the legitimate expectations of those living nearby add up to a violation of norms in this particular place.

The University of Saint Thomas has decided to join the major athletic powerhouses by shoehorning the requisite facilities into a campus that used to serve more modest, but valuable, ambitions. It is the responsibility of the University, should it continue on this trajectory, to respect the limits of its footprint and the residential neighborhood in which it is located. The current proposal simply ignores that difficulty, to the detriment of its neighbors.

Specifically, the building is too big. My understanding of the zoning code is that building height is limited to 40 feet. As those more expert in this point out, provisions in the current CUP do not constitute a variance. In fact, Saint Thomas has outgrown the current CUP and the stadium should await its review.

Other large stadiums in the Twin Cities are in highly urbanized locations and/or on multiple public transit routes which, together, are theoretically capable of handling surging crowds. The south campus location is the opposite. Let's be realistic. Many of those 5,500 seats will be filled by fans who drive to the game unless Metro Transit radically, completely, and very expensively rebuilds its infrastructure on the west side of Saint Paul in 18 months. The "surging" before and after games and events will be of cars.

I was therefore astonished to learn that the University's site plan application did not include a Traffic Demand Management Study. Again, I am not expert in the details but I expected those details to reflect common sense.

For these reasons and others, I urge the committee to reject the stadium site plan.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

Joel Clemmer  
2154 Fairmount Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105  
[joel@joelclemmer.org](mailto:joel@joelclemmer.org)

**From:** [Julie Conzemius](mailto:Julie.Conzemius@advocates4rd.org)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](mailto:*CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@advocates4rd.org)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** University of St Thomas arena comments  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 3:14:20 PM

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Julie Conzemius and I am a resident of 197 Woodlawn Avenue in St Paul. I am writing today to convey my STRONG opposition to the proposed sports arena at 2260 Summit Avenue on the University of St Thomas Campus.

My opposition might seem surprising in that I am a graduate of the University of St. Thomas. I had a beautiful experience as a Tommie, and that experience is partially what led me to stay in the neighborhood. But the pride I once felt as an alum is disappearing quickly in reaction to a sports arena being built in the middle of beautiful, vibrant, and historic neighborhoods.

St. Thomas benefits from being adjacent to the Shadow Falls, Kings Maplewood, Merriam Park, and broader Macalaster Groveland neighborhoods. In fact, some of the neighborhood attributes are highlighted on their website. They provide walkability, green space, eating and shopping establishments within walking distances, the neighborhoods are beautifully maintained and visually appealing, and they are very safe.

My opposition and frustration with the arena development is simply explained: too much of a burden is being asked of UST neighbors. What do I see as the burdens:

- **Environmental concerns:** As I understand it, St. Thomas was not required to do an Environmental Impact Statement. Starting with construction and through to the arena being fully utilized I am concerned for our neighborhood's environment. St. Paul provides a unique opportunity for its residents – we live in an urban area but we enjoy an abundance of wildlife. At our home, we regularly enjoy eagles, hawks, wild turkeys, coyotes, and fox in addition smaller critters. It's hard to imagine we'll see them as frequently with the noise of construction for the next year, and the greenhouse gasses that are undeniably part of a structure that houses 6000+ people 60+ times per year. I am aware that St Thomas has proposed ride sharing but it's still gasses coming into our neighborhood. As of today ride-sharing is tenuous given the situation with Uber and Lyft.
- **Traffic:** Traffic on Cretin Avenue currently is very heavy. If anyone in my family needs to go north on Cretin, we need to first go two blocks south to a traffic light. It's next to impossible to go north on Cretin during higher traffic hours without a stoplight. And going North on River Road takes us to the already congested Marshall Avenue.

With the addition of an arena, and only one entrance that also serves as an exit, it will undoubtedly increase traffic on an already overtaxed Cretin Avenue (which cannot be widened). Additionally, St Thomas has not accounted for the traffic to/from Highland Bridge which is also expected to bring thousands of new residents. It defies logic that a two-lane street in a residential area can capably, and safely handle, traffic from an 6000+ arena and an entirely new development.

With Cretin Avenue traffic increasing, it will likely force traffic into the neighborhoods. Given that a big percentage of traffic will be during the winter months, this seems especially unsafe. Yes, this year snow was light which created generous widths for cars to pass. But in a typical Minnesota winter, the roads narrow to the point the city no longer allows parking on both sides of streets. When (not if) this happens how can residents be assured that emergency vehicles can reach our homes on game nights on a timely basis?

St Thomas pays \$0 in property taxes. The entire burden to build, repair and maintain roads is on city residents. We pay some of the highest property taxes in the State of Minnesota. And now we'll undoubtedly be asked for more and more of our taxes to go to roadways. It's too much. At some point our taxes are unsustainable and will affect housing prices, and the ability to sell them.

- Parking: Where do I start? Instead of trying to find a parking solution on campus grounds (or anywhere), St Thomas has **decreased** parking by close to 400 spots. Since that happened, we have experienced a sharp increase in student, and employee, parking on Woodlawn and around our neighborhood (permitted or not). We have also seen busses park, or idle, for long stretches of time in front of our home since the recent parking changes.

To my knowledge, other than ride-shares and a “push” for public transportation, St Thomas has not proposed a single parking solution for what will be hundreds of cars carrying fans to these games/events. The City of St Paul requires sufficient parking for businesses, why does a well-funded university get a pass to push parking into neighborhoods? Is St Thomas providing any incentive for fans to use ride-share services, or public transportation? It doesn't seem viable from my perspective as fans could face surge pricing and where are all of these ride share cars supposed to pick up fans, and/or wait for games to end so they are close to the arena? (think neighborhoods). And ride-share options like Uber and Lyft are tenuous right now. I'm doubtful this is option that will provide relief.

- Housing: To build the arena, it is necessary for St Thomas to tear down a student residence, the historic Cretin Residence Hall. This will further push students into neighborhoods for housing, creating more tension between the university and neighborhoods.
- Quality of Life: The traffic and parking situation isn't just about space on the roads, and greenhouse gasses. It's about a way of life. We know that St Thomas plans to rent the arena/space to local sports teams and other organizations for their events. As it stands, just with St Thomas events, our streets will be overrun with traffic and parking at least every 2-3 days between November and March, but hopefully less often outside of those months. We are sure to see increased pedestrian traffic on our sidewalks and lawns, which will result trash left behind in our yards, being woken by loud and possibly intoxicated fans, and challenges to getting to and from our own homes.

Additionally, we lose the ability to spontaneously entertain or have visitors in our homes. We'll now need to check the St Thomas website and schedule around arena events to ensure parking for our own friends and family.

We bought our current home in 2016 when St Thomas was a Division III school. To be quite honest, I would not have bought a home in a neighborhood that would see unprecedented increases in traffic and parking. I also knew in 2016 that St Thomas had already given thought to becoming a D1 school but passed on that opportunity. We thought we were safe. I don't like that St Thomas was pushed out of the MIAC but the burden for that decision shouldn't fall to city residents.

Kings Maplewood is a beautiful, sleepy, neighborhood that provides an idyllic life for its residents. I have found joy in living so close to the university – it's fun to hear the roar of the football games, and see the excitement of students. But good neighbors shouldn't be relegated to being the university's parking lot. Many residents have been here for decades, and this arena will disrupt our lives in ways that will have not just frustrating consequences but very likely financial ones as well. As a community we've all taken steps to ensure the beauty of the neighborhoods and its viability long into the future. I wish St Thomas would do their part, and respect our wishes.

It's incredibly frustrating that St Thomas sees no obligation to find a workable solution, nor have they presented any substantive options or ideas to quell our concerns. Our only outlet is to appeal to a city that seems inclined to rubber stamp an approval for St Thomas. Please listen to us – St Paul is a special city that is big with but with a small-town feel (also on the St Thomas website).

Thank you for reading this message.

Julie Conzemius  
197 Woodlawn Avenue  
St Paul, MN 55105

**This letter is in response to file 24-029-110 at 2260 Summit Avenue**

**From:** [Jeff Hunter](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Message to St.Paul zoning committee  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 9:38:17 AM

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## Planning Commission Testimonial

Name: Jeff Hunter  
Address: 159 Montrose Place

April 22, 2024

Project address: 2260 Summit Ave. St Paul, MN  
Zoning file number: 24-029-110

To whom it may concern,

My primary concerns over the proposed building project on UST campus is the increased traffic issues. It's hard to imagine that after the Highland Bridges development is completed, the ill advised attempt by the Mayor to change our Snow Emergency parking , plus the now proposed building project at UST that it WON'T cause unbelievable traffic conditions.

Please turn down the request by UST until further traffic studies can be completed and explained to those of us who live in the area.

Thank you,  
Jeff Hunter

**From:** [joy.knopp](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Advocates4rd Info](#)  
**Subject:** Project Address 2260 Summit, File #24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:15:58 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee,

I am writing to raise my objections to the building of the St. Thomas Arena.

St. Thomas is located in the middle of a residential neighborhood, and because of that, it has a responsibility to be cognizant of that neighborhood and its concerns.

In 1988 Congress established the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA), a unit of the National Park Service. It is an affront to this designation to build a large arena with a huge carbon footprint, including a large increase in greenhouse gases, the potential for ethylene and glycol leaks which would end up in the River, loss of animal habitat, and disruption of the flyway to name just a few consequences.

Also greatly affecting this neighborhood, besides the air pollution and traffic congestion, is the parking issue. Frequent events will generate traffic needing parking. As there is inadequate parking on campus, cars will be forced on to our neighborhood streets. This means that often throughout the year, parking in front of our own homes will be difficult if not impossible. Friends and family will also find it difficult to park during events.

The decision by St. Thomas to upgrade to a Division 1 University with its emphasis on sports has drastically changed the ramifications for this neighborhood and does not seem to be consistent with the Catholic values that St. Thomas espouses.

Thank you for allowing me to express my extreme concern of the consequences that will ensue if this arena is built in this location.

Sincerely,

Joy Knopp,  
222 Woodlawn Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
(resident of over 25 years)



**From:** [Jenny Semmens](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 5500 seat Arena at St Thomas  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 10:28:03 AM

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I am including the file number ZF#24-029-019 for 2260 Summit Avenue

On Fri, Apr 26, 2024 at 10:25 AM Jenny Semmens <[jennifersemmens@gmail.com](mailto:jennifersemmens@gmail.com)> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Jenny Semmens** <[jennifersemmens@gmail.com](mailto:jennifersemmens@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Apr 26, 2024 at 10:22 AM  
**Subject:** 5500 seat Arena at St Thomas  
**To:** <[PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

Dear Zoning Committee Secretary

We are Jennifer and Michael Semmens on 2163 Goodrich Ave, St Paul, MN 55105  
As we live very close to St Thomas University we follow the new developments with interest.

The intention to put such a large arena so close to our neighborhood will no doubt create much traffic congestion and noise in our neighborhood.

We already tolerate noise from the playing fields at St Thomas and I have had to call in to get them to turn down the loudspeakers.

We feel that the neighbors have already tolerated a good deal and that our enjoyment and safety will be compromised by the inclusion of such a large arena project.

We have lived here now for 25 years and have paid our burgeoning property taxes for each of those years.

We would appreciate if our objections would be taken into consideration.

We are adamantly opposed to this arena being built so close to our neighborhood.

We are writing this as we must be away on May 2nd and cannot attend the Public Hearing

Sincerely

Jennifer and Michael Semmens

**From:** [Jan Selby](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to the UST proposed arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:07:22 PM

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Hello,

My name is Jan Selby and I own a home at 2207 Sargent Avenue in Saint Paul. I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the proposed new St Thomas arena. The project address is 2260 Summit and file number is 24-029-110.

There are many reasons why this arena should not be built on the proposed site and as it is currently designed. My concerns relate to the cumulative environmental impact, the setting and its proximity to the delicate river bluff, the effect of the potential hundreds of thousands of annual visitors on the surrounding neighborhood, and the increase in traffic in the already dangerously busy intersection of Cretin and Summit Avenue.

I am not against the idea of UST expanding their athletic facilities in general. However, the city and university leaders owe it to Saint Paul residents and the neighbors around Saint Thomas to do extensive and valid studies based on real estimates of how the space will be used. In addition, established procedures should be followed (such as a Traffic Demand Management Study), and legal standards should be upheld. Only then can the right rational, legal, and moral decision be made about how and where a new arena should be built.

The UST mission statement includes this language: "...the University of St. Thomas educates students to be morally responsible leaders who think critically, act wisely, and work skillfully to advance the common good."

I challenge the UST to live up to their mission, especially in advancing the common good.

With respect and gratitude for a legal process that allows residents to have their voices heard and taken seriously even when faced with the history and power of the University of Saint Thomas,

Jan Selby



**Jan Selby**

Principal, Filmmaker, Creative Director, Executive Producer  
612.889.3640

**From:** [John Sullivan](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Appeal of St. Thomas Arena site plan  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 7:17:56 PM

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Third attempt, adding file #24-029-110  
Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 21, 2024, at 5:39 PM, John Sullivan <jgsullj@aol.com> wrote:

I inadvertently left my full address off the statement below. Providing it now.

John Sullivan  
2216 Princeton Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** John Sullivan <jgsullj@aol.com>  
**Date:** April 21, 2024 at 4:38:10 PM CDT  
**To:** ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us  
**Subject: Appeal of St. Thomas Arena site plan**

To the Zoning Committee of the St. Paul Planning  
Commission:

I am writing to add testimony to consider prior to the May 2 hearing on objections to the current plan of UST to build a 5500 seat arena on its South Campus. I write as a St. Thomas graduate and the father and grandfather of graduates. I am a homeowner and neighbor to St. Thomas for over 35 years, and value the institution as a community asset.

As you are aware there is a long history of tension and compromise between UST and the community over expansion plans going back to the mid-90's, partially alleviated by the current conditional use permit, in effect since 2004. During that time St. Thomas has initiated various attempts grow and expand beyond the limits of that plan, making promises to preserve architecture or expand parking, only to abandon those plans due to funding constraints or community objections. This has resulted in a mostly thoughtful, measured

growth curve for UST that has allowed for compatibility of the neighborhood environment valued by the students and staff, and the University's goals. We are at another watershed moment (Pun intended), where compromise is demanded. I believe the University has outgrown its St. Paul campus and needs to examine additional real estate if it wants to pursue this significant expansion of its athletic programming to attract further funding and fuel significant new growth. The University recognized this when it built its Business and Law schools in downtown Minneapolis years ago.

The current arena plan does appear to increase the risk of groundwater issues underneath the arena due to its proximity to the river bluff and grotto to the west of the South Campus, which should be more fully investigated by a robust environmental impact study (EIS). It's probable that building on this site was not viewed as an ideal option even by UST, as they first looked to sites at the Highland Bridge Development and the Town and Country golf course, before settling on this third option, which attempts to literally shoehorn the arena into a space far too small. However, it being within their boundaries, no doubt they hoped to go forward without the neighborhood noting the impact on roads, traffic, pollution this development would cause. The site plan allows for minimal spacing between the arena, Brady Center, the St. Paul Seminary and the new academic buildings, and unlike previous expansions, there is no provision to expand parking. In fact several hundred parking spaces have already been eliminated, to the chagrin of commuter students, students renting off campus, who already have expressed frustration to ARD members when we've spoken to them at our informational picketing events.

Choosing an on-campus arena site in a neighborhood that has struggled to retain small restaurants in the 35 years I've lived here, ignores how today's sports fans consume the product. People are not going to walk to the game and then walk home. Even students living on campus will want to grab food or drink at a good restaurant or bar, and socialize together before and after the game. and will want their cars nearby, particularly in winter. The wear and tear on Cretin Avenue will be significant, as will traffic delays before and after the event. The neighborhood doesn't have the entertainment infrastructure to accommodate this demand.

I, like some of you, I imagine, have been stuck in traffic trying to find parking at the State Fair, at Fireworks displays on the Fourth of July, at Grand Old Days, to name a few, and those events only inconvenience the neighbors a few days per year,

generally outside of the winter season. The UST events will cause similar inconvenience perhaps 40 times a year, mostly in winter when traffic is already affected by snow and ice. It would be more logical to consider developing this arena nearby to a developed entertainment and restaurant environment like the University Avenue midway or downtown Minneapolis, but that decision is above my paygrade, I think.

At a minimum, the planning commission needs to recommend a new EIS, demand that UST develop and disclose specific plans for managing traffic and providing adequate parking beyond the residential streets of the surrounding neighborhood, including a new ramp near I94 that could connect drivers to shuttles going to and from the arena. A resource like that would also alleviate parking problems for current students who cannot find parking close to campus during the weekdays without ignoring current parking permit restrictions. The University needs to make a binding financial commitment to contribute to the cost of maintaining Cretin and Summit Avenues near the campus. It also seems appropriate that St. Thomas clearly articulate what, if any, plans it has for expansion of its footprint a few years after an arena is built, rather than continue to do this semi-transparent drip-drip-drip rollout of building plans. It would be unlikely that this would be the last building project St. Thomas proposes for the St. Paul Campus if this arena is approved as currently sited and designed.

UST should continue to be required to act as a good neighbor, in the "Common Good", as it has for the past 25 years by the city and its neighbors.

John Sullivan, ARD member  
Princeton Avenue, St. Paul, MN

**From:** [JOHN D DELL](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Neighborhood Opposition to St Thomas Arena (2260 Summit Avenue) file # 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:22:36 PM

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We are writing to express our **strong opposition** to the approval of the St Thomas proposed 6000 seat Arena site plan. The arena project address is **2260 Summit Avenue** and the file number is **(File 24-029-110)**.

The proposed arena, currently sited for essentially the middle of a quiet residential area, would have negative environmental impact on the greater neighborhood and the nearby Mississippi River. To name a few, these negative impacts would include the risk of ammonia and ethylene glycol leaks and greenhouse gasses released from cars circling looking for parking places and for the increased traffic to the site. Additionally, the expected neighborhood disturbance from the noise of refrigeration units running constantly. Loss of trees and loss of habitat and disruption of underground springs and ground water pathways and the list goes on....

Parking is another large negative. St Thomas has an inadequate plan for parking when the arena is at capacity. It is expected that cars will roam the neighborhood looking for a free place to park; The result will be neighborhood streets jammed with cars on event days and the people who live there will not be able to find street parking, nor will their visitors.

There are alternative locations such as Herberger's/Allianz area which already has the appropriate traffic infrastructure and is not a residential area.

Please consider our opposition and vote to **not** approve the area site plan.

Thank you,

John and Virginia Dell  
2248 Goodrich Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [janet.wilebski](mailto:janet.wilebski)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](mailto:*CI-StPaul_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary)  
**Subject:** File No. 24-029-110 - Project Address: 2260 Summit Ave, St. Paul, MN  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:35:30 AM

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We have lived in the Merriam Park and Mac-Groveland residential communities since 1974 - 50 years. We both graduated from St. Thomas. We both enjoyed an excellent education. **And during those early years, we enjoyed a college that was neighborhood friendly and the focus was on higher education.** UST enjo-029-110ed the prestige of providing a fine education and promotion of moral standards.

**Today, it is clear that UST is focused on sports prestige.** Certainly it brings in some money. Maybe it brings in students - though recent reports are that - in spite of being a Division I sports school - UST is dismissing a large number of staff due to loss of students. And UST is dismissing the very serious concerns of the very neighborhoods that had allowed its students and staff to flourish in a safe and supportive environment.

**The voters of these neighborhoods expect their elected officials to do what is right for the citizens that put them in office and not just what is most convenient for UST.**

An arena can be built - but it should be placed in a commercial area that is appropriate for a commercial enterprise. The arena will be a commercial enterprise run, most conveniently, by a non-profit entity. We are not opposed to an arena (if that is what it takes for UST to make money) but we, and all our neighbors, are opposed to placing it in a residential neighborhood, an environmentally sensitive area, an area already highly impacted by the traffic created by the size of UST.

It is unfortunate that this is not an election year. But elections will come.

Alan and Jan Wilebski  
2150 Fairmount Avenue, St. Paul, MN

File No. 24-029-110  
Project address: 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN

**From:** [Karen Alf](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Appeal to the University of St.Thomas Multi-Use Arena Site Plan--File #24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 8:37:00 PM

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Dear Members of the Zoning Committee,

We are long time neighbors of the University of St. Thomas. We have always supported their building projects but the proposed multi-use 6000 seat arena on the South campus is just too big for the neighborhood. We felt the Frey Science center, and the Schoenecker Center on the South campus were important educational additions in support of UST's mission. But the arena seems more of an entertainment complex that barely fits into the footprint of what's left of the South campus. A few specifics that concern us:

- **Lack of parking**—between the Schoenecker Center and the arena, UST is eliminating close to 400 on-campus parking spaces. They are not adding any parking spaces. It appears that UST assumes our neighborhood streets will be the arena parking lot. With 66 hockey and basketball games in the evenings and weekends during the season and other events such as concerts year round there will be no place for renters or visitors to park.
- **Safety**—From UST's estimates we expect more than 1500 cars roaming the neighborhood before a game looking for parking spaces. The games are in the winter season so it will be dark and many times snow and ice will be a risk factor. Dr. Abrams prepared an analysis included in the appeal showing that emergency vehicles will be blocked from getting to an emergency in a timely manner in our neighborhood due to the traffic congestion. A scary thought. Also, we expect many cars circling the neighborhood streets looking for parking —again in the dark in winter—that the risk of pedestrian accidents seems likely especially given that alcohol will be served at the arena.
- **Environmental**—With cars circling the neighborhood looking for parking spaces and cars idling in traffic congestion on Grand, Cretin and Summit Avenues, greenhouse gasses (GHG) will be dramatically increased in the neighborhood. We believe this violates the City's plan to reduce GHG over the next years. In addition to GHG, the arena will sit on the edge of the Gorge within the Mississippi River Critical Corridor. The west edge of the 75 foot arena will be a short stone's throw away from the stream at the grotto that flows into the river. We have concerns about such a large structure on the edge of such a fragile land area. Also, as the appeal states there have been 14 documented ammonia leaks since 2015 from ice arenas. Ammonia gas leaks are deadly and this is especially of concern near such a fragile aquatic area such as the streams at the Grotto that flow to the Mississippi River as well as our densely populated neighborhood atmosphere.

Thank you for reading our concerns. As I said we have welcomed UST as a neighbor for over 40 years. The arena project is just too big for our densely populated neighborhood.

Sincerely,  
Karen Alf  
2252 Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105



File# 24-029-110

Project address is 2260 Summit Ave, St. Paul, MN

**From:** [kim bingham](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** proposed st thomas stadium  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 6:27:32 PM

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My name is kim bingham and i live at 1907 grand ave st paul mn 55105. i am writing on behalf of myself and patricia moen(same address). our phone number is 651 690 0308. i am writing to voice our concern regarding the proposed st thomas stadium. i was unaware of this plan until i read the newspaper. none of the neighbors i spoke to were aware of the proposal.

I wanted to get more information so i contacted st thomas. the next day i had a good conversation with jerome benner. he was able to answer some of my questions but couldnt address some of my specific concerns regarding capacity,frequency,and parking. he was helpful in giving me some scenarios regarding the college use but not rental use. there were ranges of capacity. the parking issue wasnt specific. they were going to encourage public transit,uber and shuttles from other places(possibly the minnesota fairgrounds. i wanted to also get info from the group Advocates for responsible development(ARD). i would urge you to . review the memo dated april 15,2024. they have raised several issues that should be addressed. i think st thomas should have an opportunity to respond to these issues as they have a significant impact on a huge investment they are making. i know there are allegations of past non compliance and legal and environmental requirements that must be enforced. i do not think mr benner was aware of these potential issues because he assured me they were totally compliant. i will say that my common sense and experiance tells me there is a huge parking/traffic issue. we had an experience within the last two weeks where we left the ordway and ended up in a sea of people getting out of a concert at the xcel. the traffic was insane. we had to go to a bustop near united hospital because they eliminated the one near the ordway. people were going blocks away from the xcel to get their uber. downtown has lots of parking and people were getting ubers that would be in neighborhoods in this case. its magical thinking that there will not be a huge influx of traffic in a primarily residential area. im a committed bus rider but i am in the minority. i dont think its a reasonable plan to encourage people to bus it.

i know i bought a house over 30 years ago between two colleges. our neighbors have had to make adjustments to work with the college. things change. i would also say st thomas has to know its location is in a neighborhood and they need to adjust to. this is not a request for an educational building. this is a stadium.

i respectfully request that st thomas be able to have specific details on the scope of use and capacity of this proposal. i would like them to have the opportunity to address previous allegations of non compliance in 2004. i would ask that all rules,regulations and laws be required and enforced. i would ask all environmental and building issues be addressed i would ask that the parking and traffic issues be resolved before any construction has commenced i appreciate your consideration on this matter. i hope there can be a resolution that works for everyone. i would like to preserve the integrity and neighborhood environment and co exist with a fine educational institution

sincerely kim bingham and patricia moen

**From:** [Kathy Brudevold](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** My comments to ARD Appeal to University of St Thomas proposed arena site plan  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:50:49 PM

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**Project address 2260 Summit Ave File Number File 24-029-110**

**My name and address: Kathleen Brudevold 2208 Sargent Ave, St Paul, MN**

**Re: ARD appeal to the University of St Thomas site plan**

I am a near neighbor to UST and oppose the construction of the arena for the following reasons:

**Parking and vehicle/pedestrian safety**---I live 4 blocks south of the Cretin/Grand Ave intersection and 2 blocks up from Mississippi River Blvd. Event traffic will overwhelm the Cretin/Grand intersection with pedestrian traffic and vehicle traffic flow on Cretin (an already over-loaded corridor). Clearly, Cretin Ave cannot withstand the projected event traffic. Resulting heavy vehicle traffic and large bus and truck traffic to service the arena area will put a huge strain on the Cretin Ave roadway. Homeowners, not non-profit UST, will pay the higher property taxes for upkeep and repairs to Cretin Avenue.

**Safety**—There will be extremely impaired ability for emergency vehicles to navigate event congestion on Cretin especially in the near vicinity of Grand Ave. The pedestrian and vehicle traffic plan at the Cretin/Grand intersection entering the driveway to parking ramp/sidewalk to arena is a disaster. That space is simply too small to safely move that many vehicles and pedestrians in a confined time-frame. UST neighbors will be unable to drive or walk the area by vehicle or on foot due to heavy traffic and extended wait queues to enter the arena area.

**Parking**—Inadequate on-campus parking capacity pushes that problem onto the surrounding neighborhood streets. Neighbors will reluctantly add permit parking to their streets to avoid cruising traffic and streets filled with vehicles on event days/nights. This also restricts street parking for neighborhood visitors and visitor vehicles parking to enjoy the Mississippi River Boulevard. Our house has a street-facing garage. Sloppy parking along with snow events narrowing the streets could seriously impair our ability to back our vehicle from the garage to the street. Our longstanding Halloween Block tradition would be unable to allow trick or treater parking on permitted streets, an important neighborly event.

**Building Site Plan Non-compliance**—ARD appeal notes specific instances of non-compliance with building height, fragile soil issues and river bluff set-back requirements. The proposed arena will be sited on private property as are private homes, businesses, etc. All are required to adhere to the rules for new developments. There is no exception to the rules for UST. Noncompliance impacts the surrounding neighborhoods with potential water issues, river bluff deterioration, unsightly oversized building structure and other environmental issues.

Neighbors have chipped in serious money just to defend our own neighborhood and be heard. If UST played by the rules (sports have rules, so do cities and environmental agencies), we could peacefully co-exist.

Kathy Brudevold, homeowner

2208 Sargent Avenue

**From:** [Kate Buckley](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed arena of St Thomas University, 2260 Summit Avenue, File number 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 5:31:51 PM

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St. Thomas University has been my neighbor for the past 40 years, as has the Mississippi River. I value both.

Putting a large arena so close to the River worries me. I fear an arena built on, or near, the fragile ground of the River gorge will be impacted by shifting ground and continuing water problems. I fear the River will be damaged.

I also think increased traffic will be a big problem. My once tranquil street is now filled with cars parked bumper to bumper. In the time I have lived here, St Thomas has grown from a college to a university, and now a D1 University. The student body has grown. The number of student rentals and student cars has mushroomed. Permit parking does not resolve this congestion. Sidewalk access to my street is often blocked. Getting out of my alley and driving on Finn, or Dayton Avenues, is a Dodge car challenge. I do not think our neighborhood can give any more space to the cars that would flow into it from the proposed arena.

Thank you for your attention to this.  
I appreciate the opportunity to be heard.

Kate Buckley

**From:** [Katherine Galligan](#)  
**To:** ["Cl-SIPaul\\_PFD-ZoningCommitteeSecretary"](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for Zoning Case File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Thursday, April 25, 2024 4:01:44 PM

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Please include my comments in the public record for this case. Project address is 2260 Summit and the file number is File 24-029-110. My address is 2257 Sargent Avenue, St Paul, 55105.

Below are preliminary poll results from a question I posted to Nextdoor. The first is the response from residents of the more immediate area to St Thomas (A), the second the response from a wider Mac-Groveland area (B) and exclusive of the first sampling.

In a short period of time (~48 hours) 1.6 have viewed the first poll (A) and 199 the second (B). Both polls remain open and posted under my name as a resident. As you can see, the question of site location is asked without bias.

**Consistent in both sets of responses is the preference for locating St Thomas University's arena at the Herberger's/Allianz location over the remaining options (including an open option).**

I hope those making site decisions have conducted their own survey(s) among Saint Thomas U's neighbors and that the input will be respected. Neighbors are at least as affected by this decision as the academic body.

I am available to answer questions (651.710.1741), including helping to field a larger, more in-depth survey if this has not yet been done. I would expect similar results, given the sample sizes of the Neighbor polls as well as the consistency of results and the disparity between preference for the first choice option (Allianz) versus others.

Thank you.

Katherine Galligan

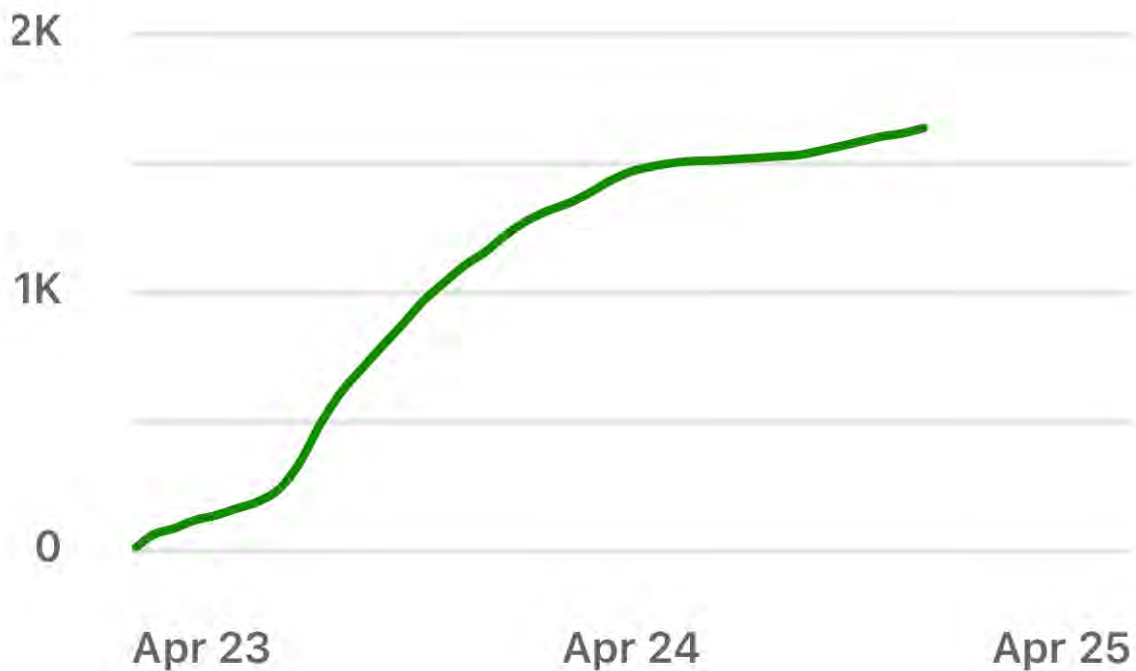
Poll A:



Apr 23: Now a D1 school, St Thomas University is building a hockey arena near campus. Which of the six possible options below is your preference for sites?

## Views

1.6K total Graph shows first 48 hours



## Neighbor response

Neighbors have a lot to say about this post

Now a D1 school, St Thomas University is building a hockey arena near campus. Which of the six possible options below is your preference for sites? Preference for new St Thomas University Hockey Arena Location

Summit and Woodlawn 13% (8)

Herberger's/Allianz 43% (26)

Cleveland and University 8% (5)

St Thomas Academy 11% (7)

West Rock at Vandalia 15% (9)

Somewhere else 10% (6)

POLL:





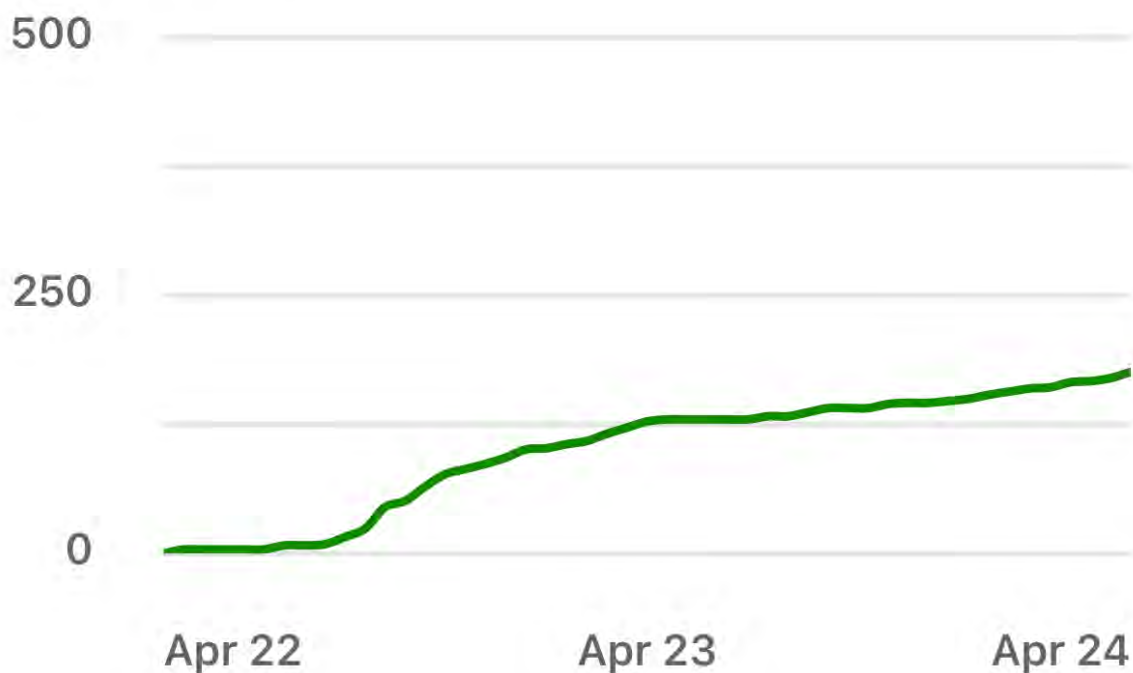
Apr 22: Now a D1 school, St Thomas University is building a hockey arena. Potential sites near campus and under consideration are below. What's your top preference?



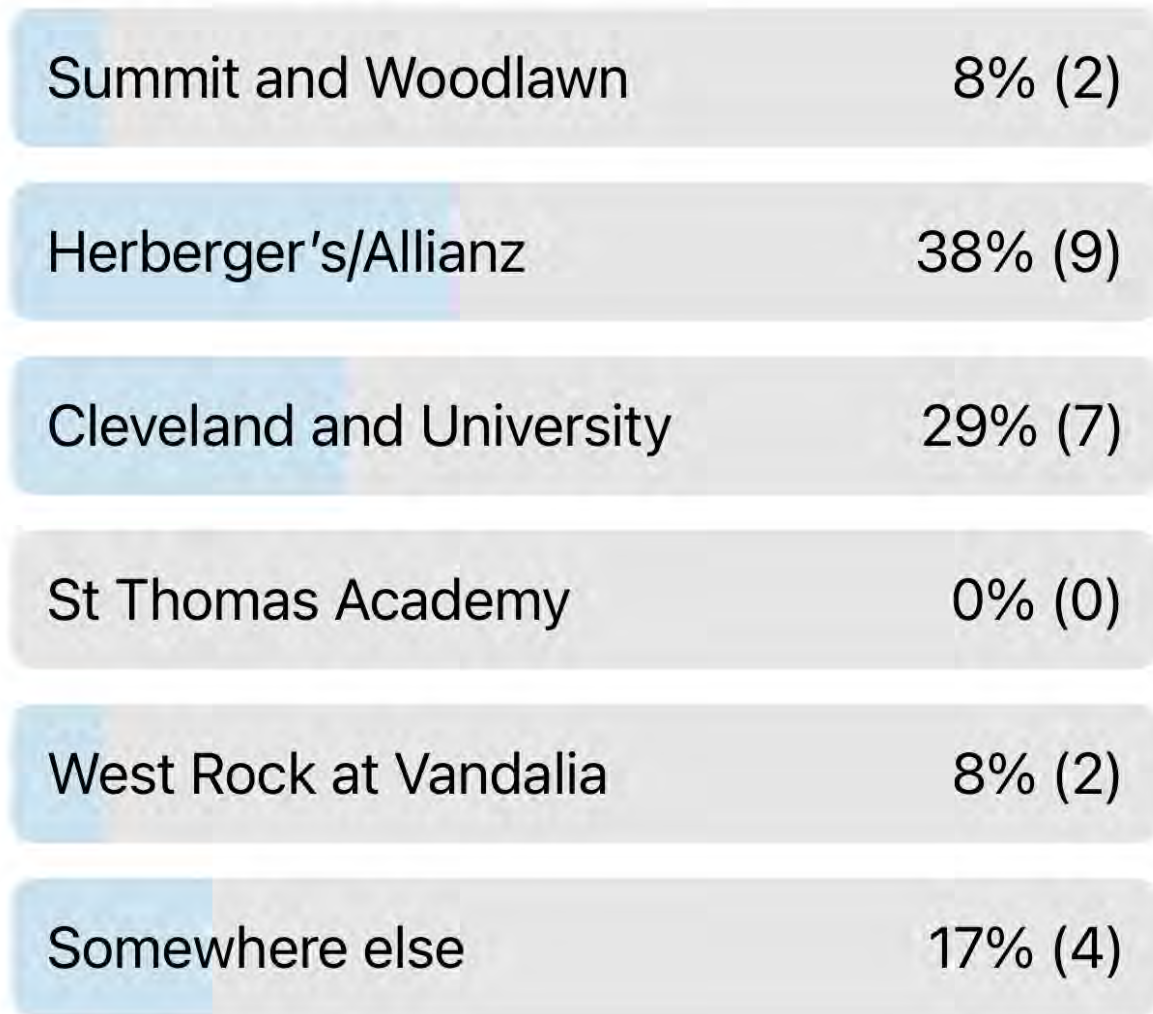
Neighbors are interested in your post!

## Views

199 total Graph shows first 48 hours



Now a D1 school, St Thomas University is building a hockey arena. Potential sites near campus and under consideration are below. What's your top preference? Preference for St Thomas hockey rink locale



**From:** [Katherine Galligan](#)  
**To:** ["Cl-StPaul\\_PED\\_ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for Zoning Case File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:10:55 PM  
**Attachments:** [image0.png](#)  
[ARD Appeal Memo 240415r.pdf](#)

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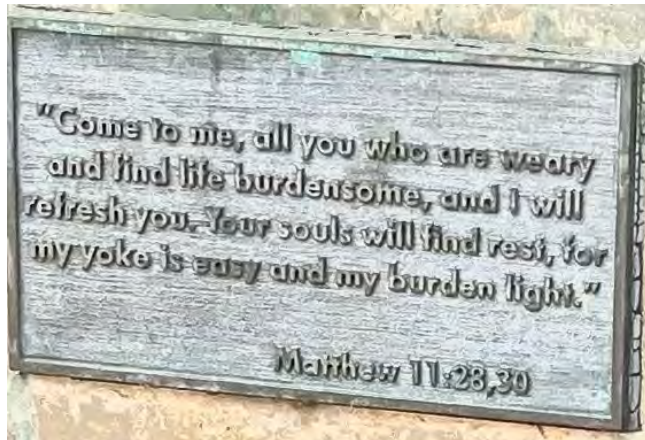
Please include my comments in the public record for this case. Project address is 2260 Summit and the file number is File 24-029-110. My address is 2257 Sargent Avenue, St Paul, 55105.

I've attached a document that succinctly summarizes why an arena should not be built on St Thomas' already-crowded campus. I am personally most concerned about environmental harm that is of course multi-faceted: loss of animal habitat, intrusion into the migratory bird pathway, loss of so many mature trees, greenhouse gas leaks, air and noise pollution from increased traffic and stalled car exiting after events, erosion of a once lovely grotto.

Relatedly, the area that is already partially destroyed is a haven for students, classes, visitors (including those on college tours), families, neighbors, and of course wildlife (a *peace garden* was installed by a professional gardener within the last five years - it's now demolished). The statue of Christ remains over the grotto: it'll face a main drive and the back of a building if the current plan proceeds.

The plaque on this statue (below) is a biblical quote that I think is apropos to my objections to St Thomas' plan. It's Matthew 11:28-30.

We need this area to remain protected as a haven. Please do not approve the current arena plan.







Katherine Galligan



**Application for a Zoning Appeal**

**To/From BZA**  
Zoning Section  
Dept. of Safety & Inspections  
375 Jackson Street, Suite 220  
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1806  
(651) 266-9008

**To/From Planning Commission**  
Zoning Section  
Dept. of Planning & Econ. Dev.  
1400 City Hall Annex  
25 West Fourth Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102-1634  
(651) 266-6589

**Zoning office use only**

File # \_\_\_\_\_

Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative hearing date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appellant Information**

Name Daniel L. M. Kennedy  
On behalf of Advocates for Responsible Development  
Address 3400 E. Lake St., Suite 200  
City Minneapolis State MN Zip 55406 Daytime phone 612-940-8116  
Email info@advocates4rd.org

**Property Location**

Project Name UST Multipurpose Arena  
Address 2260 Summit Ave.

**Type of Appeal:** Application is hereby made for an appeal to the:

- Planning Commission**, under the provision of Chapter 61, Section 701, Paragraph C of the Zoning Code, of a decision made by the Planning Administrator or Zoning Administrator on April 4, 2024.  
*(date of decision)*
- Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)**, under the provisions of Chapter 61, Section 701, Paragraph C of the Zoning Code, to appeal a decision made by the Zoning Administrator on \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(date of decision)*
- City Council**, under the provision of Chapter 61, Section 702, Paragraph A of the Zoning Code, of a decision made by the Planning Commission or the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). \_\_\_\_\_  
*(file number)*

**Grounds of Appeal:** Explain why you feel there has been an error in any requirement, permit, decision or refusal made by an administrative official, or an error in fact, finding, or procedure made by the Planning Commission or BZA.

Please see the attached memorandum.

*(Attach additional information as needed.)*

Appellant's signature  Date 4/15/2024 City agent \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMORANDUM



TO: Members of the St. Paul Planning Commission  
FROM: Advocates for Responsible Development, info@advocates4rd.org  
DATE: April 15, 2024

Advocates for Responsible Development (ARD) is appealing the administrative approval of a site plan submitted by the University of St. Thomas to construct an arena seating as many as 6,000 on the part of its St. Paul campus that is south of Summit Avenue and between Cretin Avenue and the Mississippi River (UST's "South Campus"). ARD urges the Planning Commission to uphold this appeal and to deny approval of this site plan.

### **What is ARD?**

Advocates for Responsible Development is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was formed in October 2023 after UST announced its plans to build an arena on the South Campus. ARD currently has 280 members, including UST students.

### **What has St. Thomas proposed?**

UST wants to build a multipurpose arena that holds up to 6,000 seated attendees; UST has not disclosed the total capacity with standing room. The arena would host approximately 66 home games for men's and women's basketball and hockey teams each winter, plus conventions, job fairs, and concerts. The arena could be rented out for high school sports and as an entertainment venue. The 250,000-SF complex would also include two practice basketball courts and a practice hockey rink. Two buildings designed by Cass Gilbert and funded by James J. Hill are being demolished and 256 parking spaces are being removed for the arena.

### **What is the status of the proposal?**

The city issued an environmental assessment worksheet (EAW) that was drafted by UST's consultants. Despite outcry from ARD members (acting individually; ARD was formed later) about the environmental effects, the city concluded that no environmental impact statement (EIS) would be required. ARD was formed and appealed; the court of appeals heard oral arguments on April 11. Without waiting for the outcome of that case, St. Thomas submitted a site plan, which the city administratively approved on April 4. ARD is appealing that approval to the Planning Commission.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ARD requested a copy of the approved site plan on April 4 from a planning department employee who had sent out notifications that the site plan had been approved. ARD also submitted a data practices act request on the same date. The site plan was provided on April 9. When ARD noted that no TDMP was included, a further response provided Exhibit 6 to the site plan on April 11. When ARD noted that none of the other exhibits to the site plan had been provided, a further response was provided on April 12. With ten days to appeal the site plan approval (eleven days due to the tenth day falling on a Sunday), the late production of the site plan has handicapped ARD's ability to analyze the site plan and provide a thorough response.

**What is the setting of the South Campus?**

Until 1987, the South Campus was owned by the St. Paul Seminary (which continues to own and occupy the northwest corner of its former campus). The South Campus lies on the bluff above the Mississippi River, which from there flows through St. Paul on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. Mississippi River Boulevard, a designated parkway, lies between the river and the South Campus’s western lot line. North of the South Campus is Summit Avenue, another designated parkway, and a residential community that extends north. East of the South Campus are Grand Avenue and Lincoln Avenue. Property on Grand west of Cleveland is owned by UST on the north side and is 100% residential (mostly apartment buildings) on the south except one restaurant at Cleveland Avenue. Lincoln is 100% residential. South of the South Campus is a residential community that extends miles to Ford Parkway.

**OBJECTIONS TO THE APPROVAL OF UST’S SITE PLAN**

**1. NO SITE PLAN SHOULD BE APPROVED BECAUSE ST. THOMAS IS OUT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ITS 2004 SPECIAL CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT.**

The first bullet point of the City’s Site Plan Approval Letter of April 4, 2024 states, “The development is subject to the existing Campus SCUP including maximum heights and minimum setbacks.” By this reference, the Approval Letter incorporates paragraph 16 of the 2004 St. Thomas University Special Conditional Use Permit (“SCUP”), which provides:

**Goodrich Avenue Access.** At such time as the University remodels or replaces the Binz Refectory or replaces Grace Hall, the loading drive which currently exists between Goodrich Ave. and the Binz refectory shall be removed, such that there shall be no vehicular access from Goodrich Ave. to any of the University’s buildings on the south campus.

St. Thomas substantially remodeled basements and first floor of the Binz Refectory in 2022-23, yet has not removed the drive from Goodrich Avenue to the Binz Refectory as required. UST is therefore in violation of the SCUP.

The Binz Refectory is a dining hall that was constructed in 1978 by the Saint Paul Seminary. After the 2020-21 academic year, St. Thomas stopped using the Binz Refectory as a dining hall.

In the summer of 2022, St. Thomas’s contractor Ryan A+E, Inc. obtained Permit No. 20 22 074023 from the City to “**Remodel** a Portion of the Binz Building to Accommodate Athletic Offices, Team Rooms, and Addition of Unisex Restrooms” (emphasis added). By that point, St. Thomas was no longer referring to it as a “refectory” and was calling it the “Binz Building.” According to the permit application, the remodeling work was to start by July 11, 2022 and end by September 9, 2022. The construction plans show that about half of the first floor would be remodeled into offices for coaches, an office, lounge, and conference room, team meeting room, and bathrooms. The estimated value of the remodel would be \$795,000, plus electrical work of \$100,000 and other add-ons.



Shortly thereafter in December of 2022, a different UST contractor obtained Permit No. 20 23 104295 to “install a new exhaust fan” and “supply ductwork to accommodate new spaces” in the Binz Building. The work was to begin in December 2022 and be completed in January 2023. The value of the work was listed as \$85,000. Construction drawings show that the basement was being remodeled to locker rooms for men’s and women’s soccer, softball, a visiting locker room, official’s room, and other spaces.

As part of its remodeling of the Binz Building, St. Thomas was *required* to remove the drive from Goodrich Avenue to be in compliance with the SCUP. That remodeling work was completed by January 2023, yet the drive remains in place more than one year later.



Fig. 1. Overview of drive from Goodrich Avenue to the Binz Building. (Source: Google maps, with three labels added for orientation)



St. Thomas has produced various plans showing that it intends to build a multipurpose arena on the South Campus, and none of those plans show the removal of the drive from Goodrich Avenue. While UST seeks to take advantage of the benefits of the SCUP, it fails to comply with its responsibilities under the SCUP.

Because the City’s April 4, 2024 Site Plan Letter of Approval specifically states that the “development is subject to the existing Campus CUP,” it must have necessarily concluded that UST’s failure to remove the Goodrich Avenue drive is in compliance with the SCUP. That is an obvious error. The correct finding is that any development must be consistent with the SCUP, and the site plan must be denied because it does not conform to the SCUP.

Rather than act to ratify UST’s failure to abide by the SCUP, the Planning Commission should act to revoke the SCUP. Leg. Code § 61.108 provides:

The zoning administrator shall notify the planning commission or the board of zoning appeals when a development covered by a site plan, permit, variance, determination of similar use, or other zoning approval is not in compliance with any of the conditions imposed upon such use approval. The commission or the board may, at a public hearing, following notice to the owner of subject property and other adjacent property owners as specified in section 61.303(c), and upon determination that the conditions imposed by such approval are not being complied with, revoke the authorization for such approval and require that such use be discontinued. The commission or the board, in lieu of revoking the permission, may impose additional conditions, modify existing conditions, or delete conditions which are deemed by the commission or the board to be unnecessary, unreasonable or impossible of compliance.

Even if the Planning Commission does not revoke the SCUP at this time, it should not take the opposite action by approving UST’s noncompliant site plan that leaves the Goodrich access in place.

**2. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE IT INCLUDES DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SETBACK AREA FROM THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER BLUFF, WHICH IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

Congress established the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (“MNRRA”) which protects the 72 miles of the river and riparian lands in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and the seven-county metropolitan area. The purpose of passing the MNRRA was “to protect, preserve, and enhance the significant values of the waters and land of the Mississippi Corridor within the Saint Paul-Minneapolis Metropolitan Area.” See 16 U.S.C. § 460zz(a)-(b). The federal government also established a Comprehensive Management Plan for development within the MNRRA. The Comprehensive Management Plan (at p.18) requires preservation of “the bluff impact area (40 feet back from the bluff line) in a natural state or restore natural vegetation.” Following passage of federal law, the Minnesota Legislature established the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area

(“MRCCA”), which is co-extensive with the MNRRA. The purpose of the MRCCA Act was to “protect and preserve the Mississippi River and adjacent lands,” “prevent and mitigate irreversible damages,” “preserve and enhance the natural, aesthetic, cultural, and historical values,” “protect and preserve the Mississippi River,” and “protect and preserve the biological and ecological functions of the Mississippi River corridor.” Minn. Stat. § 116G.15. The MRCCA Act authorized the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) to develop and adopt rules and oversee the administration of the MRCCA. The DNR did so in Minnesota Rules Chapter 6106, and St. Paul is required to adopt an MRCCA ordinance.

The policy of the MRCCA Rules is to preserve the Mississippi River corridor and to “protect its environmentally sensitive areas.” Minn. R. 6106.0010. In its Statement of Need and Reasonableness (SONAR) establishing the MRCCA Rules, the DNR was explicit: “Protection of bluffs in the MRCCA was a major focus of this rulemaking.” SONAR at 22. The MRCCA Rules also define “primary conservation areas” to be protected by the MRCCA Rules as “key resources and features.” Minn. R. 6106.0050, Subp. 53. The primary conservation areas include bluff impact zones, gorges, and natural drainage routes. *Id.*

The MRCCA rules provide that no development (including impervious surfaces) may exist within 40 feet of the bluffline. St. Paul Leg. Code § 68.402(b)(4) contains the same restriction. The definition of a bluffline is graphically illustrated in the City’s publication *Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area* (Nov. 18, 2021) at 245. See Fig. 2.

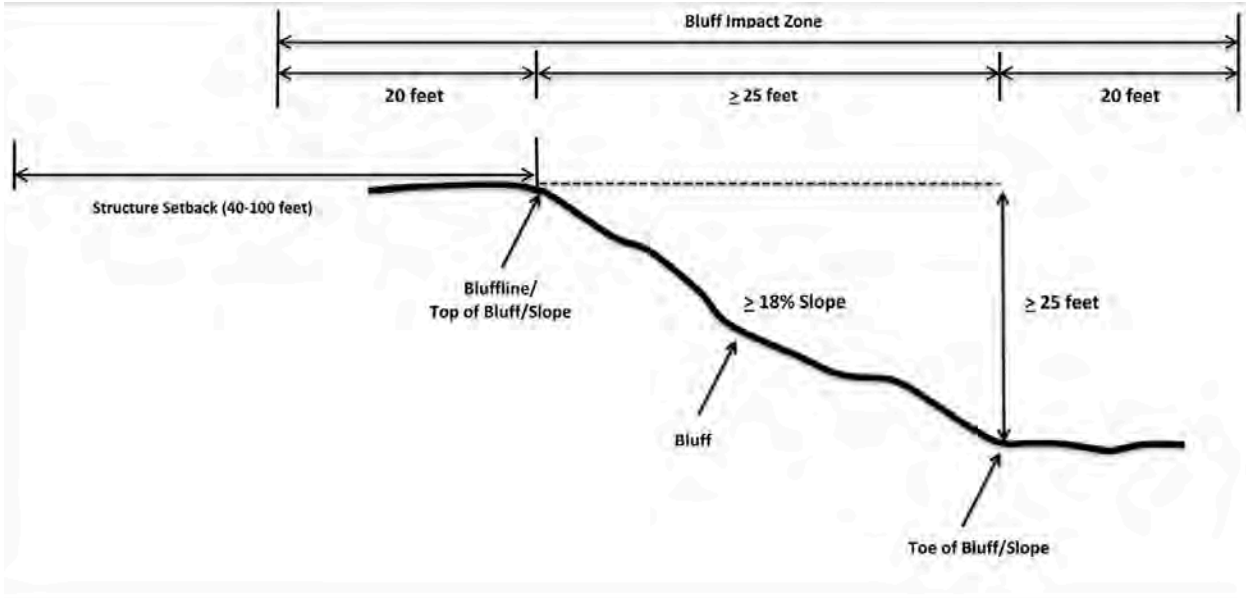


Fig. 2. A graphic illustration of the definition of the “bluffline”

The same publication shows that the grotto is part of the river’s bluff area. See Fig. 3.

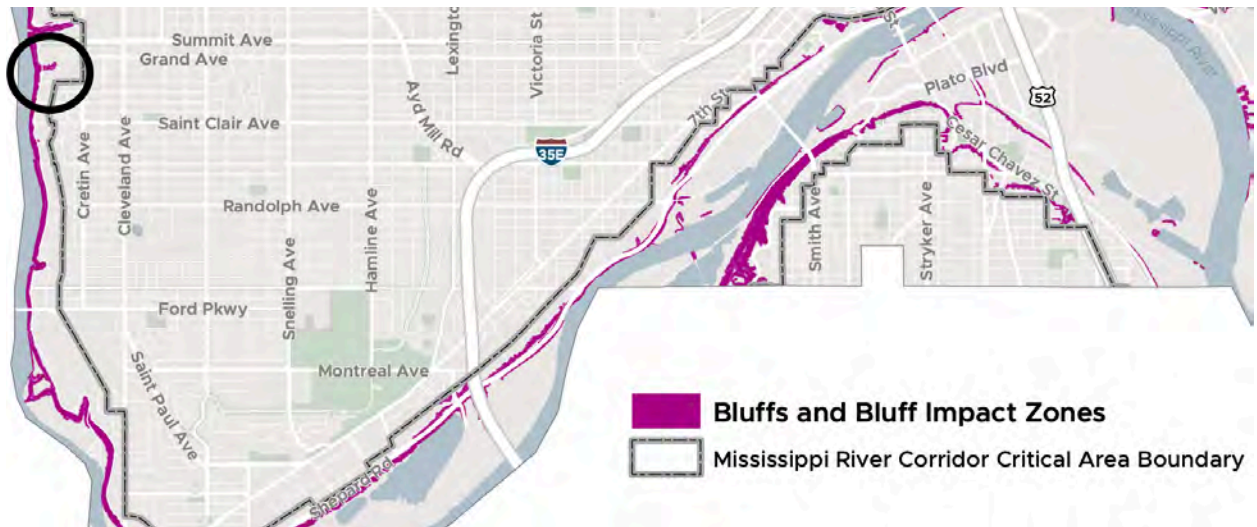


Fig. 3. This figure in St. Paul’s MRCCA Publication was taken from Minn. R. 6106.0050, Subp. 9. The grotto is circled.

When UST took title of the South Campus from the St. Paul Seminary in 1987, the Planning Commission’s College Zoning Committee determined, “In addition to specific requirements for each district, there are general standards regarding placement of structures, grading and filling, protection of wildlife and vegetation, and runoff, as specified in Section 65.410, that apply to uses in all River Corridor districts. These general standards will apply to development that occurs on the former Seminary campus as well. ... Two of these standards, which will affect where development can occur on the Seminary campus, prohibit development on slopes greater than 18 percent or within 40 feet of the bluffline (Section 65.411, Subd. 2, (5) and (6)). This means that no development can occur in the large river gorge that extends into the campus from under the Mississippi River Boulevard or within 40 feet of the bluffline created by the gorge (see Map 3, p. 14).” Recommendations of College Zoning Committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission, August 1988, at 11.

The consequences to a city if it permits a development that is prohibited by the MNRRA or MRCCA could include a finding by the federal government that the city is noncompliant and is therefore ineligible for financial assistance until it returns to compliance. The federal government took exactly that action in 2023 when the city of Minneapolis approved construction of a house within the bluff impact zone. The DNR has also sued Minneapolis to halt construction of the house. *Minnesota Dep’t of Nat. Resources v. City of Minneapolis and Wattenhofer*, Hennepin County District Court file 27-CV-24-1524.

A specific area of concern is a ravine extending east from the river called the grotto. The grotto runs under the Mississippi River Boulevard and into the South Campus. The arena would be located just 40 feet from the bluffline of the grotto. By extension, this is also the bluffline of the river itself, and is specifically included in the mapping of the bluffs of the Mississippi River. To state it another way, the river bluff is located a little over about 40 feet west of the arena’s

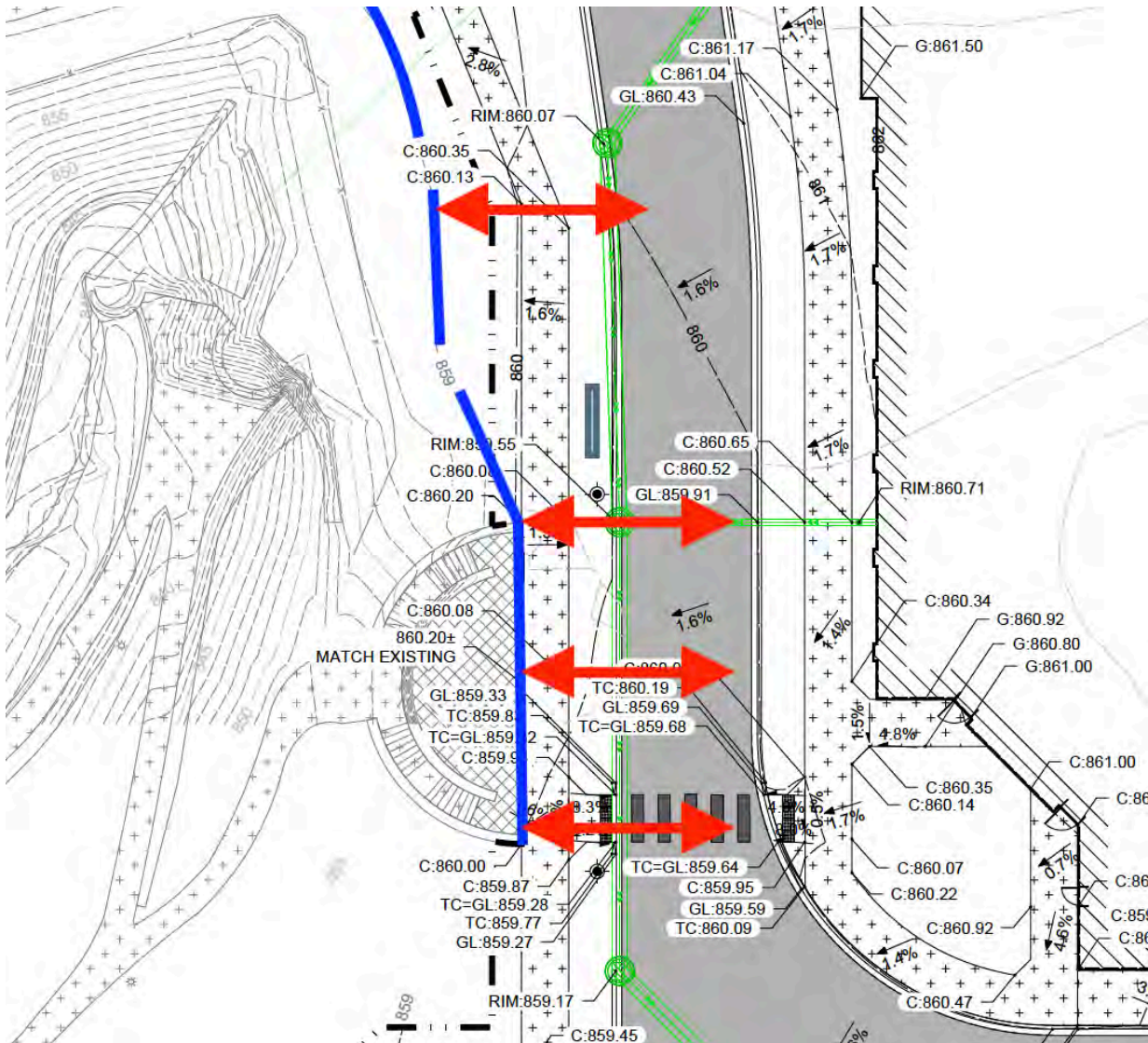


Fig. 4. The red arrows are approximately 40 feet long. The blue line is the bluffline.

western wall, and is located at approximately the midpoint of that wall. There is just no possible way to redirect the groundwater around the arena and have it flow in a natural way toward the grotto and the river. Concentrating the water (e.g., running it through a pipe) would cause massive erosion wherever the pipe ends. At the same time, the lack of groundwater will dry the soil, kill the vegetation, and result in erosion from rainfall.

The site plan shows that UST plans extensive development above and below ground adjacent to the bluff. Above ground, the site plan includes a two-way roadway with parking lane and a sidewalk within the 40-foot zone next to the bluffline. That leaves no permeable surface for rainwater to fall and soak into the ground, rather than running into a gutter and being transported elsewhere by pipe. Fig. 4. Unfortunately, the site plan is consistent with UST's plan in its

Environmental Assessment Worksheet that 5.97 acres of the arena's 6-acre site will consist of impermeable surfaces. The MRCCA Rules mandate that "structures and impervious surfaces must not be located in the bluff impact zone." Minn. R. 6106.0120, Subp. 3B. St. Paul Leg. Code § 68.402(b)(4) is more restrictive, prohibiting development of any kind within 40 feet of the bluffline.

That prohibition of development of any kind would apply to the extensive underground pipework that the site plan envisions within 40 feet of the bluffline. Page C500B of the site plan shows a utility plan that includes multiple utilities underground adjacent to the bluffline. A fiberoptic line would run under a sidewalk just feet from the bluff; a new stormwater pipe, new electrical lines, and new water lines would lie a few feet further east, all within 40 feet of the bluffline. Steam and condensate pipes would lie east of all those pipes and would be about 40 feet from the bluffline.

In the specific case of UST's South Campus, the importance of the bluff impact zone is heightened. According to the EAW, the groundwater beneath the site is only 6-12 feet below surface and the groundwater flows directly to the Mississippi River. Anyone walking along Cretin Avenue at Lincoln Avenue can hear the groundwater running beneath through an uncovered grate. If the arena were built in a narrow configuration on an axis perpendicular to the river, groundwater would flow around the building and continue on its way to the river. But the planned arena is such a huge building that there is no possible way to avoid cutting off the groundwater flow to the area between the arena and the river. This leaves the bluff impact zone high and dry — too high to benefit from any groundwater that could flow underneath the arena and dry because its paved surface is impervious. There will be insufficient moisture to maintain the vegetation in the bluff area, and the death of the vegetation and its root structures will accelerate erosion during any introduction of moisture, whether it be a rainfall or a release of water from the arena. The bluff will eventually broaden, and the soil supporting the UST sidewalks and roadway may give way, pulling those hardscape structures into the river gorge.

A natural spring exists within the arena site near the grotto; its water flows toward the river, although its flow is not at the surface level because St. Thomas previously paved over it for a parking lot. The spring is cited as a natural feature in the Department of Natural Resources Inventory. Presumably, the spring water contributes to the health of vegetation and the river bank. Perhaps St. Thomas believes that depriving the arena area of groundwater will cause the spring to dry up. That would be bad for the health of the river, but good for St. Thomas; the spring has previously created a sinkhole that UST has filled in. This spring area would include the outer wall of the planned arena, so if UST is unsuccessful in killing the spring, the structural integrity of the arena could be in peril.

The arena's effects on the bluff area will extend to the wildlife that inhabit the grotto. Most of them (e.g., foxes, deer, coyotes, waterfowl, most raptors) restrict themselves to spaces that are not immediately adjacent to human habitat. The Mississippi River is a gathering place for many of our more wild creatures. With the immediate proximity of the building to the bluff, the shadow that the 76-foot high arena would cast for much of the day, and the lack of moisture and

resulting loss of vegetation, the grotto and the remainder of this section of the river bluff will become inhospitable as a habitat.

The MRCCA prohibits *any* development within 40 feet of the bluffline, and UST's planned development is extensive above and below ground. No plan with such development in the bluff impact zone can be approved. This is far more than a technicality; UST's planned development would have dire consequences for the river bluff.

**3. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE IT INCLUDES TRANSPORTATION ROUTES, UTILITY AND OTHER TRANSMISSION SERVICE FACILITIES AND CORRIDORS ON SOILS SUSCEPTIBLE TO EROSION, AREAS OF UNSTABLE SOILS, AND AREAS WITH HIGH WATER TABLES, ALL OF WHICH ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

The City's Legislative Code contains provisions to prevent damage to soil structures that are fragile for a variety of reasons. One provision that protects fragile soils is section 68.402 regarding the placement of structures, with "structures" meaning not just buildings but also the physical elements (roads, pipes, tunnels, etc.) that may lie outside the buildings.

Section 68.402(b)(5) prohibits the placement of facilities and corridors for "transportation, utility and other transmission service" in ten environments, three of which are present in the arena site: (g) "Soils susceptible to erosion, which would create sedimentation and pollution problems"; (h) Areas of unstable soils which would be subject to extensive slippages"; and (i) "Areas with high water tables."

The nature of a river bluff is that there is a marked drop-off in ground level, such that soils lack lateral support to keep them in place. Without that support, forces acting vertically or horizontally displace the soil to a lower elevation, which is the essence of erosion. Combined with the flow of water, the soil may be carried from its starting point into a river. The above section discussing the bluff impact zone discusses how the incredible size of the arena will choke the supply of groundwater to the westward side along the bluff, and how that deprivation will accelerate erosion as the vegetation dies and loses its hold on the soil. But even without the added effects of the arena, this site would be considered prone to erosion.

St. Paul has already identified the South Campus as a site with unstable soils. Map CA-8 of the MRCCA Publication graphically demonstrates the locations in St. Paul where the soils are considered unstable. Fig. 5. Various shades on Figure 4 identify the soil as being unstable. Within the classification of unstable soils are gradations for "low" instability or "high" instability. Although some of the arena site is on the lower end of the gradations, the fact that it is identified as having soils that are unstable *at all* is sufficient for the application of statutory restrictions that apply where unstable soils are present. Of course, the bluff and the areas immediately adjacent are at the extreme high end of the scale of unstable soils (note the dark shading of these areas in Figure 4), indicating that the area is extremely susceptible to erosion.





Fig. 5. Map CA-8 of the MRCCA Publication, showing unstable soils as measured by soil erosion susceptibility. South Campus is in upper left.

The high water table is shown by the EAW, which determined that groundwater is a mere 6 to 12 feet below ground level in the arena site. That would normally be considered a high water table, but in this context it seems even higher: the cross section of the arena indicates that it will extend further than that below the ground surface. That disruption to the natural water table on such a massive scale will surely have ramifications for the surrounding areas. For example, if the groundwater cannot flow naturally through the arena site and is instead diverted to the north and south on its way west toward the river, one would expect that the groundwater volume would be much greater to the north and south of the arena, making the water table higher there than it already was. That diversion effect is already present in the saturated, spongy soils that have resulted from the construction of Schoenecker Center near the arena site. Yet the arena plans contain utilities, tunnels, and paved surfaces in the areas north and south of the actual arena building.

The Legislative Code makes it clear that these structures should not be placed in these ecologically fragile settings. Leg. Code § 68.402(b)(5) prohibits the massive network of structures that service the arena. Underground, these include the various utility services described above that exist in the bluff impact zone and throughout the arena site, sewer pipes, stormwater pipes, and tunnels. This includes the extremely long sewer line run to Summit Avenue, where the sewer main surely was not built to handle the peaks of waste that an arena of

this size would add. Above ground, these include sidewalks, curbs, and of course the new roadways that would carry the heavy trucks needed to service a major entertainment venue.

Each the three conditions (susceptible to erosion, unstable soils, and high water table) would independently be sufficient to serve as a bar to St. Thomas building an arena at this location. Together, they indicate exactly why shoehorning a massive arena into a riverbluff site was destined for failure. The site is protected from such harmful development. The Planning Commission must therefore reject the site plan.

#### **4. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE ITS BUILDINGS ARE TOO TALL.**

The entirety of the South Campus lies in the RC3 zoning district, also known as the River Corridor Urban Open Overlay District. St. Paul's legislative code restricts buildings in the RC3 zoning district to 40 feet in height. Leg. Code 68.233(a). This applies to all properties, including those owned by St. Thomas. The arena would be twice the applicable height limitation.

UST argues that its special conditional use permit (SCUP) allows buildings up to 75 feet tall in the central portion of the South Campus, and asserts that the SCUP trumps the city code. There is no legal support for such an argument. While there is no question that the City granted a SCUP to UST and that the SCUP stated a height restriction that is greater than the legislated maximum height in the CA-3 zoning district, a municipality's grant only extends as far as its authority. The SCUP does not exist in a vacuum but rather is subject to other applicable restrictions. "Conditional use permits for River Corridor areas are supplementary to other zoning and building permits." Leg. Code. § 68.502. One example is cited above: the existence of a river bluff may restrict where structures can be placed, even if the normal setback rules are more permissive.

A municipality's ability to approve development plans is limited to the authority granted to the municipality. *Breza v. City of Minnetrista*, 725 N.W.2d 106, 114 (Minn. 2006). The City cannot grant a SCUP that permits what City laws prohibit.<sup>2</sup>

UST's site plan is not consistent with the intent of the greater height limits stated in the SCUP at any rate. "[A]ssuming St. Thomas builds facilities at the square footage it requires on the Seminary campus, a 40 foot height restriction would force new buildings to occupy a larger footprint than a building of the same square footage at a taller height. Higher building height limits will encourage the preservation of more green space on the campus." Recommendations of the College Zoning Committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission, August 1988, at 8. UST wants to build a sprawling arena complex that could about fit all of the remaining South Campus

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<sup>2</sup> An exception would be in cases where a variance is available and is granted, but no variance is at issue here. At any rate, a variance for height would not be available to UST in this instance because any claimed hardship is simply UST's desire to have a taller structure than the code allows.



buildings within its footprint, hardscaping 5.97 acres of its 6-acre site. But the arena would also be twice as tall as the 40-foot height limit applicable in the RC3 zoning district. There is no preservation of green space, and it constitutes an abuse of the intent behind the SCUP's greater height limits.

Because the city does not have the discretion to permit a violation of its code provisions, the height allowances in the SCUP do not displace the maximum height allowance of 40 feet set forth in Leg. Code 68.233(a). The site plan sets forth a building that is almost double that height, and the site plan must therefore be rejected.

## **5. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE IT INTERFERES WITH PUBLIC RIVER CORRIDOR VIEWS.**

A "primary objective of the [MRCCA] is to protect views to and from the Mississippi River." MRCCA Publication at 244. The MRCCA Publication reflects three policies relevant to the UST arena:

Policy CA-10. Regulate building height, placement and design consistent with the intent of the MRCCA rules to protect, enhance and minimize impacts to Public River Corridor Views.

Policy CA-12. Consider designated Public River Corridor Views from other communities in developing dimensional standards, view impact evaluation procedures, and mitigation identification procedures.



Fig. 6. View of arena from Minneapolis side of the Mississippi River. (Source: UST site plan application, Ex. 3).

Policy CA-13. Support shorter buildings closer to the river's edge and taller buildings as distance from the river increases in order to maximize views of and from the river, and preserve visual access to the river as a public good (rather than privatized right).

The new arena would dominate sightlines from the Mississippi River, presenting its gray western facade to those who would otherwise be enjoying the river’s wildness. Fig. 6. The City’s MRCCA Publication identifies the scenic overlook at East 36th Street and West River Boulevard in Minneapolis (Fig. 7, upper left corner) as a Public River Corridor View, and it looks directly at the arena site. The arena would be a dominating presence when viewed across the Mississippi River. At 76 feet tall, the arena would be taller than mature trees — but there will be no mature trees growing near the arena. The trees shown in UST’s rendering in Figure 6 would have no place to grow because the surface west of the arena is nearly 100% impervious. Any mature trees west of the arena grow from a lower part of the bluff, 40 feet below the blufftop perch of the arena. They would not screen the arena from the river.

While St. Paul already has some other tall buildings that soar over the riverside treetops and negatively impact the public river views, these are currently considered the results of poor city planning allowed by prioritizing private development over public enjoyment of the river’s wild beauty. They would not have been permitted under the City’s current codes, and neither should the UST arena. The Planning Commission should reject the site plan due to its interference with public river views.

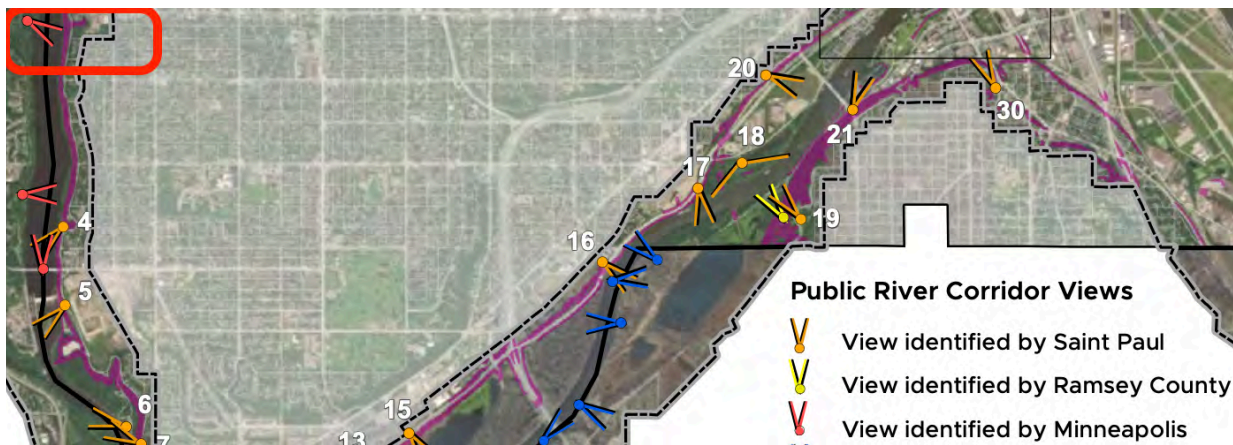


Fig. 7. Source: *Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area*, adopted Nov. 18, 2021 (City of St. Paul), at 263 (the Public River Corridor View in the corner was identified by Minneapolis).

## 6. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE IT IS LIKELY TO CAUSE POLLUTION.

Erection of an ice arena on the river bluff is not permitted due to the toxic nature of the two main chemicals used in rink refrigeration and the likelihood of a leak. There are many locations in St. Paul where an ice rink may be permitted, but the Mississippi River Bluff is not one of them.

Leg. Code 68.233(d) provides that “No use shall be permitted which is likely to cause pollution of water, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Section 115.01, unless adequate safeguards,

approved by the state pollution control agency, are provided.” Minn. Stat. § 115.01(13) contains the following definition: “‘Pollution of water,’ ‘water pollution,’ or ‘pollute the water’ means: (a) the discharge of any pollutant into any waters of the state or the contamination of any waters of the state so as to create a nuisance or render such waters unclean, or noxious, or impure so as to be actually or potentially harmful or detrimental or injurious to public health, safety or welfare, to domestic, agricultural, commercial, industrial, recreational or other legitimate uses, or to livestock, animals, birds, fish or other aquatic life; or (b) the alteration made or induced by human activity of the chemical, physical, biological, or radiological integrity of waters of the state.”

Any ice arena placed next to a waterway risks the release of fluids that could contaminate and poison the waterway in the adjacent area and downstream. Ice arenas rely on refrigerants that are highly toxic, and leaks are all too common. Rink refrigeration systems use ethylene glycol (also known as concentrated antifreeze) to lower the freezing point in the rink’s chiller system. Short-term exposure from the oral intake of ethylene glycol (in increasingly large doses) can cause vomiting, drowsiness, coma, respiratory failure, convulsions, cardiopulmonary effects, and kidney and brain damage. The immediate effects of exposure to high concentrations of ethylene glycol can cause death to animals, birds or fish.<sup>3</sup>

Given the high toxicity of ethylene glycol, one would expect that it would be handled in a manner to avoid leaks. But the high volume needed (even for one rink, but UST’s arena would have two) and the complex systems required to keep a sheet of ice refrigerated in an arena that is warmed for spectator comfort make it difficult to avoid leaks. The following are documented leaks of ethylene glycol ice arenas:

- The Ralph Engelstad Arena, Grand Forks, ND, December 13, 2023 (500 gallons)
- Northbrook Park District, Northbrook, IL, September 27, 2021
- Folsom Ice Rink, Sacramento, CA, November 21, 2021
- “Patsy” Di Lungo Veterans Memorial Ice Rink, East Haven, CT, March 2020
- Crystal Fieldhouse Ice Arena, Burton, MI, July 10, 2018
- Seymour-Hannah Sports and Entertainment Center, Niagara Falls, May 1, 2016
- Pelham Civic Complex, Shelby County, Alabama, September 20, 2016
- Huron County Expo Center, Bad Axe, MI, Aug 12, 2008
- Ice Palace, Spokane, WA, October 19, 2007

Anhydrous ammonia is an inexpensive refrigerant widely used in ice arenas. It does not cause global warming (unlike some of its alternatives), but can be deadly. Anhydrous (without water) ammonia is an inexpensive refrigerant widely used in hockey rinks. At room temperature and atmospheric pressure, ammonia is a gas. It can be compressed into a liquid under pressure, or when cooled. This liquified ammonia is used as a refrigerant. It is classified as a B2 refrigerant (toxicity class B, flammability class 2) according to ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers. The refrigerant is highly toxic, with inhalation potentially causing respiratory failure, unconsciousness, skin or eye irritation, freezing injuries or

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<sup>3</sup> CDC.gov Ethylene Glycol Public Health Statement <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp96-c1.pdf>.

death. The physical effects are a result of anhydrous ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) reacting with moisture in the mucous membranes to produce ammonium hydroxide (NH<sub>4</sub>OH), a corrosive, alkaline compound. Liquid ammonia is a common cause of fish kills. Arenas use thousands of gallons, and the UAW specifically identifies ammonia as a refrigerant it intends to use ammonia in its ice rink. Fatal ammonia gas leaks can occur in industrial uses and in ice arenas.<sup>4</sup>

To protect the community from potential chemical risks, including ammonia refrigeration system operations, the U.S. EPA region 1 (Minnesota is region 5) passed an “Emergency Planning and Right-to-Know Act.” Improper application or handling of liquid anhydrous ammonia can lead to ammonia volatilization (loss of ammonia gas to the atmosphere). Clouds of anhydrous ammonia are subject to air movement and will change direction with the breeze. The ammonia is heavier than air and will settle in low areas of surrounding landscape. Areas surrounding the leak would need to be evacuated. The Minnesota Department of Health, designates permanent rules for indoor ice arenas, Minnesota Rules Ch. 4620, but there is no system in place to notify the public of their risk of hazard exposure or safety procedures in the event of a chemical leak. Causes of leaks can include a broken weld, loose valve packing or compressor shaft seal failure. These failures are not infrequent in ice rink chiller systems. A Minnesota Department of Agriculture report states “ammonia is a strong base and will corrode galvanized metals, cast iron, copper brass or copper alloys.”

With ammonia exposure being deadly and a high volume required by ice rinks, it is vital that the ammonia be properly contained. That is evidently easier said than done. The following are documented ammonia leaks at ice arenas:

- Oyster Bay Ice Skating Center, Nassau, NY, January 28, 2024
- Centennial Sports Arena, Circle Pines, MN, December 1, 2023
- Leddy Ice Arena, Burlington, VT, July 7, 2023
- Reno Ice, Reno, NV, April 10, 2023
- Falmouth Ice Arena, Falmouth, MA, November 18, 2022
- Tewksbury Ice Rink, Tewksbury, MA, August 30, 2022 (1 hospitalization, neighbors evacuated)
- Capital Clubhouse Ice Rink, Waldorf, MD, March 9, 2021
- Loring Arena, Framington, MA, March 2, 2021
- Fernie Memorial Arena, Fernie, B.C., October 18, 2017 (3 fatalities)
- Ashburn Ice House, Leesburg, VA, June 27, 2017
- Canal Park Ice Rink, Washington, D.C., January 6, 2016
- Prospect Park Ice Rink, New York, NY, October 15, 2015 (2 hospitalizations)
- Louis Astorino Ice Rink, Hamden, CT, August 25, 2015
- Pineville Ice House, Pineville, NC, April 22, 2015

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2023/04/ice-maker-arctic-glacier-fined-232k-over-michigan-ammonia-spill.html> (reporting second leak of Arctic Glacier ice packaging facility and one fatality in first leak; ISSUU North American Guide to Natural Refrigerants in Ice Arenas <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/substances/fact-sheets/ethylene-glycol-12-ethanediol>).

The numerosity and severity of the documented leakage events indicate that this is a serious problem. Vague assurances that “we know what we are doing” do not constitute safeguards, particularly when uttered by an institution that has never owned a refrigerated ice rink. Chemical spills can be deadly to fish and wildlife. See <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/tech/science/environment/2024/03/29/fish-kill-in-nishnabotna-river-spill-said-to-exceed-750000-department-natural-resources-nitrogen/73125495007/> (750,000 fish dead due to fertilizer leak).

The UST’s EAW states (in section 12(b)(ii)) that the Grotto, is a “linear aquatic feature that conveys stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces within the project site.” It also states that “2 acres of impervious surfaces drain into the grotto” and that the grotto “follows a drainage channel west towards the Mississippi River.” The EAW goes on to say that the remaining 2.8 acres of impervious surfaces drain southeast to an existing storm sewer tunnel which discharges to the Mississippi River.” Consequently, all chloride from salt use for 4.8 acres of deicing sidewalks and roads will drain into the Mississippi. Any hazardous material leaked and not contained would also likely drain into the Mississippi River. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture report quoted above also stated that, “since ammonia is very soluble in water, there will be no layering effect when liquid ammonia is spilled into a surface water body. Brooms, pads, sweeps and pillows that are usually used to contain and recover petroleum are ineffective on spills of ammonia into surface water.”

The MRCCA chapter of the 2040 Minnesota Comprehensive Policy places the UST Multipurpose arena in districts CA-RN (river neighborhood), CA-RTC (river towns and crossings) and CA-ROS (rural and open space). It also places the proposed arena in the following primary conservation areas: shore impact zone, natural drainage ways, bluff and bluff impact zone, significant existing vegetative strand, and unstable soils area with areas of high erosion susceptibility. As the arena has already been designated to be in an unstable soils area, there must be complete evaluation regarding the distinct possibility that the ground may shift during the arena’s lifetime with cracking of equipment, pipes or coils and leak of hazardous waste.

In the site plan, there is no reference to safeguards to prevent chemical spillage and water pollution, or any sign of approval by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency of any such safeguards. The arena cannot be constructed unless it incorporates safeguards against leakage into its design. The Planning Commission must reject the site plan because it does not address the high risk of water pollution from the high volume of toxic chemicals that would be perched atop its river bluff amid groundwater just 6-12 feet below the surface.

## **7. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE THE EAW IS INADEQUATE.**

Advocates for Responsible Development appeal the City’s decision not to require an environmental impact statement for UST’s arena project, and oral arguments were heard by the Court of Appeals on April 11, 2024. This memorandum will not recite all of the arguments raised in ARD’s appeal, but one bears noting here: The EAW was required to consider the UST development of the South Campus as a whole, rather than isolating just the arena for



examination. Particularly close in time of construction is Schoenecker Center, which is just now being completed and which added 130,000 square feet of new users and demands on traffic and parking. Schoenecker Center also displaced 127 parking spaces, which should have been considered relevant when the arena would eliminate and additional 265 spaces. The Planning Commission should reject UST's site plan because it is based on a site plan that was inadequate.<sup>5</sup>

## **8. THE SITE PLAN MUST BE REJECTED BECAUSE ITS TRAFFIC DEMAND MANAGEMENT PLAN IS INADEQUATE.**

Exhibit 6 to the site plan is a "City of Saint Paul Transportation Demand Management Form" but the site plan as produced to Advocates for Responsible Development did not include any Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDMP). Because it is required that the site plan include a TDMP, the site plan must be rejected.

St. Paul Leg. Code § 63.122(c) provides that "No building or grading permit shall be issued for any project subject to this section until a TDMP has been prepared which meets the requirements of this section and the Travel Demand Management (TDM) Program Standards Guide." Leg. Code §63.122(c)(1) adds, "The TDMP must be submitted and approved as part of site plan review under the provision of section 61.402."

The Transportation Demand Management Form contains almost no information to help the City decide whether to approve the site plan. What it does provide, however, discloses that UST's parking plan is to provide zero parking spaces to accommodate the needs of a new arena. But even that complete failure understates UST's dire situation; St. Thomas actually plans to reduce parking by 265 spaces instead of increasing it to meet the arena's demand.

In lieu of parking spaces, UST's responses on the form offers to add 102 bicycle parking spaces, as if that would impact parking for a basketball and hockey arena where games are played in winter. UST also says it will partially subsidize transit passes for full-time employees who do not purchase parking passes, without stating how many, if any, employees would be affected.

St. Thomas wants to build a complex and invite 6,000 people to campus while not providing any plan to handle the traffic and parking problems that it is creating. The Planning Commission cannot approve such site plan without a TDMP that demonstrates that UST is capable of managing traffic and parking. The Planning Commission therefore must reject UST's site plan.

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<sup>5</sup> Other inadequacies of the EAW, such as its failure to consider greenhouses of arena attendees and its misrepresentations about the production of GHGs by the arena building, are discussed elsewhere in this memorandum.

Although the site plan application does not contain a TDMP, UST's EAW contained a "Transportation Study" written by the consulting firm SRF ("SRF Study") as Exhibit D. Although the Transportation Study is inadequate as a TDMP, ARD will analyze it because it is the only transportation-related document UST has offered.

#### A. Traffic: Volume

Neither the EAW nor the city's approval of it reconciled the increased traffic which will be caused by the arena with the city's commendable goal of reducing vehicle trips in and through the city. The EAW acknowledged that 78% of the visits to the arena would involve non-student trips; a substantial percentage of those visits will be from other communities in the metropolitan area. The city has made progress on reducing vehicle trips; this arena will entirely undermine the city's progress on that important environmental goal. We will never reach our climate goals if we make exceptions for new developments like this that have virtually no transit service.

The SRF Study dramatically understates the number of cars that will arrive at the arena. It does this by making multiple incorrect assumptions:

**Incorrect assumption: UST students are wild about basketball and hockey and will walk to games.** St. Thomas unrealistically asserts that 1,200 students will attend games. But only 2,600 UST students live on campus. It is not realistic to predict that almost half of the on-campus population will walk to games on a consistent basis. The sole purpose of this inflated estimate is to understate UST's traffic and parking problems.

**Incorrect assumption: The average car will contain 2.75 people.** In order to minimize its projected parking demand, UST assumed that an average of 2.75 people would arrive in every vehicle attending an event. The basis for this number was a study of event attendees that provided a range of 2.2 to 2.8 people per vehicle. Even within that high range, the use of the high end of the range is not justified in the SRF Study. The state and federal government apply an assumption of 1.9 people per vehicle. Using a rate of 2.75 minimizes the admitted traffic by eliminating hundreds of vehicles from the models.

Even using the 2.75 AVO, the EAW predicts that 4,250 arena attendees will arrive by car (a minor percentage will arrive by bus). Using MNDOT average vehicle occupancy (AVO) of 1.9 persons per car means 2,237 cars arriving. UST revealed in its legal brief that it applied 2.75 AVO, which is at the extreme high end of a 2.2-2.8 AVO range derived from a study on baseball game attendance. A 2.75 AVO allows UST to claim that "only" 1,545 vehicles will arrive and that "only" 742 vehicles will have no place to park on campus or on streets adjacent to campus.

**Incorrect assumption: Traffic will see almost no growth.** For its modeling, SRF applied an assumption that traffic would grow a mere 0.25% per year. That would be unrealistically small under normal circumstances; SRF has employed a 1.00% annual growth factor in other traffic studies it has performed. But in this case, it is wildly inaccurate. The biggest housing development St. Paul has seen in 80 years is in the years-long process of opening at Highland

Bridge (the former Ford Motor Co. factory) at the south end of Cretin Avenue. Neighbors along Cretin Avenue protested, predicting that the Highland Bridge development would dramatically increase traffic along Cretin Avenue. Cretin Avenue serves as the link between Highland Bridge and Interstate 94. As apartment buildings and condominiums are being built and populated, the traffic count on Cretin Avenue has started to rise. But Highland Bridge is only partly settled at this point, and thousands more residents will populate that development in the upcoming years. SRF provided traffic analyses for Highland Bridge and the same engineer at Ryan Companies (Anthony Adams) has worked on Highland Bridge and the arena, so St. Thomas cannot make a good-faith claim that it was not aware of the impacts that Highland Bridge will bring.

**Incorrect Assumption: Attendees will know where they are going to park.** Although UST's parking problem is a crisis by itself, the assumption in the SRF Study that cars will have designated places to park leads SRF to omit the problems created by cars driving up and down the neighborhood streets, looking for parking. Focusing on the traffic volume issue, this means that every car that arrives at the arena does not terminate its route at a parking facility. The car arrives on Cretin Avenue and turns down a residential street (for instance, Lincoln Avenue, the closest to the arena). Finding no open parking space, the car drives down Lincoln and then back to Cretin Avenue on Goodrich Avenue, again finding no parking.<sup>6</sup> At this point, this car will have doubled its impact on Cretin and added impacts on Lincoln and Goodrich. When the car drives down Fairmount and returns on Princeton, it will have tripled its impact on Cretin. By assuming that cars have a place to park, the SRF study severely undercounts the traffic impact on Cretin Avenue and on the side streets such as Lincoln, Goodrich, and Princeton.

**Incorrect Assumption: Cars can pass on side streets.** UST's reliance on neighborhood parking means that cars will driving up and down the streets near campus, looking for parking. Some will approach the block from the east, some from the west. It is possible for two cars to pass on these streets if parked cars are near the curb and the cars slow to maintain control as they maneuver past each other. But basketball and hockey are winter sports, and cars do not park close to the curb because snow has encroached into the street and snowbanks make it difficult to open passenger-side doors if the car is parked too close to the curb. An additional factor is rutting of ice on the street that effectively creates a track for one vehicle down the middle of the street. These are the expected Minnesota conditions, yet the SRF Study fails to address them. The impact on these streets is that twenty vehicles may attempt to drive eastward on a side street and twenty vehicles may attempt to drive westward. These vehicles will be unable to pass and proceed; they will be gridlocked. Cars will eventually have to back out one way or the other, but the traffic levels will be too high to make that feasible. And once clear, a new set of vehicles will cause the same logjam. This will be a great inconvenience to the drivers, but also to the residents who will be unable to drive through their own neighborhood.

**Incorrect Assumption: Attendees won't park on local streets.** The worst levels of service predicted by the SRF Study were the intersections of Cretin Avenue and side streets, where cars

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<sup>6</sup> This scenario will definitely occur for every weekday event, as Lincoln, Goodrich, Fairmount, and parts of Princeton Avenues require a permit for on-street parking M-F until 8:00 p.m. The scenario will continue to occur on weekends because arena attendees will quickly occupy the nearest residential streets.



may be unable to leave the side streets for the 30 minutes before or after an arena event. The EAW dismisses those drivers as local residents, but UST's parking plan would direct hundreds of vehicles to park on those streets. For example, if Sargent Avenue has 44 attendee vehicles parked on it, they will be unable to leave for 30 minutes after the game due to the regular traffic on Cretin Avenue combined with the vehicles leaving the arena — and that is UST's rosy estimate.

Even while making every unrealistic assumption in order to minimize arena traffic, the SRF Study still concludes that the traffic levels of service will nosedive as a result of the arena. Around the arena site, those levels are currently A and B. The SRF Study asserts that those levels of service will decrease to D and F for arena events. If SRF had used accurate projections, the levels of service would have been lower; since F is the lowest rating on the level of service scale, we can assume that they would have been a low F.

By applying assumptions that do not reflect reality, the SRF Study produced results that did not reflect the full impact that UST's arena would have on traffic patterns around the site. The Planning Commission should determine that UST has not presented a TDMP that accurately assesses the impact of the arena and should reject the site plan.<sup>7</sup>

#### B. Traffic: Emergency Vehicles

From a safety perspective, it is extremely worrying that St. Thomas projects that its arena will cause lengthy delays in being able to access Cretin Avenue during its arena events. If someone (resident or attendee in a vehicle) has a medical emergency, no emergency vehicles will be able to enter the side streets because they will be blocked by vehicles that can't past each other. Even UST's projected 30-minute logjam would likely prevent adequate and timely medical intervention in the case of heart failure or stroke. But UST is undercounting traffic and not accounting for street conditions in the snow; the real delay would be much worse. As an appendix to this document, Dr. Jerome Abrams has modeled the delays that would be caused by the arena traffic.

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<sup>7</sup> An apt comparison is to the Starbucks coffee shop at Snelling Avenue and Marshall Avenue in St. Paul. On its face, it seemed implausible that a popular coffee shop could exist at that intersection with minimal parking and a drive-through lane. The neighborhood took the position that the use was incompatible with such a tight site. But the applicant brought consultants who testified that, based on the assumptions Starbucks made about its use, the traffic snarls foretold by the neighbors would not occur. The Planning Commission believed the applicant's consultants and approved the project. From the outset, it was clear that the site could not handle the traffic generated by the drive-through line, which backed up into traffic on Marshall and Snelling Avenues. After years of trying to make that drive-through lane work using traffic police, Starbucks closed the drive-through lane. The Planning Commission should note that consultants make whatever assumptions will benefit their client to get the project approved, and should reject a project where, as here, the consultants' conclusions do not reflect the probable results of building a large arena on a small site on the river bluff in a residential neighborhood with easy vehicular access and no parking.

### C. Traffic: Emissions

The sports complex and the traffic it generates will emit greenhouse gases (GHGs). Even though their toxicity is well documented, even though there are federal, state and local governmental actions to reduce them, even though we are already experiencing their effects on our climate, even though St. Thomas claims it wants to be carbon neutral within a decade, UST nonetheless puts forward the least efficient arena plan in the worst possible location. In this case, the GHGs are being emitted in a residential neighborhood and on the bluff of the Mississippi River.

St. Thomas is hoping that thousands of people come to the arena, but has not addressed in any way the pollution that will be generated by all those trips.<sup>8</sup> The Minnesota Court of Appeals recently noted that greenhouse gases from attendees *must* be analyzed in EAWs, *In re Mankato Motorsports*, No. A23-0091, \*18 (Minn. App. 2023). In the case of the arena, this is a complicated subject because attendees will drive to campus and then will drive around and around the neighborhood looking for parking because UST admits its parking supply is many hundreds of spaces short, even after utilizing all of the on-street spaces adjacent to campus and making unrealistic assumptions to disguise the extent of the parking shortage. People will drive down residential street after street until they finally find a parking space far from campus. These neighborhood tours — undesired by fans and residents alike but favored by UST — will greatly increase the GHGs emitted, both by each vehicle and as a total.

Most large arenas are in downtown areas to take advantage of freeway and transit access, available evening parking, and the absence of adverse effects upon neighbors. UST has instead chosen to site an arena on a tight campus footprint, immediately adjacent on three sides to residential neighborhoods (and with the river on the fourth side). All of the pollutants emitted by the facility and the attendees' vehicles will adversely affect those who live in this community.

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<sup>8</sup> Similarly, St. Thomas's EAW avoided discussing the pollution that would be emitted by a 6,000-seat arena. It is intuitive that a facility that maintains two permanent ice rinks will have a large energy footprint. At times, the rink will be covered so a temporary basketball floor and seating can be placed atop it, but the fact remains that a facility that warms the basketball arena while simultaneously freezing the ice beneath is inherently energy-inefficient. The EAW states (at 32), "Emissions from cooling and refrigeration systems are not accounted for in this operational analysis as GHGs from refrigerants are approximately less than five percent of the total GHG emissions of a building." The EAW then cites to a source that says *no such thing*, and has nothing to do with arenas or ice rinks. The cited source states, "There are typically refrigerants or coolants that inadvertently leak from HVAC or refrigeration equipment. Project Drawdown ranks refrigerants as the No. 1 solution for reversing global warming. Given the regulatory environment for the U.S. health care sector, most hospitals report that this is less than 5 percent of their overall GHG footprint, but it is still critical to confirm that is the case for each hospital." Yes, the *leakage* (not *usage*) of GHGs from *most hospitals* (*given the applicable regulations*) is less than 5% of their total GHG emissions. UST's consultant, Kimley Horn, put that statement in the EAW to avoid disclosing of the arena's energy use, and the city did not notice or question this deception.

UST's imposition on the surrounding environment will be made worse by buses that deliver visiting teams and their equipment, youth teams, groups coming from bars or from campuses of visiting teams, and others arriving by chartered bus. The site plan does not include any place for those buses to park during games. The result is that they will park illegally on one of the nearby residential streets that does not allow parking without a permit (probably Summit Avenue, because the few other streets with 24/7 permit requirements will be impassible due to the problems described above) and will idle to stay warm because basketball and hockey are played in winter. With 66 home games per winter, this bus exhaust will impose a significant burden upon the residents and the wildlife along the river.

#### D. Traffic: Effect on Summit Avenue

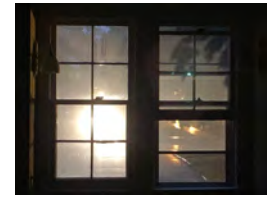
Besides being a parkway, Summit Avenue is part of the West Summit Avenue Heritage Preservation District. That district was established in 1980 to preserve the historical nature of Summit Avenue west of Lexington Avenue. With an arena, Summit would carry traffic from neighborhoods east of UST, particularly as a means of avoiding the backlog on Cretin Avenue as thousands of cars drive from Interstate 94 toward campus.

The burden on Summit is compounded by the fact that the arena service road connecting directly to Summit. All trucks and buses servicing the arena will either enter on Cretin Avenue and exit on Summit (there is no place for such large vehicles to turn around and go back to Cretin Avenue). That means all of the food vendor trucks (e.g., Sysco), beer trucks, soda trucks, equipment trucks, garbage trucks, recycling trucks, and team buses will travel on Summit Avenue. Each of these weighs two or three times the maximum gross vehicle weight on any parkway of 9,000 pounds. Summit will deteriorate into a private commercial drive for UST heavy traffic.

Smaller vehicles will also use Summit Avenue. The only conceivable location where taxi/Uber/Lyft vehicles would discharge and pick up customers near the arena is through the entrance from Summit Avenue, which goes to the arena and has a turn-around circle. The EAW predicts that 335 event attendees will arrive and depart by ride share, but each vehicle must arrive twice (once before and once after the game) and depart twice (same), making four trips down Summit for every use of ride share. That is, at a minimum, hundreds of additional trips down Summit (if 335 people crammed into 100 taxis, that would result in 400 trips down Summit per event; if they rode solo it would result in 1,340 trips per event). Summit Avenue would become a very busy street for each arena event, night after night.

Summit Avenue's parkway exists because property owners west of Lexington Avenue donated 50 feet of land on both sides of the avenue to create the space for the entire city to enjoy. But Summit remains a residential street, and a well-known one at that. Its architecture has inspired books and drawn tourists to St. Paul. If Mitchell Hamline Law School or Macalester College (both are on Summit) were to decide to build a 6,000-seat arena and use Summit Avenue as a connecting street to the arena, the city would not allow it because it would destroy the avenue and make it unlivable. Both are in residential settings, and the arena would be incompatible. The same should be true for St. Thomas.

Turning Summit into UST’s service drive presents the same problems (the sight, vibration, sound, and smelly emissions of buses and trucks) for residents as for bicyclists and pedestrians. But residents must live through it all the time. Feeding 6,000 people per event takes a fleet of trucks, and each truck must pass every house as it accelerates, drives, and stops. Because the basketball and hockey seasons are in winter when dusk is earlier, the headlights from trucks coming from the arena will be a constant annoyance to residents (see photo to the right of vehicle leaving UST toward Summit Avenue). It would be bad enough if arena-related traffic only affected those who live or drive on Summit Avenue. But Summit is a destination for bicyclists and pedestrians who travel to the river and either turn around or connect to the Mississippi River Boulevard to travel north or south. The presence of the trucks and buses and ride share vehicles will have an adverse impact on one of St. Paul’s most heavily used recreational routes.



For example, trucks using the South Campus’s drive to Summit will cross both a sidewalk and a bicycle path, endangering both pedestrians and bikers. For each of UST’s 66 home games, one would expect a Pepsi truck, a beer truck, several food semi trucks (e.g., Sysco) smaller food vendor trucks (e.g., Papa John’s, Subway), and garbage and recycling trucks — it takes a lot to provide food and drinks to an arena full of people.



The example of the Pepsi truck maneuvering across the Summit Avenue sidewalk and bicycle path illustrates the danger posed to those who traverse Summit.



It is further worth noting that St. Paul limits vehicles on all parkways, including Summit Avenue, to 9,000 pounds gross vehicle weight. Leg. Code §§ 145.02, 170.07. Trucks and buses are two or three times heavier than that maximum.



#### F. Parking

UST’s parking plan is to not only refuse to add any parking for its 6,000-seat arena, but to eliminate 265 parking spaces instead. Even using every manipulation to minimize its projected shortfall, UST admits that it lacks the parking to meet the arena’s demand. More specifically, UST admits that its parking supply is more than 1,000 spaces short. Its plan is for people to fend for themselves by parking on the street in a

1/2 mile radius around the arena. If a plan to have people park on the street up to 1/2 mile away met city requirements, then those requirements are so lax as to have no meaning at all.

As with the traffic count, UST's claims about parking rely heavily on incorrect assumptions and misrepresentations of fact. Many of them are listed here:

**Incorrect assumption: On-street parking is available.** UST's consultants took a count of available on-street parking spaces adjacent to campus, but chose to do so as a winter snowstorm was imminent. Obviously, many people who would otherwise have driven either stayed home or took the bus. The only reason to include this defective parking count is to mislead the city into thinking that fewer cars will need to park in the neighborhood. UST's overall parking plan raises the question: What other business is permitted to claim all on-street parking as its own to demonstrate that it provides adequate parking?

The current situation evidences a severe shortage of parking on the St. Thomas campus. The university has a lottery system for parking for current students and staff, but that system already has cars parking off campus on surrounding streets, especially on Selby Avenue, Dayton Avenue, in Shadow Falls, on Cleveland Avenue, Summit, Grand, Lincoln, and Goodrich Avenue, where the entire length of the street west of Cretin is filled with cars every weekday and most evenings, including on the weekends. Construction of the Schoenecker Center by St. Thomas eliminated 127 parking spaces and added 130,000 square feet of space to be used for performance venues as well as typical campus activities.

**Incorrect assumption: Residents do not need on-street parking.** The homes in the community around the South Campus were built in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, when owning more than one vehicle was rare. Many houses therefore have one-car garages. Today, many households have two vehicles and park one on the street. Adult children who live with their parents also rely on street parking. To an elderly or handicapped person, the ability to park near one's home is essential, particularly in winter. The areas around campus also have apartment buildings, duplexes, and other multi-family housing where residents depend on on-street parking near their building. During arena events, attendees' vehicles will line the streets for blocks, making it impossible for any resident of those blocks to park on any nearby street. And it will be impossible to host a social event unless it corresponds with a gap in the arena's booking schedule. With most arena events and most social events on weekends, that seems unlikely.

**False representation: UST plans to have small crowds.** St. Thomas claims that the arena crowds will usually be far below capacity, so parking will not be a big problem. If that were true, UST would not be building such a large arena. Playing to a half-empty arena is embarrassing, and UST has no intention to spend extra money to build an arena that would embarrass its athletes. And UST is certainly not recruiting with any intention other than to have winning teams that can fill arenas. In fact, UST represented at a community meeting that 35 of its 66 home games are expected to sell out.<sup>9</sup> The only reason UST is misrepresenting its

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<sup>9</sup> In stark contrast, UST's EAW (at 36-37) represented that it would have only 1-2 capacity basketball games and 2-4 capacity hockey games per season.

projected attendance in its traffic plan is to convince the city that UST doesn't have a massive parking shortage.

**False representation: The number of events.** St. Thomas has stated that it plans to hold 66 home basketball and hockey games at the arena, but has been coy about what other events will be held. The EAW refers to graduation and job fairs, but it is likely that UST will use the arena as a revenue center and lease it to promoters for concerts and conventions that could keep the arena busy year-round. The arena could also host high school tournaments; the Cretin-Derham Hall football team already plays games in the St. Thomas stadium. The city should expect that UST will use the arena to the full extent it can legally utilize it. UST's withholding its plans constitutes a misrepresentation by omission of its full intentions for use of the arena.

**False representation: The dead campus.** St. Thomas does not account for activities on campus that will require parking at the same time that the arena requires parking. The most obvious conflict is classes, with courses meeting on weekday evenings and on weekends when arena events are likely to occur. In addition, UST has a theater, a 1,000-seat reception hall in the Anderson Student Center, other athletic competition spaces, and new performance spaces in Schoenecker Center next to the arena. There will be other events held at the same time as arena events, and those other events will contribute significantly to the demand for parking. That translates to additional competition for scarce parking spaces, and more important, cars circling the neighborhoods looking for places to park, and contributing even further to greenhouse gas emissions.

**False representation: Wrong baseline.** St. Thomas presents numbers as to parking availability, but those numbers fail to consider that UST just opened a new 130,000-SF science hall, Schoenecker Center, across the lawn from the arena site. Since Schoenecker opened, illegal parking has escalated due to the shortage of on-campus parking. This includes the St. Paul Parks and Recreation parking lot on the Mississippi River Boulevard west of the South Campus. When Schoenecker was built, it displaced 127 parking spaces that were not replaced.

**False representation: Free parking.** St. Thomas does not mention the fact that it charges people to park in its ramp and surface lots. By doing so, UST is encouraging arena attendees to park in the neighborhood (where parking costs nothing). The likely result is that UST's parking lots are not full because attendees are parking for free in the neighborhood.

**False assumption: Free parking.** St. Thomas assumes its arena attendees can park anywhere in the neighborhood. That is an incorrect assumption for three reasons. First, neighbors also park on their streets, meaning the available parking spaces are not as numerous as UST posits. When neighbors have events (and plan to start before arena attendees take all the parking), that further restricts the supply of parking for UST. Second, much of the surrounding neighborhood requires a permit to park on the street, M-F 8am-8pm (in some cases, 24/7). In fact, the neighborhoods around the UST campus contain about one half of the permit parking spaces in St. Paul. Many colleges in the city have no permit parking zones around them. The differences are that UST's business model relies heavily on commuters and that UST refuses to build adequate parking facilities. The effect of the permit zones is that arena attendees may not park nearby on weeknights, when



many of the events occur — unless they park illegally and hope not to receive a citation before 8:00 p.m. Third, it is likely that the permit parking regime will become more restrictive. Already, blocks without permit parking are petitioning to require permits, and blocks with permits are petitioning to include weekends. The city has recently seen that Allianz arena’s model of providing insufficient parking creates the need for permit parking in the neighborhood — and Allianz lies on robust LRT and bus lines that UST lacks.

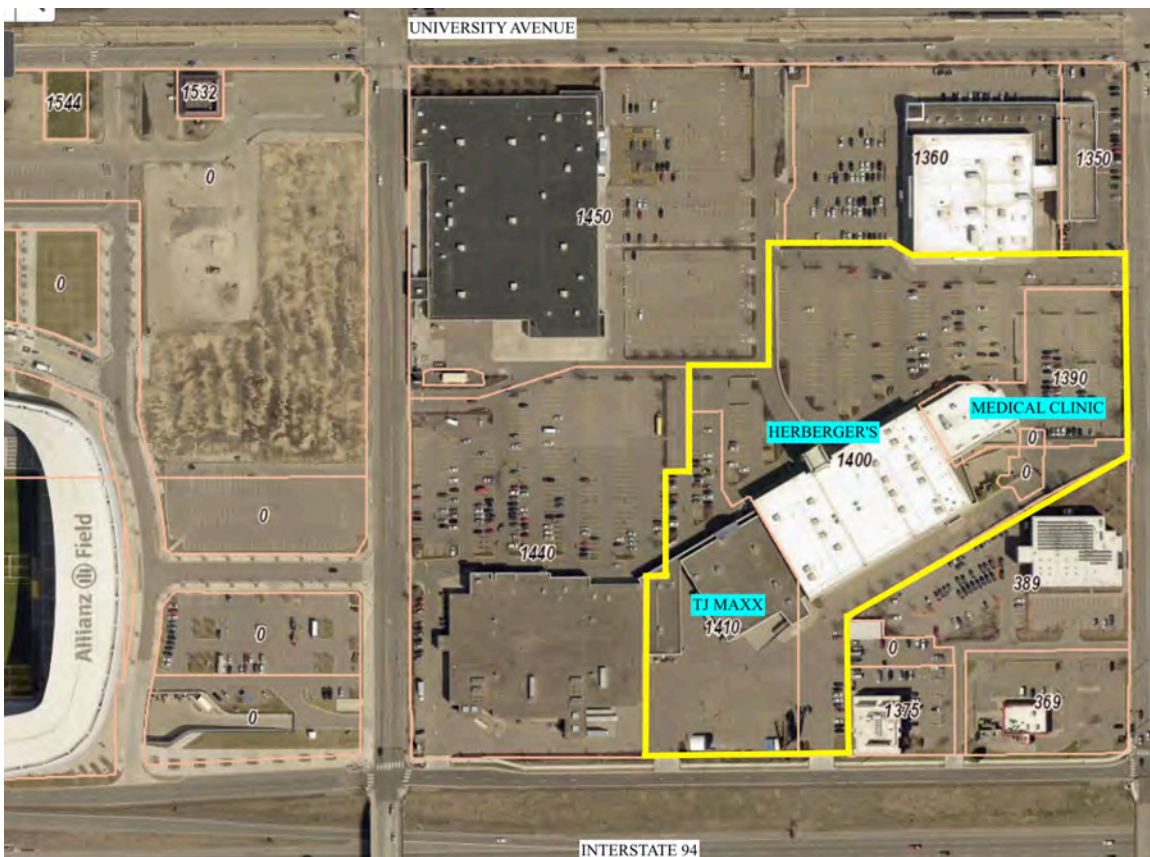
### **IS THERE ANY ALTERNATIVE TO PUTTING AN ARENA ON CAMPUS?**

It is not incumbent upon the zoning administrator to find a suitable location for St. Thomas to build an arena. But it is worth noting here that several alternatives exist that are far better than the South Campus.

St. Thomas has moved to Division 1 and has aspirations of gaining national prominence through athletic achievement. UST also recognizes that basketball and hockey ticket sales generate significant revenue at other D1 universities. Ticket sales can be maximized at a larger arena.

UST’s first choice for its arena was Highland Bridge, but it was quickly recognized that the former Ford plant site did not offer the infrastructure (transit, freeway access, parking) required. The second site choice was a quickly rejected bid of \$61.4 million for Town and Country Club’s 100-acre golf course. After those off-campus sites failed, UST moved to option 3, its South Campus. But St. Thomas has better options.

**Midway:** West of Allianz Stadium lies the site of the former Montgomery Ward department store. It was replaced by a retail strip mall anchored by Herberger’s, which occupied a 6-acre site until it closed in 2018. That site remains vacate. The adjacent TJ Maxx (2.6 acres) closed in



2023 and remains vacant. A medical clinic (1.5 acres) is also adjacent to Herberger's, but could be relocated. The resulting 10-acre site could be redeveloped as a high-profile and high-visibility sports campus, with ample parking.

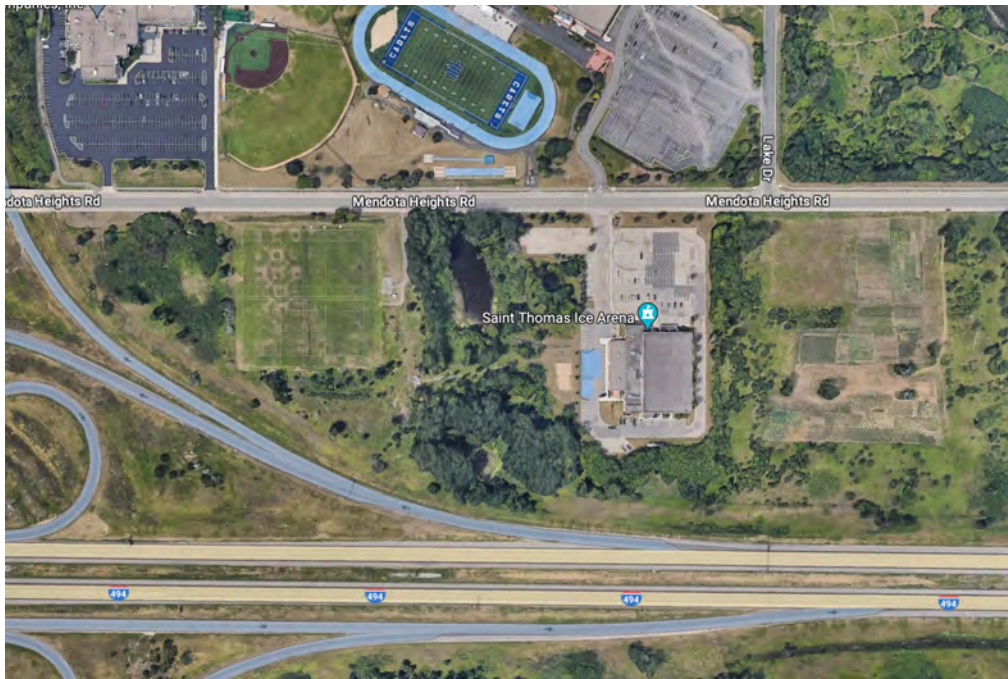
**Cleveland & University:** The area around Cleveland Avenue and University Avenue is ripe for redevelopment. Its origins are industrial, but parts are already being repurposed for uses like dog daycare, a brew pub, and self storage. Several buildings look vacant or low activity. These



parcels are smaller, so that building a site of adequate size would require acquiring property from several owners. It is actually shorter to walk across I-94 from Tommie North (0.6 miles) than to the south campus arena site.

**Vandalia & I-94.** The West Rock industrial plant contains more than 40 acres but is barely utilized; West Rock eliminated 130 positions in 2022 as it closed its corrugated medium facility. It now operates only its corrugated paper processing facility, which uses a fraction of the West Rock acreage. Acquisition of the West Rock site would provide UST a blank slate to create the sort of sports campus that will allow it to compete at the highest levels, without the constraints of fans not being able to get to games or find a parking spot. Ample room for parking would serve multiple sports venues, avoiding unnecessary duplication of parking supply in separated venues in different seasons. The site also offers high visibility from I-94. Because the site lies directly on the existing route from St. Paul to downtown Minneapolis, UST's existing shuttle can easily





Area around St. Thomas Academy Arena

stop on its way back and forth. However, the walking distance from most UST dorms is the same to I-94 as to the South Campus arena site.

**St. Thomas Academy.** If St. Thomas is solely concerned with building an arena to play basketball and hockey, its current home hockey arena at St. Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights has acres of undeveloped contiguous land that could be used to build a new arena; the existing rink could be retained as the practice rink that UST says it wants. This location is also highly visible from a highway (I-494) and has immediate freeway access without any fans driving through a residential neighborhood.

Other sites would work better for the city, the neighborhood, and even for St. Thomas and its teams and alumni. The arena as proposed will be very difficult for St. Thomas' fans and alumni to attend. The relative merits of each alternative are shown on this diagram:

**Desirable Aspects of Arena Site:**

	South Campus	Allianz / Herbergers	Cleveland & University	Vandalia & I-94
Proximity to campus				

	South Campus	Allianz / Herbergers	Cleveland & University	Vandalia & I-94
Proximity to public transportation	Red	Green	Green	Green
Proximity to major traffic route	Red	Green	Green	Green
Adequate on-site parking	Red	Green	Green	Green
Ecologically stable site	Red	Green	Green	Green
Minimal impact to nearby residents	Red	Green	Green	Green
Visibility to community	Red	Green	Green	Green
Proximity to restaurants	Red	Green	Orange	Orange
Low cost	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange
Opportunity cost	Red	Orange	Green	Green

**Conclusion**

Advocates for Responsible Development asks the Planning Commission to uphold this appeal and to reject the site plan submitted by the University of St. Thomas.

## **Appendix to Appeal filed by Advocates for Responsible Development**

### **Safety Risks of the Planned University of St. Thomas Arena**

#### Executive Summary

The current plan for the University of St. Thomas (UST) arena has failed to adequately evaluate safety risks. Part I of the following discussion will examine the risks to neighborhood residents that result from obstruction to arrival of emergency vehicles during arena events. Part II will identify more general risks. The plan states that neighborhood streets will be used for parking during (UST) arena events. The plan does not include data or estimates of parking density, width of streets with two-sided parking during winter snow, or the time for parked cars to exit the neighborhood streets such that emergency vehicles have neighborhood access. The following discussion assumes an event capacity of 5500 attendees. A UST spokesperson stated in the EQ Monitor that events having 5500 attendees will occur 35 times a year. Making the reasonable assumption that individuals will park as close to the arena as possible and will park at the same density as currently measured with UST students and staff parking on the north side of Goodrich Avenue, the neighborhood bordered by Goodrich Avenue, Princeton Avenue, Mississippi River Boulevard, and Cretin Avenue can accommodate over 300 cars. With two-sided parking and narrowing of the streets by snow left at the curbs during winter, measured width of the streets ranges from 15 ft 8 in to 16 ft 5 in. With two-sided parking and travel in one direction, the width was measured at 8 ft 5 in. First responder emergency vehicles are 10 ft wide and require a lane wider than 10 ft when in motion. Cretin Avenue is the likely choice of exit from the neighborhood. Exit time to Cretin Avenue from, for example Fairmount Avenue, was measured at 2 minute intervals from 4:36 PM to 5:30 PM. Average delay for cars to enter the traffic flow on Cretin Avenue was 41.4 seconds. Assuming one way traffic and no pedestrian traffic, emergency vehicle access to the neighborhood will be delayed 41 minutes. With two-way traffic, the delay time is likely to be increased. American Heart Association guidelines state that for, heart attack, door to treatment time goal is less than 30 minutes. For stroke, door to treatment time goal is less than 60 minutes. These guidelines will be impossible to meet under these conditions. The obstruction to emergency vehicle access to the neighborhood as a result of the arena events risks the lives and health of neighborhood residents. Please see Part I for details of the model.

#### Part I Neighborhood-specific risk features

A neighborhood adjacent to the UST South Campus arena is that area bordered by Cretin Avenue, Goodrich Avenue, Princeton Avenue, and Mississippi River Boulevard. We assume that people will choose to park as close to the arena as possible without paying, even if more distant off-street parking is available. This assumption is reasonable, given that hockey and basketball are primarily winter sports, and arena attendees will likely choose to walk no further than necessary in the cold and snow. Distance from the curb to the curbside of parked cars and the residual width of the streets with two-sided parking was measured 3/26/2024 following a snowfall. The average width of the remaining width for driving was 17 ft 4 in. With a car in the driving lane and two-sided parking, the remaining width was reduced to 8 ft. 5 in. A first responder emergency vehicle is 10 ft wide and, consequently, cannot pass. When in motion, the

emergency vehicle requires a lane greater than 10 ft wide. The measurement did not include the width of parked pick-up trucks and their extended side mirrors.

- A. Determination of the number of cars exceeding the capacity of the Anderson parking ramp and needing parking.

For an event of 5500 attendees, 2.7 passengers per car, and using the UST estimate of 22% arriving by non-motorized means, 1589 cars will seek parking. For the same capacity, 1.7 passengers per car, and 22% arriving by non-motorized means, 2523 cars will seek parking. The figure of 1.7 passengers per car is used in FHA traffic analyses.

- B. Determination of parked car capacity in the neighborhood adjacent to the arena area bordered by Cretin Avenue, Goodrich Avenue, Princeton Avenue, and Mississippi River Boulevard.

This neighborhood was chosen for analysis because of its proximity to the proposed arena. The parked car capacity of the neighborhood was calibrated as follows. UST students and staff park on the north side of Goodrich Avenue, when school is in session. The number of cars parked between Cretin Avenue and Mississippi River Boulevard was counted and averaged 54 vehicles. This value was used as a measure of number of vehicles per street unit length. Capacity of the neighborhood is 330 cars. The number of cars seeking parking is in excess of 330 cars. Consequently, the adjacent neighborhood streets are likely to be used for parking. Fairmount Avenue, as an example, has a capacity of 84 cars parking on both sides of the street from Woodlawn Avenue to Cretin Avenue.

- C. Calculation of delay in exit of parked cars

The issue is the delay that will occur when the arena event concludes, the attendees attempt to leave the streets where their cars are parked, and a neighborhood resident has an emergency. Again, we use Fairmount Avenue as an example. The argument will apply to other neighborhood streets. The model employed is that used by Mao et. al. (Mao, X et al., Optimal Evacuation Strategy for Parking Lots Considering the Dynamic Background Traffic Flows, Intl J Environ Res and Public Health, 2019,16:2194) The model assumes no left turn, no non-motorized or pedestrian traffic, and one car can exit at a time.

Let  $Q_r$  = the background traffic flow. Please see appendix for determination of  $Q_r$   
 $\tau_r$  = minimum time for background traffic to allow exiting vehicle to merge into background traffic. Please see appendix for determination of  $\tau_r$   
 $T_r$  = average time for two consecutive intervals for car to exit.  
 $\mu_r$  = average time of arrival in queue. Please see appendix for determination of  $\mu_r$ .

$T_r = 1 / (Q_r * \exp(-Q_r * \tau_r)) - 1 / Q_r - \tau_r$ .  $T_r = 6.05$  minutes.

Since the vehicle at the front of the queue can only leave and merge in to the background traffic flow when vehicle headway is greater than the minimum time for background traffic to allow vehicle to exit into background traffic flow, the average time between the intervals is the service time of queueing system.

Let  $d_r$  = average queueing time per car.  
 $d_r = T_r / (\mu_r T_r - 1) = 41$  minutes.

Numerical simulation, by Mao and colleagues, of evacuation of a parking lot with two exits similar to the exits from the neighborhood streets to Cretin Avenue had average queueing times of 17 minutes and 28 minutes. The simulation assumed no left turns, background traffic flow, and no non-motorized traffic. (Mao et al, op. cit.). With left turns and two way traffic, delays in excess of 28 minutes are reasonable. An analogous situation is that of exiting the Lawson parking ramp at the conclusion of a Minnesota Wild hockey game, an Ordway event, or both. With one way traffic and an adequate driving lane, I have personally experienced exit times of 25 to 35 minutes.

## Part II General risk features

A review of literature studying traffic safety identifies several risk features for death and serious injuries. Speeding, reduced visibility, neighborhood environment, human behavior, and congestion are all associated with increased risk for accidents.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety reported that 60% of all fatalities on urban streets occurred at dawn, dusk, or in darkness. Rain and snow were identified as risk features by Andreescu et. al. (Clin Res 1988,9:225). Reduced visibility and adverse weather conditions are common in Minnesota winters. The arena is designated to serve hockey and basketball, primarily winter sports, which will be held during these adverse weather conditions. The current plan identifies on street parking as required to manage the parking demand for events. On street parking increased risk to pedestrians 1.8 times. (Congiu, T. et.al., Sustainability, 2019,11:1014) Greater than 50% of crashes on a college campus were associated with crosswalk signs, pedestrian signals, public transit, and at least 3 location and branding signs at intersections (Dai, D. The Impact of Built Environment on Pedestrian Crashes and the Identification of Crash Clusters on an Urban Campus, W J Emerg Med, 2010, 11: 294). The neighborhood selected by UST has many homes that are nearly or greater than 100 years old. Many of these homes house elderly residents, a population identified as having increased risk. Neighborhoods built before 1970 were associated with a higher frequency of crashes. Higher density of residential homes and minor roads were associated with higher crash frequency of all types. (Asadi, Accident and Prevention, 2022,17:9) In a study of pedestrian crashes, intersections with 4 or more legs were identified as having an increased likelihood of crashes. Please note that the Summit-Cretin and Marshall-Cretin intersections have 4 legs. (Dumbaugh, E. and Li, W., Designing for the Safety of Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Motorists in Urban Environments, J Am Planning Assoc, 2011, 77:1). As reported by Wood, et al. (J Consumer Res, 2011,38:611), "Heavy social drinking is a common and deeply ingrained tradition for both professional and college games that often occurs before the game, during the game (although only in stadiums that sell alcoholic beverages), and after the game. Unfortunately, heavy drinking is associated with many types of risky behavior, perhaps most notably, impaired driving. Game-day drinking, especially, has been shown to lead to increased driving danger." Congestion is linked to speeding and aggressive driving behavior. A pedestrian vehicle crash at 30 mph has a 45% mortality, while a crash at 40 mph has an 85% mortality. (National Center for Health Statistics)

## Summary and Conclusions

The proposed arena presents neighborhood specific and general safety concerns. Obstruction of emergency vehicle access to the neighborhood with maximum capacity events is calculated at 41 minutes. American Heart Association guidelines state that for heart attack, door to treatment time goal is less than 30 minutes. For stroke, door to treatment time goal is less than 60 minutes. These guidelines will be impossible to meet under these conditions. The obstruction of emergency vehicle access to the neighborhood as a result of the arena events risks the lives and health of neighborhood residents. General risks include poor driving conditions especially in winter, elderly residents in the older adjacent neighborhoods, traffic congestion, speeding, and alcohol consumption.

The residents of St. Paul can reasonably demand that the City of St. Paul government protect the lives, health, and safety of its residents. Please note that the EAW identified 1 recent death and 3 serious crashes without an arena event. The question that needs an explicit answer is how many deaths, serious injuries, and serious crashes will the City of St. Paul endorse as an acceptable price for an entertainment center in a site without adequate infrastructure to support it. The attendees of arena events may willingly accept the increased risks of the current plan. The residents of the adjacent neighborhoods refuse to accept these additional risks.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jerome H. Abrams

## Appendix

Determination of  $Q_r$

Calculation of  $Q_r$

Road width ft	30
car speed mph	25
	36.6666
speed ft/sec	7
Sec to traverse road	0.81818
	2
	1.22222
Cars/sec across road= $Q_r$	2

Determination of  $\tau_r$

minimum time of the background traffic to allow vehicle at exit to merge into background traffic was estimated at 5 seconds

Determination of  $\mu_r$

Average time to exit Fairmount Avenue to Cretin Avenue was measured on 4/9/2024 from 4:36 PM to 5:30 PM every 1 to 2 minutes. Average time for a left turn was 41.4 seconds. Average time for a right turn was 12.9 sec. An average of 27.1 seconds was used. Data available on request.

$\mu r = \text{average time for individual car to exit} / \text{number of cars parked}$   
 $= 0.0369 \text{ sec}$

Kim Kvale  
1946 Portland Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104

April 22, 2024

City of St. Paul Zoning Committee  
City Hall  
15 Kellogg Blvd. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Objection to the Proposed St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
Project Address: 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN  
File Number: 24-029-110

Dear Chair Taghioff and Zoning Committee Members:

I object to the site plan approval for the proposed St. Thomas multipurpose arena. My primary objection is because the EAW significantly fails to provide for the protection of wildlife, plant communities, and ecological habitats.

On a daily basis I walk through the area that would be negatively impacted by the construction of the proposed arena. In the mature canopy layer, I have seen bald eagles, red tailed hawks and several owl species, including barred owls. In addition, I have enjoyed seeing adult and juvenile trumpeter swans flying overhead.

Each year, more than 325 species of migratory birds make their way along the renowned Mississippi Flyway. The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service identifies the project site as premium habitat for the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, an endangered species. UST development has already disturbed this critical habitat. The EAW has failed to identify significant wildlife and sensitive ecological resources at the site. Further investigation is warranted. Until this investigation is completed and appropriate measure taken to preserve this fragile ecosystem, the project site plan should not be approved.

Sincerely,

Kim Kvale



**From:** [Kathryn Mitchell](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#); [Terry Brueck](#)  
**Subject:** UST site plan File # 24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 9:48:38 PM

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Dear zoning committee,

Thank you for your serious consideration of the thoughts of your tax paying, law abiding citizens here in St. Paul opposing this untenable situation. We are very concerned about the effects of this stadium in our community and on the environment. Already there are many trucks and buses exceeding the 9000 lbs limit for Summit Avenue driving and parking along our avenue and leaving their engines running. Surely if these limits are not enforced now, and clearly are in the plans to increase this for the new stadium, we will have a deluge of such nonsense in our hood, which is illegal and adds to unnecessary pollution. In addition, we are very concerned about bicyclists and pedestrians. Presently this is already a concern as traffic is already drastically increasing and speed along both Cretin Avenue and Mississippi River Blvd are increasing to outrageous high speeds, far beyond the limits. It is shocking to live here and see these cars race by. on what is supposed to be a parkway, with no concern. As traffic increases here from stadium activity it will surely get even worse. We are here, right along the beautiful Mississippi River, a major avenue for bird migration. Quite frankly to ignore this, as if it was nothing to consider is very concerning. Please as you contemplate all that is at risk here do your duty to protect our environment.

Thank you,

Kathryn Mitchell  
2279 Summit Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

**Kathryn S. Richtman, Esq.**  
**1939 Portland Avenue**  
**St. Paul, MN 55104**  
[krichtman@aol.com](mailto:krichtman@aol.com)

April 22, 2024

City of St. Paul Zoning Committee  
City Hall  
15 Kellogg Blvd. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Objection to the Proposed St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
Project Address: 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN  
File Number: 24-029-110

Dear Chair Taghioff and Zoning Committee Members:

I am writing to object to site plan approval for the proposed St. Thomas multipurpose arena. While I have many objections to the plans for the arena, I will focus only on the issue that is most critical to me: St. Thomas' EAW is fundamentally and fatally flawed because it fails to account for the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with operating the arena.

First, the EAW does not account for the GHG emissions – pollution - associated with the cooling and refrigeration of the arena. The EAW specifically admits that it does not include consideration of these emissions, stating:

“Emissions from cooling and refrigeration systems are not accounted for in this operational emissions analysis as GHGs from refrigerants are approximately less than 5 percent of the total GHG emissions of a building.”

(University of St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena EAW, page 32). But the report cited as authority for this statement does not say what the EAW claims and does not support the EAW's failure to include an analysis of the cooling and refrigeration systems. Ironically, the report is a toolkit for hospitals and health care providers to **reduce** GHG emissions in their facilities. The report in fact states:

“Refrigerants are powerful greenhouse gases, and small leakages can be a significant component of a greenhouse gas inventory. These are typically refrigerants or coolants that inadvertently leak from HVAC or refrigeration equipment. Project Drawdown ranks refrigerants as the No. 1 solution for reversing global warming. Given the regulatory environment for the U.S. health care sector, most hospitals report that this is less than 5 percent of their overall GHG footprint, but it is still critical to confirm that is the case for each hospital. Given this information, there are a number of paths that can be taken to capture refrigerant emissions in a GHG inventory ....”

(*Greenhouse Gas Reduction Toolkit, Setting a Goal and Tracking Emissions*, p. 14, Practice Greenhealth, [https://practicegreenhealth.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/PracticeGreenhealth\\_GHG\\_Toolkit\\_0.pdf](https://practicegreenhealth.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/PracticeGreenhealth_GHG_Toolkit_0.pdf)).

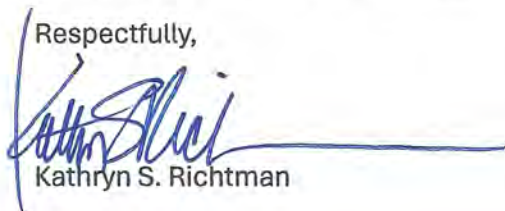
Thus, the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Toolkit* is specifically addressing **LEAKAGE** from HVAC or refrigeration equipment. It is not referring to the **OPERATION** of the cooling and refrigeration systems. Moreover, cooling and refrigeration systems needed in a hospital setting are far different from those that would be installed in the proposed multipurpose arena. The arena as proposed will have two permanent ice rinks, a temporary basketball floor – designed to sit on top of the ice rink, which will allow for games, but also the option for arena seating on the floor for concerts and other events. This will require simultaneous refrigeration of the rink and heating for the basketball court and arena. The failure to account for the emissions required to operate such a facility is a fatal flaw in the EAW. Moreover, by citing to a publication that does not say what it is quoted as saying is intellectually misleading at best, and calls into question the intellectual integrity of the entire EAW.

Second, building an ice arena on the Mississippi River Bluff area presents far too many risks to the water, air, and habitat to be allowed. The water levels of the site, the underground spring that sits right below where the arena is being proposed to be built, combined with the chemicals needed to refrigerate the rinks create a significant risk of pollution. Rink refrigeration systems use ethylene glycol (also known as concentrated antifreeze) to lower the freezing point in the rink's chiller system. They also use anhydrous ammonia as an inexpensive refrigerant. Any leakage or spillage of ethylene glycol and/or anhydrous ammonia will flow directly into the Mississippi River. Exposure to ethylene glycol and/or anhydrous ammonia can cause death to animals, birds and fish. To assume that a spill or leakage won't happen is not realistic and inconsistent with the history of other arenas. The proposed site is simply too fragile to take the risks associated with building this arena on this site. Preserving the sanctity of this sight, on the Mississippi River Bluff, mandates denial of the site plan.

Finally, the St. Thomas EAW does not address the greenhouse gases that will be emitted due to the additional traffic associated with operating the arena. Not only will there be thousands more people driving their vehicles to arena events, circling the adjacent neighborhood in search of a parking spot, there will also be large buses bringing teams to the arena and parking – usually with engines running – while the games are played. In addition, commercial vehicles will be delivering food and beverages for each event. All of which will significantly increase the GHG emissions. The EAW does not accurately address these emissions and what will be done to reduce them.

For all these reasons, and for the reasons stated in other objections, I urge you to reverse approval of the site plan for the proposed St. Thomas multipurpose arena.

Respectfully,



Kathryn S. Richtman



**From:** [Katie Parke-Reimer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#); [Tim Parke-Reimer](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 8:17:27 PM

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To the Zoning Committee:

We have many concerns about the arena UST has proposed to build in our neighborhood. The greatest concern is around **environment protection and neighborhood safety and quality of life.**

The demolition in the proposed arena area has already disrupted the Seminary grotto, which has been one of the most serene green spaces in the city and a favorite of ours for decades. An underground stream runs through the arena site and above ground through the grotto and into the River—**chemicals and pollution from the arena infrastructure would be dangerously close to flowing into the Mississippi River Valley.**

**Traffic, parking, and pedestrian safety**, both for residents (who are big walkers) and arena-attendees, are enormous issues that UST hasn't adequately addressed. Pedestrian safety is already an increasing problem, and Cretin is dangerous to cross for the many of us who regularly go to the River Road. With more cars speeding along Cretin, and more arena-attendees parking in our neighborhoods and trying to cross Cretin to get to the arena, **the area's walkability and safety will suffer.** We live at an intersection with Finn and fear that this street that is a pedestrian and bike haven will be inundated with cars speeding through, with drivers looking for parking spaces. **UST has not proactively addressed pedestrian safety and traffic control** in this residential area.

We oppose the construction of the arena in this location.

Sincerely,  
Katie & Tim Parke-Reimer  
2122 Princeton Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Project address: 2260 Summit  
File 24-029-110

**From:** [Kelly Vinson-Taylor](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Opposing St. Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:38:43 PM

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Zoning Committee,

I am writing in opposition of the St. Thomas arena on the proposed site (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110).

I live two blocks from the University and am most concerned that the environmental, safety, traffic and parking consequences will be detrimental to the neighborhood and have not been fully explored. I am confident that looking into these areas will show they are legitimate concerns and that the arena should not be built on the South Campus.

UST estimates there will be 35 events of approx. 3,000 spectators occurring Nov - March. That means 2 events per week, where many cars will be trying to arrive at the arena all within a short period of time. This is also the darkest part of the year, when roads are narrowed due to snow, and it will be difficult to see pedestrians. Games will take place in the early evening which means traffic will significantly increase during rush hour. Marshall, Cretin, and Summit are already backed up during evening rush and I can't even imagine how horrific traffic will be when many more cars and pedestrians will be added to the mix. Parking is already a problem on campus and in the neighborhoods. Many residents currently struggle to find parking near their homes and with a deficit of 750 parking spaces and no existing parking plan, those cars will be trying to find street parking where very little exists. Exhaust from cars circling to find parking and the proximity to the river are only two of many environmental concerns that need further exploration.

The arena should not be built on the current site and I urge you to take a more in-depth look at the ramifications, because once the building is erected and problems ensue, it will be too late.

Kelly Vinson-Taylor  
2127 Dayton Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Sent from Yahoo Mail. [Get the app](#)

**From:** [Lauren Walker](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#); [Jim Walker](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#); [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Opposition to St. Thomas Arena on Mississippi River Blvd  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 10:16:47 PM

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Lauren and Jim Walker.  
2097 Goodrich Ave.  
Zoning file (24-029-110)

Hello,

We are writing to express our opposition to the development of a new arena how (and especially where) it is currently planned. As parents of young children, our family frequently visits South Campus for the lovely green space it provides. One of our favorite places to explore is "the grotto." We are very concerned about the increased traffic that will result from the new arena and the crowds it will draw. We worry about the safety of not only our children when crossing the street, but also other pedestrians and cyclists with so many cars on the road. In addition, there would be increased levels of greenhouse gases from cars that are circulating to find parking, which, in the long term, could impact the health of all neighborhood residents, including St. Thomas University students. We also understand that this requires cutting down many mature trees and destroying the habitat of many different animals, including squirrels, rabbits, turkeys, coyotes, foxes, songbirds, raptors, and many others.

We were appalled with how the "community engagement" meeting tonight was conducted, as University representatives gave a one-sided presentation. They were unprepared for how many community members attended and planned very little time for questions and feedback. It is clear that the University does not wish to take community feedback if it in any way thwarts their plans. We asked multiple times what would happen to the green space at the corner of Mississippi River Blvd and Goodrich and they replied, "The soccer field will remain a soccer field," with no further response after we clarified what we meant (the park space next to the soccer field).

While we object to the current location, we do not object to the arena being built elsewhere. There are a number of other possible locations where this arena could be built that would not have the same negative impact on the environment. Westrock at Vadalía's and the old Herbergers near Allianz Field are just two examples. The University would need to purchase additional land, but if they wish to pursue such a large project, they should only do so in a responsible way that does not substantially harm the environment or surrounding communities.

Sincerely,  
Lauren and Jim Walker

**From:** [Linda Bruemmer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Mitra Jalali](#)  
**Subject:** Objection to Approval of University of St Thomas Site Plan for a new arena - 2260 Summit, File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 1:34:34 PM

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I am writing to object to the approval of the University of St Thomas Site Plan for a new arena on the south campus. I am a resident of the area and have lived here since 1989. I have watched the level of traffic increase along Cretin Ave and experience the congestion caused by traffic daily. It is already extremely hazardous to cross Cretin when I walk my dog down to the Mississippi River Road in the morning. I have previously contacted my City Council member about these concerns in June 2023. I wrote about the Villager article about the EAW that will be done for the new St Thomas arenas near Grand and Cretin. I asked if there been any updates to traffic plans along Cretin because of the increase in traffic due to Highland Bridges? Also the other proposed St Thomas construction along Montreal will feed into Cretin, too. I have not seen anything comprehensive about traffic and parking from St Paul planning. I was told in response from Council Member Jalali's office that Cretin would be changed from 4 lanes to 3 and on-street parking would be eliminated along the football stadium. This has not happened.

Ultimately, I base my opposition on the piecemeal approach that the University of St Thomas (UST) and the City of Saint Paul have taken to looking at congestion and transportation needs in the area and their violation of the Conditional Use Permit. Now that the Pandemic has ended and Highland Bridges has many new residents, I believe new traffic studies on and near Cretin Ave should be conducted. UST should not be granted the site plan.

Please contact me if you have any questions.  
Sincerely,

Linda Bruemmer  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

## Planning Commission Testimonial

Lynette Erickson- Sikora  
173 Montrose Place  
St Paul, MN 55104

April 21, 2024

Property address: 2260 Summit Ave. St Paul, MN  
Zoning file number: 24-029-110

For Godsake, Crash Test the UST Arena!

Engineering perfects function. It also shields fools like us from the unwitting perils of our own creation. To engineer is wise. To intentionally under-engineer something is hubris. It's pitting faith against failure and malfunction. The practice virtually assures trouble and is therefore irresponsible.

So we've established standards and regulations to defend our health, safety and the wellbeing of our environment. But when these rational, protocols are blatantly ignored, data is skewed or improperly applied, our carefully ordered system of checks and balances is circumvented.

Skyscrapers are engineered to withstand the impact of an aircraft, not because we expect planes to fly into buildings, but in a mishap, engineering assures the building will withstand the impact. Ocean-going vessels aren't designed to gamble against raging storms that would surely chop them to pieces. Instead they are robustly engineered to endure those extreme conditions, with the full acknowledgement of their likelihood. Engineering shapes our world and we are all the better for it. So why would anyone underestimate the number of attending cars or available parking spaces related to a new arena? Blind ambition can be the only answer.

Like everything, roads and traffic are engineered. A qualitative measure used in traffic engineering is LOS or Level of Service.

The Transportation Research Board and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials both use an alphabetical system for grading Level Of Service; A: represents free flowing traffic. B: reasonably free flowing. C: stable flow. D: approaching unstable flow. And F: unstable flow, aka chaos and gridlock, the lowest possible score.

The traffic study used in the University of St Thomas Environmental Assessment Worksheet for its proposed, new arena admits that intersections near the facility normally graded an A and B for traffic flow will be reduced to D and F, as peak traffic descends on the arena both pre and post games. One of the many things the study



fails to stress is the frequency of these at or near capacity events. Which, based upon the UST schedule will occur a minimum of 66 times during hockey and basketball seasons, and if arena rentals are included, easily 100 or more times per year. That means prolonged cycles of foreseeable gridlock, frustration and risk to pedestrians twice each week on average!

The St Thomas EAW traffic study is an understated accounting of current traffic conditions and parking, and a rose colored measure of what is anticipated. "Garbage in, Garbage out," as they used to say. The phrase expressed that the computations of a PC were only as good as the data feed into the system. Inaccurate data input invariably yielded a flawed result. That's the problem with the arena traffic study, overly optimistic data was used and no one in City government really questioned it.

Fast Company called "2024 advanced vehicles the definitive consumer technology." Automobiles are among the most highly engineered consumer products in human history. Despite the advanced calculations and computer modeling applied to any new model brought to market, the total assurance of a vehicle's safety is only proven out through physical testing. It is here that suppositions and Pollyanna data are put to rest. There is no disputing a motor vehicle subjected to real world crash conditions.

So I propose as a demonstration. One day at 6:30 PM we arrange for 2,000 automobiles to convene simultaneously on Cretin Avenue at the intersections of Cretin/Summit, Cretin/Grand and Cretin Goodrich. Half should stop near the arena to drop off passengers. Herd 2,000 pedestrians across Cretin at Summit and inject a few Buses. To create a realistic simulation, cars must arrive from every conceivable direction. Since there is no single parking destination, cars should roam freely, if that is the right word, into and through the surrounding residential streets in search of a legal, available parking spot, until one is found. The air should be tested both prior to and during the event to demonstrate just how far above the estimated 3x amount of greenhouse gases will be expelled from tailpipes. Circus music should play. Naturally this must all be recorded for later analysis, but it is likely we'll have an excellent impression of the situation in real time.

A crash test like this will finally confirm for the many deeply concerned neighbors and naysayers alike what the future holds for anyone in the vicinity of a UST "drive-in arena" event.

**From:** [Linda Van Egeren](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Steven Mose](#); [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** UST Arena Site Plan (2260 Summit, File 24-029-110)  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 6:03:47 PM

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**To:** St Paul Planning Commission  
**From:** Linda Van Egeren and Steven Mose  
511 Desnoyer Avenue  
St Paul, MN. 55104

I am concerned about the proposed UST arena for primarily two reasons: 1) traffic/safety issues and 2) potential negative environmental impact. It is already the case that when I drive, or go biking/walking during a UST event at the stadium, there is considerable congestion due to increased traffic in the area. Adding another large sporting event venue will make the congestion more the norm than the exception. Cycling in particular is a concern given that in recent years cyclists have been killed by cars on Summit Avenue and the Mississippi River Blvd. The congestion from the proposed arena's events pose a very real safety risk. In addition, the increased pollution due to traffic is concerning. I don't want to be inhaling fumes from vehicles and buses coming into the neighborhood while I am biking or going for a walk.

I share others concerns about the environmental impact on the river bluff.

The \_\_\_\_\_ don't feel that the city has adequately evaluated the potential negative impact of this project on our neighborhoods and the public interest.

Thanks for your consideration of my concerns.

Linda Van Egeren  
Steven Mose

**From:** [Margaret Wirth-Johnson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** We oppose the UST arena on the campus  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 5:00:33 PM

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To: The Department of Planning and Economic Development  
Zoning Committee

From: Margaret Wirth-Johnson and James Johnson

2224 Dayton Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104

Re: Proposed UST Project at 2260 Summit

File number File 24-029-110

We are homeowners of 33 years in the area of Shadow Falls, St. Paul. We live  $\frac{3}{4}$  block from Cretin Avenue, one block from Marshall Avenue, and two blocks from the Campus of the University of St. Thomas. Our position is that the arena UST proposes to build on its south campus is a very bad idea, for the following two reasons (of many):

### **Reason 1: Traffic**

Over the decades of living in this area, we have withstood many deleterious shifts to our quality of life mainly due to changes at UST. The undergraduate student population has increased hugely; many new buildings have been built (Anderson Student Center, Schoenecker Center, to name just two); area houses have been sold to UST for its administrative and academic expansion. As the University has expanded, traffic to and from the University has increased. Vehicles are more numerous, and consistently go beyond posted speed limits on area streets.

Cretin Avenue already bears the burden of having the most direct access to and from I-94, and to the Highland Bridge site. Pedestrians, including UST students, who want to cross Cretin, especially at unmarked streets often must wait for cars in four lanes to all stop for a safe crossing, which may take a long time. Alternatives to waiting, for example to run across, are dangerous.

The idea of building yet another enormous structure on the campus that will bring yet more vehicles to Cretin and neighboring streets, resulting in more incidents of speeding, more vehicle exhaust and potentially endangering more pedestrians is unthinkable.

### **Reason 2: Environmental**

St. Thomas's site for the proposed arena is illegal, per Minnesota laws requiring that certain construction must be more than 40 feet from the Mississippi River bluff line. Per the arena site plan there will be a paved drive, sidewalks, and underground utility lines with 40 feet of the bluff line.

In addition, the proposed site will interfere with many naturally occurring elements in the river area, including animal habitats and migration, grotto erosion, and loss of mature trees. There is also potential groundwater contamination and spread from chemicals used to maintain an arena.

**Conclusion:** There are other near-to-campus sites that are way more suitable for an arena the size and scope that UST wishes to build. These sites will not impact residential streets nearly as much as the South Campus site would, nor would they jeopardize river ecosystems and wildlife.

**From:** [Michele Byfield Angell](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Appeal to UST Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 5:01:30 PM

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Project name and address:  
UST Multipurpose Arena,  
2260 Summit Avenue

File number: File 24-029-110

Name and address:  
Michele Angell, 24 Mississippi River Blvd.

I am respectfully appealing the City's administrative approval of the University of St. Thomas' site plan for a multipurpose arena at 2260 Summit Avenue. I believe there are serious concerns focusing on the inadequacy of the traffic management, no clear plan for anything but street parking and the sheer number of potential events associated with this proposed project. As a resident, we are impacted in ways we see zero benefit from. Our peaceful place on the river, for which we are heavily taxed, could soon become a constant rotation of vehicles who have no interest in preserving or caring for our environment. St. Thomas has plenty of options for this stadium which still suit their objectives.

michèle byfield angell  
612-817-7703

"Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom" ~ Marcel Proust

Date: April, 22, 2024

To: St Paul Zoning Board

From: Marian Biehn  
83 Otis Ave., St Paul, MN 55104

Re: University of St Thomas Proposed Arena  
2260 Summit Ave. St Paul, MN  
Zoning file number: 24-029-110

City of St Paul 2040 Plan Vs University of St Thomas (UST) Proposed Arena

The University of St Thomas is seeking Zoning and other St Paul City approvals to build a multi-use arena. I respectfully request that you deny the request for multiple reasons as outlined in the ARD appeal. But also because the arena is in conflict with many of the St Paul 2040 Plan objectives. I have sited only a few below.

The UST proposed arena is sited on their south campus surrounded by highly residential neighborhoods (LU-2 2040 maps pg. 47). UST is an allowed use in the neighborhood, however, its move to a D1 athletic status has pushed its athletic facility needs into a higher category than the surrounding residential neighborhoods can accommodate.

The arena UST proposes has a parallel capacity to the CHS Saints Baseball field in downtown St Paul. If you have attended an event at CHS Field. You know the intensity of pre & post event movement. CHS field is in a downtown commercial district; has multiple public parking ramps for cars and tour buses; there are multiple public transit options; and multiple interstate highway systems within blocks to handle people and traffic volumes. The UST's proposed arena site offers none of these necessities. It is not in a commercial or entertainment zoned district. It is in a CA-RN zoning both currently and in the 2040 Plan future zoning (Map CA1-future land use) - a tight residential neighborhood. The infrastructure does not exist to accommodate the proposed, and likely growing, use of the arena. Increased traffic from the arena, additional traffic from the Highland Bridges, additional apartments on Marshall & Grand Ave, UST growth, etc. will create more green house gases and stress the existing streets beyond their intended and residential capacity. UST's proposed arena is unsuited for an on campus site.

### **Land Use Chapter**

Policy LU-8. Ensure that zoning and infrastructure LU support environmentally and economically efficient, resilient land use development.

The placement of the arena poses a threat to the MRCC. The structure sits on the bluff line, the rerouting of known underground streams and aquifers feeding the Mississippi and the additional impervious surfaces will dehydrate the natural vegetation.

Further, the rerouting of ground water via a storm water system or natural rerouting into the Grotto ravine (at the edge of the proposed arena) will erode the ravine.

Finally, multiple data has been submitted showing the frequency and toxicity of hockey arena chemical (ammonia & glycol) breaches into the ground. If the arena is built on the proposed site, the likelihood of leaks are real. Ammonia, glycol and other chemicals used for ice freezing going into the ravine or seeping into the underground shale will empty into the Mississippi River which is approximately 100 feet away. (See Arena leak and ammonia, glycol info emailed with these comments.)

Voting no to the zoning of the arena in its proposed site, could prevent a dramatic and deadly environmental disaster to the bluff vegetation and the Greater Mississippi River water and aquatic life.

Policy LU-19. Prioritize measures to achieve a long-term increase in canopy coverage citywide, with general goals of 40% tree canopy coverage in all neighborhoods outside of downtown and 15% downtown.

In its land prep, UST has already cut down multiple old growth trees. Their site plan proposes trees to be planted. However, with more of the area being covered in building and impervious surfaces, fewer trees will be replaced than what were removed. It will take 50-60 years before the new trees will provide the canopy coverage and green house gas filtering. More building on the UST campus will result in more loss of vegetation. As above, the proposed building will displace underground water sources and stare of the remaining tree canopy and vegetation. The neighborhood, the City and the River cannot afford to lose more canopy by choice, development or zoning decisions.

### **Water Resource Management Chapter**

Policy WR-18. Encourage the use of Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) for new development

The Minimal Impact Design Standards call for a focus on “keeping rain where it falls.” The recently completed Schoenecker STEAM building and the proposed arena both sit on the UST South Campus. The underlying ground is a watershed into the Mississippi. With the construction of the STEAM building and the proposed arena, the underground streams will be redirected or will self-redirect. With more impervious surfaces, more frequent occurrences of weather events, and the closing off of the underground waterways, the natural watershed can’t do its natural work. The storm water systems are overburdened as noted by occurrences of sink holes, flooding and on the site where the area is proposed (see photos). And the redirecting/merging of the underground springs create a more intense underground water activity.

Further, no discussion has been put forward by UST or the City for brown water use. This is a bad site for the arena for multiple reasons, but whatever goes on the site, should have a brown water plan to meet Minimal Impact Design Standards

Policy WR-6. Support a healthy urban forest and urban forestry initiatives to capture storm water through canopy interception, evapotranspiration and increased infiltration.

To support a healthy urban forest, don’t disrupt it. The arena sits on the MRCC river bluff line with natural vegetation that is to be protected. (Map MC 5 & 6 pg 255 & 256) Trying to replace or recreate it is never efficient and takes too long. The proposed arena will have a major impact on the general canopy, the river bluff canopy and vegetation and potential erosion of the ravine due to increase watershed.

Policy WR-13. Maintain response readiness for emergencies related to water supply contamination interruption, and for damage to treatment and distribution infrastructure.

The best way to prepare for a potential water contamination emergency is not to approve a use that has a record of hazards. The existence and frequency of chemical leaks from hockey arena is real even with safety measures in place. The proposed UST arena sits on a major water way and watershed with active streams and ravines. This natural resource should not be threatened. It would be irresponsible to approve the use of this site for a use that carries potential environmental risks to vegetation, ground water and a national water way.

St Paul 2040 Plan Appendix C:

Map CA-2 Shore Line (pg 252) shows MRCC area boundary. The site plan of the UST arena, sidewalks and underground utilities within the MRCC area boundary

Map CA-5 Bluff & Bluff Impact Zone (pg 255) shows the proposed UST arena sits at the edge of the Bluff Impact Zone

Map CA-6 Native Plant, etc. (pg 256) show that the proposed UST area sits along the boundary of Significant Native Plant Communities and Significant Existing Vegetative Stands

In closing, I urge the Zoning Board to deny the University of St Thomas' zoning application and recommend that the University find a more suitable site to accommodate this Multi Use Arena (away from potential waterway contamination and harms) and future athletic facilities it may need for its growth and success as a D1 contender.

Supporting Attachments to email:

Data on ice arena chemical leaks

Photos from UST sink hole Nov. 2020



## Glycol Leaks

Glycol leaks can and do occur.

The Ralph Engelstad Arena, Grand Forks, ND, December 13, 2023

<https://www.grandforksherald.com/sports/und-hockey/ralph-engelstad-arena-cleaning-up-after-glycol-leak>

Northbrook Park District, Northbrook, IL, September 27, 2021

<https://www.nbparks.org/district-project-northbrook-sports-center/>

Folsom Ice Rink , Sacramento, CA (vandalism) Nov 21, 2021

<https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/folsom-ice-rink-vandalism/>

“Patsy” Di Lungo Veterans Memorial Ice Rink, East Haven, CT, March 2020

\$1.3 Million

<https://www.nhregister.com/metro/article/Ice-rink-fix-could-cost-East-Haven-1-3-million-15628850.php>

Crystal Fieldhouse Ice Arena, Burton, MI, July 10, 2018

<https://www.crystalfh.com/blog/north-rink-good-as-new>

Seymour-Hannah Sports and Entertainment Center, Niagara Falls, May 1, 2016

[https://www.niagarafallsreview.ca/news/niagara-region/four-pad-rink-closing-due-to-glycol-leak/article\\_5ced87b1-d8e1-518e-bd7b-c5b1086474c0.html](https://www.niagarafallsreview.ca/news/niagara-region/four-pad-rink-closing-due-to-glycol-leak/article_5ced87b1-d8e1-518e-bd7b-c5b1086474c0.html)

Pelham Civic Complex, Shelby County, Alabama, September 20, 2016

<https://www.shelbycountyreporter.com/2016/09/30/demolition-of-ice-arena-under-way/>

Huron County Expo Center, Bad Axe, MI, Aug 12, 2008

<https://www.michigansthumb.com/news/article/Study-uncovers-antifreeze-contamination-at-Expo-7302165.php>

Huron County Expo Center, Bad Axe, MI (cont) Sep 9, 2008

<https://www.michigansthumb.com/news/article/DEQ-Find-extent-of-antifreeze-contamination-7301252.php>

Ice Palace, Spokane, WA October 19, 2007

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2007/oct/18/leak-delays-ice-rink-opening/>

**BAD AXE** — Huron County Commissioners agreed Tuesday to pay nearly \$11,000 to determine the extent of the contamination of ethylene glycol (antifreeze) in the groundwater and soil at the Huron County Expo Center.

The move came after Robin Oeming, of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), told commissioners the county has to determine the size of the contamination plume at the fairgrounds, then proceed with site cleanup and eventually find and fix the cause of the leak.

“Get an idea of the system itself — find the leak and fix it,” Oeming told the board. “... It simply cannot be allowed in the groundwater — particularly at the fairgrounds.”

He explained the reason it’s so important to remove the ethylene glycol is because the chemical is highly dangerous to animals (only a few drops can kill a bird, and a couple spoonfuls can prove deadly for dogs), and the substance moves very quickly once mixed in the groundwater.

“Besides its toxicity to animals, (ethylene glycol) moves at least as fast as gas when it hits the ground water,” Oeming said, noting a preliminary report found the antifreeze already was present in water samples taken at the fairground this summer.

Clean up can take months and cost millions of dollars. A leak

Chemistry of Ice Skating

<https://www.chemistryislife.com/the-chemistry-of-ice-skating>

Ammonia Leaks in rinks

Town of Oyster Bay Ice Rink, Long Island, NY, January 28, 2024

<https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/hazmat-team-called-to-ammonia-spill-at-ice-rink-on-long-island/>

Oyster Bay Ice Skating Center, Long Island, Nassau January 28, 2024

<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/nassau/ice-rink-bethpage-ammonia-leak-otktfg89>

Centennial Sports Arena, Circle Pines, December 1, 2023

<https://bringmethenews.com/minnesota-news/refrigeration-failure-causes-dangerous-ammonia-leak-at-circle-pines-ice-arena>

(follow-up)

Airboat Rescues Centennial Sports Arena Ice after ammonia leak

<https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/centennial-sports-arena-ammonia-leak-airboat-saves-ice/>

Tewksbury Ice Rink, Tewksbury, MA, Aug 30, 2022

<https://www.nbcboston.com/news/local/tewksbury-rink-evacuation/2821856/>

Loring Arena, Framington, MA, March 2, 2021

<https://www.hazmatnation.com/news/hazmat-team-responds-to-loring-arena-for-ammonia-leak/>

<https://framinghamsource.com/index.php/2021/03/02/hazmat-team-responds-to-loring-arena-for-ammonia-leak/>

Fernie Memorial Arena, Fernie, B.C. Oct 18, 2017 (fatalities)

<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/inspections-training-needed-to-prevent-ammonia-leaks-at-ice-rinks-experts>

## **Ammonia: How risky is the gas that creates winter fun?**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/ammonia-rinks-gas-fernie-deadly-hockey-curling-1.4378191>





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**From:** [Michael Fellner](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Michael Fellner](#); [Charlotte Stearns](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena 2260 Summit File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 1:31:51 PM

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**To:** [PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

**FROM:** Michael Fellner and Charlotte Stearns, 1996 Fairmount, Saint Paul

**RE:** Opposition to UST Arena, 2260 Summit Avenue, St. Paul File 24-029-110

We are writing to oppose the development of a new sports arena within the University of Saint Thomas campus. We question the transparency and thoroughness of the environmental review and impact studies to date, and question whether the University and City of Saint Paul have fully considered possible alternative sites.

Much has been said about the environmental, traffic and safety issues of squeezing such a large project into the middle of UST's South Campus, adjacent to a residential neighborhood.

We focus our comments and questions on the veracity of Saint Thomas's claims about its use, the impact on the neighborhood, and the real cost and impact to the City and its taxpayers. As far as we understand, the current project would amount to a taxpayer subsidy for a tax-exempt institution, with minimal economic gain or multiplier effect for the City and its taxpayers

### **Usage Claims?**

At first, Saint Thomas claimed it would have only 1-2 capacity events a year. Then it switched its answer to 35 capacity events. The first was obviously an attempt to placate the neighborhood. The second also would appear to have been a made up number.

The Tommie's have a proud winning tradition. It is not credible to think they would join Division I and spend \$150 million on a new arena and NOT fill it continuously with paying alumni and other fans. Consider:

- a. Last season alone, UST had more than 55 home hockey and basketball games
- b. The multi-purpose arena will be used for more than winter Tommie winter sports, thus possibly increasing the large events exponentially. UST has stated the facility will be used for high school sports, concerts, conventions, and a myriad of other activities.
- c. College Division I sports is big business and requires a major commitment from wealthy boosters, alumni and fans, and the games are not mainly attended by the student body. What marketing and development plans has UST shared with the Planning Commission?
- d. UST falsely claims it wants the arena on campus so students can walk to games, when it knows that to be successful in college sports the students are not the major attendees or sources of income.

### **Economic Impact?**

UST has stated publicly that it intends the arena to “create a new community and economic asset for the Twin Cities, the state of Minnesota, and the region” If this is true, then UST is building a smaller version of the Xcel Center, and we – the taxpayers of Saint Paul – will be subsidizing this tax-exempt institution – and getting very little economic benefit.

We ask if the Planning Commission has evaluated who is going to pay for City services and infrastructure needed for such a facility owned by a wealthy non-tax payer.

In addition, what will be the impact on the area roads and infrastructure.

Has the City measured the impact of the facility if was built in a commercial area; such as on the adjacent properties to Allianz Field that are next to I-94 and other major throughfares, next to the Green Line, have more than enough parking, and have the potential to benefit existing and new businesses.

Why isn't this facility being built near Allianz Field, to make it a destination Sports complex and the City has stated is an underdeveloped area?.

Has anyone from the Planning Commission or other officials within City government met with anyone from Saint Thomas to discuss alternative sites. If so, when and what were the results of such discussions?

UST has known for at least five years (if not longer) that if it switched from Division III to Division I, it would need a new sports arena.

We hope that you consider and answer these questions before approving any development of a new UST sports arena.

Respectively submitted and thank you for your consideration,

Michael Fellner and Charlotte Stearns

**From:** [Meg Grove](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to St Thomas arena site plan application  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 12:26:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

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**RE: Project address 2260 Summit Ave**  
**File number 24-029-110**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in opposition to the site plan application for the University of St. Thomas South Campus arena.

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. This is unreasonable.

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?

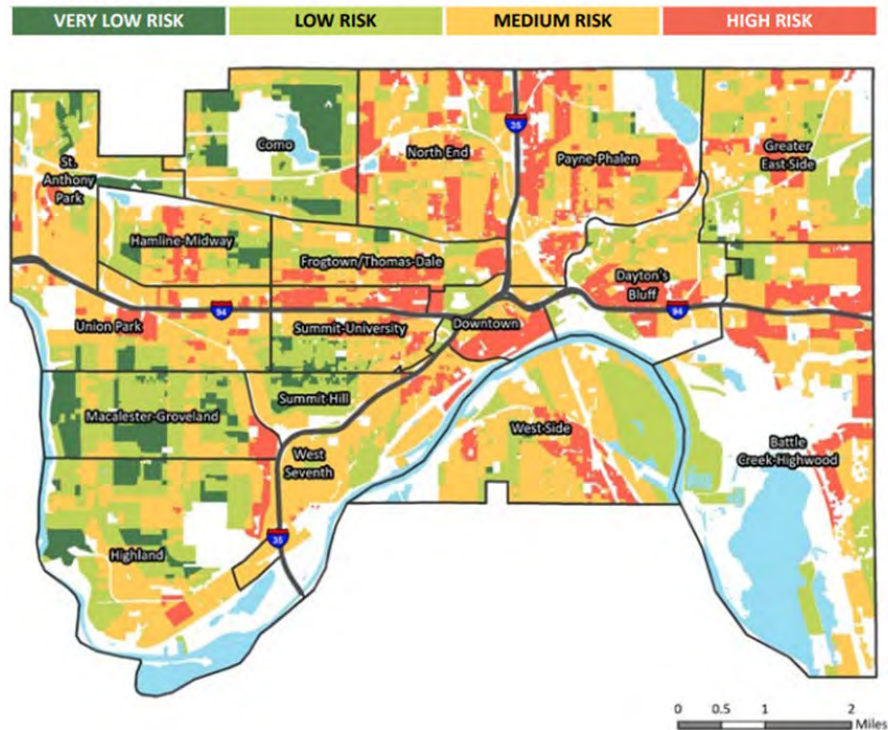
The parking issues and St. Thomas' mitigation ideas are not new. The 2004 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) signed by the City and St. Thomas contains this language; "St. Thomas agrees to explore and implement policies, such as reducing

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 increased 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, where increased vehicle traffic 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.



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 yesterday (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.

I hope you will reject the arena site plan application. 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

**From:** [Mary Halverson Waldo](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony re: UST Arena (2260 Summit), (File 24-0290110) - My reasons for opposing the site-plan  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 11:44:41 AM

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To: Esteemed members of the Zoning Committee, St Paul City Planning Commission,

Speaking as a resident living within three blocks of the proposed UST arena site (2260 Summit), (File 24-0290110), I am deeply disturbed by the report of this proposed project's negative impact on general safety, environment, property value, and overall quality of residential life.

As a senior with mobility issues I moved into this quiet, low traffic neighborhood less than two years ago feeling that I could take gentle walks around my block without fear of being hit by a car at intersections. I am now worried about the impending challenge to my own safety, as well as that of my frequently-visiting family members and grandchildren. The quiet street we now live on threatens to become a part of UST's spill-over parking plan, due to the lack of accommodation for massive numbers of drivers who will attend arena events throughout the year. *Drivers racing around on our residential streets desperately searching for parking spaces will violate the current reality of safe streets for pedestrians.*

That said, I have not even begun to address the overall *environmental impact* which threatens the larger community beyond our own street, including air and noise pollution, removal of large trees, poorly planned hydrological impacts, etc, all of which will be brought to your attention by those who are representing the voices of residents near UST, and beyond.

Finally, I am concerned that my residential property, purchased less than two years ago, will soon go down in value due to the negative impact of the UST arena. *Indeed, had I known before buying this property that such a development was being planned, I would have had serious doubts about moving into this neighborhood.*

Sincerely yours,

Mary Halverson Waldo  
2244 Sargent Avenue  
St Paul, MN 55105

To: The Planning Commission and Zoning Committee  
From: Marguerite Hattouni Spencer  
Re: UST Site Plan (File 24-029-110 at 2260 Summit Avenue)  
Date: April 22, 2024

I am writing to request that you uphold ARD's appeal and deny UST's site plan for the following three reasons:

1. I have lived in my home since 1990 and I have seen UST expand to the seminary property, add new buildings, and create new living spaces in a positive and respectful manner. The UST site plan is neither. In fact, it is aggressive and disrespectful.
2. The Mississippi River and its surroundings are dear to me. I grew up in lower Northeast Minneapolis along the same River and I treasure its enduring beauty and symbolism. The UST site plan will cause unnecessary and permanent damage to this living body, its wild life, and surrounding trees and plants.
3. The footprint of the facility, the veiled number of full-capacity events, and the anticipated vehicular traffic are absolutely untenable in a neighborhood like ours. To date, UST has made many modifications to its construction projects to maintain their proportionality to the area. This project is grossly disproportionate.

As a neighbor, property owner, and professor of over 30 years at UST, I strongly urge you to deny UST the right to build their facility in this residential area near our beautiful Mississippi River.

Respectfully,  
Marguerite Hattouni Spencer, M.A., J.D.  
Senior Adjunct Faculty in Theology - UST  
2117 Dayton Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
[mlspencer@stthomas.edu](mailto:mlspencer@stthomas.edu)



**From:** [Miriam](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 3:59:44 PM

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**Project address: 2260 Summit**

**File number: 24-029-110**

Dear Zoning Committee,

As a long-time neighbor of UST I have great concerns about the proposed stadium on the South Campus. My major concern is for the safety of all who reside on the blocks adjacent to UST, including members of UST's own community. On my block alone, we have a number of Senior Citizens, a person who always uses a wheelchair and several toddlers. With the Arena, I sense that it will only be a matter of time before something tragic occurs as hundreds of people, many distracted and in full party-mode, drive down the adjacent streets looking for non-existent parking.

Other concerns center on traffic, such as

1. The traffic and parking on the surrounding residential streets will be unmanageable and doubly so in Winter when snow and ice build up. We have for years had to institute (and pay for, on top of our city taxes) Permit Parking due to the many UST students who drive to campus daily and jostle to secure free, on-street parking.
2. Since the increase in traffic brought on by the recent Highland Bridge project, there is already often a very long wait to turn onto Cretin from the side streets that border UST.
3. With thousands of spectators driving to the arena, there will not be adequate space for emergency vehicles to navigate.

Still other of these concerns are environmental, such as

1. the emissions and possible leaching out of toxic chemicals from the ice surface (think 3M and their Forever Chemicals).
2. The tearing down of three historic buildings, especially the beautiful Cretin residence, designed by Cass Gilbert.
3. The disappearance, piece-by-piece, of greenspace that we all treasure.
4. The needless removal of dozens of mature trees which provide shade, habitat and the look and feel of a cohesive neighborhood.

Please support our community's efforts by digging deeper into this poorly thought-through arena plan.

Thank you,

Miriam Simons 22XX block Princeton Avenue

**From:** [Murray Thurston](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summitt Ave. File: 24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 5:07:59 PM

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To Whom Must be Concerned:

I write in opposition to the proposed arena at 2260 Summit Avenue.

It was 31 years ago today that my bride and I closed on our purchase of 200 Mt. Curve Blvd. Later, that evening we were married in our new living room.

The St. Thomas campus is to our North. At the other end of Cretin Ave. was a major manufacturing facility. Not once in thirty years did the Ford plant intrude into our neighborhood or lives. It is telling that the same could not be said about the quaint, small college campus. It intruded despite my attempts to build a good fence to assure a good neighbor.

I share a distaste for reactionary NIMBY attitudes. In this case, the small college campus neighbor has consumed steroids becoming a soul less exaggeration of its former self and is attempting to consume our community. It has transformed.

My greatest concern is traffic on Cretin Avenue and on the neighborhood streets. Traffic flow on Cretin has increased over the thirty years. Cleveland Avenue was changed to a one-lane street. Cretin is the only North-South street between Highland Bridge and Interstate 94. Injecting the 5,500 person arena and its traffic into the middle will further restrict our ability to enter the rest of St. Paul. Passage of emergency vehicles will become impossible when the chance of incident is greatest. Side streets will only be as passable for emergency response as the restricting vehicle ahead is able to move.

Decades ago chose to live in this community rather than Dinkytown. We have contributed to the maintenance of our community. Is it too much to ask that we not live in Dinkytown East?

Thank you for your serious consideration of these concerns.  
Murray Thurston  
200 Mt. Curve Blvd

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [M.T](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [torre009@umn.edu](mailto:torre009@umn.edu)  
**Subject:** Statement in Opposition to the Construction of the UST Sports Arena in Saint Paul  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 1:04:41 PM

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Dear members of the Zoning committee,

**Project address:** 2260 Summit Ave

**File number:** 24-029-110

As concerned citizens of Saint Paul, we stand in firm opposition to the proposed construction of the UST sports arena within our community. While we understand the potential benefits such a development might bring, we cannot ignore the significant concerns regarding the inevitable surge in traffic that would accompany its establishment. Our apprehension stems from several key factors:

- 1. Congestion Overload:** The addition of a sports arena in our already bustling neighborhood is bound to exacerbate the existing problem of traffic congestion. Saint Paul's roads are already strained during peak hours, and the influx of vehicles heading to and from the arena would only compound this issue. Residents and businesses alike would suffer from longer commute times, increased frustration, and decreased accessibility to essential services.
- 2. Impact of Zoning Changes:** The recent changes in zoning along Marshall Ave, from single-family to multi-family homes, have already begun to strain our transportation infrastructure. This shift has led to an increase in residential density, resulting in more vehicles navigating our streets daily. The construction of the UST sports arena would only further amplify this strain, exacerbating the congestion and making it even more challenging for residents to travel safely and efficiently.
- 3. Ford Development:** The ongoing development at the Ford site presents another significant challenge to our community's transportation network. As construction progresses and new residents and businesses move into the area, we anticipate a considerable uptick in traffic volume. When combined with the traffic generated by the proposed sports arena, the result would be an untenable situation for our already overwhelmed streets and intersections.
- 4. Inadequate Public Transportation:** Compounding these challenges is the low quality of public transportation in our city. Saint Paul's current transit infrastructure is insufficient to meet the needs of our growing population, forcing many residents to rely on automobiles for their daily commute. Without a viable alternative to driving, the construction of the UST sports arena would only further incentivize car usage, exacerbating traffic congestion and environmental degradation.
- 5. Parking Challenges:** The area surrounding UST already faces significant parking challenges, particularly during events hosted by the campus. Residents often struggle to find parking spots near their homes, and incidents such as vehicles blocking driveways during football games further exacerbate the issue. The addition of the sports arena would undoubtedly exacerbate these parking challenges, leading to increased frustration and inconvenience for residents.

Considering these pressing concerns, we urge the authorities to reconsider the construction of the UST sports arena in Saint Paul. While we recognize the importance of fostering athletic

and community engagement, it should not come at the expense of our residents' well-being and the sustainability of our neighborhood. We call for a thorough reassessment of alternative locations, the implementation of robust traffic mitigation measures, and a significant investment in improving public transportation to address the adverse impacts of increased traffic before any further steps are taken towards this project.

Maurilio e Sheila Torres  
26 Mississippi River Blvd N  
Stain Paul, MN 55104

**From:** [Peggy Ladner](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST arena plan  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 4:52:11 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to register my opposition to the siting of UST's planned large arena (2260 Summit, file # 24-029-110) adjacent to a residential neighborhood. My primary objection is the lack of adequate parking, which will result in too many cars in the neighborhood. I also think the additional noise from the stadium will be problematic. Given the very disappointing history of UST not adequately planning and not being forthright about its plans, I do not trust UST to limit events at this new venue and do what is best for the neighborhood.

Sincerely,  
Peggy Ladner  
1980 Goodrich Avenue  
Saint Paul

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Patrice Werner](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Arena project address (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110)  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 10:00:04 PM

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Project address (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110)

To Whom it may concern,

I have shared Goodrich Avenue with UST for more than 30 years. I raised my family here. The money through endowments that UST receives has profoundly changed UST's campus and my neighborhood. Further, the arena project has been steamrolled through the building/permit process. Whatever were they thinking? Fortunately, our neighborhood has taken action.

The project will profoundly affect our quality of life. Will my home lose value because of your encroachment? With new exposure to our neighborhood, crime will rise. Frequently, I have to dismiss cars w/o permits. How are those 7,000 people going to get to the arena? Where will they park? How will the city and UST redesign signals and traffic flow? Where will those buses park? (Buses do park on Goodrich now. There can't be more.) The environmental issues need to be considered in the permit/building process.

It's no secret that the neighborhoods surrounding the campus have strong negative feelings about UST. You are the bully. It's a tragedy.

Please, do the right thing and demand further study. Be cognizant and enforce the laws that protect our community's quality of life.

Respectively Submitted,

Patrice Egan Werner  
2240 Goodrich Avenue  
96510214-3007

2164 Princeton Ave  
St Paul, MN 55105  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024

Re: Zoning File Number: unknown, Project: UST Multipurpose Arena, 2260 Summit Ave.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write in support of the appeal by Advocates for Responsible Development (ARD) against the administrative approval of a site plan submitted by the University of St. Thomas to construct a 5500 capacity arena on its St Paul campus. In addition to agreeing with the points raised by ARD, I want to emphasize the following concerns my wife and I have:

1. With 5500 attendees, even assuming a generous 3 per vehicle, would require parking for over 1800 vehicles. With staff and participants that could easily surpass 2000 vehicles. Yet St Thomas is reducing parking on campus.
2. We live in a residential neighborhood with limited on-street parking. Area 22 where we live has a maximum of about 500 on street parking spots, half that on snow emergencies. (11950' legally available; 23' per vehicle per standard => 506 vehicles.) Of the other areas adjoining the south campus, both the area south of campus and the area to the north have much less. We could easily see virtually no on street parking being available for residents, visitors or emergency vehicles.
3. Road capacity for access to the stadium is limited, esp Cretin Ave from I-94. Taken in conjunction with the unfinished Highland Bridge development, it is clear the roads around the arena site will be inadequate for the volume of traffic leading to major inconvenience and potentially dangerous situations.
4. It is clear St Thomas has been less than candid about the implications for this development. What else don't we know?

Your sincerely,  
Rob Bell.

Boehm Heating  
1598 Selby Ave  
St Paul, MN  
55104



Russ and Kathy Adams  
2236 Goodrich Avenue

Attention: Zoning Committee  
Regarding Project @ 2260 Summit; File # 24-029-110

We are writing to express and document our opposition to the UST arena at 2260 Summit; File # 24-029-110. Our opposition is primarily focused on our concern for neighborhood safety, pedestrian safety, traffic management and parking hardships for local tenants and homeowners. None of these issues have been adequately addressed by the University of St. Thomas in any of their site plan documents. UST's plans to monitor traffic and parking after the arena is built are clearly not acceptable.

We are also concerned about the impending impacts on the environment, including pollution of the river bluff, greenhouse gases and rerouting of groundwater flows. These environmental concerns will be driven by both the arena itself and the significant increase in area traffic. These issues are in direct conflict with city and state current and long term objectives.

We ask that the committee take these issues, along with those expressed by others, into consideration, when deliberating the future of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Russ and Kathy Adams

**From:** [Riley Kane](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Stadium File #24-029-110, Project Address: 2260 Summit Ave.  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 8:58:21 PM

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Hello members of the St. Paul Zoning Committee,

I am not a NIMBY. I am not a UST-hater. But I am concerned.

UST has grown as an institution, and I applaud them for that. To be honest, there have been a fair share of neighborhood/UST disputes over my 20 years living here, but one way or the other, things work out or we just learn to live with it.

THIS THOUGH...

Wedging a giant stadium into a neighborhood where your only plan for what is going to be a traffic, parking and pedestrian safety debacle -- is, quite literally, "we'll figure it out after we build it?! (Others I'm sure will speak to the environmental impacts of a stadium this size being so close to the river, so I'll leave that for others.)

I think if you lived in this area, you may be concerned too.

I genuinely don't understand why UST is reluctant to do a thorough and **independent** traffic demand assessment. This would show such good faith to the neighbors. Why not do it? What is there to lose?

Why?

The fact is, this stadium is going to be a cash cow for UST's Division One demographic. It's going to be used A LOT, by them, and others, for all kinds of events. And all with little relevance to anyone but their mostly white, privileged demographic.

I beg you to pump the brakes a bit on this so everyone can figure out the real effects of this stadium, in this particular location. A smaller stadium? A different location? Parking restrictions for surrounding streets? These all seem worth debating.

Thank you for considering this,

Riley Kane  
2149 Fairmount Ave., St. Paul

File #24-029-110  
Project Address of 2260 Summit Ave.

**From:** [joy knopp](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Project address:2260 Summit Avenue, File #24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 7:15:22 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee,

I am writing in regards to the proposed building of the St Thomas arena.

I am an alumnus and donor of St Thomas University and while I am grateful for the education I received from them,

I am disappointed that they have chosen to build this arena on the site of the campus. With the increased need for parking for groups attending the myriad of events that will be hosted there, there is insufficient parking. Neighborhood street parking will be the only other option. This means using parking spaces used by owners of these neighborhood homes. This is not acceptable. In addition, the noise level in our quiet neighborhood will also become an issue.

St Thomas needs to consider the effects of this stadium on the neighborhood that they reside in.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Robert Knopp  
222 Woodlawn Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Russ Loomis](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** UST Arena --- 2260 Summit --- File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 10:58:03 AM

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I'm writing to voice concerns about UST Arena Development. It seems that the UST is moving forward without following many aspects of the CUP and in violation of the most recently granted CUP.

Parking...construction has or will take away 400-600 parking places. No plan to replace these has been submitted.

No plan for transportation and parking has been suggested to handle such large additional Vehicle needs.

The UST site plan did not include a Traffic Demand Management Study.

No variance for height of Arena (75 feet) max 40 feet per zoning code.

Drive onto Goodrich from Binz Refectory should have been removed a year ago. No permit for this has been granted for it to stay.

Multiple Environmental issues have not been properly addressed or studied.

Need for multiple variances has not been submitted to the neighborhood for review.

Please address the above requirements before any UST Arena construction continues in any way.

Russ Loomis  
2237 Princeton Ave, St Paul, MN 55105



**From:** [Robert Metcalf](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org); [Julie Conzemius](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas University Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:29:00 PM

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Hello,

Robert Metcalf here, 197 Woodlawn Ave, St. Paul, MN 55105.

This is in regards to 2260 Summit Ave and file number 24-029-110.

**I am in strong opposition to the multipurpose arena St. Thomas is building.**

I implore upon the zoning commission that you stop the arena development until all issues are resolved.

Below are my objections to continuing with the arena development.

1. **No representation without taxation.** As a non-tax payer, St. Thomas forces the neighborhood to incur expenses and burden (crowds, environmental, fiscal, parking, and time) without the neighborhood having any say.
2. **Parking.** St. Thomas decreased parking supply, increased parking demand, and pushed parking to the neighborhood. This is an untenable situation. They did it because they can and they were circumspect with forthcoming information.
3. **Environmental.** We live in a high-density neighborhood on the Mississippi river. St. Thomas is building a large building in a tight space. The influx of people, cars, emissions, construction materials and traffic, and long-lasting chemical concerns (ice sheets consume and emit lots of chemicals) are a huge concern to most in this neighborhood.
4. **Quality of life.** The neighborhood is negatively impacted by St. Thomas' actions. Pushing crowds, traffic, and environmental concerns into the neighborhood has a detrimental effect on everyone in the neighborhood.
5. **Property value and taxes.** St. Thomas said in 2015 (roughly) they were not going to be a Division I team. That decision was reversed, which is their option. No one would be concerned if they build the arena in a more suitable area, such as 94 and Cretin-Vandalia, or north of University Ave in an industrial area. A large, intrusive arena in the middle of a 100+ year old neighborhood is likely to push down property values while the city's goal is to increase property tax. You can't have both. This destroys the fiscal foundation of many people in this neighborhood.
6. **Day-to-day life.** The reduction in existing parking spaces has pushed people to park in front of our house all day, every day. Prior to St. Thomas removing the parking spaces, we and friends were able to park in front of our house - there was minimal outside (non-neighborhood) parking. I am concerned there will be an overflow of parking in the neighborhood once the arena is complete. The building will not sit empty outside of game days. It takes a sizable crew to maintain the facilities.
7. **Rowdy crowds.** You can take this to the bank. At the first sign of rowdy, loud, misbehaving crowds, or parking incursions, there will be non-stop communication from the neighborhood to anyone and everyone at St. Thomas, regardless of the hour. The request will be for St. Thomas to intervene, stop the incursion, and get things under control.

Thank you and regards,

Robert Metcalf  
[robert@metcal.com](mailto:robert@metcal.com)  
612-386-0440

**From:** [Ray Skowyra](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Our opposition to proposed new UST arena  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 2:49:23 PM

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We are writing to express our opposition to the arena project at 2260 Summit Ave.,  
File 24-029-110.

We have lived across from the south campus for over 40 years, so obviously have seen considerable change and growth. For the most part we support what UST has done. We even enjoy the Saturday afternoon crowds and parking issues associated with football games. It's only a few weekends in the fall and it's festive. This proposed arena is different. It's dozens of events, mostly at night, with hundreds of cars parking all over the neighborhood. It would be highly disruptive to everyone living nearby. This facility should not be force-fitted into a residential neighborhood, it should be put somewhere else where it could work.

Sincerely,

Marianne Short and Ray Skowyra  
2215 Summit Ave.

Sent from my iPhone  
1.651.261.0096

**From:** [Susan Bauer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** File 24-029-110, 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:48:36 AM

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Dear Zoning Committee:

I am writing to you to express my concerns about the Arena.

I have lived in this neighborhood for 38 years. And I am against St. Thomas building their Arena on the college campus for many reasons. I am choosing to focus on just one reason.

The development of Highland Bridge has congested the through streets of Cretin and Cleveland Avenues. Most streets surrounding the campus are permitted parking. So where will the participants of the Arena park now? In other words, the neighborhood streets are **already crowded**. The arena will surely intensify the problem. We all know that St. Thomas can find another more suitable location for this Arena. They have endless resources.

Thank you for your time.

Susan P. Bauer  
2108 James & Cleveland



**From:** [Sarah Davis](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: St. Thomas proposed arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 12:45:23 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee:

I'm writing to say that I strongly disagree with the St. Thomas arena plans.

Once again, what makes St. Paul so beautiful and treasured is up for grabs.

Yes, St. Thomas owns the land. But they don't own the neighborhood. Or do they?

Far too many St. Thomas students walk across the street - faces glued to their

phones - seemingly oblivious to the current traffic or to what a beautiful neighborhood their

school is in. And sure, maybe that's fine, their stay is temporary.

But as a resident of St. Paul since 1978 - I do pay attention to traffic and to the beautiful neighborhoods and surrounding nature.

Stand on Cretin Avenue at various times of day and you'll get a sense of the car exhaust - now! Plenty!

Walk along Mississippi River Blvd. from Randolph to Summit and you'll be reminded of what

is so special about this area. I do many times a week and see countless others enjoying it as I do.

St. Thomas is a school, not a sports company. It's one thing to build new buildings

to replace the old, another to turn a peaceful neighborhood into a sports center.

It's time for city government to have a broader vision. AND for proposed projects to face more scrutiny.

The wise man who wrote the letter to the newspaper about the Starbucks on Snelling/Marshall was so right.

Learn from the smaller examples. Please.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sarah Brion Davis

**From:** [Sarah Ayres](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** File 24-029-110, 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 5:38:58 PM

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To the Zoning Committee,

As neighbors of St. Thomas University, we feel strongly that building a large arena among well established St. Paul neighborhoods would create a disruptive and troubling situation. There is no parking ramp or lot planned for in the arena design, leaving potentially hundreds of cars and buses vying for parking during events. Already the noise, the heavy trucks coming and going from the construction site, the dust and fumes are noticeable and unpleasant. We worry about how a project of this breadth- its footprint, environmental implications, and more-will impact the integrity of St. Thomas University and its lovely campus, and its status as an important institution in the twin cities, and beyond.

Thank you for your attention. We hope our voices, and those of others like us might change your minds, and re-site this project.

Best wishes,  
Sarah Haugen  
2062 Berkeley Avenue

Anne Brokaw  
2119 Berkeley Avenue

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Susan Wolkerstorfer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Zoning Committee/Planning Commission testimonial/#24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 9:36:42 PM

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(This version of the letter includes Susan's middle initial; "J. Terrence Wolkerstorfer" is husband's full ID as used by the IRS, our financial institutions and the voting registry.)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Susan Wolkerstorfer <suwolk@gmail.com>  
**Date:** April 22, 2024 at 10:14:52 PM EDT  
**To:** ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us  
**Subject:** Zoning Committee/Planning Commission testimonial/#24-029-110

TO: St. Paul Zoning Committee  
and Planning Commission

FROM: Susan L. Wolkerstorfer  
and J. Terrence Wolkerstorfer  
2159 Princeton Ave., St. Paul 55105

RE: File No. 24-029-110

PROJECT ADDRESS: 2260 Summit Ave., St Paul

We have lived in Macalester-Groveland near the University of St. Thomas for more than 40 years. We didn't attend the university, but we have provided ongoing financial support for several organizations based there.

Despite our admiration for St. Thomas, we have serious concerns about its latest plans to erect a Division 1 sports arena on campus in the midst of a residential neighborhood and so close to the Mississippi River.

It is our sense that the environmental assessment for this project did not take into account the full impact of factors such as new traffic, additional demands on street parking, air pollution and loss of wildlife habitat. The Mississippi River Gorge and the neighbors in Mac-Groveland deserve to have these issues addressed in a full Environmental Impact Statement. Construction should not be allowed to proceed without a full-fledged EIS.

**From:** [SUSAN MEISKE](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, File 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 12:39:37 PM

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From; Susan Meiske

2085 Lincoln Ave. St. Paul, Mn. 55105

I am briefly submitting my concerns for the University of St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena. As a 20 year resident of Macalester Groveland, and a 16 year resident of Highland Park, I have tolerated changes and developments that have occurred with the University of St. Thomas through my tenure. It appears the University has considered their additions and modifications with the surrounding neighborhood and environment in the past. However, this latest project is very concerning. Not only for me and my neighbors, but the surrounding community. I question the thought, consideration, and research that UST has done for this project.

My first concern is the amount of car, pedestrian, and bike traffic on the adjacent streets to the arena. Safety is a primary issue. Physically there is no room to accommodate future traffic on the main thoroughfares in Macalester Groveland and Highland Park. There is no room to expand Cretin, Grand, and Summit. These areas are not property of St. Thomas. Also, it is important to consider the current Ford Plant development with this increasing traffic.

I understand that there will be little or no additional parking for the arena which means the overflow will have to be accommodated off of the main streets. Parking is already at a premium. The situation will only get worse with the addition of this. Cleveland Avenue no longer has parking on its street. With the additional future work of Summit Avenue, more parking will be eliminated.

The ARD has gone into great detail that the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the proposed arena will affect the Mississippi River environment as well as the esthetics of the natural areas and the residential community.

Please strongly consider the concerns of the residents and the rest of the surrounding community.



**From:** [suzie\\_olson](#)  
**To:** [\\*Cl-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: University of St. Thomas Arena Comments  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:54:15 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee,

I am writing to add my voice in opposition to the Hockey/Basketball Arena proposed by St. Thomas. I am a resident living 3 blocks away from the proposed site and have lived in my home for 16 years. From my small, personal experience living within the reach of UST, I have experienced continued challenges with the University not having any comprehensive parking plan for their students and faculty. We live with not being able to park in front of our homes, blatant disregard for snow emergencies and street cleaning, constant littering and an entitled attitude that they are more important than the residents. I realize this is a small problem, but I bring it up as I believe it reflects the attitude of UST as they have bulldozed their agenda over the voices of the neighborhood they continue to invade. Now onto the broader and more important issues to be addressed.

The Zoning Appeal from Daniel Kennedy, on behalf of the Advocates for Responsible Development, has laid out in great detail the objections being presented as reasons to stop the arena from being built. Hopefully, you have read in detail these issues. If so, it seems incomprehensible to me that anyone could allow the arena to be built. Here, in brief, are some enormous issues:

1. Environmental - the Mississippi River is a protected area. How can that be allowed?
2. Setting - Many violations of the current laws in place.
3. Traffic - that intersection on Grand and Cretin narrows into one line right at that intersection. It's a disaster waiting to happen. Add to that students not always paying attention and heading into an area where lanes are narrowing and probably many cars unfamiliar with the area.
3. Number of events per year and impact on the area.
4. Summit Avenue - a national treasure! It will surely change the feel and image of that beautiful street.
5. Parking - How can an arena of that size be allowed to be built with absolutely no parking plan. There is a limit of what the neighborhood should have to put up with. Our permit parking will have to expand to nights and weekends, meaning no one can ever visit? Who should have to live like this?
6. Alternative Sites - I know several other sites are proposed to UST for consideration. Of course they prefer an on campus site, but they exist in a residential neighborhood and there needs to be awareness.

I believe the University of St. Thomas is a great school. However, they are not great neighbors and it's personally shocking to me that their plan could be allowed to proceed with the number of violations, poorly thought out plans and clear attempts to pull the wool over everyone's eyes in hopes that they can do as they please. I dearly hope the City of St. Paul will clearly see that there are viable options for UST and put a stop to the current arena plan.

Thank you,  
Suzie Olson  
2116 Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

File # 24-029-110  
Property Address 2260 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN



On Sun, Apr 21, 2024 at 5:09 PM suzie\_olson <[solson49@gmail.com](mailto:solson49@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Zoning Committee,

I am writing to add my voice in opposition to the Hockey/Basketball Arena proposed by St. Thomas. I am a resident living 3 blocks away from the proposed site and have lived in my home for 16 years. From my small, personal experience living within the reach of UST, I have experienced continued challenges with the University not having any comprehensive parking plan for their students and faculty. We live with not being able to park in front of our homes, blatant disregard for snow emergencies and street cleaning, constant littering and an entitled attitude that they are more important than the residents. I realize this is a small problem, but I bring it up as I believe it reflects the attitude of UST as they have bulldozed their agenda over the voices of the neighborhood they continue to invade. Now onto the broader and more important issues to be addressed.

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I believe the University of St. Thomas is a great school. However, they are not great neighbors and it's personally shocking to me that their plan could be allowed to proceed with the number of violations, poorly thought out plans and clear attempts to pull the wool over everyone's eyes in hopes that they can do as they please. I dearly hope the City of St. Paul will clearly see that there are viable options for UST and put a stop to the current arena plan.

Thank you,  
Suzie Olson  
2116 Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [suzie\\_olson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** University of St. Thomas Hockey/Basketball Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 5:20:01 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee,

I am writing to add my voice in opposition to the Hockey/Basketball Arena proposed by St. Thomas. I am a resident living 3 blocks away from the proposed site and have lived in my home for 16 years. From my small, personal experience living within the reach of UST, I have experienced continued challenges with the University not having any comprehensive parking plan for their students and faculty. We live with not being able to park in front of our homes, blatant disregard for snow emergencies and street cleaning, constant littering and an entitled attitude that they are more important than the residents. I realize this is a small problem, but I bring it up as I believe it reflects the attitude of UST as they have bulldozed their agenda over the voices of the neighborhood they continue to invade. Now onto the broader and more important issues to be addressed.

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Thank you,  
Suzie Olson  
2116 Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105



City of St Paul  
Planning Commission Testimonial

Steve Sikora  
173 Montrose Place  
St Paul, MN 55104

April 21, 2024

Project address: 2260 Summit Ave. St Paul, MN  
Zoning file number: 24-029-110

To the St Paul Planning Commission,

Among its many omissions, the University of St Thomas failed to disclose two environmental risks in sections; 13 (Contamination/Hazardous Materials/Wastes) and 22 (Other Potential Environmental Effects) of the UST Findings of Fact document. Likewise, the Environmental Assessment Worksheet is mute on the potential threats posed by Ammonia and Glycol, both used as refrigerants in the ice chilling system, and both subject to hazardous leaks. Thousands of gallons of refrigerant are used in ice rinks. This arena will have two rinks. When reviewing any rink site, the consequences of inadvertent leakage need to be considered, but given its proximity to the Mississippi, indeed, straddling an active ravine, common sense alone should disqualify the site as environmentally vulnerable.

The Mississippi River Gorge is designated as the “Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area” by the DNR. To the National Park Service it’s enshrined as the “Mississippi River & Recreation Area Minnesota.” The river gorge is part of the “Mississippi Flyway,” used by 325 bird species and approximately 40% of all waterfowl in North America. There is no over-stating the critical nature of this singular, fragile resource. To chance a toxic spill here is as incomprehensible and it is unconscionable.

#### Ammonia

Ammonia is a common refrigerant used in ice arenas. It is highly toxic, and ice arenas are subject to leaks. A single rink chiller uses thousands of gallons. Ammonia leaks can be in liquid or gaseous form, both are potentially deadly.

Liquid ammonia is a common cause of fish kills. Ammonia gas leaks inside a rink have been fatal to humans.<sup>1</sup>

#### Glycol

Ethylene glycol is commonly used in automotive antifreeze. It serves a similar purpose in ice arenas where it is used to lower the freezing point in the chiller system.

Short-term exposure from the oral intake of ethylene glycol (in increasingly large doses) can cause vomiting, drowsiness, coma, respiratory failure, convulsions, cardiopulmonary effects, and kidney and brain damage. The immediate effects of exposure to high concentrations of ethylene glycol can cause death to animals, birds or fish. <sup>2</sup>.

Ice arenas require massive amounts of these chemicals. While one could argue that all ice rinks and arenas are subject to the perils of potential leaks consider this:

- I. The arena is sited atop a bluff, in close proximity to the Mississippi River.
- II. It is sited just feet from an active drainage ravine (aka The Grotto), which flows directly into the river.
- III. Leaks are more common than you might think. They can put arenas out of service for months, cost millions of dollars to remediate and they can kill people and wildlife. (See list of recent glycol and ammonia leaks below)

Documented ethyl glycol leaks in arenas:

The Ralph Engelstad Arena, Grand Forks, ND, December 13, 2023  
Northbrook Park District, Northbrook, IL, September 27, 2021  
Folsom Ice Rink, Sacramento, CA (vandalism) Nov 21, 2021  
“Patsy” Di Lungo Veterans Memorial Ice Rink, East Haven, CT, March 2020  
Crystal Fieldhouse Ice Arena, Burton, MI, July 10, 2018  
Seymour-Hannah Sports and Entertainment Center, Niagara Falls, May 1, 2016  
Pelham Civic Complex, Shelby County, Alabama, September 20, 2016  
Huron County Expo Center, Bad Axe, MI, Aug 12, 2008  
Ice Palace, Spokane, WA October 19, 2007

Documented ammonia leaks in arenas:

Oyster Bay Ice Skating Center, Long Island, Nassau January 28, 2024  
Centennial Sports Arena, Circle Pines, December 1, 2023  
Tewksbury Ice Rink, Tewksbury, MA, Aug 30, 2022  
Loring Arena, Framington, MA, March 2, 2021  
Fernie Memorial Arena, Fernie, B.C. Oct 18, 2017 (fatalities)

The UST campus has a dynamic water table underlying it. Historical maps show vast swamplands on the former Finn Farm property. Between 1887 and 1910 a swampy area of the UST campus was dammed into a small lake. Lake Mennith was large enough to sail on. Shadow Falls neighbors will tell you anecdotally that over past decades ground water flow has been redirected with every new campus building, forcing residents to install sump pumps, when they never experienced water problems before. Take a look today at the lawn between the Seminary and Mississippi River Blvd. Since construction of the Schoenecker center it has become so saturated it won't support grass. Mature trees are dying there too.



**When it comes time for the City of St Paul Planning Commission to reach a determination on whether or not to grant a permit, complete and accurate environmental data is critical. In that regard, the current EAW is far from adequate. And as one would expect, the approved plan set is no better. While the Capitol Region Watershed District focused considerable attention on the management of precipitation runoff from the impervious surfaces including the arena roof and pavement, it did not look at groundwater. For instance, it certainly did not consider the consequences of a chemical leak; particularly if it reached one of the two water tables or simply washed downhill by the natural spring, which the DNR has documented on site. The year-round active spring runs into the grotto ravine. That ravine drains directly into the river. The study that was done by American Engineering Testing, which was used by the Capitol Watershed District to permit the site, focused primarily on the stability of the soil and bedrock, which is another issue (unstable soils and Decorah shale bedrock which expands and contracts in the presence or absence of water; a potentially unstable support beneath the concrete slabs that compose the rinks. If the slabs heave and crack refrigerant leaks will occur and will run into the river before anyone knows they occurred.) A thorough, independent Environmental Impact Statement is mandatory. Better yet, a more suitable site far from the Mississippi would be less of a gamble for the environment.**

1. ISSUU North American Guide to Natural Refrigerants in Ice Arenas

<https://www.dccew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/substances/fact-sheets/ethylene-glycol-12-ethanediol>

2. CDC.gov Ethylene Glycol Public Health Statement

<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp96-c1.pdf>

**From:** [STEWART STONE](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas arena proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 9:57:31 AM

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Hello:

I am writing to express opposition to the arena that the University of St. Thomas is proposing. There is simply not enough room to build an arena of that size in the space available. The construction process has begun, but it is not too late to stop it and force the university to reconsider their options. It is too much of a load to put on the neighborhood, since the parking will need to overflow onto our residential streets.

We are concerned about safety, traffic efficiency, and quality of life - all of which will be compromised with this project.

Thank you for your consideration. Let's please re-examine the zoning and impacts of this building.

Sincerely,

Stewart Stone  
210 Woodlawn Avenue

Project number 24-029-110  
Project address: 2260 Summit Avenue

Sent from [Outlook](#)

22 April 2024

To Whom It May Concern regarding (2260 Summit), file number (File 24-029-110,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed UST sports complex. I am not averse to sporting events, it's the placement of this large events venue that concerns me.

Natural resources are often overlooked in the name of "advancement" and "progress". The Mississippi River corridor, and its beauty and importance should not be one of these. Its nearby underground springs and drainage routes (most of which we are largely ignorant of) , its importance to migratory birds, its benefits as a corridor for other wildlife....can't we consider all of these 'lesser' but much more important factors.

Habitat loss has already occurred in the demolition of the large chimney belonging to the classical brick building in the proposed building area. Migrating Chimney Swifts, a threatened species, used that chimney as a nesting and roosting spot. Nobody seems to care about this, but with the growing crisis of climate change, shouldn't we be protecting our wildlife and natural resources more than ever? (Birds can't control climate change but humans can.)

Secondarily, neighbors who live very close to the proposed building site have pointed out that many spectators will be coming to watch these events and parking and air pollution will become an issue. Why try to pack in so much in such a small and beautifully natural space that is surrounded by residential tranquility? You have an amazing urban neighborhood just north of you that has even better transportation access for visiting fans and competitors, and is zoned light industrial. The Creative Enterprise Zone would be very convenient to students on the UST campus (just take the Metro 87 bus), bike, or walk. (Most UST students seem to own a car anyways.) There is plenty of space that has already been cleared and paved. What about the old train depot?

Come on, UST. Show us your Christian principles and love the creation that we have been gifted by God. Too soon it will be gone.

Respectfully,

Susan Willis  
2115 Roblyn Ave  
St Paul, MN 55104

**From:** [Sarah Wisner](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St Thomas stadium File #24-029-110 Project address of 2260 Summit Ave  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 12:04:29 PM

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Hello,

I'm writing as a mother out of concern for the new stadium negative impacts on the neighborhood children and families. We've lived in our house on Fairmount Avenue just off Cretin Ave since October of 2001 through many changes and expansions of the St Thomas campus. There have been some disruptions and readjustments with past campus expansions but overall nothing that has had major lasting impacts that effect the quality of life of the long term families/residents of this neighborhood. Our area has many small children and more moving in every day and I believe their health and safety will be compromised by this massive stadium in many ways.

One is the health and environmental impact to people and wildlife and old growth trees and the river. The air quality from the amount of vehicle exhaust from traffic from extra cars, idling vender trucks, cleanup trucks and cars, and traffic on an already difficult to cross Cretin Ave due to increased traffic from the Ford plant development. There will be large amounts of waste/garbage, littering, broken glass (dangerous also for our dogs paws) which this neighborhood has already experienced and we continually need to clean up in our front yards from students living and passing though the neighborhood, which will certainly increase with the stadium events.

Another is physical safety of our families/residents. Our neighbor was recently hit by a car and received body and head injuries with longterm health consequences. The added traffic will certainly add to these incidents, especially with children playing outdoors, and worse during winter months when its dark after 5pm. We've already witnessed students speeding down our streets, disruptive parties and add in drinking with these events and that could become quite dangerous.

Other urban universities like DePaul University which is located in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Chicago have built large stadiums (Wintrust Arena) off campus in more appropriate locations that can absorb traffic and parking needs. St Paul certainly has other more appropriate locations that could accommodate the large St Thomas stadium.

Overall, this seems like St Thomas is trying to force out their neighbors and change our safe, beautiful, livable neighborhood that has made it such a desirable university setting for St Thomas and turn it into a large university area that will become unsafe and unlivable for many families. Its not a good reflection on St Thomas values, which these days seem to be money and profit and sports over all else.

Sarah Wisner Kane  
2149 Fairmount Ave, St Paul

File #24-029-110  
Project address of 2260 Summit Ave

**From:** [Terrance Brueck](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena - site is a terrible location!  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 12:42:37 PM

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Arena project address (2260 Summit) and file number (File 24-029-110)

Imagine 5,000 people converging at the same time, in one location (smaller than a football field), with no plan for how they get to or from that location ... that's the UST arena site plan! The only mass transit option is a single city bus line - which only works for attendees if it happens to run near their travel origination point.

I live on Summit Avenue near the proposed arena site and already experience the extreme traffic and parking problems during the UST football season, which only occurs 6 times on weekends in the fall. The UST arena will create this same catastrophe several times every week for 6-8 months of the year ... not to mention the additional compounding issue of parking bans for winter snow removal! The new science building removed 127 parking spaces and the proposed arena has already removed another 265 parking spaces ... almost 400 parking spaces removed with no additional parking proposed for the arena!

The environmental impact of the traffic will be even greater from support vehicles (semis for food and beverage) and tour buses for the visiting teams trying to access the area from narrow alley ways via city streets (exceeding the gross vehicle weigh limits for city streets) - plus the added impact of greenhouse gas emissions from these vehicles and all the cars driving through the neighborhood searching for parking spots!

The City of St. Paul must reject the site plan for the arena for reasons of extremely poor accessibility, environmental damages to the river bluff location, and excessive pollution and safety issues from increased vehicle traffic.

**Terrance Brueck**  
**2279 Summit Avenue**  
**St. Paul, MN 55105**



**From:** [Tom Alf](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: File No. 24-029-110 - Project Address: 2260 Summit Ave, St. Paul, MN  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:24:14 PM

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## Appeal to the University of St.Thomas Multi-Use Arena Site Plan-- File #24-029-110

Dear Members of the Zoning Committee,

My wife and I have lived in the Macalester Groveland neighborhood the last 40 years. We tolerated the noise and damage to roads caused by 30 years of significant demolition and construction on both the south and north campus as long as the activity supported educational purposes or added on campus housing. The 6,000 seat multipurpose arena does not further UST's education mission, it is far too large given the modest size of the south campus and it is inappropriate within a residential neighborhood. The arena should be sited in a commercial area providing adequate parking with easy access to mass transit. Following are a few of the reasons for not approving the current site plan:

### **Arena Information:**

- Host 66 basketball/hockey games plus numerous nonathletic events including conferences, commencements, speakers and concerts in order to help defray large operating costs.
- 1,500 – 2,500 vehicles per event depending on the event and assumptions used
- Lost almost 400 parking spaces due to Arena and Schoenecker Center construction
- No new parking facilities included in the site plan
- 250,000 square feet
- Maximum height 76 feet- Paul's legislative code restricts buildings in the RC3 zoning district to 40 feet in height. Leg. Code 68.233(a).

### **Lack of Adequate Parking Resulting in Serious Neighborhood Safety Issues**

Currently, UST students enter a lottery to obtain access to on campus parking facilities. Those unlucky students who did not get access to on-campus parking must find parking on nearby residential streets, often ignoring current street parking restrictions. The recent loss of 400 on campus parking spaces has exacerbated the problem.

How can the City of St Paul approve a site plan where 400 parking spaces are lost and no parking is being added to accommodate up to 2,000 to 2,500 vehicles for up to 80 plus events where existing on-campus parking is already inadequate for current needs? Currently the 6 home football games fill up neighborhood streets within 5 blocks of the football arena. With the multipurpose arena, we are not talking about only 6 home football games, we are talking about 80 plus events a year!

All surrounding neighborhoods will have hundreds of cars circling to find nearby, free parking on our streets. Event vehicles will overwhelm Cretin Ave, Summit Ave, River Road and Grand Ave. Cars will be backed up for blocks waiting to get into on campus parking facilities, especially the Anderson Parking Ramp. Frustrated motorists will be illegally trying to pass cars on these streets to get around the traffic jams. Motorists will be going into residential streets to avoid the traffic jams and also to find street parking.

Before and after events, many pedestrians, including fans, will be trying to cross these busy arterial

streets leading to a much higher chance of pedestrian injury or death. Large numbers of frustrated motorists will be going through our streets, likely going too fast, in search of parking or avoiding traffic thereby creating a significant safety risk to families walking in the neighborhood.

### **Environmental**

The arena's west wall is located about 40 feet from the grotto which feeds into the Mississippi River and by extension is part of the river bluffline. Ground water beneath the site is only 6-12 feet below the surface whose natural course of flow will be interrupted by the massive arena. Water currently nurturing the grotto area leading to the river will be significantly disrupted causing serious damage to habit. Diverting the water using large pipelines will cause erosion problems wherever the pipeline directs the water. UST plans to build a two way impermeable road and sidewalk west of the arena wall which is well within 40 feet of the grotto diverting the water runoff using gutters that would otherwise help nurture the plants in the grotto.

The arena has two sheets of ice operating all year plus while needing to heat the arena for basketball and other non-hockey events resulting in a large amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) near the river corridor and in the middle of our residential neighborhood. The EAW does not address the GHG impact of special cooling for an arena with two ice sheets. The EAW does not address the GHG impact of 1,500 - 2,500 vehicles driving round trip from the metro area plus out of state for up to 80 plus events.

Additionally, significant GHG emissions will be caused by many vehicles stuck in traffic jams, waiting to park in on campus facilities and circling neighborhood streets looking for parking. St Thomas needs the arena to be successful and fully utilized because they need to cover the costs of such a large arena. This means there is an economic motivation to maximize the number of events and the number of attendees. The EAW assumptions for traffic and parking assumed far below average capacity for games and excluded any impact from nonathletic events.

Respectfully,

Thomas B Alf  
2252 Fairmount Ave  
St Paul, MN 55105

File# 24-029-110

Project address is 2260 Summit Ave, St. Paul, MN

To: The Zoning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission

From: Thomas Moss, 175 Woodlawn Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Re: Objections to the Proposed Site Plan for the Arena Project at 2260 Summit Avenue (File 24-029-110)

I've lived near the University of Saint Thomas (UST) for 32 years, and I enjoy walking in the neighborhood, especially along the Mississippi River gorge. When we moved here in 1992, we knew we were close to a university with a Division III athletic program, but also knew that its campus boundaries were defined, so its future impact on the neighborhood would be limited.

I often walk from our house through the grotto area of UST to read and write in the Ireland Library. I have taken special courses they offer and attended lectures. Our grandchildren are on swimming teams that use their pool, and I've taken them to eat lunch in the UST cafeteria. I've donated to UST's Grounds and Landscaping Fund.

Now however, UST has decided to move to Division I athletics – requiring them to significantly upgrade and expand the capacity of their athletic facilities. They have opted to build a 5500-seat arena complex in the middle of the campus, which will have extremely negative consequences for the environment, and the traffic and pedestrian safety in the surrounding neighborhood. The current site plan does not adequately address those concerns.

I don't object to UST building a new arena, but this one is sited too close to the Mississippi River gorge and is too big to be built in any residential neighborhood. The current site plan:

- Is Inconsistent with Saint Paul's Climate Plan - specifically regarding greenhouse gases and potential groundwater issues near the Mississippi River.
- Allows the arena construction to be illegally close to the Mississippi River bluff line and its nearby habitat.
- Is inconsistent with Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan – specifically regarding traffic and pedestrian safety. It does not include a Traffic Demand Management Plan and does not adequately anticipate the volume of traffic (foot and car) that the arena would generate.
- Relies on UST's overly conservative estimates of projected attendance. Since they completed their Environmental Assessment Worksheet, UST has regularly upped their estimate of capacity events, and they have never quantified the number of “near-capacity” events. (An event that is 90% full has virtually the same impact on traffic and parking as a capacity event.) Also, they have never quantified other events like concerts, lectures, fairs etc. UST will have powerful economic incentives to maximize arena use year-round.
- Allows violations of the current Special Condition Use Permit – including the presence of their driveway off Goodrich Avenue, which should have been eliminated.

32 years ago, we moved near a Division I liberal arts university and have tried to be good neighbors. Now UST is becoming a sports and entertainment center with an arena complex that does not belong in any Saint Paul residential neighborhood – especially near such an environmentally sensitive area.

I urge you to reject the current site plan for the UST arena.

Tom Moss - 175 Woodlawn Ave. St. Paul

**From:** [T.Walls](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Zoning file # 24-029-110, 2260 Summit Ave.  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 3:10:11 PM

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From: Theresa L. Walls  
2024 Fairmount Ave, St Paul, MN 55105

This is in response to the zoning application for the proposed University of St. Thomas (UST) arena at 2260 Summit Ave. I am a resident in the area. UST has been encroaching more and more on the neighborhood and the environment over the years. I believe that there are multiple reasons that the arena should not be allowed at that location:

1. It would be too close to the river bluff which would potentially cause environmental problems. There would be a problem with rainfall (which will be increasingly erratic with climate change) to cause erosion.
2. Buildings will be too tall for the area.
3. Pollution is likely from the refrigerants for the ice arena.
4. Pollution is likely from the lack of parking. Not only is UST proposing to provide no extra parking, they have eliminated many parking spaces. UST expects the arena attendees to park in the neighborhood or ride bikes (in the winter for hockey and basketball games). The only parking that UST provided is for a fee, which students already are not willing to pay. So they instead will drive around the family neighborhood, creating traffic, pollution and infringing on street parking that residents need. We already have students parking on our street because UST charges for them to park on campus. How will attendees safely cross busy streets like Cretin?
5. Parking will be a problem also because of narrow residential streets. The city wants to have one side parking in the winter to clear snow. That is bad enough without UST arena parking.
6. My understanding is that access to the arena will be from Summit Ave., a historic street. And how does this fit with the plan to create a regional bike trail on Summit Ave.?
7. UST states that the arena would host approximately 66 home games for men's and women's basketball and hockey teams each winter, plus conventions, job fairs, and concerts. The arena could be rented out for high school sports and as an entertainment venue. The 250,000-SF complex would also include two practice basketball courts and a practice hockey rink. It could be occupied many nights. It can be a money maker for UST, at the expense of a family residential neighborhood. Please take neighbors comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

Theresa L. Walls  
2024 Fairmount Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Van Cline](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** RE: File no. 24-029-110, Univ. of St. Thomas multi-use hockey/basketball arena, 2260 Summit Ave  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 10:20:12 AM

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My name is Van Cline. I reside at 72 Exeter Place in St. Paul. For the past 36 years I have been a concerned, tolerant yet bullied neighbor of the University of St. Thomas. I am writing to you specifically regarding UST's construction of the multi-use hockey/basketball arena on its south campus at 2260 Summit Ave. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> large structure UST has built in St. Paul during my residence in the neighborhood.

My primary objection to UST's arena project is its violation of Minn. R. 6106.0120, subp. 3.B. The **Mississippi River Gorge** running from St. Anthony Falls to Ft. Snelling (within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area) is a unique natural feature along the entire 2,340 mile length of the river. Its preservation was considered essential by planners of both cities over 100 years ago. Because of St. Paul's historical underpinnings, respect for the Gorge and its preservation today is even more essential. UST property borders the Mississippi River Gorge along its entire south campus boundary with Mississippi River Blvd and the Mississippi Gorge Regional Park. The construction of UST's arena and its violation of Minn. R. 6106.0120, subp. 3.B ignores its responsibility to respect and preserve this important part of our natural history.

My second objection to the arena is based on the absolute **critical demands of climate change** in our country and world today. Climate change **IS HERE** and demands every bit of effort and creativity that we as an intelligent society can muster. The development of UST's arena contributes to the continuing generation of greenhouse gases in many complex ways from the destruction of existing urban woodlands, to construction methods being used, to the operation of the facility and its multiple ice sheets, and to the excessive vehicular traffic it will generate far into the future. UST has paid great lip service over the years to the concepts of "sustainability," "community," and "all-for-the-common-good." It's time for UST to step up and demonstrate this commitment.

Please, as our public planning officials, take a stand for all of us in St. Paul by demanding UST's accountability in this regard. If I can be of additional service to you please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Van W. Cline, Ph.D.  
72 Exeter Place  
St. Paul, MN 55104



**From:** [Vincent Graziano](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Saint Thomas arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 3:24:53 PM

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Hello,

I am writing in regard to the following Saint Thomas arena project:

Project address: 2260 Summit Ave, St Paul, MN  
Zoning file number: 24-029-110

My family has lived at: 121 Otis Ave since 1992. The College of Saint Thomas has continued to grow, became the University of Saint Thomas and expanded beyond its footprint at the time to adjacent blocks and also degraded family neighborhoods with rental properties used for student housing. They have added on-campus housing which I applaud but also increasing student headcount to 6-thousand undergraduates and 3-thousand graduate students. The latest move to D1 sports has required huge new expansions on a footprint that is no-long growing. The new basketball and hockey arena is only the latest expansion and this venue could impact the neighborhood in profound ways, particularly during the basketball and hockey seasons that cover roughly the same time period. There will be men's and women's basketball and hockey games played at this arena. I have no knowledge as to the scheduling of these games but at the U of M where Williams Arena is shared by the men's and women's basketball teams, there are sometimes two home games per week for each for the men's and women's teams.

What are the problems with this new venue? Multiple. I care deeply about possible environmental impacts such as underground water flow but will let others discuss specifics. A great concern of mine is parking or the lack of it. At the U of M, there is limited parking near Williams requiring fans to walk up to a third of a mile one way. With no new parking planned and already limited parking at the U of Saint Thomas campus, neighborhood streets will become the only parking option available to their fans. The neighborhood surrounding the campus is one of the Crown Jewels of the city of Saint Paul and as such, pays significant property taxes. If quality of life is impacted by the arena, continued investment in these older properties could fall. Property values could suffer along with property tax income as a result of this arena. These neighborhood streets will likely become inundated with traffic on game days searching for parking options. The capacity of Cretin Ave, already challenged by cars heading toward 94 or the new Highland Bridge, will become a pinch point for traffic. How will fans get into and out of the area? Does the city have a plan for this? Biking will not be significant because of the winter season.

Thank you,  
-Vincent Graziano  
121 Otis Ave  
Saint Paul, MN. 55104

**From:** [Victoria Stewart](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Proposed UST multipurpose arena at 2260 Summit Avenue file 24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 7:27:53 PM

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A second copy of my message with the zoning file number.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Victoria Stewart <stew0042@umn.edu>  
**Date:** April 21, 2024 at 5:28:48 PM CDT  
**To:** ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us  
**Subject: Proposed UST multipurpose arena at 2260 Summit Avenue**

I am writing to confirm my support of ARD, Advocates for Responsible Development, and my opposition to the plan to build and operate an arena on the southwest part of the University of St. Thomas campus. My opposition to the plan stems from the many problems with pollution, negative environmental impacts, increased traffic, decreased safety, and inadequate parking, as well as general degradation and diminishment of the aesthetic and natural beauty of this neighborhood, one which is important and unique because of the Mississippi River and adjoining parklands. I am one of many in the neighborhood who oppose this plan. Please hear our concerns and act to stop the building of this arena at this location.

Sincerely,

Victoria Stewart  
124 Montrose Place  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-644-9312

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [William Angell](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** File 24-029-110 Appeal of City's Administrative Approval  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 1:46:54 PM

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I am respectfully appealing the City's administrative approval of the University of St. Thomas' site plan for a multipurpose arena at 2260 Summit Avenue. While I believe there are multiple grounds to reconsider the City's administrative actions, my concern focuses on the inadequacy of the traffic management plan for this proposed project.

As a long-term St. Paul resident in his mid-seventies with a cardiac condition and cancer, the volume of traffic created by this proposed project poses a serious restriction to emergency services before and following multiple arena events. The traffic volume created by the proposed arena is compounded by insufficient parking and the associated load of pedestrian flow. In addition, there is epidemiological evidence that the increase in ambient carbon monoxide and particulate matter from vehicle exhaust elevates the risk of fatal cardiac events among senior citizens. These are unacceptable public health risks.

The additional vehicle traffic on Summit Avenue, Mississippi River Blvd., and other residential streets including that from buses and delivery trucks servicing the proposed arena will far exceed the design loads of these roads and lead to premature deterioration and taxpayer expenses.

The additional on-street parking demand created by St. Thomas' proposed arena will deny us and other residents from the parking needed for our guests including those elderly and handicapped. We simply lack the physical space on our residential lot to subsidize St. Thomas' failure to provide adequate additional parking for their oversized project.

Thank you.

--

**William J. Angell**  
Professor Emeritus, College of Design, University of Minnesota

**From:** [walter](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Fwd: St Thomas arena proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 7:12:17 PM

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My apologies, I omitted the zoning file number. Please note, my comments are in regards to the project address 2260 Summit and zoning file number File 24-029-110

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **walter** <[jrebertz@gmail.com](mailto:jrebertz@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 23, 2024 at 6:44 PM  
**Subject:** St Thomas arena proposal  
**To:** <[ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:ped-zoningcommitteesecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

Sirs,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed arena on the St Paul University of St Thomas campus. The project poses unacceptable environmental risks to the Mississippi River. I run and bike the river corridor multiple times a week year round. I considered it an invaluable natural treasure deserving our protection in the manner dictated and intended by the federal government in it's Mississippi National River and Recreation Area designation.

Additionally, the traffic and parking nightmare that would accompany the arena haven't been realistically accounted for. I live 3 blocks from the St Thomas football field. I know when there's a game going on by looking out my window. My block and the blocks around me are jammed with cars. I seriously doubt public transport is leveraged in any meaningful way during events there.

Please put a stop to the arena proposal.

regards,  
Walter Ebertz  
2201 Dayton Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

**From:** [Carrie Terrell](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit Zoning appeal application  
**Date:** Thursday, April 18, 2024 4:35:04 PM

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Hello,

I was directed here to submit public comment about this appeal. I do not want 24 hour permit only parking in front of my house. The M-F 8a to 8p permit only parking already is burdensome for me. I am an active faculty member at the U of MN Medical School and I often invite trainees and co-workers to my home. On the days and times the current permit parking is enforced my guests need to find parking a number of blocks from my house or I need to pay for many daily passes. Similarly, when we have workers at the house they struggle to find parking or, again, we need to pay for daily passes. Of note, there is a limit to the number of daily passes we can buy in a year.

As an active neighborhood member, I love the St. Thomas Mac Groveland Community and students. I choose to live here willingly amongst them and am not bothered by their event parking. I believe the application for 24 hour permit only parking is driven by the new arena St. Thomas is building. Given most events there would start before 8pm and we already have 8a to 8p permit only parking I do not see a need for 24 hour permit only parking. I do not envision a significant parking burden for weekend events at the new arena.

Thank you for your time.

**Carrie Ann Terrell, MD, FACOG**  
**2108 Lincoln Ave**  
**Cell 612-423-4653**



John P. Kingrey  
2258 Fairmount Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

TO: Saint Paul Zoning Committee

April 22, 2024

FR: John Kingrey

While there are many reasons to oppose the UST Entertainment Complex, I believe the environmental concerns deserve further research and discussion.

The complex is located on top of what is called a “perched” water table. Water is currently located between layers of shale. This includes underground streams or flows which I assume are being rerouted somewhere. There is concern that some redirection of the groundwater flows may impact neighboring residential properties.

There is or was a natural spring on site which has caused a sinkhole in the past (see attached pictures). It is my understanding that the “grotto” had a natural spring at one time that has been altered. I believe the proposed structure will further erode the grotto due to the lack natural filtration and water absorption.

Minn. R. 6106.0120, subp. 3.B states that there may be no impervious surfaces (i.e. development) within 40 feet of a Mississippi River bluff line (the grotto is located at the east end of the bluff line). The site plan has sidewalks, a paved drive, and multiple underground utility lines within 40 feet of the bluff line. In addition, Minn. R. 6106.0120, subp. 3.B states that a structure may not be located within 40 feet of a bluff line. The proposed site is at or close to 40 feet from the bluff line. It certainly is not consistent with the intent of Minnesota Rules.

Finally, the increase in greenhouse gases from cars and private buses attending UST events, as well as cars circling the neighborhoods looking for parking should be considered.

I respectfully request that you reject the UST site plan.

Thank you for your consideration.













Karen E. James  
2258 Fairmount Avenue  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105

To: Saint Paul Zoning Committee

April 22, 2024

FR: Karen James

I am writing to encourage the Zoning Committee to reject the UST site plan. The development fails to consider the impact on the nearby neighborhoods, the environment, and our families. The site plan should be required to include a Traffic Demand Management Study.

Our neighborhood has seen a significant uptick in the traffic on Cretin Avenue since the opening of Highland Bridge. Cretin Avenue is a one-lane road south of the proposed arena. There will be congestion on side streets which will be compounded by the inability to turn onto Cretin from the side streets. I have concerns regarding the inability of emergency vehicles to pass the glut of cars driving to UST events, which is dangerous for anyone having a health or fire emergency. The time to answer these questions is now – not after monitoring the problems for 2 years as UST suggests.

Traffic will increase dramatically along surrounding residential streets and alleys as visitors search for parking and stalled traffic diverts to less congested corridors. This will increase greenhouse gases in our residential neighborhoods and poses a significant threat to pedestrian safety. UST should be required to construct additional on-campus parking to replace the loss of parking spaces due to the new complex, as well as the increased number of attendees at UST events. The history of UST demonstrates their interest in putting up new structures with little consideration to address the increased parking demands.

I respectfully request that you reject the proposed UST site plan.



Kathryn S. Richtman, Esq.  
1939 Portland Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
[krichtman@aol.com](mailto:krichtman@aol.com)

April 22, 2024

City of St. Paul Zoning Committee  
City Hall  
15 Kellogg Blvd. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Objection to the Proposed St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena

Dear Chair Taghioff and Zoning Committee Members:

I am writing to object to site plan approval for the proposed St. Thomas multipurpose arena. While I have many objections to the plans for the arena, I will focus only on the issue that is most critical to me: St. Thomas' EAW is fundamentally and fatally flawed because it fails to account for the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with operating the arena.

First, the EAW does not account for the GHG emissions – pollution - associated with the cooling and refrigeration of the arena. The EAW specifically admits that it does not include consideration of these emissions, stating:

“Emissions from cooling and refrigeration systems are not accounted for in this operational emissions analysis as GHGs from refrigerants are approximately less than 5 percent of the total GHG emissions of a building.”

(University of St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena EAW, page 32). But the report cited as authority for this statement does not say what the EAW claims and does not support the EAW's failure to include an analysis of the cooling and refrigeration systems. Ironically, the report is a toolkit for hospitals and health care providers to **reduce** GHG emissions in their facilities. The report in fact states:

“Refrigerants are powerful greenhouse gases, and small leakages can be a significant component of a greenhouse gas inventory. These are typically refrigerants or coolants that inadvertently leak from HVAC or refrigeration equipment. Project Drawdown ranks refrigerants as the No. 1 solution for reversing global warming. Given the regulatory environment for the U.S. health care sector, most hospitals report that this is less than 5 percent of their overall GHG footprint, but it is still critical to confirm that is the case for each hospital. Given this information, there are a number of paths that can be taken to capture refrigerant emissions in a GHG inventory ....”

(*Greenhouse Gas Reduction Toolkit, Setting a Goal and Tracking Emissions*, p. 14, Practice Greenhealth, [https://practicegreenhealth.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/PracticeGreenhealth\\_GHG\\_Toolkit\\_0.pdf](https://practicegreenhealth.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/PracticeGreenhealth_GHG_Toolkit_0.pdf)).


Thus, the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Toolkit* is specifically addressing **LEAKAGE** from HVAC or refrigeration equipment. It is not referring to the **OPERATION** of the cooling and refrigeration systems. Moreover, cooling and refrigeration systems needed in a hospital setting are far different from those that would be installed in the proposed multipurpose arena. The arena as proposed will have two permanent ice rinks, a temporary basketball floor – designed to sit on top of the ice rink, which will allow for games, but also the option for arena seating on the floor for concerts and other events. This will require simultaneous refrigeration of the rink and heating for the basketball court and arena. The failure to account for the emissions required to operate such a facility is a fatal flaw in the EAW. Moreover, by citing to a publication that does not say what it is quoted as saying is intellectually misleading at best, and calls into question the intellectual integrity of the entire EAW.

Second, building an ice arena on the Mississippi River Bluff area presents far too many risks to the water, air, and habitat to be allowed. The water levels of the site, the underground spring that sits right below where the arena is being proposed to be built, combined with the chemicals needed to refrigerate the rinks create a significant risk of pollution. Rink refrigeration systems use ethylene glycol (also known as concentrated antifreeze) to lower the freezing point in the rink's chiller system. They also use anhydrous ammonia as an inexpensive refrigerant. Any leakage or spillage of ethylene glycol and/or anhydrous ammonia will flow directly into the Mississippi River. Exposure to ethylene glycol and/or anhydrous ammonia can cause death to animals, birds and fish. To assume that a spill or leakage won't happen is not realistic and inconsistent with the history of other arenas. The proposed site is simply too fragile to take the risks associated with building this arena on this site. Preserving the sanctity of this sight, on the Mississippi River Bluff, mandates denial of the site plan.

Finally, the St. Thomas EAW does not address the greenhouse gases that will be emitted due to the additional traffic associated with operating the arena. Not only will there be thousands more people driving their vehicles to arena events, circling the adjacent neighborhood in search of a parking spot, there will also be large buses bringing teams to the arena and parking – usually with engines running – while the games are played. In addition, commercial vehicles will be delivering food and beverages for each event. All of which will significantly increase the GHG emissions. The EAW does not accurately address these emissions and what will be done to reduce them.

For all these reasons, and for the reasons stated in other objections, I urge you to reverse approval of the site plan for the proposed St. Thomas multipurpose arena.

Respectfully,



Kathryn S. Richtman

**From:** [matthew larkey](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 21, 2024 3:49:18 PM

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While I could support the new arena, traffic, parking, and pedestrian safety connected to an influx of people/vehicles needs to be addressed in a meaningful way. What is the plan? Will st Thomas or the city have people directing traffic like at United Soccer games? Will cretin design change? Will biking be incentivized? What happens when people aren't allowed to park in neighborhoods? Will people be allowed to park on parkway by river? How many events are really going to be at the new arena per year? UST calculations on impacts cannot be trusted. Too many errors have already been discovered in their community impact reports. So who is going to calculate the actual impact of this arena?

PLAN FOR TRAFFIC NEEDED. WE CANT JUST HOPE FOR THE BEST.

Matthew Larkey. Community member.  
2189 Sargent ave St. Paul mn 55105



**From:** [Robert Metcalf](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org); [Julie Conzemius](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas University Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 4:01:58 PM

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Hello,

Robert Metcalf here, 197 Woodlawn Ave, St. Paul, MN 55105.

**I am in strong opposition to the arena St. Thomas is building.**

I implore upon the zoning commission that you stop the arena development until all issues are resolved.

Below are my objections to continuing with the arena development.

1. **No representation without taxation.** As a non-tax payer, St. Thomas forces the neighborhood to incur expenses and burden (crowds, environmental, fiscal, parking, and time) without the neighborhood having any say.
2. **Parking.** St. Thomas decreased parking supply, increased parking demand, and pushed parking to the neighborhood. This is an untenable situation. They did it because they can and they were circumspect with forthcoming information.
3. **Environmental.** We live in a high-density neighborhood on the Mississippi river. St. Thomas is building a large building in a tight space. The influx of people, cars, emissions, construction materials and traffic, and long-lasting chemical concerns (ice sheets consume and emit lots of chemicals) are a huge concern to most in this neighborhood.
4. **Quality of life.** The neighborhood is negatively impacted by St. Thomas' actions. Pushing crowds, traffic, and environmental concerns into the neighborhood has a detrimental effect on everyone in the neighborhood.
5. **Property value and taxes.** St. Thomas said in 2015 (roughly) they were not going to be a Division I team. That decision was reversed, which is their option. No one would be concerned if they build the arena in a more suitable area, such as 94 and Cretin-Vandalia, or north of University Ave in an industrial area. A large, intrusive arena in the middle of a 100+ year old neighborhood is likely to push down property values while the city's goal is to increase property tax. You can't have both. This destroys the fiscal foundation of many people in this neighborhood.
6. **Day-to-day life.** The reduction in existing parking spaces has pushed people to park in front of our house all day, every day. Prior to St. Thomas removing the parking spaces, we and friends were able to park in front of our house - there was minimal outside (non-neighborhood) parking. I am concerned there will be an overflow of parking in the neighborhood once the arena is complete. The building will not sit empty outside of game days. It takes a sizable crew to maintain the facilities.
7. **Rowdy crowds.** You can take this to the bank. At the first sign of rowdy, loud, misbehaving crowds, or parking incursions, there will be non-stop communication from the neighborhood to anyone and everyone at St. Thomas, regardless of the hour. The request will be for St. Thomas to intervene, stop the incursion, and get things under control.

Thank you and regards,



Robert Metcalf  
[robert@metcal.com](mailto:robert@metcal.com)  
612-386-0440

**From:** [Robin Sjaastad](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St Thomas hockey/basketball arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 5:38:47 PM

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Dear zoning committee secretary-

I write, as a homeowner near campus, to object to the siting of a new hockey and basketball arena at St Thomas University. This is a completely inappropriate place, a quiet residential neighborhood, to put a 5000 seat arena. St Thomas has never been a thoughtful or considerate neighbor, but I am still shocked they would even consider proposing such a facility at such a location. They don't seem to understand the benefit they themselves derive from their setting, which they are always threatening to degrade with dreams of apparently limitless expansion. St Thomas has a campus in downtown Minneapolis, which offers a far better prospect: ample parking and transit options, pre and post event dining and entertainment, a destination in need of attention, and, considering the current state of commercial real estate, plenty of potential sites to acquire cheaply for an arena.

Regards,

Robin Sjaastad  
124 Montrose Place  
St Paul

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Sarah Davis](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** re: St. Thomas" proposed arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 22, 2024 1:00:04 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee:

I'm writing to say that I strongly disagree with the St. Thomas arena plans.

Once again, what makes St. Paul so beautiful and treasured is up for grabs.

Yes, St. Thomas owns the land. But they don't own the neighborhood. Or do they?

Far too many St. Thomas students walk across the street - faces glued to their

phones - seemingly oblivious to the current traffic or to what a beautiful neighborhood their

school is in. And sure, maybe that's fine, their stay is temporary.

But as a resident of St. Paul since 1978 - I do pay attention to traffic and to the beautiful neighborhoods and surrounding nature.

Stand on Cretin Avenue at various times of day and you'll get a sense of the car exhaust - now! Plenty!

Walk along Mississippi River Blvd. from Randolph to Summit and you'll be reminded of what

is so special about this area. I do many times a week and see countless others enjoying it as I do.

St. Thomas is a school, not a sports company. It's one thing to build new buildings

to replace the old, another to turn a peaceful neighborhood into a sports center.

It's time for city government to have a broader vision. AND for proposed projects to face more scrutiny.

The wise man who wrote the letter to the newspaper about the Starbucks on Snelling/Marshall was so right.

Learn from the smaller examples. Please.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sarah Brion Davis  
2353 Youngman Avenue #515  
St. Paul MN 55116

I don't live in the immediate neighborhood anymore, I am enclosing my address below, I rent so I don't know my zoning number but I am in the St. Thomas neighborhood daily and care about this neighborhood !

**From:** [Dan Gleason/USA](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us)  
**Subject:** UST Development  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 11:15:38 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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*City of Saint Paul Leadership and Staff,*

*I am writing to share our strong support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project as soon as possible.*

*While we understand small number of neighbors oppose the project, the vast majority of neighbors, alums, students, and others are excited about this project and the asset it will bring to the community. I am in support of this project for a number of reasons including the following:*

- *the arena will be exciting venue for women's and men's athletics and will be a resource for the community.*
- *UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project – they are building within campus boundaries and are abiding by existing conditional use permits.*
- *This project is privately funded. It's also being built on UST owned property, so there is no other City property that would be removed from the tax rolls to make way for the project.*
- *Being on campus will mean that a significant amount of event attendees will not need to drive, therefore reducing the car trips needed to/from the arena.*
- *UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.*
- *A significant number of Highland Park residence are former students and the University continues to feed the neighborhood and healthy tax paying families*

*St. Thomas is an incredible asset to the neighborhood and this arena is an exciting addition to the UST legacy. We urge your support in approving and advancing this project as fast as possible.*

Sincerely, Dan Gleason (lifetime Saint Paul resident)

**Dan Gleason**  
Executive Managing Director  
Brokerage Services

Direct: +1 952 893 8884



Mobile: +1 612 804 3654  
[dan.gleason@cushwake.com](mailto:dan.gleason@cushwake.com)



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**From:** [Joe Gaylord](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** New arena at UST  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 9:17:12 AM

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Good Morning,

I am writing to express my support for the new UST arena. I have lived in Highland Park since 1992 and think the new arena would be additive to the local community. Please see reasons below:

- A new economic impact study shows that St. Thomas currently brings \$498.8 million to the City of St. Paul annually and \$124.7 million to our adjoining St. Paul neighborhoods. The arena will bring even more economic activity to our beloved city.
- St. Thomas is not asking for a variance from the city for this project – they are building within the rules, within its campus boundaries. They are abiding by our conditional use permits and working closely with the city on all approvals and requirements.
- Several other sites were considered. However, an arena on campus means that fans can walk to games. An on-campus facility is favorable for many reasons, including the ability to reduce vehicle traffic. In addition, the city was not in favor of St. Thomas taking off-campus taxable property.
- As part of the project, St. Thomas will be investing in infrastructure improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.
- The community has had a lot of opportunity to engage with this project. There have been lots of meetings, and St. Thomas is the only college with a full time director of neighborhood relations!

- St. Thomas will not want the traffic or parking situation to be a bad experience for fans, because they want their fans to return. They will find solutions to parking and traffic.
  
- St. Thomas cares deeply about the environment and about its responsibility to care for the river. The review of the impact on the environment by the city was thorough. The arena is taking down three very inefficient buildings, and a series of surface lots to create the site. The project will actually improve water drainage significantly through investments in drainage infrastructure. In addition, they are adding a green quad to the south campus and building a LEED certified building. Sustainability is a priority for St. Thomas.

Sincerely,

Joe Gaylord  
1788 Bohland Ave, St Paul, MN 55116

**From:** [Tom Traxler](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Supporting UST Arena  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 10:56:11 AM

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*City of Saint Paul Leadership and Staff,*

*I am writing to share our strong support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project as soon as possible.*

*While we understand small number of neighbors oppose the project, the vast majority of neighbors, alums, students, and others are excited about this project and the asset it will bring to the community. I am in support of this project for a number of reasons including the following:*

- the arena will be exciting venue for women's and men's athletics and will be a resource for the community.*
- UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project – they are building within campus boundaries and are abiding by existing conditional use permits.*
- This project is privately funded. It's also being built on UST owned property, so there is no other City property that would be removed from the tax rolls to make way for the project.*
- Being on campus will mean that a significant amount of event attendees will not need to drive, therefore reducing the car trips needed to/from the arena.*
- UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.*

*St. Thomas is an incredible asset to the neighborhood and this arena is an exciting addition to the UST legacy. We urge your support in approving and advancing this project as fast as possible.*

*Sincerely,*

*Tom and Colleen Traxler  
1780 Scheffer Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55116*



**From:** [AnneMarie Furlong](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 5:55:59 PM

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Dear Committee Members,

I hope this message finds you well.

I am writing to express my strong support for the 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, specifically file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-11.

As a lifelong resident of Mac-Groveland & Highland Park, I am deeply invested in the well-being and development of our community. While I do not reside in close proximity to the campus, I have family who do, and I frequently travel to the area. I firmly believe that the construction of the arena will be a significant boon to the neighborhood, enhancing the overall experience for both residents and visitors alike.

Having attended the St. Thomas vs. University of Minnesota game at the Xcel Center, I can personally attest to the excitement and enjoyment that such events bring. It was an unforgettable experience for my family and me, and I wholeheartedly support the endeavor to provide similar opportunities for St. Thomas students and fans.

In discussions with my siblings, their families, and our extended family, who all reside within a three-mile radius of the campus, the consensus is clear: the arena would be a valuable addition to our community. We are united in our belief that it will have a positive impact and serve as a source of pride for St. Paul residents.

Moreover, the convenience of having the arena on campus will undoubtedly encourage greater participation from students, potentially reducing traffic congestion and promoting sustainable transportation options, such as walking or public transit.

In conclusion, I urge you to consider the immense benefits that the construction of the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena will bring to our community. My family and I are eager to see this project come to fruition and would gladly support it, including the purchase of season tickets.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Warm regards,

AnneMarie Furlong  
2029 Field Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55116  
651-341-3080

**From:** [Bob McNaney](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Please Support St. Thomas Area  
**Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2024 2:29:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

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Dear City of Saint Paul Leadership and Staff,

I am writing to voice my support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project as soon as possible. This project represents a significant investment in the city and will serve not only St. Thomas student athletes, but will provide an exceptional experience for youth athletes in the community. St Thomas is an unparalleled asset to the community and this new facility will serve the entire community well for decades to come.

- The arena will be exciting venue for women's and men's athletics and will be a resource for the community.
- UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project – they are building within campus boundaries and are abiding by existing conditional use permits.
- This project is privately funded. It's also being built on UST owned property, so there is no other City property that would be removed from the tax rolls to make way for the project.
- Being on campus will mean that a significant amount of event attendees will not need to drive, therefore reducing the car trips needed to/from the arena.
- UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.

Please support this important project.

Bob McNaney  
651 249 7718



**From:** [David Hopkinson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Saint Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 8:53:48 AM

---

Dear Zoning Committee,

As residents of Saint Paul and a nearby neighbors to the University of Saint Thomas we are writing to show our support for the school's planned Anderson Arena.

The university has been a wonderful, conscientious neighbor through our past 25 years of home ownership at the corner of Princeton and Woodlawn.

The school was founded in 1885 and has been an anchor to a wonderful community. We love the beautiful campus and having the friendly students nearby.

The planned arena will have Division 1 games within walking distance of our home and add value to our real estate. It will add life and commerce to local businesses.

Saint Thomas went out of their way to explain their decision to the community as well as designing an arena that meets all zoning requirements for construction. To change the rules mid construction would be unfair and a burden to the institution.

We highly urge you to let the University of Saint Thomas continue with their current plans and development of the Anderson Arena.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Hopkinson

Cliff Hopkinson

2266 Princeton Avenue

Saint Paul, MN

**From:** [Dan McQuillan](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 4:51:30 PM

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I have lived in Highland Park my entire life and was once on the land use committee for district 14 council and attended UST in the eighties. I am in support of this new construction of the arena. UST has always gone out of there way to be a good neighbor even though it is difficult at times. They have contributed to the economic growth of our city which we desperately need to foster

Dan McQuillan  
Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Judd Fenlon](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2024 1:49:41 PM

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Dear City of St. Paul Leadership and Staff,

I am writing to share my support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project. I grew up less than a mile from UST, I am currently a resident of St. Paul and I own property at 1217 Marshall Avenue along with other properties on Marshall and Snelling in this community.

As I understand it, a small number of neighbors oppose the project, the vast majority of neighbors, alums, student and property owners in this community are excited about this project and believe it will be an asset to the community. I am in full support of this project for a number of reasons including;

- The arena will be an exciting venue for women's and men's athletics and will be a resource for the community
- UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project - they are building within campus boundaries and are abiding by existing conditional use permits
- This project is privately funded. It is also being built on UST owned property, so there is no other City property that would be removed from the tax rolls to make way for the project.
- Being on campus will mean that a significant amount of event attendees will not need to drive, therefore reducing the car trips need to/from the arena.
- UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.

As a lifelong St. Paul resident and an owner of a small business in St. Paul, I know St. Thomas to be an incredible asset to the neighborhood, the city and the business community. This arena is an exciting addition to the campus. I strongly urge your support in approving and advancing this project as fast as possible.

Sincerely,

Judd Fenlon  
Grand Real Estate Advisors  
651-492-1741

**From:** [Joe Hughes](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Lee and Penny Anderson Arena  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 11:44:34 PM

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Dear City of Saint Paul Leadership & Staff,

I'm writing to express my strong support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and urge its swift approval.

The arena will be an exciting venue for athletics, and it's privately funded, so no strain on city resources. UST is complying with all regulations, and it's on-campus, reducing traffic and benefiting the neighborhood.

Please advance this project promptly.

Thank you.

Best regards,

Joe and Izzy Hughes

**From:** [jkline@c-dh.org](mailto:jkline@c-dh.org)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** St Thomas new arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 4:18:33 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I believe the new arena on the campus of UST will be very exciting for all students and alumni at UST. It will provide a wonderful experience for the student athlete, their friends and families, and our local community. This arena will bring an abundance of revenue for the city of St. Paul and continue to support our local economy.

Thanks,  
Jerry Kline, Jr  
Sent from my iPhone

--

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**From:** [McQuillan, Jim \(MMA\)](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Support the UST Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 8:29:18 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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*City of Saint Paul Leadership and Staff,*

*I am writing to share our support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project as soon as possible. I live 2 miles from the school and am very familiar with the concerns from some neighbors.*

*While I understand that some of my neighbors oppose the project, the vast majority of neighbors, alums, students, and others are excited about this project and the asset it will bring to the community. I am in support of this project for a number of reasons including the following:*

- *the arena will be exciting venue for women's and men's athletics and will be a resource for the community.*
- *UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project – they are building within campus boundaries and are abiding by existing conditional use permits.*
- *This project is privately funded. It's also being built on UST owned property, so there is no other City property that would be removed from the tax rolls to make way for the project.*
- *Being on campus will mean that a significant amount of event attendees will not need to drive, therefore reducing the car trips needed to/from the arena.*
- *UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.*

*St. Thomas is an incredible asset to the neighborhood and this arena is an exciting addition to the UST legacy. We urge your support in approving and advancing this project as fast as possible.*

James R. McQuillan

**ChFC | AIF | President, Financial Services – Upper Midwest**

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6160 Golden Hills Drive, Minneapolis, MN 55416 | Phone: 763-746-8244

[Jim.McQuillan@marshmma.com](mailto:Jim.McQuillan@marshmma.com) | [MarshMMA.com](http://MarshMMA.com) [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)



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**From:** [ERIC&JOE NEUMANN PLANT](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 11:02:10 AM

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Dear St. Paul Planning Commission:

We are writing in support of the University of St. Thomas's intention to develop the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena on it's St. Paul campus.

We have been residents of the City of St. Paul since the early '80s, and owning our current home at 388 Warwick St.(St. Paul, 55105), since 1989. We have intentionally decided to live in the city, and in particular the Macalester-Groveland area, in large part because of the strength, beauty, vitality and offerings of our college neighbors, principally St. Thomas, Macalester and St. Catherine's. We love the energy, hope and positive impact they bring to our community. And yet we are convinced that a small but vocal minority is constantly badgering these colleges and universities, particularly St. Thomas, in ways that are overreaching and could have long-term detrimental affects to these schools and their economic impact and value to the city.

The Anderson Arena, to us, represents so much more than just a venue for sports at St. Thomas. We see it as a great community asset that could also support many youth sports activities, neighborhood gatherings (such as home improvement fairs) and generate a reasonable but much needed source of visitors who could patronize our area restaurants, shops and other businesses. And by keeping the arena on the St. Thomas campus, they're not taking off-line another tax-generating piece of real estate elsewhere.

We do not understand why the project was interrupted so late in the process, but it seems totally unfair to St. Thomas and will only add to the overall cost of the project, funds that could have been deployed with more beneficial impact. .

St. Thomas has consistently designed its facilities in a manner that elevates the beauty and distinction of our city. We are immensely proud to take friends and family visiting the area to see our wonderful institutional neighbors. We see St. Thomas seeking a positive relationship with the community and doing so much to invest in the neighborhood; I just wish that same support was more reciprocated. We don't want to see more investment by St. Thomas move elsewhere, as they did in the 90's and 2000s to Minneapolis.

Please support on the on-going development of the Anderson Arena on the St.

Thomas St. Paul campus...we sure do!

Joe Plante and Eric Neumann

388 Warwick St.

St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Josh Rodenbiker](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 11:50:12 PM

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Hello,

I'm writing in regard to the case 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, with the file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. I'm a current resident of Saint Paul and my home address is 1554 Midway Pkwy APT 381, Saint Paul, MN 55108. I would like to express my enthusiastic support of the new arena. Abiding by their conditional use permits and working closely with the City of Saint Paul, St. Thomas is building a state-of-the-art multipurpose arena that will serve its campus and the greater community in myriad ways. It will drive even more economic activity to our city on top of the already \$498.8 million the university already brings to Saint Paul annually. St. Thomas is building this arena with the neighborhood in mind, investing in infrastructure improvements that will benefit the neighborhood and has engaged with the community in 17 public meetings on the arena. The university is also showing that it values sustainability by building an arena that is LEED certified and adding a green quad to a space on campus that used to be occupied by three very inefficient buildings, and it will also be investing in drainage infrastructure as a part of the project. This new arena will be a fan favorite in the community and a place that drives positive economic impact while also providing unforgettable memories for families to enjoy together. All in all, I'm a firm believer that this multipurpose arena will serve Saint Paul in countless ways for years to come!

Sincerely,  
Josh Rodenbiker

**From:** [Julie Tauer](#)  
**To:** [\\*Cl-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#Cl-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2024 5:24:34 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I have a longstanding connection with the university from being a student in the early nineties to earning an MBA in 2008 to enjoying the green space on south campus with my dogs and neighbors. UST is now where my son plans to earn his engineering degree, play basketball for his dad, and make memories that will take him into adulthood. You see, UST is a special place to me and our family.

I have a home at 160 Woodlawn Ave. and support the exciting development of a new sports arena on south campus. I do have a concern about parking overflow into the neighborhood on big event days/nights and I ask that the city and UST do everything in its power to mitigate any disruption to the neighborhood. We are a quiet neighborhood community and we take pride in the investments we have made in our homes and yards. We went to universities like UST so we could afford to live in a neighborhood like Kings Maplewood where property taxes can be north of \$30k per year. UST wants a good parking experience for fans and we want to continue to have quiet, safe streets to live on.

I support the new arena and believe it is a necessary step forward for UST athletics.

Sincerely,  
Julie Tauer  
160 Woodlawn Ave.



**From:** [john tauer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 11:17:28 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to express my support for the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena at 2260 Summit Ave (File #s 24-029-019 and 024-029-110). I have lived in St. Paul for 46 of my 51 years, love this city, and appreciate all the ways it serves our citizens. I attended St. Thomas, work at UST, and live 5 minutes from campus. Over the years, I have seen the ways the school has grown, changed, and adapted over the past 50 years. During that time, it's my belief UST has added a tremendous amount of value to our community. Over time, I believe the net effect of Anderson Arena will be strongly positive for UST and our community.

I believe Anderson Arena will do more good for our community and citizens. Certainly, change is difficult. I recall 20 years ago when our School of Law was opening, there was great trepidation. Now, I don't hear people lament the fact that we have a law school. Similarly, I believe this multipurpose facility will serve the community, enhance the university, and add a vitality, both socially and economically, to St. Paul. Most importantly, St. Thomas is committed to making this work because we are both in the city and of the city.

UST is an anchor of our community, bringing nearly \$500 million to the city annually. This project is one where UST is working closely with the city and not asking for any variance. An on-campus arena will allow students to walk to games, fans to use the existing ramps, and St. Thomas to find ways to mitigate parking problems on game days. I do think the nature of basketball and hockey games are such that people don't tailgate, most games are during the cold of winter, and people drive to the games, walk back to their cars and drive home. St. Thomas cares deeply about working to make the city and our community stronger while being environmentally friendly and sustainable.

In sum, I believe Anderson Arena works within the city's guidelines, is a project that will create a community space for exciting events, provide an exciting venue for young hockey and basketball players to watch and learn about their sports, and help St. Thomas to continue to grow and thrive as a hub of our community during challenging times for all of higher ed.

St. Thomas values being a strong partner with the city, and this project is one that will further strengthen that bond and commitment.

Sincerely,

Johnny Tauer  
1762 Pinehurst Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN

**From:** [Kara Bradshaw](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 9:24:19 AM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Kara Bradshaw. I have lived and owned a home in Highland Park for more than a decade.

I am writing to express my support for the construction of the multipurpose arena at the University of St. Thomas, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. As a proud Highland Park resident and employee, I have followed the arena project closely, attending public hearings and on-campus meetings, to better understand the potential impact on the environment and our neighborhood. I have been impressed with the environmental responsibility the university has exhibited in other construction projects. While I was saddened to see historical buildings taken down or modified, the facilities that replaced them have maintained the historic beauty of campus and are far better for our environment. The proposed development of south campus follows suite.

I care deeply about our community - the people, businesses and natural beauty that comprise our home city. St. Thomas is embedded in the fabric of our community. I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact that St. Thomas has had on Highland Park and our city at large. This arena represents a significant opportunity to extend that positive impact by attracting more visitors and dollars to local businesses, creating a new venue for community engagement and events, and continuing to enhance the profile of St. Paul, Minnesota through state-of-the-art collegiate facilities and D-I athletics.

St. Paul has always been a forward-thinking city that values and invests in community, education and cultural engagement. This arena continues that trajectory. I am hopeful for the positive outcomes that this development would bring to our beloved city.

Sincerely,  
Kara Bradshaw  
1407 Prior Avenue South  
St. Paul, MN 55116

**From:** [Collins, Keith @ Minneapolis](mailto:Collins_Keith@Minneapolis)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2024 8:49:19 AM

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*City of Saint Paul Leadership and Staff,*

*As a proud UST alum and person who owns 18 residential properties near UST I am writing to share my strong support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project as soon as possible.*

*While we understand small number of neighbors oppose the project, the vast majority of neighbors, alums, students, and others are excited about this project and the asset it will bring to the community. I am in support of this project for a number of reasons including the following:*

- 1. the arena will be exciting venue for women's and men's athletics and will be a resource for the community.*
- 1. UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project – they are building within campus boundaries and are abiding by existing conditional use permits.*
- 2. This project is privately funded. It's also being built on UST owned property, so there is no other City property that would be removed from the tax rolls to make way for the project.*
- 3. Being on campus will mean that a significant amount of event attendees will not need to drive, therefore reducing the car trips needed to/from the arena.*
- 4. UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.*

*St. Thomas is an incredible asset to the neighborhood and this arena is an exciting addition to the UST legacy. I urge your support in approving and advancing this project as fast as possible.*

*Sincerely,*

*Keith Collins  
UST Alum 1989  
(612) 889-0500*

**Keith P. Collins**  
Executive Vice President  
CBRE | Capital Markets | Institutional Properties | Multifamily  
323 Washington Avenue N., Suite 200, Minneapolis 55401  
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**From:** [KAREN LAIRD](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback Re: UST Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 9:53:19 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.

My husband and I have lived in the Shadow Falls neighborhood of St. Paul since 2002, raising four now adult children here. Among other things, we were first attracted to the beauty and stability that the University of St. Thomas ("St. Thomas") provides this area of St. Paul. In addition, I have had the privilege of working for St. Thomas since 2011. The university is a great neighbor and employer.

I am aware that the construction of the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena on the south campus is drawing feedback from neighbors near campus. While I share their parking and traffic concerns, I believe St. Thomas is addressing these issues as seen in the Event Management Plan draft. These are the primary issues that I would encourage the university to continue to engage the neighbors to ensure workable solutions.

Next, I support St. Thomas' right to build within its campus boundaries. I trust that they are abiding by their conditional use permits and seeking the necessary approvals with the City.

Finally, St. Thomas has consistently shown its commitment to high quality construction and architecture that has maintained and enhanced the beauty of the neighborhood. For example, the recently completed Schoenecker Center on Summit Avenue. The university's attention to detail and design integrity give me confidence that the proposed arena will be another high quality project that will serve our neighborhood well for the next generation.

It is my belief that St. Thomas will live up to its reputation and find a path forward that serves its campus community, our neighborhood and the City of St. Paul well.

Thank you for your consideration,

Karen Laird  
79 Otis Avenue  
St. Paul

**From:** [Noelle Jacquet-Morrison](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary: #CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 10:33:56 AM

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**Reference:**

2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals,  
file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

Dear Board of Zoning

I am writing to you in support of the multipurpose arena built by the University of St Thomas. I grew up in the shadow of the university and as a child I participated in many events sponsored by the University focused on engaging the community. After graduation from college, I travelled with my work but returned to the area after the birth of my daughter as I wanted her to be able to experience a life in a broad and caring community. I build my business here and intend to remain and continue to enjoy life in a community which welcomes all.

I believe that the arena will provide new opportunities for athletes from diverse backgrounds. The world is changing and every day our concept of what a community is changing with it. Status quo has no place and preserving it at all costs only lead to decay of a society.

The arena is the next step for the University to adapt , and as part of their planning the arena and as a good neighbor they will share this new opportunity with the community at large from young athletes wanting to hone their skating skills as well as the opportunity to watch sportsmanship and grow from it.

I hope that my young daughter and her peers will not be denied that opportunity by a few who fear changes and will go to whatever length is necessary to preserve their own world without thoughts for the future.

It is true that with the arena will come additional activities in the area, but I am confident that the university leadership will continue to learn from the challenges and will adapt to improve processes for the benefit of all. Unless the University and Ryan Co have failed to provide the required studies and data, or if the Board of Zoning has failed in the assessment of the permits, I respectfully request that this appeal be denied and that the work be allowed to resume.

Thank you for listening,

Liana Sun Jacobson-Neighbor-Business Owner  
1840 Selby Avenue #1  
St Paul, MN 55104

**From:** [Linda Baughman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas arena appeal  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 3:54:17 PM

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Hello,

I am writing in reference to case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals; file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.

My name is Linda Terry and live at 1373 Bayard Avenue and have been a St. Paul resident for the past 22 years.

I am writing to express how much I value the University of St. Thomas. This university is a vital cornerstone in the St. Paul community--my understanding is the university currently brings 498.8 million to the City of St. Paul. The arena will only increase contributions to the St. Paul community.

It seems to me that those appealing do not understand that the University is building within its campus boundaries and abiding by the existing conditional use permits and that the university is working with the city on all necessary approvals and requirements.

Building the arena on campus is an asset for several reasons. Having an on-campus facility means fans will be able to walk to the games or easily access public transportation--this will reduce traffic congestion that would exist at an off-campus site. St. Thomas is also investing in an infrastructure to improve crossings at Cretin and Grand. My understanding is that the city of St. Paul was not in favor of St. Thomas building an arena off-campus for tax reasons---so the university appears to be aligning with goals of the city.

I know there are environmental impact concerns. However, the review of the impact on the environment by the city was thorough. The arena is taking down three very inefficient buildings, and a series of surface lots to create the site. The project will actually improve water drainage significantly through investments in drainage infrastructure. In addition, they are adding a green quad to the south campus and building a LEED certified building. These factors demonstrate a commitment to the environment.

None of my neighbors have complained about St. Thomas building an arena. In fact, mostly what I hear is excitement.

When you buy a home near a university, it is a known fact that there will be university activity. In today's world, a university that is actually growing and contributing more to the community is something to be proud of ---not something to run from.

I hope you will deny the appeals that have been submitted and allow the university to continue the arena project.

Sincerely,  
Linda Terry  
1373 Bayard Avenue  
St. Paul, MN

**From:** [Maria Brendel](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 11:20:12 AM

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referencing case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

As I homeowner in Highland Park, I would like to voice my support for St. Thomas's multipurpose arena. The addition of the arena will add valuable resources to the community. St. Thomas is a great part of the neighborhood and they are building within campus boundaries, within the rule, and abiding by all permit and approval rules.

Additionally, I am not at all worried about traffic/parking. Most of their fans will be within walking distance. I, for one, can't wait to enjoy the sporting events I will have within walking distance of my house. It will provide great opportunities for family outings. Building elsewhere (further from campus) is what would increase traffic.

The community had plenty of opportunities to engage with St. Thomas on this issue. I understand there were 17 public meetings. All of the issues that are currently being brought forth are simply ridiculous at this point. St. Thomas has a long history of caring deeply about the environment and is taking down three inefficient building to put up one LEED certified building.

I hereby pledge my support for the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena. I can't wait to have our neighborhood reap all of the benefits it will provide for decades to come.

Maria Brendel  
2157 Eleanor Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55116

Maria Peichel Brendel



**From:** [Mychal Brenden](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for St. Thomas Basketball/Hockey Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 8:16:34 PM

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Dear Zoning Appeals Committee –

In connection with the recent appeal of the new St. Thomas basketball and hockey arena and the news related thereto, I am writing to express my strong support for the new facility. My family lives in between St. Thomas' north campus and Mississippi River Blvd., meaning any of the purported detriments of the new arena would directly impact those I care about most. While those purported detriments should be appropriately evaluated, it is also important to recognize the benefits such an arena would bring and to acknowledge the university's history as a responsible and committed neighbor.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that I am a graduate of St. Thomas. The university means a great deal to me, as does the neighborhood that we live in, and the new arena represents a great opportunity enhance the campus – bringing increased economic activity, providing an on-campus venue for students, and creating additional opportunities for youth sports. In the more than 20 years since I attended, the university has continued to grow and evolve. New student living facilities have been added, a new student center replaced a surface lot on Summit and Cretin, and numerous older buildings have been replaced. Throughout all of this change, the university has been respectful of the neighborhood and ensured that any adverse impacts to its neighbors were limited.

Aside from my individual feelings, it is important to call out several important facts. St. Thomas is not asking for a variance from the city to build this arena; it is building in compliance with city rules and within its campus boundaries. The university has also committed to investing in infrastructure that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich. And, a comprehensive environmental review has indicated that the project will actually improve water drainage through investment in drainage infrastructure. As with its prior developments, it is clear that this project has not been undertaken without appropriate analysis and a commitment to benefitting the university and the neighborhood.

Change can be scary. I am respectful of my neighbors' right to request an appeal and to have their concerns heard; however, my experience has been that strong resistance to the project is a minority position amongst my neighbors. As with any proposed changes, people want to make sure things are done the right way. I have no doubt, based on its past history, that St. Thomas is keeping all constituents' interests in mind in pursuing this project.

Respectfully submitted,

Mychal S. Brenden

**From:** [Mike Hand](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 10:09:16 AM

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Hi Team,

Best wishes on the upcoming meetings. I live in the neighborhood and am super-excited about the new UST arena. I look forward to walking to basketball and hockey events in the near future.

Peace, Mike Hand

2090

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*Mike Hand, Ed.D.*  
*612-360-5843*

**From:** [Michelle Ware](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** I support the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena (file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110)  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 1:26:33 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am writing in reference to the case related to 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. As a resident of St. Paul and an employee at the University of St. Thomas, I am very much looking forward to the completion of the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena. I am excited for the positive economic impact and visibility the new area will have on the City of St. Paul and the University. As an anchor in the St. Paul community for decades, the University of St. Thomas has contributed to providing millions of dollars in revenue to the City of St. Paul and adjoining neighborhoods. In addition, sustainability is a priority for St. Thomas and the new arena is being built as have other St. Thomas buildings that have been LEED certified. The University provided ample opportunities for neighborhood constituents to engage in the area project (i.e. 17 public meetings), so to stop the project now is fiscally irresponsible and will do more harm than good to the St. Paul economy and the future of the University of St. Thomas.

Thank you for considering my support for the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena.  
**Michelle Smith Ware, Ph.D.**

**From:** [Noelle Jacquet-Morrison](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary: #CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 3:38:12 PM

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Dear Board of Zoning,

Neighborhood residents have raised many concerns about the construction and use of the new Anderson Arena on the UST south campus. As a resident of Union Park for more than forty years, I feel that I should add my two cents worth. There will, of course, be some impacts on the area, as with any facility construction, but I think that some of the issues are overstated.

The University currently manages traffic and parking for 4-5,000 attendees at football games held approximately 3 blocks from the new facility. I fail to see why the new arena, with seating capacity of about the same magnitude as the football stadium should cause much greater impacts than are currently experienced.

In addition, my understanding is that the hockey ice will be available for community use when not being used by UST teams. In The State of Hockey, which will definitely be a positive impact for city kids!

I have a couple of comments on environmental impacts. If there is a real fear about the west end of Saint Paul falling into the gorge, or refrigerant leaks polluting the river, why does there seem to be little concern among our neighbors across the river? Are the hundreds of other ice arenas in the Mississippi watershed similarly likely to pollute waterways?

There is always a contingent of local residents who oppose any construction by UST. I suspect that many of the grave concerns amount to little more than “NIMBY” (not in my back yard.) In fact, in a recent televised interview a resident said that it was fine for UST to build a new arena, “just not here.”

I therefore respectfully ask that the Board of Zoning grants the continuation of the multipurpose arena without further delays.

Cordially,  
John W Morrison



**From:** [Fr. Paul Gitter](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 7:07:23 PM

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Dear Zoning Committee,

I'm writing in reference to the new arena at the University of St. Thomas (*2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110*)

I am a St. Paul resident who currently resides at the University of St. Thomas, so I am familiar with the issues of this case:

1. St. Thomas is an anchor institution for St. Paul and their trajectory is an asset to the City of St. Paul. A new economic impact study shows that St. Thomas currently brings \$498.8 million to the City of St. Paul annually and \$124.7 million to our adjoining St. Paul neighborhoods. The arena will bring even more economic activity to our beloved city.
2. St. Thomas is not asking for a variance from the city for the arena – we are building within the rules and within our campus boundaries. St. Thomas is abiding by our conditional use permit with the City and working closely with city officials on all permits, approvals, and requirements.
3. Several other sites were considered. However, an arena on campus means that fans can walk to games. An on-campus facility is favorable for many reasons, including the ability to reduce vehicle traffic.
4. As part of the project, St. Thomas will be investing in infrastructure improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich.
5. The community has had ample opportunity to engage with this project – 17 public meetings on the arena. St. Thomas is the only college with a full-time director of neighborhood relations and is proactive in neighborhood relations!
6. St. Thomas will not want the traffic or parking situation to be a bad experience for fans, because they want their fans to return. We are as motivated as anyone to mitigate complications and will find solutions to traffic and parking on event days.

Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely,  
Fr. Paul Gitter  
2115 Summit Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
651-358-3336

**From:** [Patrick Summers](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** In support of new UST arena  
**Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2024 11:28:33 AM

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I am a lifelong resident of St. Paul. Our home is on Fairmount Avenue, in Ward 4, within the resident permit parking area. We love our neighborhood and this great city. The amenities and mix of people and activities are aspects of the area which helped us to decide to buy our home and raise our three kids here. St. Thomas has been a great neighbor for the 14 years we have lived in our house. We like the energy of being close to a university campus. I think the new arena will be an asset to the community and the City. It's being built with UST money on its own land. It will be great to have a new facility for women's and men's sports, as well as for use by the community. It's great to see significant investment in St. Paul. I feel that UST has done a good job communicating with the neighborhood about its plans for the arena, as well as in general. UST is an asset to St. Paul.

Given the number of students who live on campus, the limited number of large events, the nature of the uses, and the City's efforts to encourage the use of bicycles and transit, I am not concerned about issues with parking. Given the recent elimination of parking minimums for development in St. Paul, it is interesting that parking concerns seem to be a significant talking point with those objecting to the arena. It seems odd to block this new arena based on concerns about occasional issues with parking, while eliminating parking minimums for other sorts of projects. To be clear - I live on a street that may have folks parking on it to attend some events.

I urge the Board of Zoning Appeals and the City Council to issue whatever approvals are needed to allow this project to move forward.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Patrick Summers

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Broadly speaking, the short words are the best, and the old words best of all. Sir  
Winston Churchill

**From:** [Paul Zenner](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Saint Thomas Hockey Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 2:38:09 PM

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It has come to my attention that the new hockey arena at Saint Thomas has been stopped. Hopefully temporarily. Saint Paul doesn't really have much going on right now to aid in its growth and prosperity. Saint Thomas is a growing campus (recently changed to Division 1) and a GOOD neighbor. Whatever Saint Paul can do to partner with Saint Thomas is very good for the community.

Thank you,  
Paul Zenner  
585 Portland Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
651-270-4997

**From:** [Hilger, Rick J](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** UST arena  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 10:03:12 PM

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To Whom it Concerns,

I am writing to express my support for the new multipurpose arena on the UST campus. In brief, it will bring much needed economic activity to the city of St Paul during these uncertain financial times. The arena will expand court and ice time for youth within the city. Adding Division 1 basketball and hockey (with additional seating) will add to the entertainment options in St. Paul, which is a draw when young adults and families make decisions on where they work/live.

I strongly recommend that UST be allowed to build the arena. Progress is always met with some resistance. I respectfully ask you to look at the overwhelming positives to the project and allow it to proceed.

Thank you for your time. I'm happy to discuss further if warranted.

Rick

Rick Hilger MD SFHM  
Utilization Management/Care Management Medical Director, HealthPartners  
Hospitalist, HealthPartners Medical Group  
Adjunct Professor of Medicine, University of Minnesota Medical School

Rick Hilger  
St Paul resident, 55116

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Lee and Penny Anderson Arena  
UST campus

I'm sorry, I can't find the zoning file number or property address

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**From:** [Roger Wolff](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 3:04:51 PM

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Good afternoon,

I'm writing to show my support for St. Thomas's position for their proposed Multipurpose Arena.

St. Thomas has been and will continue to be an asset for the city of St. Paul, and this new project will only increase the economic impact they provide for the city. Part of the project is to improve the surrounding public infrastructure that will benefit all that visit, and especially the neighborhood.

It is my understanding St. Thomas is not seeking a variance, they are working within the city rules, they will be adhering to the city's conditional use permits, and working with the city on all other required approvals.

Again, I support St Thomas's proposed Multipurpose Arena project.

Thank you,

Roger Wolff

1202 Cleveland Avenue South

St. Paul, MN 55116

**From:** [Humbert, Suzanne M.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Lee and Penny Anderson Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 6:29:40 PM

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Hi –

I am writing to voice my support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena on the campus of St. Thomas. I went to St. Thomas and graduated in 1999. During that time, I played varsity basketball all four years. I met my husband at St. Thomas. He played varsity football all four years. We have raised a family in St. Paul, with four children ranging in age from 11-18. Our years at St. Thomas provided us with the skills needed to have successful careers in the Twin Cities. Some of those skills came from participating on the sports teams – the value of hard work, time management, working in teams, and leading teams as a captain. St. Thomas has always provided opportunities for its student-athletes to be so much more than athletes – to come together for the common good.

St. Thomas is a significant asset to the city of St. Paul. The ability to have such a strong academic institution within the city attracts students from near and far. The campus itself is often a big reason students choose to attend – it offers the benefits of being in a city, but on a beautiful campus that has the feel of small campus that has everything you need. As a student who did not have a car on campus, the ability to go watch other sports' teams on campus allowed me to partake in the vibrant campus life. If our basketball arena was not on campus, I doubt we would have gotten many fans to come watch. The ability to have an arena on campus leads to increased student engagement.

St. Thomas has a long history of working within its boundaries to repurpose buildings and space. This is another example of doing just that. They are building with the campus boundaries, working closely with city officials on permits, approvals and requirements and are operating within the rules. Building a new arena on campus brings the opportunity to make infrastructure improvements that will benefit the whole neighborhood, such as the improvements to the crossing on Cretin at Grand and Goodrich avenues. It also will result in a positive increased economic impact to the neighborhoods and the city.

In my job, I go back to campus frequently to recruit accounting students from the university to come work for my company. It is a vibrant campus that proves many opportunities for students to learn, practice their faith, engage with the neighborhood, and become future leaders. St. Thomas has a history of working with the neighborhoods and being a good neighbor and they do not take that lightly. I am confident that they will do the same with this arena.

Thanks –  
Suzanne Humbert

**Suzanne Humbert**  
she/her/hers  
Partner | Audit & Assurance  
Deloitte & Touche LLP

Tel/Direct: 612.692.7098 | Mobile: 612.708.1009

[suhumbert@deloitte.com](mailto:suhumbert@deloitte.com) | [www.deloitte.com](http://www.deloitte.com)

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v.E.1

Steven Lehr  
67 Otis Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-263-2906

April 25, 2024

Re: St. Thomas Division I Facilities

To Whom it May Concern:

I have lived at 67 Otis Avenue for 21 years, a couple of blocks from the proposed St. Thomas Arena. I have been a real estate professional as a broker and lawyer for 34 years. I currently lead the Land practice at CBRE. Over my career, I have represented the City of St. Paul and Port Authority in relocations for the Phalen and Como Shops industrial projects, I represented Ford in the sale of the Highland Bridge site and I represented Wellington in the re-development of Emerald Gardens.

After it was announced that St. Thomas received approval to move into Division I sports, I was retained by St. Thomas to conduct a comprehensive and professional search for land for the facilities. I can say that the search was complicated by the restrictions on expansion the City has imposed on the University proximate to the campus. It is well documented that we put significant effort into acquiring Town and Country Club but were unsuccessful. We did consider some other sites but they were too far and disconnected from the campus.

One of the assumptions and aspirations was to build the fan base from the student body which is the case for many other college sports. Traffic and student safety were also concerns we needed to address. We concluded that building on campus was the best for the students, neighborhood, the University and City. If we had sited the arena off campus, it would have created more traffic at game time from students leaving the University than if it were on campus. Also, there are existing parking facilities proximate to the chosen site.

It is bit frustrating during football season on home game days when the neighborhood turns into a parking lot but it is also exciting and a part of the attraction to the neighborhood to be near the University. The University was here long before I bought my home and it is a little



naïve to think it would go away or not grow. Over the years we have had very few if any disruptions from traffic, fans and parking on game days. My bigger beef is the students looking down at their phones when they are crossing Summit Avenue! That, I suspect is more of a generational thing than whether or not there is a new arena in the neighborhood.

I have spoken to some of the opponents who have knocked on my door to solicit my support to oppose the arena construction and some of the points they made to me were just incorrect.

Just a disclaimer here: I am a graduate of St. John's University and in spite of that St. Thomas hired me and I have found a way to live next to all these Tommies. I, for one am excited at the prospect of walking to the arena to catch a Division I hockey game.

As a neighbor, a real estate professional who tried to find an alternative and as a Johnnie, I support St. Thomas in its decision to build on campus.

Steve Lehr

April 26, 2024

Zoning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission  
City Hall Annex, 25 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1300  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Re: 24-029-110 UST Multipurpose Arena Appeal

Dear Chair Taghioff and Zoning Committee Members:

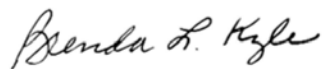
On behalf of the Saint Paul Area Chamber and its members, I write to offer support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena at the University of St. Thomas.

Many neighbors, students, and alumni are very excited about the new arena, which will host D1 Tommie basketball and hockey games. A recent economic impact study shows that the University of St. Thomas currently brings \$498.8 million to the City annually, and \$124.7 million to the surrounding neighborhoods. This new arena will bring even more economic activity to the City, along with opportunities for youth sports and campus engagement.

It's worthwhile to note that the City of Saint Paul has already approved the site plan for the arena. Due diligence was taken in the project's environmental review and infrastructure impacts, along with community engagement. Further, no variances were requested by St. Thomas for this project; they are abiding by all permits and working closely with the City on all necessary approvals.

While there are residents organized against this project, there are also significant positive outcomes that will result from the new arena: from infrastructure improvements at crossings, to replacement of inefficient buildings with a LEED-certified facility, to added vibrancy at the University of St. Thomas campus. We ask that this appeal be denied and this project be allowed to move forward as previously recommended by the City.

Sincerely,



B Kyle  
President and CEO  
Saint Paul Area Chamber



**From:** [Tom Clasen](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** St. Paul Resident Strong Support for St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 5:35:33 PM

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Greetings,

This email is in reference to the 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. I am writing in order to show my strong support for the University of St. Thomas multipurpose sports arena. I believe this facility will be a very good thing for the City of St. Paul and the region.

As we know, St. Paul struggles to attract any kind of development, and it seems to me that having a strong and vibrant Division 1 university in our city will only increase the energy and economic vitality we so sorely need.

While I also support community engagement in any large project in St. Paul, it seems to me that the UST arena has been in front of the public for quite some time with many opportunities for public input. The university has been in its present location since the 1800's, and was there long before any of the current residents were even born.

I sometimes hear from non-St. Paulites that our city has a reputation as being afraid of change, and I think there are times where we let a small group of residents slow or stop a project that is best for the greater community.

I would ask that the city supports positive change to make our city more prosperous and vibrant. Please support the St. Thomas Multipurpose arena.

Thank you for all you do for our city.

Regards,

Tom Clasen  
300 Wall Street #706  
St. Paul, MN 55101

**From:** [Tim Murphy](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support of UST new Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 2:58:47 PM

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Dear City of Saint Paul Leadership and Staff,

I am writing to share our strong support for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena project and to encourage your support to advance the project as soon as possible. As a graduate of UST in 1986 – and owner of business with strong needs for this University – and I have owned two homes in Saint Paul these past 30 years – UST is a very good and responsible neighbor and a huge asset to the City of Saint Paul.

I am in support of this project for a number of reasons including the following:

- The arena will be exciting venue for women’s and men’s athletics and will be a resource for the community.
- UST is not asking for a variance from the city for this project.
- This project is privately funded.
- Being on campus will mean that students will attend without driving.
- UST will be making improvements that will benefit the neighborhood and this project meets the cities development plan.

St. Thomas is an incredible asset that works to meet all city requirements and are improving this cities value.

I urge your support in approving and advancing this project as fast as possible.

Tim Murphy  
Direct Line: 651-456-1404  
President Printware  
2935 Waters Road Ste. 160 Eagan MN 55121





**From:** [Wade Johnson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals / file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 3:00:39 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support of the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena construction project on the campus of the University of St. Thomas. As a resident of St. Paul (1263 James Avenue) I fully support St. Thomas' efforts to improve their institution and on campus facilities. I am in full support of their efforts to improve their infrastructure and provide a significant economic boost to the community and the City of St. Paul as whole. Working within the bounds of the Conditional Use Permit, I am hopeful that the project can be completed without interruption. I find the opposition to the project based upon increased traffic to be non-compelling based upon the existing parking facilities, St. Thomas' efforts to mitigate impact upon the neighborhood and the fact that similar traffic volumes are already experienced during on campus football games.

I look forward to seeing the improvements completed and experiencing the positive impact that it will bring to our community.

Best,

**From:** [Barbara Julie salzman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Your neighbor's concern re: file #24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 2:24:12 PM

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I live within close walking distance from Saint Thomas and the proposed arena. Our son attended, graduated from St. Thomas and had a very positive experience at this fine university. We have always thought so highly of St. Thomas, until now. St. Thomas, how can you justify building this arena in the heart of an already crowded space? There are many families and young children who will be so negatively impacted by the traffic generated. What a concern this is. Please have consideration for what this will do to us and reconsider. Certainly there are numerous places that would be vastly better in terms of parking and space. Do this for the safety and sanity of so many of us.

Thank you for your consideration,

Barbara Salzman  
2266 Sargent Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Cate Wood](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to UST Arena  
**Date:** Friday, April 26, 2024 8:15:00 PM

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As a long time residence of the 2000 block of Lincoln Ave I have seen the ongoing development and expansion of St Thomas and the accompanying noise, traffic, and disturbances.

I **oppose** the building of the new arena and parking structure. It will only bring more traffic and noise, and continue to push UST campus into our residential neighborhood.

Cate Wood

Regarding the arena project at 2260 Summit Avenue, file number 24-029-110:

I recently learned about the University of St. Thomas' plans to build an arena on this site. I'm embarrassed to admit that I hadn't realized a 5,500-seat arena was being planned in our quiet, largely residential neighborhood. With neighborhood newspapers like the Highland Villager recently going behind a paywall, it's been difficult to get information about important issues affecting our area. I did notice lawn signs from a neighborhood group, but I assumed they were protesting the arena's planned construction in the new Highland Bridge development. I am sure that many of my neighbors are still completely unaware that the arena will be constructed in their backyard.

My concerns are numerous, but the most significant issue to me is the potential for massive events to overwhelm the neighborhood's capacity to handle traffic and parking. Most attendees will come to the arena in private automobiles, yet parking is available for only a fraction of these cars. Summit Avenue and Mississippi River Blvd. are major cycling corridors year-round. Will cyclists be safe from the increased traffic circulating the neighborhood trying to find parking?

On event days, will it be possible for residents to easily access their homes? Will the neighborhood resemble the Xcel Energy Center on game days, with the possibility of being locked in an unmoving traffic jam for extended periods as the arena is loaded and unloaded? Unlike the Xcel Energy Center, this is not in a downtown area; it's a residential area where people are trying to get home from work, appointments, and errands. If this arena is constructed, I foresee a time when all residents will need to diligently track arena events to avoid getting stuck in traffic when going to the pharmacy or the grocery store. How often will residents be trapped in their homes or blocked from reaching them due to events?

Additionally, I'm concerned that this gigantic facility is planned on the bluffs of the Mississippi River. Have there been adequate environmental studies examining the effects on this sensitive ecological area? We were drawn to this neighborhood because of the serene natural park along the river. I've enjoyed seeing countless wildlife in the river valley, including bald eagles, foxes, wood ducks, pileated woodpeckers, and coyotes. What will be the impact on them and their habitat?

Lastly, I'd be very saddened to see the destruction of the two remaining Cass Gilbert dormitories on the South Campus. These are beautiful, 100-year-old buildings designed by one of Minnesota's most important architects. I'm no architectural expert, but I know the city well. These buildings must rank among the most important architectural structures on the western end of Summit Avenue.



It's particularly troubling to see an educational institution like St. Thomas diverting resources towards ventures like NCAA Division I basketball and hockey. These pursuits seem far removed from the core mission of education and more akin to profit-driven enterprises. It's disheartening to see the university prioritize athletic expansion over education, the environment, and its obligations to the neighborhood it calls home.

Thank you.

James C. Farley  
1994 Summit Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
29 April 2024

**From:** [Joe Jacobson](#)  
**To:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#); [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 6:17:57 PM

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Greetings -

The University of St Thomas is actively soliciting the neighborhood to share positive feedback (aka canned talking points) to the City of St Paul. I wanted to provide a perspective from a UST neighbor that (I believe) represents the neighborhood.

Generally, the neighborhood isn't against a stadium or "structural progress" on the UST campus per se. The neighborhood understands they decided to live by a university and the pros/cons that come with that. UST has generally been a thoughtful neighbor.

However, the new stadium has been a clear exception.

Case in point (suggested talking point from UST)

*St. Thomas will not want the traffic or parking situation to be a bad experience for fans, because they want their fans to return. They will find solutions to parking and traffic*

Parking and traffic are the 1 and 1a concerns for the neighborhood. The tone deaf, arrogant statement above of "we don't have a plan OR consideration for the neighborhood for traffic and parking but don't worry, trust us...we will find an option for **fans** that should? maybe? help the neighborhood too" is absolutely the issue.

The heavy machinery traffic has already been a major concern and brought to the attention to UST multiple times. The single response from Jerome Benner (university relations) was UST and Ryan companies "received approval" to use Cretin as a truck hall [sic] route. Approval from who? The city? Cretin is a Minnesota State Aid road, unfortunately trucks cannot be stopped however Cretin is not a truck route. (Yes, it's confusing). The highland bridge project understood these complexities and in good faith (and good will) for the neighborhood routed heavy machinery off "residential" roads as much as possible. And they listened, communicated and (gasp) had a plan.

**PLEASE** make UST have a plan for parking and traffic, both during and post construction. A plan that is fair and thoughtful to the neighborhood. Do **NOT** let them get away with their continued arrogance of "just trust us" for this project.

Thanks.

**Please include my comments in the public record for this case. The project address is 2260 Summit and the file number is File 24-029-110. My address is 2257 Sargent Avenue, St Paul, 55105.**

Below are preliminary poll results from a question I posted to Nextdoor. The first is the response from residents of the wider Mac-Groverland area (A) and the second is the response from a more limited audience, those living closer to the STU campus (B). These are separate samples.

In a short period (~48 hours) 2K have viewed the first poll (A) and 199 the second (B). Both polls remain open and posted under my name as a resident. As you can see, the question of site location is asked with limited background information.

**Consistent in both sets of responses is the preference for locating St Thomas University's arena at the Herberger's/Allianz location over the remaining options (including an "other" option).**

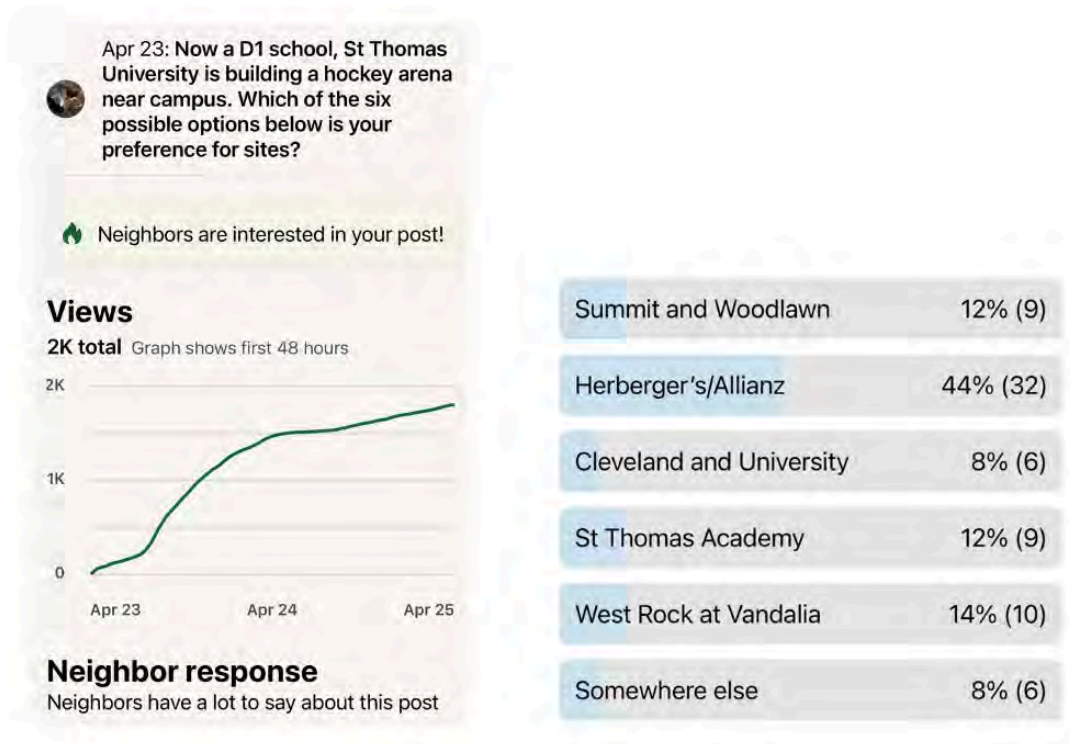
I hope those making site decisions have conducted their own survey(s) among Saint Thomas U's neighbors and that the input will be respected. Neighbors are at least as affected by this decision as the academic body.

I am available to answer questions (651.710.1741). I would expect similar results in a larger survey, given the sample sizes of these Neighbor polls as well as the consistency of results and the disparity between preference for the first choice option (Allianz) versus others.

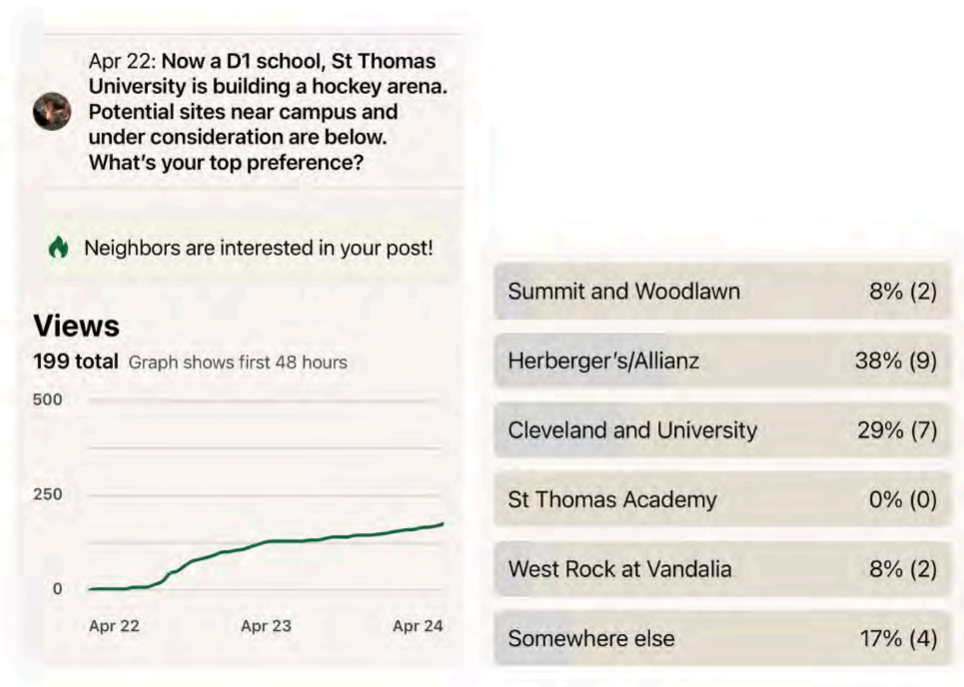
Thank you.

Katherine Galligan

**Poll A:**



**Poll B:**





**From:** [Katie Tuma](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** The Mississippi River  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 10:35:51 AM

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Please protect her. There is much work Native led and co led along the Mississippi River. It is important to connect all ventures along this treasure and historic highway for the Indigenous people and all people who live along it.

If there is a possibility of toxic run off this needs to be addressed big time.

The future of our City relies on it!

Please disclose all information and environmental reports that keep the River safe. She deserves this kind of treatment.

Please think 7 generations ahead when college sports may not even be a thing.

Sincerely,

Katie Clements Tuma

2260 Summit

24-029-110

**From:** [Ray Langer & Lynn Kane](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to St. Thomas's Site Plan Application  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 2:44:33 PM

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**To:** St. Paul Zoning Committee

This email is to register objections to the planned arena at:

**2260 Summit Avenue**

File No:

**24-029-110**

My husband and I are longtime neighbors of St Thomas University at:

**2132 Fairmount Ave.**

**St. Paul, MN 55105**

Our opposition is based on the following concerns:

### **Environmental**

An **Environmental Assessment Worksheet** is not adequate for a project this size.

An **Environmental Impact Statement** is needed!

An **EIS** would identify the *many* environmental problems that haven't been addressed in the **EAW** - high on the list being concerns about pollution of natural springs, groundwater and ultimately the Mississippi River.

### **Setting**

**Summit Avenue** is the one of St. Paul's most iconic and historic elements. It stretches from the WWII monument overlooking the Mississippi River to the State Capitol. The Arena plans to utilize the portion of **Summit Avenue** that serves as the link to the Mississippi River Boulevard as a **Service Access!**

### **Traffic**

A Traffic Demand Management Study (TDMP) is needed!

This email reflects just a few of the concerns we have. We have read the appeal prepared by Advocates for Responsible Development and urge you to consider the application.

thank you,

Linda Kane

Ray Langer

**From:** [Lee Schafer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; #CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** UST Multipurpose Arena Appeal File # 24-029-019  
**Date:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 6:22:55 PM

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Good Day,

I am writing to express opposition to the UST Multipurpose Arena, file 24-029-019.

I live near enough to the site to perhaps feel some impact from parking and car traffic were the arena to be built as planned, but I do not expect any meaningful negative impact on my life. My own interest here is in good policy and the health of our city.

St Thomas was once a small college and is now a 2nd Tier university, on largely the same real estate. Many of the students are commuters, and with our inadequate transit system a lot of students come to the neighborhood in personal cars. As St. Thomas grew it emphasized sports programming to raise the profile of the University and attract applicants, which is a strategy other universities have used successfully. It is therefore reasonable to expect that St. Thomas would seek to upgrade its facilities. I also understand, generally, the rights of institutional landowners within a campus boundary. However, in this case UST has chosen to create a major sports project without appropriate and responsible investments in infrastructure, particularly parking.

The project will take parking spots from the overall campus. UST's plan is simply to send those who attend events into the nearby residential neighborhood to circle around and park their cars wherever they can on event nights. In other words, the project's negative effects are NOT within the campus boundaries. Many of those costs will be borne by St. Paul residents outside the boundaries, as the "event" spills onto the residential blocks around the campus. Common sense ideas like ensuring that the Anderson Ramp off Cretin Avenue is open and free on event nights -- to train visitors to try the ramp first rather than cruise up and down neighborhood streets looking for "free" street parking -- have not been planned by UST, to my knowledge. Planned investments in upgraded foot traffic crossings are minimal and should have been made a long time ago anyway. The City, in its role as land use regulator, must insist on building a city that works for all. The city and its Planning Committee need to reconsider this project.

We live in a central city, and we expect traffic and street vitality; the vitality is good for the health of St. Paul. In this case, however, St. Thomas is not acting responsibly and in good faith. With the possible exception of UST alums, there appears to be uniform opposition throughout our part of St. Paul to the project. I have not chosen to join with the more vocal residents in our part of town now doing things like planting lawn signs all over, particularly on blocks nearer than us to the proposed site, but I do recognize the irresponsible UST project for what it is.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lee Schafer

---

**Lee Schafer**  
(612) 812-0242  
2237 Sargent Avenue  
Saint Paul  
[LinkedIn.com/in/leeschafer](https://www.linkedin.com/in/leeschafer)  
Bluesky: [@thetreasurer.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/thetreasurer.bsky.social)

**From:** [Elizabeth Alf](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** Concerns on UST arena project  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 2:44:06 PM

---

Hi,

My name is Elizabeth Alf and I live at 1661 Marshall Ave, St. Paul, MN, 55104. I am writing in regards to the UST arena development project- 2260 Summit Ave- file number (24-029-110).

I am concerned about the increased flow of car and bus traffic that the arena project will bring and the resultant increase in greenhouse gases in our local community. My family and I live nearby and my parents live right nextdoor. We all love to be able to spend time walking in the neighborhood and enjoying our backyards and I'm concerned about the increasing pollution from vehicle traffic.

I am also concerned that there was no Traffic Demand Management Study included in the UST site plan application as that seems like critical information to evaluate the decision.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns and I hope they are helpful as this plan is re-evaluated.

Best,

Liz Alf



**From:** [Mark Salzman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Kennedy](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed UST Arena  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 1:22:59 PM

---

Dear Zoning Committee Members,

This is Mark Salzman, 2266 Sargent Ave., St. Paul, MN. I'm a resident close to the proposed University of St. Thomas Arena at 2260 Summit Avenue file number (24-029-110). As a resident and landscape architect, I'm concerned about the potential adverse safety, noise, and parking impacts on our neighborhood. In recent history, there have been many buildings constructed at the University of Saint Thomas. From a best practice perspective, the proposal for a large arena in a very tight campus setting does not sufficiently address the parking needs for the proposed facility but relies on neighborhood parking for most of the facility's parking needs. This not only impacts adjoining neighborhoods regarding parking but forces much increased traffic in neighborhoods for parking seekers and presents safety concerns for our neighborhoods with small children and crossing challenges at intersections like Mississippi River Boulevard approaching Cretin Avenue.

I would suggest that The University of Saint Thomas would be a much better community partner if they look for another location for their proposed arena. Because of the anticipated adverse impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, I ask that City of St. Paul will not support the approval of the proposed arena at this site.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

**Mark Salzman, PLA**

Principal Landscape Architect  
Transportation

**Direct** (763) 852-2125 | **Main Line** (763) 852-2100 | **Cell** (952) 412-6210 | **Email** [msalzman@hntb.com](mailto:msalzman@hntb.com)

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**From:** [Sallie Kemper](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Arena - 2260 Summit Avenue - file no. 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 10:01:36 AM

---

Dear Zoning Committee Members:

As a 40-year resident of the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood, I have been supportive of many University of St. Thomas (UST) initiatives and have often argued that the institution should, within reason, be able to do as it wishes on the property it legally possesses. However, I am **very much opposed** to the proposed arena as its very existence depends upon the willingness of nearby tax-paying neighbors to provide free parking for up to several thousand attendees of events held by the very well endowed, non-tax-paying University.

UST has access to enormous resources in large part thanks to its non-taxable status and the wealthy, influential supporters who enjoy the recognition acquired by tax deductible contributions funding major projects. To ask hard-working taxpayers to take on the burden of providing parking for this arena is unconscionable. UST should provide sufficient on-campus parking at its own expense, not look to a handout from the neighbors who will have to tolerate the horrendous onslaught of unwelcome car traffic, foot traffic, noise and general mayhem in what has been to date a pleasant, sought-after neighborhood. I am dismayed that the city would even begin to think about allowing such an ill-conceived project to go further.

Sallie Kemper  
221 Woodlawn Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Andrew](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of the St. Thomas Lee and Penny Anderson Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:36:21 PM

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Good Afternoon-

I am reaching out in support of the arena at the University of St. Thomas. As an 8-year resident of St. Paul who participates in our wonderful city's politics, I do not wish that the late protests of a small group of neighbors stalls this project.

St. Thomas' transition to Division I athletics provides a unique opportunity to find a market in college athletics for St. Paul. As Minnesota's 2nd Division I school, this arena is a perfect size and at a perfect school to open hosting events at the facility as well as bringing a high level of college athletics to St. Paul.

Further, as I understand it, this project is privately paid for and wholly on St. Thomas property, with them so far meeting all city requirements -including 17 public meetings so far! There has been no asking for a variance and this project would bring untold millions to the community.

As with the bike lane project on Summit, it is unfortunate that this cadre of residents feels they can restrict an opportunity/enhancements for the entire city because they feel it might inconvenience them.

Please do not allow them to delay or hold up the Lee and Penny Anderson arena project at St. Thomas!

Best,

Andrew Nelson  
1555 Race St.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

**From:** [Andy Pieper](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary: #CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit Avenue (St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals): File Nos. 24-029-019 & 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 11:42:18 AM

---

Dear Councilmembers:

I live at 1876 Wellesley Avenue in Saint Paul with my wife Michaela Kronlage and our three children, ages 14, 12, and 9. Michaela and I have lived in Saint Paul for more than 25 years, having first moved here, respectively, from rural Minnesota and rural Iowa to attend the University of St. Thomas as undergraduates. We fell in love with this city, and, after college, we decided to stay and build our family and our careers here.

St. Thomas is an anchor institution in our lives and in our neighborhood; we have always felt fortunate to have the university as a neighbor given all of the amenities and vibrancy that it brings to urban living. Indeed, we both rejected the idea of moving to a suburb as we started our family precisely because we desired the kinds of benefits that come with living in a college town like Saint Paul, in which institutions like St. Thomas provide tremendous benefits.

And, over the years, we've realized those benefits. For example, our kids have loved exploring the St. Thomas campus and the environment around it, which St. Thomas has always nurtured and cared for as a good neighborhood steward. We've also enjoyed attending athletic and other events on campus. As a result, we were ecstatic at the announcement of the new Anderson arena on south campus because it will provide exceptional benefits to our neighborhood and to the city, both in terms of economic development and in youth sports opportunities.

Specific to youth sports, I've coached numerous teams over the years (and presently) for each of my kids; I estimate that I've coached more than 250 kids in Saint Paul in various different programs, particularly in basketball where I've volunteered through the Highland Hoops organization and through middle school athletics. Having a D-1 college basketball program in our backyard is a massive boon to our community: St. Thomas actively engages and inspires our youth to participate in athletics like basketball and the arena will only increase and enhance that engagement. To that end, there are innumerable ways in which the arena will positively impact our neighborhood and city, both in the immediate term (by providing more and better facilities for youth sports) and in the long term (by retaining youth in our community as they grow). And having a facility like the Anderson arena--and the D-1 basketball and hockey programs that it will support--will make our neighborhood and our city even more attractive to new and young families as they consider their options for planting roots.

Moreover, the Anderson arena is a privately funded facility and will be built entirely within St. Thomas' existing campus borders. As a result, our neighborhood and city are gaining these advantages without the public investments that are otherwise necessary to make these kinds of facilities available. That fact alone should seal the deal in support of the Anderson arena.

Simply put, the Anderson arena is nothing but a tremendous win for all stakeholders: the university, the neighborhood, the city, and our youth.



With that, and for all of these reasons (and many more), I strongly urge you to allow construction of the Anderson arena to proceed.

Thank you,

Andy Pieper  
1876 Wellesley Avenue  
651-402-2069

**From:** [Johnson, Avery K.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, line numbers 24-029-019 & 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 12:07:59 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to you today to express my reason on why the St. Thomas Arena should continue being built. I am a student at the University of St. Thomas and have been so excited for the new stadium to be finished. Part of the reason I transferred from my previous institution is due to the building of the new arena. I would ask that the stadium be built so Me, my fellow Tommies, and future Tommies can make lasty memories in the Arena.

In regards to 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, case numbers 24-029-019 & 24-029-110

Thank You,  
Avery Johnson

**From:** [Blake Montpetit](#)  
**To:** [Charlie Simmons](#)  
**Cc:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 1:23:03 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

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Very well said, thanks for writing this my friend.

On Tue, Apr 30, 2024 at 10:07 AM Charlie Simmons <[charlie@charlieandcodesign.com](mailto:charlie@charlieandcodesign.com)> wrote:

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing in support of The University of St. Thomas' arena development, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. For nearly a decade, I have lived at 2190 Sargent Ave., just three blocks south of the construction site. Over the past year, I have heard many of the arguments from my neighbors regarding this particular project. I believe that much of the angst comes from misinformation, unintentional or otherwise. Many of my neighbors believe that what is being built is similar in scale to a professional sports stadium, little to no outreach to our community has been done by UST, and that this project will negatively impact our environment.

Once I started to hear about concerns at our neighborhood gatherings, I began to research the facts for myself. In a mere five minutes on Google, I found the concept plans noting the size, location, and seating capacity of the proposed arena, at least a dozen public meetings to review updates and changes to the project with the neighborhood, and copies of the government mandated E.I.S. (Environmental Impact Study). Armed with these facts, I have shared them with a few of my neighbors, only to be met with disbelief. This leads me to believe that the impetus behind the "pushback" is fear of change and not on any zoning or legal grounds. It is my understanding that no variances are being requested, which indicates that UST is not trying to "bend the rules", but rather improve their institution within the guidelines set forth by the City of St. Paul, and on private property for that matter.

As a principal of an architecture firm, I know firsthand the amount of due diligence that must be done on a project of this scale, not only with the city but with the neighborhood as well. After examining the facts of the proposal, I'm left with only one conclusion – that this will be a beautiful building that will positively shape the future of St. Thomas, our neighborhood, and our wonderful capital city.

Thank you for allowing me to enter into the public record my full support for this project.

Warmest Regards,

Charlie Simmons

Founder / Principal

Charlie & Co. Design

1601 Utica Ave. S. #212

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

(ph) 612.333.2246

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--



**Blake Montpetit**

Owner | Tiffany Sports Lounge

612-839-4747

[tiffanysportslounge.com](http://tiffanysportslounge.com)



**From:** [Bob Shoemake](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, File numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 10:02:12 PM

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Dear Councilwoman Jalali and St. Paul Zoning Committee Members,

I am writing to you to express my support for the University of St. Thomas (UST) as it constructs new athletic facilities on its St. Paul campus.

The University of St. Thomas, the largest private university in Minnesota, is a significant economic engine within the city of St. Paul. Its flourishing supports and contributes to the flourishing of our city. This project is aimed at enhancing the university's continued growth and development, and thus that of St. Paul.

Other sites were considered for this construction. By building on this site on the St. Thomas campus, the tax roles of St. Paul were not negatively affected, a huge issue in a city in which a large percentage of its property is in government or otherwise non-profit tax status.

The university is committed to being a good neighbor. It is the only college in Minnesota with a full-time director of neighborhood relations. As is its practice, it consulted widely in the process of this project, conducting 17 public meetings.

The university is committed to being a good steward of the environmental resources in its care. This project will bring a number of significant improvements to this property, improving water drainage, adding a green quad and building of a Leed-certified athletic facility.

A significant number of UST employees, including me, live and pay taxes in St. Paul. As a long-time resident, I am deeply engaged in the life of our community, including having served as a former board member and past president of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council. I believe that this project is good for UST, good for the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood, and good for the City of St. Paul.

Thank you for your consideration.

Take care,

Bob Shoemake  
1523 Pascal Street North  
Saint Paul, MN 55108  
612-730-6401

**From:** [Brian Molitor](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file # 24-029-019 and 24-029110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:41:40 AM

---

To whom it may concern:

I am an alumnus of the University of St Thomas. I also currently have two children who are attending the University of St Thomas. I am in support of the new arena that the University is constructing. The University of St Thomas has had a positive influence for St Paul and the State of Minnesota in its history. I think it is great that they continue to make improvements for the future.

Brian Molitor  
651-437-5371 (Office)  
651-983-8264 (Mobile)  
651-437-0038 (Fax)



**From:** [Brown, Bridget P.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Request to Resume Construction of St. Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:58:42 AM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-23et33oz.png](#)

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Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Bridget Brown and I am a Junior at the University of St. Thomas. I am writing this email regarding 2260 Summit the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals (file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110).

I am writing to express the urgent need for resuming construction on the arena. The delay in completing this project has caused significant disappointment among our student body and has put a pause on various events & activities that could help grow our school & community engagement.

The arena project holds immense value not only for our university but also for the broader community. Once finished it can help foster student well-being, enhancing academic experience, create community building, and support the local economy. Furthermore, it is important to note that the university had plans to host graduation ceremonies at the arena, which now hang in uncertainty for my graduating class (2025) due to the delay. Resuming construction would ensure that this significant milestone for my class remains on track and is commemorated the new venue.

I urge you to prioritize the completion of the arena project for the betterment of our university, the community, and the city. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated on behalf of students at UST.

Thank you for your attention to this request,

**Bridget P. Brown**

University of St. Thomas '25  
Operations & Supply Chain Management  
[brow1010@stthomas.edu](mailto:brow1010@stthomas.edu)  
[LinkedIn](#)



UNIVERSITY  
*of* ST. THOMAS  
MINNESOTA



**From:** [Charlie Simmons](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** RE: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:00:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Updated public statement with home address. Please use the below:

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing in support of The University of St. Thomas' arena development, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. For nearly a decade, I have lived at 2190 Sargent Ave. 55105, just three blocks south of the construction site. Over the past year, I have heard many of the arguments from my neighbors regarding this particular project. I believe that much of the angst comes from misinformation, unintentional or otherwise. Many of my neighbors believe that what is being built is similar in scale to a professional sports stadium, little to no outreach to our community has been done by UST, and that this project will negatively impact our environment.

Once I started to hear about concerns at our neighborhood gatherings, I began to research the facts for myself. In a mere five minutes on Google, I found the concept plans noting the size, location, and seating capacity of the proposed arena, at least a dozen public meetings to review updates and changes to the project with the neighborhood, and copies of the government mandated E.I.S. (Environmental Impact Study). Armed with these facts, I have shared them with a few of my neighbors, only to be met with disbelief. This leads me to believe that the impetus behind the "pushback" is fear of change and not on any zoning or legal grounds. It is my understanding that no variances are being requested, which indicates that UST is not trying to "bend the rules", but rather improve their institution within the guidelines set forth by the City of St. Paul, and on private property for that matter.

As a principal of an architectural design firm, I know firsthand the amount of due diligence that must be done on a project of this scale, not only with the city but with the neighborhood as well. After examining the facts of the proposal, I'm left with only one conclusion – that this will be a beautiful building that will positively shape the future of St. Thomas, our neighborhood, and our wonderful capital city.

Thank you for allowing me to enter into the public record my full support for this project.

Warmest Regards,

Charlie Simmons  
Founder / Principal

Charlie & Co. Design  
1601 Utica Ave. S. #212  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

(ph) 612.333.2246

[www.charlieandcodesign.com](http://www.charlieandcodesign.com)



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**From:** Charlie Simmons

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 10:08 AM

**To:** 'PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us' <PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

**Cc:** 'ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us' <ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing in support of The University of St. Thomas' arena development, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. For nearly a decade, I have lived at 2190 Sargent Ave., just three blocks south of the construction site. Over the past year, I have heard many of the arguments from my neighbors regarding this particular project. I believe that much of the angst comes from misinformation, unintentional or otherwise. Many of my neighbors believe that what is being built is similar in scale to a professional sports stadium, little to no outreach to our community has been done by UST, and that this project will negatively impact our environment.

Once I started to hear about concerns at our neighborhood gatherings, I began to research the facts for myself. In a mere five minutes on Google, I found the concept plans noting the size, location, and seating capacity of the proposed arena, at least a dozen public meetings to review updates and changes to the project with the neighborhood, and copies of the government mandated E.I.S. (Environmental Impact Study). Armed with these facts, I have shared them with a few of my neighbors, only to be met with disbelief. This leads me to believe that the impetus behind the "pushback" is fear of change and not on any zoning or legal grounds. It is my understanding that no variances are being requested, which indicates that UST is not trying to "bend the rules", but rather improve their institution within the guidelines set forth by the City of St. Paul, and on private property for that matter.

As a principal of an architecture firm, I know firsthand the amount of due diligence that must be done on a project of this scale, not only with the city but with the neighborhood as well. After examining the facts of the proposal, I'm left with only one conclusion – that this will be a beautiful building that will positively shape the future of St. Thomas, our neighborhood, and

our wonderful capital city.

Thank you for allowing me to enter into the public record my full support for this project.

Warmest Regards,

Charlie Simmons

Founder / Principal

Charlie & Co. Design

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**From:** [Walters, Carter K.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the University of St. Thomas" Multipurpose Arena: Vital for St. Paul's Growth and Prosperity  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 5:56:02 PM

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Dear City of St. Paul,

I am writing in regard to the case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, File Numbers: 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

I hope this message finds you well. I am reaching out to express my deep concern regarding the halt in the construction of the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena, a crucial project for the University of St. Thomas and the broader St. Paul community. As a student of St. Thomas, I hope to voice my concern and show support for this vital project in order to continue the mutually beneficial growth and success of the University and surrounding community.

As you know, St. Thomas serves as an anchor institution for St. Paul, contributing significantly to the city's economic vitality. A recent economic impact study revealed that the university brings nearly \$498.8 million to St. Paul annually, with \$124.7 million benefiting our adjoining neighborhoods. The arena promises to amplify this impact by generating additional economic activity and fostering community engagement.

It's important to note that St. Thomas is not seeking special treatment from the city. The university is adhering to all regulations and permits while collaborating closely with municipal authorities to ensure compliance with all requirements. Moreover, the decision to construct the arena on campus, within existing boundaries, was made after careful consideration of multiple alternatives. By locating the facility on campus, fans will have the convenience of walking to games, thereby reducing vehicle traffic.

Throughout the planning process, St. Thomas has actively engaged with the community, hosting 17 public meetings to gather feedback and address concerns. The university has also appointed a full-time director of neighborhood relations, underscoring its commitment to fostering positive relationships with residents.

As part of the project, St. Thomas is committed to investing in infrastructure improvements that will benefit the surrounding neighborhood, including enhancements to crossings on Cretin at Grand Avenue and Goodrich. Additionally, the university is dedicated to environmental stewardship and sustainability. The arena project involves the removal of inefficient buildings and surface lots, which will improve water drainage.

The university is already paving the way for sustainable development with the construction of an LEED-certified building. St. Thomas prioritizes sustainability and is taking proactive measures to mitigate environmental impact.

While acknowledging the concerns raised by Advocates for Responsible Development, I urge the city of St. Paul to consider the broader benefits of the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena to our community. By supporting this project, we can foster economic growth, enhance community engagement, and demonstrate our commitment to sustainable development.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will carefully weigh the importance of this project for the University of St. Thomas and the city of St. Paul.

Sincerely,

Carter Walters  
Undergraduate - First-year  
University of St. Thomas



**From:** [Mendez, Osvaldo O.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas multipurpose arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:41:36 AM

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Good morning,

I emailing to support the construction of the UST Arena, I am a grad student that live in the neighborhood, the arena will bring more live to the city and more business. This is a great opportunity for the neighborhood for development. I support the arena and as someone young I want to live in a neighborhood with amenities like the new arena. The building is gonna to be LEED certified.

Consider the future, the arena will bring a lot of opportunities, do it for the future of the city.

I am going to remember if you approve, and next elections I will remember.

Thanks,

**Cesar Osvaldo Méndez Portillo**

Graduate Student M.A Diversity leadership

St. Thomas University Alumni advisory board member

(651) 398-8332 | He/Him/ El pronouns



**From:** [cjmicheljr@gmail.com](mailto:cjmicheljr@gmail.com)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re; File Number: 24-029-019  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:03:57 AM

---

From:

*Chip*

Charles J (Chip) Michel Jr.  
1731 Summit Ave  
St Paul, MN. 55105-1833

Dear Committee Members,

My Name is Charles Michel. I live at 1731 Summit Ave. Midway between The University of St Thomas & Macalester College. I have lived in this neighborhood all 75 years of my life.

Over these years I have watched the neighborhood change and adapt. These schools are part of the neighborhood and were here long before me and my family. They are part of the culture and life flavor of the community. Both positive and not so positive. These institutions were in the neighborhood long before any of the complainers. A commonsense view would say if one doesn't tolerate a collegiate influence in the neighborhood probably shouldn't have located in one. And then there is resistance to change. I guess that's life. Change is inevitable. My wife and I embrace the positive influence that the youth brings. From knocking on our door for food drives to their spring festivals which would not be our choice of music yet brings fond memories of our youth.

These institutions need to change to stay competitive with other schools to attract students. My humble opinion is that both schools have been pretty good stewards in considering the impacts to their neighborhoods. And yet continue to put out an attractive product to their customers. (The Students)

I understand there can be worries about parking and more traffic. However, The positive influence of their presence so much outweighs the minor negatives. With that in mind I do think we should give UST the benefit of the doubt and support them in building the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena and help continue to grow our community for the better.

*Chip*

Charles J (Chip) Michel Jr.  
1731 Summit Ave  
St Paul, MN. 55105-1833  
612 859 3344 cell  
[cjmicheljr@gmail.com](mailto:cjmicheljr@gmail.com)

**From:** [Charlie Michel](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** University of St Thomas - Neighborhood Support (File Number: 24-029-019 & File Number: 24-029-110)  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 10:30:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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File Number: 24-029-019

File Number: 24-029-110

From:

Charlie Michel

186 Mississippi River Blvd S

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Charlie Michel, and I live at 186 Mississippi River Blvd. I am writing this note to express what seems to be a much more silent contingent of the neighborhood in which we live and love – and in the end is my opinion regarding how the University of St Thomas has been an amazing steward of our neighborhood for over 100 years – and we as neighbors need to support them as they have supported us and our city for so long.

Change is never easy, but it is necessary for progress to happen. A strong, vibrant, and successful University of St Thomas is good for both St Paul, and our neighborhood. Forget that their buildings are always beautiful and have a positive impact visually in the neighborhood, the university provides jobs, brings students in, students support the community and the city as a whole. Businesses thrive, provide jobs, families prosper (Davannis, Marios, Kims, Nellies, Black Coffee, all the shops in Highland, on Grand Ave, and on and on).

Back to the immediate students - once graduated, these kids from all over the Midwest then enjoy calling the Twin Cities “Home”....going on to be in the workforce, future teachers, police, businesspeople, etc etc. They set roots here, raise families – and the circle of positive growth continues. This impact cannot even be calculated by many – how positive it is on the entire Twin Cities. (I am sure there is some study that could figure it out )

Bottom line I come back to *a strong a successful University of St Thomas is good for our community, and the community should help support them in their growth and change for the better.*

I understand there can be worries about parking and more traffic (I even signed the petition to change area 23 to be a “by permit only” area), but I do think we should give UST the benefit of the doubt and support them in building the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena and help continue to grow our community for the better.

Please support the arena and support UST, and allow them to move forward with this project.

Thank You –  
Charlie Michel

**Charlie Michel**

*President – Superior Pump*



Email: [charlie@mico-usa.com](mailto:charlie@mico-usa.com)

Web: [www.pedrollogroup.com](http://www.pedrollogroup.com)

Web: [www.superiorpump.com](http://www.superiorpump.com)

**PEDROLLO GROUP - US**

45 Maryland Ave East  
St Paul, Minnesota 55117  
1-651-755-2503 ©



[AVVISO DI RISERVATEZZA PER LA POSTA ELETTRONICA \(clicca qui\)](#)

**From:** [Cole](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; #CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Please continue construction on St Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:25:15 AM

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I am an incoming student athlete at the university of St Thomas in St Paul, writing concerning case file 24-029-019 and 24-029-110 One of the biggest reasons I committed to St Thomas was because of their incredible facilities and their promise of construction on new Engineering and Sports facilities. By stopping construction the university will be hindered. Invest in education!!



**From:** [Cole](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Automatic reply: Please continue construction on St Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:28:12 AM

---

Concerning 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose arena appeals. My name is Cole Johnson and I'm from Madison Wisconsin but am committed to study engineering and swim for the University of St Thomas in the fall.

On Wed, May 1, 2024 at 10:25 AM \*CI-StPaul\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary <[PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us)> wrote:

Thank you for submitting your comments. In order for your comments to be included in the public record, make sure that you have included the zoning file number and property address of the zoning case for which you are submitting written testimony. We also ask that you submit your full name and location information. You may choose to withhold your street address as long as your full name is included with your comments.

Please note: The deadline to receive written testimony is at 2:30 PM on the Thursday of the Zoning Committee meeting during which the zoning case is to be heard.

**From:** [Gregory, Elizabeth C.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Construction of Lee & Penny Anderson Arena  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 8:22:13 AM

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Good morning!

I am referencing this case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.

I am a current student at the University of St. Thomas that lives on campus. Our campus brings life to the St. Paul area and brings significant revenue to the city of St. Paul annually. The University is building within regulations set by the city, and is not misusing the permits. Additionally, the University of St. Thomas will be investing in infrastructure improvements throughout the neighborhood to support the arena. Overall, the University was diligent with their connection with the community ahead of beginning to build the area, and did their best to hear from the community. An arena on campus will bring more revenue to the city of St. Paul, and will allow the campus to connect over sports that all students will have easy access to attend.

Thank you!  
Elizabeth Gregory

**From:** [Eric Johnson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** UST hockey arena Supporter  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 9:43:44 PM

---

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you about the 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.

I live near UST at 2101 Sargent Avenue, Saint Paul and I fully support the building of the new hockey arena. UST hosts many large events responsibly throughout the year (football, basketball, graduations, weddings, etc) and is well equipped to host hockey events. The location adjacent to the parking ramp is well suited for 3000-5000 fans. I have been notified several times that this was in the planning stages and offered a chance to weigh in.

I am a neighbor and I support the new arena.

Sincerely,  
Eric Johnson

**From:** [Bernier, Ethan W.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 1:26:19 PM

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To: PED-ZoningComitteeSecretary@ci.stpual.mn.us

Wed 5/1/2024 1:17 PM

Case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

Hello, my name is Ethan Bernier and I am a current student at the university of St. Thomas. I am writing to hopefully influence this committee to allow my school to continue bulding this multipurpose arena. I do so because I see St. Thomas as a respectable Division 1 college and because of that we as a community need a place to cheer on our division 1 teams, not in a tiny little arena, but in a full size capacity arena that many D1 teams have. This arena is one of the reaosn I came to St. Thomas in the first place. Please allow the Arena to be built.

Sincerely, Ethan.

Ethan Bernier  
[University of St. Thomas '27](#)  
[Entrepreneurship Major](#)  
[bern4206@stthomas.edu](mailto:bern4206@stthomas.edu)  
(651)-604-7557

**From:** [Jay Johnson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 11:10:06 AM

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2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals. File numbers 24-029-019, 24-029-110.

I am writing to voice my support for the University of St. Thomas regarding the basketball/hockey arena being built on the south campus. The below bullet points were forwarded to me by St. Thomas and are very valid points.

I attended St. Thomas in the early 80's and have lived in the area since. I have kept abreast of the numerous building projects they have done over the years and they have always taken the necessary steps (and beyond) with city officials to get these projects approved. And they have amended these projects to appease the various factions. To get to this point of a project and stop the progress is not good faith business.

A big reason the local neighborhoods have been extremely popular places to live and raise families, and property values are at the levels they are, is because of the many colleges and universities in the area--St. Thomas, St. Kates, and Macalester. I urge you to relay these points to those who are creating this issue and let them know the continued improvements that St. Thomas makes are beneficial to the surrounding community.

- St. Thomas is an anchor institution for St. Paul and their trajectory is an asset to the City of St. Paul. A new economic impact study shows that St. Thomas currently brings \$498.8 million to the City of St. Paul annually and \$124.7 million to our adjoining St. Paul neighborhoods. The arena will bring even more economic activity to our beloved city.
- St. Thomas is not asking for a variance from the city for the arena – we are building within the rules and within our campus boundaries. St. Thomas is abiding by our conditional use permit with the City and working closely with city officials on all permits, approvals, and requirements.
- Several other sites were considered. However, an arena on campus means that fans can walk to games. An on-campus facility is favorable for many reasons, including the ability to reduce vehicle traffic.
- As part of the project, St. Thomas will be investing in infrastructure improvements that will benefit the neighborhood, including improvements to crossings on Cretin at Grand



Avenue and Goodrich.

- The community has had a lot of opportunity to engage with this project – 17 public meetings on the arena. St. Thomas is the only college with a full-time director of neighborhood relations and is proactive in neighborhood relations!
- St. Thomas will not want the traffic or parking situation to be a bad experience for fans, because they want their fans to return. We are as motivated as anyone to mitigate complications and will find solutions to traffic and parking on event days.
- St. Thomas cares deeply about the environment and about its responsibility to care for the river. The review of the impact on the environment by the city was thorough. The arena is taking down three very inefficient buildings, and a series of surface lots to create the new facility. The project will actually improve water drainage significantly through investments in drainage infrastructure. In addition, we are adding a green quad to the south campus and building a LEED certified building. Sustainability is a priority for St. Thomas.

Sincerely,

Jay Johnson  
UST class of 1984  
1725 Berkeley Avenue  
St. Paul

**From:** [Bagnoli, Joseph T.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward3](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Arena - 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:37:02 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I write regarding the two appeals that have been filed to stop the construction of a new Arena at St. Thomas University.

I write in opposition to these appeals and in support of St. Thomas' desire to construct a new arena. I have lived in just south of St. Thomas for over twenty-five years: first on Mount Curve just off of Jefferson Avenue, and currently on Woodlawn just off of St. Clair Avenue – a block from the River. In the time I have lived near both St. Thomas, Macalester College, and St. Catherine's College, I have found them all to be positive neighbors. The fact that they bring a lot of 18-22 year-old's to my neighborhood I believe is great for Saint Paul and great for our neighborhood.

When I heard that St. Thomas was planning on constructing new facility on campus I was thrilled. While I understand that other sites were considered, I thought the best outcome was for the arena to be put on campus to allow students to easily attend the games and frankly so that tax-paying property would not become non-tax-paying. For me, it also would allow me to walk to the games, as I live relatively close. I am additionally excited as I believe that any new sheet of ice in the area is not only a great asset for the University, but also for the neighborhood. Our local outdoor rink at Groveland Park is one of the most utilized outdoor rinks in the metropolitan area. From dawn to dark on most days, and particularly on the weekends, it is filled with kids of all ages playing hockey and broomball. Currently, the sheets of ice at Highland Arena are used so relentlessly that older players – who still like to play – have a hard time getting ice other than at very late hours. This new sheet will help with that.

Some of my neighbors are concerned about increased traffic and parking concerns. I didn't grow up in the City but chose to live in St.

Paul because I like a little more density, as I think it provides better and more convenient access to all sorts of amenities that are only available by car in the suburbs. The location of the Arena is just one more amenity that I will be able to walk to that those in the suburbs will have to drive to get to.

In conclusion, I hope that the Zoning Committee rejects the appeals.

Thank you.

Joe Bagnoli  
272 Woodlawn Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Joel OBrien](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for St.Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:39:01 PM

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RE: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

To whom it may concern.

I'm writing today to express my positive feelings towards the University of St. Thomas and the Saint Thomas arena project. I believe the building of the St. Thomas arena would be a great addition to the St. Thomas community and the surrounding city of St. Paul.

Regards,  
Joel O'Brien  
619 Kirchner Avenue  
Mendota Heights, MN 55118

**From:** [Halstrom, Jonathon L.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 2:07:58 PM

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Case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeal  
File Numbers: 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

The finished construction of this rink will not only benefit the University of St. Thomas, but it will also benefit the community around it greatly. The rink will finally give fans in the area the atmosphere they are looking for whether it is a St. Thomas-sanctioned event or a high school event like a section tournament. The possibilities are endless for the community around St. Thomas, and there are many more that will benefit the students here at the university. Please continue with the construction of this arena.



**From:** [Kelly Michel](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** File 24-029-019  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:45:31 AM

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## Planning commission members

Kelly and Mary Michel have lived at 1893 Sargent since 1976

We view the new UST arena as a positive addition to our neighborhood.

They are communicating w their neighbors and don't seem to be ignoring them.

Count us in for continued construction.

Kelly and Mary

**From:** [Kendra Lawrance](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit St Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:36:42 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am a resident at 2139 Goodrich Ave, and I am in full support of the St. Thomas Arena. As a neighbor, I have *chose* to live close to St. Thomas. All the neighbors knew this when moving into the neighborhood, so for them to try to appeal to this stadium is ridiculous. This is the case I am addressing: **2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, File Numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.**

Thank you for your time!

Best,  
Kendra

--

**Kendra Lawrance**  
[kendralawrance@gmail.com](mailto:kendralawrance@gmail.com)  
(952) 380-7207

**From:** [May, Kylie M.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:27:12 AM

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Hello,

My name is Kylie May and I am a student at the University of Saint Thomas. I am sending this email in regard to the arena construction being paused. I think that the decision to build the arena has many benefits for the university and students alike. The arena will be an attraction that will grow the city of Saint Paul as well as grow the appeal for the University of St. Thomas. One reason I chose to leave my hometown of Cedar Rapids, IA and move to the twin cities was because of the opportunity and the growth the twin cities have. It would be such a shame to see this project fizzle away as the arena represents the growth and opportunity that attracted me to the cities. In addition, the arena will strengthen the St. Thomas community as students, alumni, and faculty will all gather in this space to show their pride for their school. St. Thomas should continue to be a place where people in all their diversity can come together, an aspect well represented by the arena. I hope you take my words into consideration and continue this project.

2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

Kylie Marie May  
[2115 Summit Ave, St Paul, MN 55105](#)

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**From:** \*CI-StPaul\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary <PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:18:33 AM  
**To:** May, Kylie M. <may01399@stthomas.edu>  
**Subject:** Automatic reply: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

Thank you for submitting your comments. In order for your comments to be included in the public record, make sure that you have included the zoning file number and property address of the zoning case for which you are submitting written testimony. We also ask that you submit your full name and location information. You may choose to withhold your street address as long as your full name is included with your comments.

Please note: The deadline to receive written testimony is at 2:30 PM on the Thursday of the Zoning Committee meeting during which the zoning case is to be heard.

**From:** [Lukas O'Donnell](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Lee and Penny Anderson Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:55:25 AM

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Case 2260 Summit

St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals

File numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a first-year student at the University of St. Thomas. In addition to having played hockey in Minnesota throughout my youth and high school, I now work as a student equipment manager for the men's and women's hockey teams. I recently learned of the delay holding back construction of our new arena and wanted to reach out in support of this project.

The University of St. Thomas has committed to elevating all of their division I sports as a way to bring notoriety and interest to the campus and community. It is well known that Minnesota is the State of Hockey, producing more college and university players than any other location in the country, as well as supporting the best youth and high school environment. While we appreciate the opportunity to play at St. Thomas Academy in the interim, it is simply not a viable long term. The facility does not provide the space nor amenities required to run an attractive division I program. We do not have adequate space for equipment or athletic training services, which impacts player safety. It is also difficult for student-athletes and student workers to maximize their academic and athletics experience when they have to drive every day to practice and competition.

The on-campus location of the new hockey arena is ideal for both player experience and student engagement. We know across the country that universities are vying for a smaller market share of university students. While students predominantly make decisions based upon the academic offerings and promise of successful careers, the totality of the experience – including the convenience and ability to participate in athletics, join and lead clubs, go on study abroad programs, and find unified experiences like supporting our athletics teams – makes St. Thomas attractive. While I understand some of the concerns of the neighborhood as it relates to inconvenience and additional traffic, our surrounding neighborhoods benefit from our University in terms of tax base and the value of their property. The arena would host men's and women's hockey games on roughly 40-50 days per year. And there are countless examples across the country of schools who have partnered with their communities to ensure the University was an asset to the community.

I am proud to be a St. Thomas student. I want this University to be a destination for other students, and to build hockey programs that attract the best players in the country so they can compete for championships. While I don't play, I hope to get more involved in hockey operations and athletics over the course of my career. The arena would enable me to do so without having to drive off-campus and would help us showcase our program and career opportunities.

Please consider the benefits of a vibrant university to our neighborhood and also to recruiting and retaining students as they become employees in the MSP area. Thanks for listening.

Lukas O'Donnell

St. Thomas student



**From:** [Luke Benson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Arena Construction Continuation  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 12:48:52 PM

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Hello,

As a student at the University of St. Thomas, the construction of the new arena is extremely important for current students and incoming students alike. Our school has recently become a D1 university, however, it doesn't feel that way right now. Our hockey teams play in a high school arena and our basketball team can't fit all the fans into their current gym. The new arena is essential for the growth of this great university. Please reconsider pausing the construction of our arena (2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110) as this is our campus, and the decisions made should be made by those affiliated with the University of St. Thomas.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Luke Benson  
Freshman, University of St. Thomas

2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

**From:** [Dean, Mason J.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support The Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 12:24:13 PM

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Case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

Hello,

I am Mason Dean, a student at the University of St. Thomas, and I love the university! One of the main reasons I wanted to attend this university is because of the growing division 1 athletics and school environment. The arena will bring so many people together (students, alumni, and fans) to celebrate the Tommie's! Almost all of our conference opponents have arenas like this one and I feel like we should be given an equal playing field. Without this arena, I think less students from across the country would want to come here and our sports teams may fall behind in competitions. Please resume construction.

Best regards,  
Mason Dean

**From:** [Max Huber](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for St Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9:31:00 PM

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- Referencing the case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

I live at 687 Mount Curve Blvd, St Paul, MN 55116 and I fully support this new building. I live about a mile from the new construction and I look forward to being able to support a local university and it's athletes with my family.

The benefits it will bring to our neighborhood and our city friendly outweigh any negatives.

Thank you and let them build.

Max Huber  
612-396-3828

**From:** [Mike Frattallone](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Approval 24-029-019  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 8:00:18 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Please accept this email with the spirit of growth and partnership. I would like to add my support to the St. Thomas Arena approval. I believe that it will positively impact St. Paul now and in the future.

As many of you know, Grand Ave has seen its better days. It is a beautiful smile that is missing a couple of teeth. Maybe this project will inject enough energy onto the avenue that it can turn itself around.

I appreciate the argument of some of the local residents but St. Thomas is in full compliance and has the right to build on their property. The city of St. Paul has ensured that right and should not, and probably cannot, change their rules.

The economic impact of this exciting project will be greatly appreciated and I look forward to its completion.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Frattallone  
Property owner 650 and 1676 Grand Ave.

**From:** [NANCY & JOHN SWANHOLM](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for File Numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 11:23:11 AM

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Dear St. Paul City Officials,

I write to express my support for the proposed arena on St. Thomas campus (Case: 2260 Summit Ave, St. Paul Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file # 24-029-019 and 24-029-110).

As a neighbor of St. Thomas, I appreciate the vitality that St. Thomas brings to our city. At a point when so many businesses are closing on Grand Avenue, I wholeheartedly welcome new investment in our city that may create new businesses and allow existing ones to flourish.

As an institute for higher learning with recognized environmental sustainability academics, I trust their ability - and their integrity - to care for the river and any other environmental concerns.

While those opposed to the arena are very well organized and certainly are entitled to express their concerns, I think there is a very large number of St. Paul residents who are positive about this improvement to the University of St. Thomas campus.

Thank you for your time in reading this email and for your service to the City of St. Paul.

Best regards,  
Nancy Swanholm  
2098 Stanford Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105



**From:** [Ruprecht, Nate T.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the Saint Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 11:00:42 AM

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Dear the City of Saint Paul,

My name is Nate Ruprecht and I am a sophomore at the University of Saint Thomas studying Accounting and Data Analytics. As a passionate Tommie and sports fan, I would like to express my support for the construction of the St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena.

Case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals,  
File numbers: 24-029-019  
File numbers: 24-029-110

St. Thomas has clear rights to build what they want on THEIR private property.  
Roll Toms

Sincerely,  
Nate Ruprecht

**From:** [Patrick Martin](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** SUPPORT for Lee and Penny Anderson arena File Numbers: 24-029-019 and: 24-029-110 UST Multipurpose Arena Appeal  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:28:55 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to share my fervent support for the new on-campus arena at the University of St Thomas (File Numbers: 24-029-019 and: 24-029-110 UST Multipurpose Arena Appeal)

My enthusiastic support is multi-faceted:

- I cannot wait to attend DI hockey and basketball games that I can walk or bike to. To have something so great, so close is incredibly exciting.
- From an objective standpoint, this arena will strengthen and advance the university, which is such an unbelievable asset for our neighborhood and city.
- I am thrilled for future St Thomas students (including many St Paul residents) that they can have this experience **on-campus**.

In addition, I am, to be blunt, disgusted, by the opposition to this project:

- St Thomas is following all the existing rules and not asking for any type of variances.
- St Thomas has attempted to engage the community through numerous meetings.
- The "so-called" environmental concerns are an insincere transparent attempt to derail the project by hook or by crook.

Thank you,

Patrick Martin

1881 Jefferson Ave

Saint Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Delaney, Paul](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support for St Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 1:41:47 PM

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To the Zoning Committee Secretary:

I am contacting you in reference to **2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110**. I fully support St Thomas' plans to build this new arena. This facility will be built in the same manner as any other recent construction on campus. In other words, this facility will bring innovation, environmental care, and the highest quality to the city. Keeping this arena on campus will reduce the need for automobiles as students will be able to walk to games and events.

The east metro is due for a modern facility to share with other amateur youth hockey organizations. Aldrich Arena was built in 1962 and still employs outdated, antiquated cooling systems. Aldrich is still used by amateur leagues. Having an arena on the St Thomas would bring these games back to St Paul, bring new opportunities for local businesses and utilizing new efficient technology to service the facility.

At most, 5,000 fans would attend a given event. On any given Saturday in the fall, the Tommies draw a larger crowd for its home football games. These fall Saturdays provide a positive experience for the area. These events, most often scheduled for weekends, would provide another opportunity for positive energy in the area.

I am a proud Alum of St Thomas, graduating in 1993. St Thomas was great then and has only improved since then. I am excited to enjoy the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena when it opens. And I look forward to cheering on the Tommies with other members of our community.

Roll Toms,

Paul Delaney  
312 Spring St, #409  
St Paul, MN 55102  
651 983-7444

**From:** [Paul Knapp](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:41:35 AM

---

I strongly support the construction of Anderson Arena at UST.

Paul Knapp  
2260m Princeton Avenue  
Saint Paul MN 55105

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Paula Barjesteh](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Case 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:59:50 AM

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Hello - I am writing regarding - Case 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.

My daughter is a student athlete at St Thomas University in St Paul. I have lived in St Paul and its surrounding suburbs for the past 45 years and I have seen the transformation of St Thomas University from a beautiful, independent private university, to now a growing campus with a Division 1 athletics program. This D1 athletics program is now trying to compete at a much higher level than their previous division 3 level in terms of prospects and talent for their athletic programs, but now in a world of NIL deals for student athletes as well. To compete in attracting top student athletes to this university, the university needs to provide nice facilities that compare to other surrounding division 1 programs.

Today, the University of St Thomas doesn't even measure up at a D2 program level and the hockey and basketball programs are currently going to local high schools to play their division 1 games. This is not attractive to potential student athletes interested in pursuing their education and playing sports while attending college. The University needs to be able to provide an on campus stadium that is representative of a Division 1 school and program to attract students. This will gain excitement and momentum for the current student body and alumni that support this University today as well as draw in a new fan base that can compete with the UMN athletic programs.

It is imperative that the University is able to continue its build of this stadium for the future of the University in its Division 1 journey, as well as to grow its student body base and local economy. This stadium will bring in additional tax dollars and revenue for the benefit of the state of MN and the surrounding businesses as people will come in and watch a university game and visit the local restaurants in the area before and after. Please move forward immediately with the continued development of this stadium and allow this incredible asset to be added to the University's footprint and offering.

Best regards,

Paula Barjesteh



**From:** [Sheila McGill](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support of St. Thomas Arena  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 1:04:53 PM

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Case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

I am writing this email in support of the St. Thomas Anderson Arena.

I have lived in this Highland Mac Groveland area my entire life, I was raised here, I am Married with 5 children and we now raise our family here. My husband is in his 25<sup>th</sup> year as a Catholic School teacher at Nativity of Our Lord school in this neighborhood as well.

St. Thomas and their students, since I was a kid, have always had positive energy and community outreach that has been impactful. Their students volunteer, work local jobs, life guard, student teach, coach local sports teams, and are overall good neighbors to the community. This Arena is a great asset to the University and student body. Two of my children have graduated from St. Thomas and two currently attend St. Thomas as a junior and First Year. This will bring a much-needed indoor venue for graduation, basketball games and finally Hockey on campus! It will bring revenue to the area with people going out to eat prior to events, and local shopping. It will make the University continue to grow and keep up with other colleges while keeping their existing thumbprint and not sprawling into the neighborhood, which it needs to do to create future success when so many other colleges are closing.

As always St. Thomas takes the community into account in any decision, and not only follows the rules, codes and permits but goes above and beyond those rules to better the neighborhood. They will be adding better safer crossings at Grand and Goodrich which will benefit the entire community year-round. They are adding a green quad, improved and environmentally friendly drainage and the building will be LEED certified. Sustainability always has been and always will be a priority to St. Thomas.

The neighborhood had numerous opportunities to get involved (I believe 17 public meetings) in addition to St. Thomas having a neighborhood liaison for questions and communication. This project is good for the community, it is good for campus, and it is good for the student population.

Thank you,  
Sheila McGill  
1795 Juliet Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Sam English](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:06:38 PM

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File Numbers: 24-029-019  
24-029-110

Hello,

Recently I have been made aware that the new arena construction is being paused due to appeals. I am a recent alumnus of St. Thomas, and currently live in Chicago. Because of this, I do not know how the appeals process works in St. Paul, and hope it is just a formality before ultimately continuing on with construction. What I do know however, is the impact that this new arena will provide for the community. The UST community, as well as the St. Paul community. A place like this becomes a gathering spot for the whole community to come and celebrate new and exciting things. Whether it is sports, music, or events, this place will be beneficial to the community, the local economy, as well as the local government. My hope is that this appeal process is quick and easy, and this project is back up and running shortly.

Thank you for your time.

Sam.

**From:** [Sam Molitor](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file # 24-029-019 and 24-029110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:19:36 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I am a senior at the University of St Thomas. I also currently have a younger sibling, many cousins, and many aunts and uncles how have attended the University of St Thomas. It is very much a part of our family. I am in support of the new arena that the University is constructing. The University of St Thomas has had a positive influence for St Paul and the State of Minnesota in its history. I believe it will have a positive impact on the small businesses and communities in the area. As a senior, it will give me, and many others a reason to come back and support the school and businesses in the area that otherwise I would not. I think it is great that they continue to make improvements for the future.

- Sam Molitor

**From:** [Sophia Barjesteh](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [ward4@stpaul.mn.us](mailto:ward4@stpaul.mn.us)  
**Subject:** Support the Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:40:38 AM

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Hello,

I am emailing to support the arena as a St. Thomas student and athlete. This arena is crucial for the success of the school moving forward as a D1 program. If you have any questions or want to call me to take my opinion on this matter call: 651-200-5891

2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

Best,  
Sophia Barjesteh

**From:** [Link, Trenton D.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:46:39 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am contacting you today regarding 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file number 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. I am asking you to immediately RESUME construction of the new arena. As someone who recently moved to St Paul and will continue to live here in the future it became immediately aware to me how passionate Minnesotans are about hockey! This new arena will provide for a much better hockey product here in the beautiful city of St. Paul. The positive impact this arena will have on this city and state is immeasurable. Keep Minnesota as the State of Hockey. Thank you for your time and Roll Toms!

-Ust Student

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**From:** [Timothy Schmidt](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: St Thomas arena support  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 1:02:43 PM

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>

> City Staff,

> First, thank you for all you do to ensure St. Paul continues to be a vibrant, livable city for all. Your work is important and often unrecognized. Regardless of how the St Thomas arena situation is decisioned - please know that there are citizens within the city that appreciate the time, consideration and effort you give for the benefit of our city and communities.

> For those on the zoning committee who may see this note, I'd like to share my support for the Universities new sports arena. As the father of four children who live within walking distance of the campus and proposed site, we are excited for the opportunity to support a local institution and its students who help to ensure our neighborhood and community remains positive and open to new ideas.

> We choose this neighborhood to live specifically for the atmosphere, the vibrancy, the curiosity that is sparked by colleges and universities and the employees and students who work and learn there.

> We also understand that those benefits may come with more people and traffic at times. But my family and I choose to look forward and embrace the positivity that comes with an engaged and committed community.

> The continued growth of colleges and universities in our city only makes it a more livable place in the future. We're happy to share that with a few more visitors.

> Ultimately we hope that the city will continue to look forward, embrace change for the betterment of all, versus protecting and limiting the positive impacts and privilege that come from living near a university like St Thomas.

> Thank you for your consideration.

>

> Timothy Schmidt

> 1866 Wellesley Ave

> Saint Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Bellomo, Treva J.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** University of St. Thomas Arena Construction  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 2:48:03 PM

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Hello,

I am Treva Bellomo and I'm a current student at the University of St. Thomas. I am writing today in regards to the case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110.

As a senior at UST, I have been able to witness the transition from a D3 to D1 athletic program as a student. The new growth has been exciting to see as I feel that the university is developing in a way that will provide future students with even more opportunities for success both academically and athletically. As we enter this new chapter for St. Thomas, I have never seen so many students that are truly excited and proud to be Tommies. It has been made very clear that some of the university's close neighbors are opposed to the building of the new multipurpose arena on our south campus. From what I understand of the situation, the primary causes for concern are environmental. Our neighbors have stated increased greenhouse gas emissions, limited parking space, and proximity to the Mississippi River bluff as their main points of opposition to the project.

It may be noted that St. Thomas has already made direct efforts to respond to these issues. After multiple agencies reviewed the plans for the arena, none found a significant environmental impact. It is also worth looking at St. Thomas' recent history with new construction. The most recent additions to campus, Tommie North, Frey Hall, the STEAM complex, and updates to Brady, Dowling, and the undergraduate seminary, have all been done with a strong dedication to environmental wellbeing. In fact, St. Thomas has been recognized for the environmental standard that they hold for new construction on campus. There is no evidence to suggest that they will not do the same with the new arena. Neighbors have suggested that St. Thomas find another location to build the arena. However, they seem to have failed to consider that there would be a more significant environmental impact then since students would need to commute to another location rather than simply walking to events.

In regard to parking concerns, St. Thomas has also made it clear that they are making significant efforts to partner with public transportation to decrease the number of people utilizing neighborhood street parking during events. Additionally, it should be recognized that the university plans to fill the arena on only 4 occasions throughout the

year. Other events would likely be most highly attended by St. Thomas students who do not need to find additional parking for the event due to the arena's proximity to student housing areas.

Finally, I would like to address the fact that the addition of this arena would benefit the neighborhood. During the few major events, people from other areas of the metro would be coming to the area and visiting local restaurants and businesses. This increased business would help keep small businesses in the area open and establish an even greater sense of community. Additionally, as I mentioned previously, these new facilities are going to provide St. Thomas students with even better opportunities to grow as individuals and leaders. When they graduate and move out into the local community, as so many alumni do, they will give back to the community that supported them.

It saddens me to see so much pushback from the community without an understanding of the vast benefits of this new construction in the St. Thomas community and beyond. I implore you to support the construction of the arena and do what is ultimately best for the community.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Treva Bellomo

**From:** [Peters, Vicki](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** CASE 2260 summit. St. thomas arena appeals file 24-029019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 1:27:51 PM

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I'm in FAVOR of the new arena to be built where it is. To be a D1 program you must have an arena ON Site to grow as a university and to attract higher caliber athletes. The program and university will suffer in recruiting if this arena is stopped.

Keep growing UST, your campus needs to compete.

KEEP the Arena where it is.

Vicki Peters  
Former UST Alum

**\*Wire Fraud is Real\*. Before wiring any money, call the intended recipient at a number you know is valid to confirm the instructions.** Additionally, please note that the sender does not have authority to bind a party to a real estate contract via written or verbal communication.

**From:** [Craig Peine MD](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** File Number 24-029-110 Proposed UST Arena 2260 Summit  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 12:21:30 PM

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Dear Sir/Madam:

We find it unconscionable that the University of St. Thomas would be allowed to proceed with their proposed arena. Its effect on the local environment, pedestrian safety, local traffic, and the overall good of the neighborhood has not been effectively considered or other reasonable options effectively presented. If in fact, the University of St. Thomas is seriously considering "the common good," they need to locate their arena where it doesn't damage any family neighborhood and the accompanying environment. They need to be the good neighbor they profess to be.

Sincerely,

Craig and Janelle Peine  
2252 Goodrich St. Paul, MN 55105



**From:** [Michael McDonough](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas proposed destruction of 2 National Historic eligible buildings for their inappropriate arena location.  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9:22:03 PM

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I strongly object to the city giving demolition permits to ST to destroy another historic Vass Gilbert designed building and Masquey design building. I will be forwarding an email I sent to St. Thomas with questions in response to their request for input. They have a much better alternative that they do not seem willing to in good faith explore as and alternative.

Thanks for your consideration. It would be be a big long term mistake to recommend their current disastrous plans.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Michael McDonough](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Question for St Thomas regarding proposed arena  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9:25:57 PM

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Follow up email regarding the zoning committee review of St Thomas proposed arena development that would destroy 2 or 3 more National Historic Register eligible buildings. You should also explore if there is and State or Federal money involved which would preclude them from destroying this important historical buildings. Thank you for your consideration. Michael McDonough 612 971-9140  
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Michael McDonough <michaelcolemanmcd@gmail.com>  
**Date:** April 29, 2024 at 7:24:32 AM CDT  
**To:** Bonjour1896@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Question for St Thomas regarding proposed arena

St. Thomas offer \$64 million for Town and Country to address their expansion needs but their offer was not accepted. In March 2023 I talked with and had email communication with Amy McDonough (no relation to me) with information on acquiring instead about 25 of underutilized acres from West Rock which is the next property north of T&C. I had talked to and had email communications with the West Rock real estate manager and also their RE attorney. I was told the property wasn't currently being marketed but to keep my eyes open. I provided both contacts to Amy. The property south of Wabash, west of Cretin and east of Raymond was the area used for the closed down production of the wavy center part of corrugated cardboard. Other than some storage, virtually all of the ongoing operations of coated cardboard board for packaging such as cereal boxes takes place on about 15 acres north of Wabash.

Acquiring this 25 acres would solve a lot of expansion issues for ST. First of all allow plenty of space for the Arena and keeping all the related traffic near the freeway exit. It would avoid destroying 2 or 3 more National Register eligible buildings, one would think a place of higher education and historic based religion would not even think of destroying. (Still in shock that they destroyed one last year-do they need a Cass Gilbert lecture to make them more aware), room for other sports fields, potentially student housing, space for administrative functions, access to the LRT etc...

My question is who and when did they contact West Rock, how much did they offer and were they turned down? The second question is did they have a full and open discussion with the full board about the satellite option at WestRock? Did they discuss it with the Anderson family making the large donation for the arena?

When an EAW is done one of the questions to be answered is what other options were considered. I am a landscape architect and when I served as a chair of a

Merriam Park task force on ST more than 20 years ago I was able to help convince ST to do a master plan. Which was done but has no Arena in the plan. I suggest they update the master plan and include how they could utilize the 25 acres West Rock property. Clearly anybody looking at long term options would select the West Rock option. It is only a short walk from the north end of the current campus. There has been talk of some sort of performance hall and a number of other future builds - they need a serious long term master plan that includes a legitimate historical building/landscape section before they move forward. Try not to be so short sighted and cultural insensitive.

Thank you for the opportunity to ask a main questions and a few related points.

Sincerely, Michael McDonough 612 961-9140

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Michael McDonough](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Automatic reply: St. Thomas proposed destruction of 2 National Historic eligible buildings for their inappropriate arena location.  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9:28:47 PM

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The building is on the Seminary part of the University of St. Thomas campus SW of Summit Avenue and Cretin Ave. I live at 200 North Mississippi River Blvd. St. Paul  
Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 30, 2024, at 9:22 PM, \*CI-StPaul\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary <[PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us)> wrote:

Thank you for submitting your comments. In order for your comments to be included in the public record, make sure that you have included the zoning file number and property address of the zoning case for which you are submitting written testimony. We also ask that you submit your full name and location information. You may choose to withhold your street address as long as your full name is included with your comments.

Please note: The deadline to receive written testimony is at 2:30 PM on the Thursday of the Zoning Committee meeting during which the zoning case is to be heard.



Additional written testimony received for the University of St.  
Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeal.

Pages 2-12 are written opposition of the project.

Pages 13-25 are written in support of the project.



**From:** [Tia Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Joan Haan](#)  
**Cc:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Oppose: Multipurpose arena at UST  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 11:45:56 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Joan Haan –

Thank you for your testimony. I am forwarding it to the Zoning Committee secretary so that it may be included in the public record for the site plan appeal filed by Daniel Kennedy on behalf of ARD.

Tia

## City of Saint Paul

**Tia Anderson**

**Principal Planner**

Department of Safety & Inspections  
375 Jackson St., Suite 220  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 266-9086

[Tia.Anderson@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Tia.Anderson@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

[www.StPaul.gov](http://www.StPaul.gov)



**SAINT PAUL**  
**MINNESOTA**

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**From:** Joan Haan <jmbhaan@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 10:44 AM  
**To:** Tia Anderson <Tia.Anderson@ci.stpaul.mn.us>  
**Subject:** Oppose: Multipurpose arena at UST

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

To St. Paul Planning Commission Zoning Hearing

We are current neighbors at 2249 Summit Avenue. Although we understand the desire for a multipurpose arena by UST, we must express our opposition for doing so. Not only will there be traffic and safety issues during the many games and events being planned, but it will also pose additional environmental hazards with noise, lights and most importantly pollutants to the air and the River in our neighborhood and community. This location is not suitable for a large arena. Therefore, we support the appeal by Daniel L. M. Kennedy on behalf of Advocates for Responsible Development.

Sincerely,

Joan & Phil Haan

**From:** [Laura E. Krishnan](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [info@advocates4rd.org](mailto:info@advocates4rd.org)  
**Subject:** UST Arena  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:50:04 PM

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Project Address: 2260 Summit Avenue Saint Paul, MN  
File Number 24-029-110

Zoning Committee Members,

I write in opposition to the placement of the Saint Thomas Arena on UST's south campus for two reasons:

1. **The placement of the Arena Could Significantly Damage the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA).** Due to the risk of polluting the Mississippi River, and risk of damage to the bluff area adjacent to the proposed site, I oppose the Arena. Building an Ice Arena in close proximity to the Mississippi creates an inappropriate risk of a chemical leak that would pollute the Mississippi River. The Ice Arena placement is within a block of the Mississippi. Ice Arenas, in particular, use a number of toxic chemicals such as anhydrous ammonia and antifreeze; there are numerous, recent cases, of chemical leaks at Ice Arenas. In addition, to the significant chemical pollution concern, there is a significant risk of substantial erosion to the ecologically fragile bluff area adjacent to the proposed site. The site will consist of impervious surfaces that will concentrate the run-off. The concentrated run-off and heightened erosion risk will result in destruction of the vegetation in the impacted section of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. This will likely cause massive erosion and further instability along the bluff line. Erosion risk is also heightened with significant utility work underground within 40 feet of the bluff line contained in the plan.
2. **Traffic and Parking Management Plan is Nonexistent.** The plan has no parking spaces to accommodate the new arena. Instead, it reduces parking by 265 spaces at a time when parking is extraordinarily difficult. It makes no sense to allow this to be pushed through with the thought that visitors can park on residential streets when there is already a dearth of parking. Although the city has tried to manage this with permit parking in certain areas, students, visitors and even some visitor buses **already** routinely park in permit only parking because there is no space available to park and permitted parking is not consistently enforced. The entire neighborhood will see the impact of Having **SIX THOUSAND** visitors to an arena at one time; such a large concentration of visitors at once requires a thoughtful plan be put in place.

In addition, with this arena, Summit Avenue will see significantly heightened traffic. Of particular concern to me is the fact that the arena plan has a service road connecting to Summit directly. All the heavy trucks and buses servicing the arena will have to enter on

Cretin Ave and exit on Summit (there is no place to turn around!). Summit Avenue cannot be turned into a service drive for the arena.

For these reasons I respectfully request that you grant ARD's appeal and deny approval of the site plan for the UST arena.

Sincerely,  
Laura Halferty  
2187 Summit Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

Sent from my iPhone

May 2, 2024

Zoning Committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission  
Email: PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us

RE: Project Address 2260 Summit; File No. 24-029-110

Dear Committee Members:

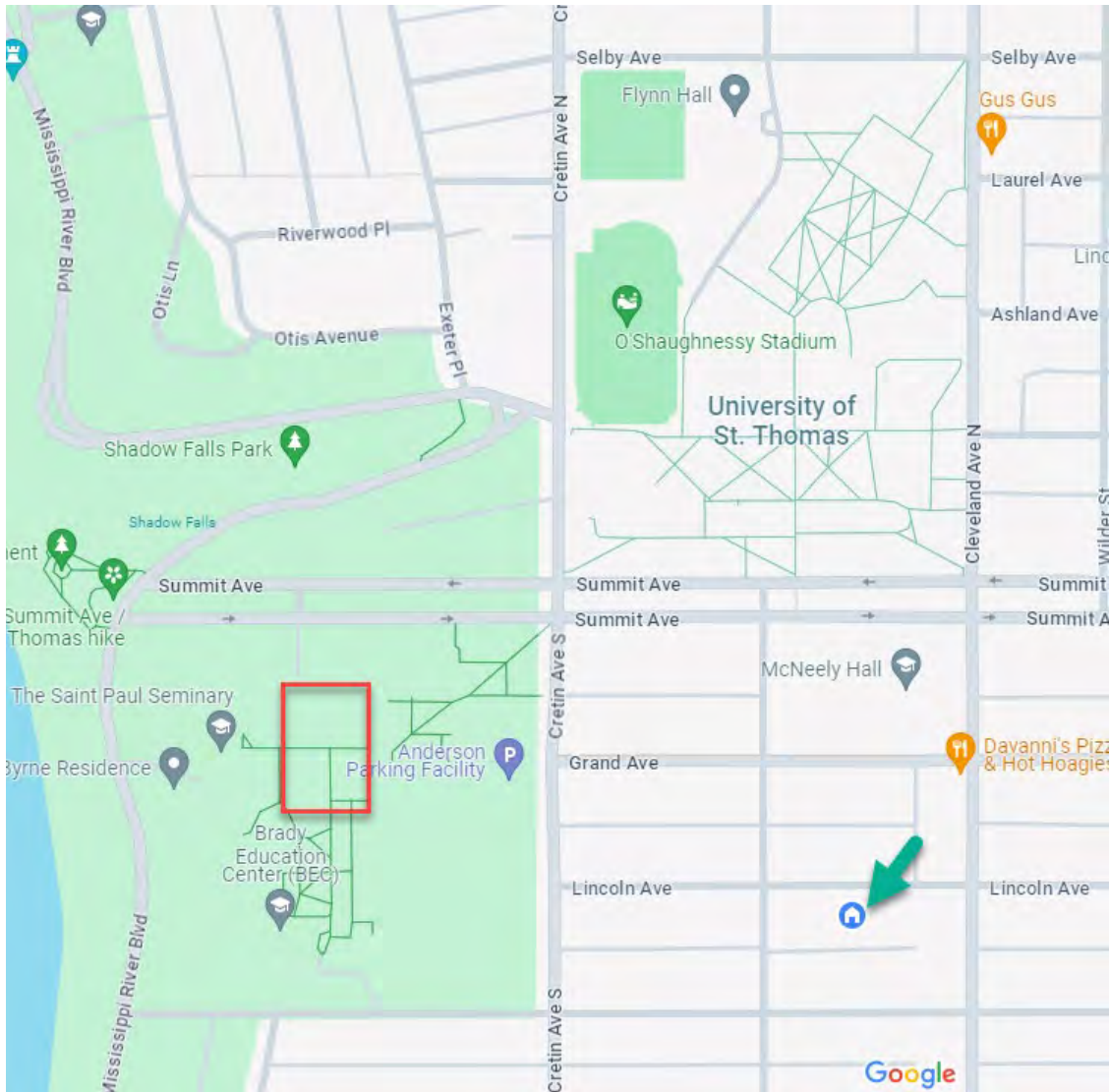
We write regarding the multiuse arena proposed for construction on the University of St. Thomas' South Campus. We live at 2096 Lincoln Avenue, between Finn and Cleveland, two blocks from the arena site. We share the concerns raised by Dan Kennedy and other neighbors, including those associated with Advocates for Responsible Development, particularly concerns regarding the environmental and hydrological impact of this massive project in the Mississippi River watershed.

In addition to the many important issues raised by our other neighbors, we ask the Committee to consider how this poor site selection for a 5,500 seat multi use arena -- in an area dominated by single family homes, with limited auto and truck routes and few public transportation options -- will impact our safety and our quality of life. The reality is that if construction of this arena goes forward, every year, starting in late October and ending in early March, we and our neighbors will be locked in or out of our own neighborhood streets on many a Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. (as fans arrive for 7:00 basketball and hockey games) and again when the games let out after 9:00 p.m. This is because during those five months (with heaviest use in the late winter), UST will be hosting at least 65 home games at this arena and on those nights, an estimated 773 – 1420 cars from all over the metro will be driving into our neighborhood, only to find themselves stuck trying to navigate the restricted ingress and egress of this poor site choice. Some fans will try to use Cretin to access the single entry into the Anderson Ramp and will successfully gain parking there (but blocking Cretin Avenue as they wait to enter). Others will avoid that traffic jam (and the parking shortfall on many game nights) by driving around the streets adjacent to the arena looking for free parking spaces in the neighborhood. If residents of neighboring streets manage to navigate these predictable traffic backups on Cretin and Cleveland and Grand (and the cars cutting through side streets and alleys to avoid the backups), and we are able to reach our homes during these hours, we will not be able to park anywhere close to our own homes and to the sidewalks we have shoveled so we can safely get to our homes. It should not surprise anyone that we're now saving money to replace our single stall garage with a larger garage and apron, so we know we have a place to park in the winter, near our home, as we age in place.

Some people summarily dismiss conclusions like this as NIMBY exaggeration, but please extend to us your open minds, an interest in the facts, and a healthy skepticism of magical thinking. All that we have done here -- and all that we ask you to do -- is to consider what life is generally like on Lincoln Avenue right now, before the nearby arena is built, and how our street would function after the arena is built, using UST's own data. Come drive our street or just look at the photos here and you will see that Lincoln Avenue is heavily parked by residents, including hundreds of UST students living in houses and apartment buildings one block north on Grand Avenue. It's a street that often becomes almost impossibly congested during winter months as it grows narrower after repeated snowfalls. Study the calendar of 2023-2024 home games for UST men's and women's



basketball teams and hockey teams, and examine UST's Environmental Assessment Worksheet and the parking projections set forth for this arena project, Even in its pessimism about the number of fans who will attend games and its optimism about how many of those fans will choose to not drive to the arena, UST still acknowledges significant minimum projected parking shortfalls. Just imagine, as we did, trying to come home from work at 6:30 on a wintry Thursday evening, or trying to grab take out for dinner on a Friday or Saturday night, or daring to invite friends or family over on those nights, where at minimum, 330 – 742 cars are trying to find a parking spot for a 7:00 game. It doesn't take much imagination to see what our reality will be.



Our house is located at 2096 Lincoln Avenue (green arrow), two blocks from the proposed arena. Please note that for the many cars that will naturally approach the arena and Anderson Parking Ramp from Cretin Avenue (from both north and south directions), there are few options to avoid inevitable traffic jams and to find free parking. The one easy option is to circle around the neighborhood streets looking for open free parking spots in front of our houses. On Lincoln Avenue and Finn Street, these are spots where students from Grand Avenue apartment building also park. As the fans driving these cars become pedestrians who have to cross Cretin Avenue to get to the arena (some legally at Grand, others illegally at Lincoln and at Goodrich), they will further slow traffic on Cretin and more cars will divert into the neighborhood, using our streets and alleys to avoid the traffic backup.



Photo 1: Morning of February 10, 2020, looking from 2096 Lincoln east toward Cleveland.



Photo 2: Morning of March 2, 2023, looking from 2096 Lincoln west toward Finn (a north/south street and night plow route) in order to clear Lincoln Avenue for daytime plowing. Note the narrowing of the driving lane that accommodates only one car. A one-sided residential parking ban was announced shortly after.

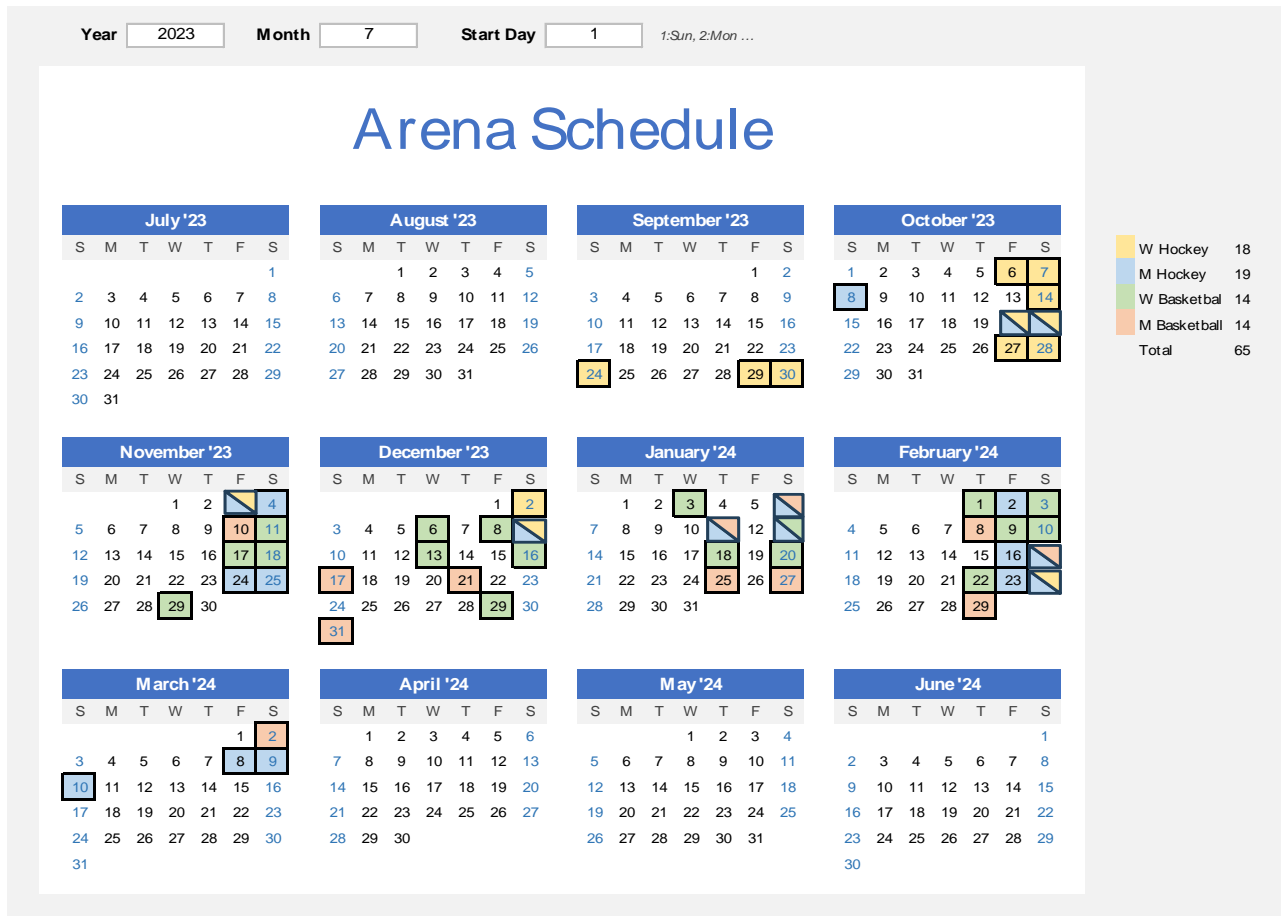


Image 1: Schedule for 65 home games (basketball and hockey), 2023-2043

**Table 13. Event Parking Demand Analysis**

	Total Number of Games <sup>(1)</sup>	Estimated Frequency	Available Supply	Demand <sup>(2)</sup>	Deficit/Surplus
<i>Thursday/Weeknight Night Event</i>					
Max Basketball (5,500)	4 to 7 BBall	0 - 1	678	1420	-742
Typical (3,000)	No Hockey	6		773	-95
<i>Friday Night Event</i>					
Max Basketball (5,500)	1 BBall 9 Hockey	0	1016	1420	-404
Max Hockey (4,000)		2		1053	-37
Typical (3,000)		8		773	243
<i>Saturday Night Event</i>					
Max Basketball (5,500)	6 BBall 9 Hockey	0 - 1	1090 <sup>(3)</sup>	1420	-330
Max Hockey (4,000)		2		1053	37
Typical (3,000)		13		773	317

(1) Based on expected men's hockey and basketball schedules.

(2) UST players/coaches and event staff are expected to park in the reconstructed lot O or other commuter and faculty/staff lots.

(3) Note nearby city permit parking restrictions are generally not in effect on Saturday.

Image 2: University of St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena: Environment Assessment Worksheet, June 2023, page 4

The data, our sense of human nature, and our experience after living here 25 years tells us this:

1. **UST is minimizing the scope of anticipated activity at this multiuse arena. This makes it impossible to do a clear-headed assessment of certain impacts of the arena and it prevents effective planning for impact mitigation, if the project goes forward.**
  - a. Starting with sports teams projected to be the primary users of the facility, we took a look at the 2023-2024 schedules for the men's and women's basketball and men's and women's hockey teams. **This year, those four teams will host a total of 65 home games (14 men's basketball games, 19 men's hockey games, 14 women's basketball games, and 18 women's hockey games).** See Image 1 above.
  - b. For purposes of effective analysis, UST could start by acknowledging not only that they will host at least 65 games per year in the arena, but also embracing the notion that these teams will draw many enthusiastic fans to the new arena, and to a growing D1 program that we all know will be heavily promoted. Instead, UST projects that only 2 out of 14 men's basketball games and 4 out of 19 men's hockey games will attract capacity crowds. See Image 2. This, in a hockey state? This allows UST to characterize the overall impact of the arena on the neighborhood as minimal.
  - c. As UST minimizes the fan base for its men's hockey and basketball teams, it fully denigrates women's sports by implying that fans will not turn out in great numbers to support its women's basketball and hockey teams. These games are not even featured on Image 2, above. This allows UST to further minimize the impact of the arena on the neighborhood, suggesting that neighbors really won't even notice events happening on most nights (presumably based on an assumption that the fans for these lesser-attended games will pay to park in the Anderson Ramp).
  - d. As UST minimizes the crowds for its own sports teams, it tends to ignore the impact of third-party users who will rent the multiuse facility. This would include, at minimum, other "typical" to high-capacity events such as high school sports playoffs, graduations, conferences and concerts. (On that note, how will Cretin now play football games on Friday nights in October just two blocks up the street?) We respect UST Chief of Staff Amy McDonough for acknowledging at an April 30, 2024, public meeting that UST will of course be interested in maximizing revenue for this large new arena (as it faces significant budget shortfalls) and that it will rent the arena to other users outside of its own regular season events. But outside of her comments, the project studies and plans reflect a willful ignorance about these other events that further minimizes the impact of the arena on the neighborhood.
2. **The season of highest use of this arena is compressed into a period of 5½ months, with heaviest use in the winter months of November, December, January and February.**
  - a. The photos above show what it looks like on Lincoln Avenue in the winter. As more apartment buildings and private dorms have been constructed on Grand Avenue, Lincoln Avenue is usually street-parked to capacity. This is especially

noticeable in the winter months. There are houses with children who play on Lincoln Avenue, so we drive cautiously anyway, but in the winter, as streets narrow, we really have to slowly navigate the street, and there have been instances of parked cars losing their rearview mirrors to passing vehicles driving carelessly down the narrow and slippery streets. These are usually the winters when one-sided parking restrictions eventually get imposed, further reducing parking availability.

- b. Snow emergency declarations mean people parking on North/South streets like Finn have to remove cars by 9:00 p.m. This always puts more pressure on the East/West streets like Lincoln and Goodrich in the early evening hours, further reducing parking availability.
- c. We just learned that a one-sided residential parking ban is being proposed as a permanent feature of wintertime driving in St. Paul. This will cut available neighborhood parking in half.

[https://www.myvillager.com/news/general\\_news/saint-paul-considers-move-to-one-sided-winter-parking/article\\_e9c2d1ca-f5ee-11ee-a811-07e5c5776d2f.html](https://www.myvillager.com/news/general_news/saint-paul-considers-move-to-one-sided-winter-parking/article_e9c2d1ca-f5ee-11ee-a811-07e5c5776d2f.html)

### 3. People *will* drive cars to these games and *will* try to park in the neighborhood.

- a. As UST belatedly convenes a committee to develop a traffic management plan, we understand that the go-to option to alleviate neighbor concerns will be to provide shuttle service from Allianz Field to the arena. However, as much we all work for ways to reduce automobile reliance, this proposed shuttle service would not reduce that reliance – it would just shift the location of the parking lot. And like so many shuttle service proposals that are dead on arrival, the idea that fans would spend 30 minutes to wait for and take a shuttle in the middle of winter to attend a two-hour basketball game is the kind of magical thinking that should be rejected. The failure of a proposed shuttle service to Allianz Field for Loons games (during good weather) is a sufficient cautionary tale. And this is not the State Fair, where people will be coming to town on the dog days of summer to spend hours at the fairgrounds. This will be the dark winter, and you can bet money that the drivers and passengers of the 300 -700 cars who cannot find parking spaces in the Anderson Ramp will not plan to park their cars miles away at Allianz Field, in order to wait in the snow for a shuttle to take them to the new arena, and then wait again, especially on a cold dark Thursday night at 9:30 p.m., for a shuttle to take them back to their cars.

We have lived in our home near UST for 25 years. We think we have a good sense of the reality of life on our street and we know how recognize a mitigation strategy doomed to fail because it is based on ways that people do not behave. As you examine the many other impacts of this arena, we appreciate your respectful consideration of our neighborhood quality of life concerns.

Alyssa Rebensdorf and Kirk Wythers  
2096 Lincoln Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105



c: info@advocates4rd.org

**From:** [Amy Geiger](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support of UST Stadium in Highland Park  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 5:24:54 PM

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Hello,

I am a proud and active alum of the University of St. Thomas. I am writing in reference of case: **2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals**, file numbers are [24-029-019](#) and [24-029-110](#)

I live less than a mile over the Ford Parkway Bridge from Highland Park St. Paul. My children attend school in Highland as well.

I'm writing in full support of the future facility being built, as a vibrant wonderful addition to St. Paul. I know that UST has always taken pride in been extremely thoughtful, respectful and ethical in their development and growth of the University and they take great care in considering their impact on the community—residents and businesses alike.

I know this will be a positive endeavor and addition to Highland Park overall!

Kind Regards,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Joslin Geiger  
UST Class of '93

5236 38th Ave S  
Minneapolis MN 55417  
c: 612.751.0226

**From:** [Brian Bigelbach](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:24:26 PM

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To whom it may concern -

I am in support of the St Thomas arena.

Community -

St Thomas continues to support the local communities with the use of their facilities. During elementary school our son had the opportunity to compete in swim meets held in the new pool and was fortunate enough to play high school football on the field.

Economic impact -

The city will benefit from the additional sales tax collected on tickets and concessions. Local bars and restaurants on Grand Avenue and in the Highland Village will benefit from the increased foot traffic.

Brian Bigelbach '93  
1427 Jefferson Ave, St Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Dana Hause](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, File # 24-029-019 & 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 6:53:49 PM

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I have a UST student and am extremely disappointed we continue to hear and see the pausing in this arena being built. The school has worked tirelessly on funding for this to be built and athletes have been recruited to come to a D1 school with nice facilities to play in. This helps the city and local establishments as well. Please help get this approved so they can continue to work on this project. I also have family who is working on this and continues to have employees getting yelled at by the home owners, they are just doing their jobs.

Thank you,

Dana Hause  
651-983-3333

**From:** [Diane Schember](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary; #CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Multipurpose Arena Appeals  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:24:32 PM

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Hello - I would like to strongly voice my support for the St Thomas Arena addressed in the Multipurpose Arena Appeals Files # 24-029-019 and 24-029-019

My husband and I are alumni, Class of 1984, and Masters 1996. We live in St Paul and are very familiar with the traffic flow and parking around campus. We think the arena plan is well thought out and should be approved.

With college enrollment on the decline nationally, it's important that St Thomas stay competitive. We need to be on plane with other D1 athletic facilities the to attract top athletes.

Sincerely,

Diane Schember, George Schember  
763-221-5639



**From:** [John Reich](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward3](#)  
**Subject:** St. Thomas Arena Appeals, File Numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:51:25 PM

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Good afternoon,

I'm writing regarding the two appeals that have been filed to stop the construction of a new Arena at St. Thomas University.

I am opposed to these appeals and in support of the St. Thomas arena. I have lived in Ward 3 for 16 years and find the colleges that are part of a neighborhood a fantastic amenity.

I have supported the construction of dense housing for our neighborhood both on Snelling and at the Ford site, among other areas. More people means more activity, more benefits to local businesses, and more vibrancy.

I appreciate the concerns of the neighbors and St. Thomas should take the community engagement seriously. I believe they have. I would strongly suggest continued engagement to mitigate traffic concerns. That said, I chose to live in the city because it's the city, where there is dense housing and walkable and bikeable amenities. This would be another such amenity for the neighborhood and my family.

In conclusion, I hope that the Zoning Committee rejects the appeals.

Thank you,

John Reich  
1822 Jefferson Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Jason Mansur](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 7:56:03 AM  
**Importance:** High

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Greetings St. Paul PED-Zoning Committee

My name is Jason Mansur and my family of 4 live in the St. Paul area near the University of St. Thomas and we are building a new home even closer to the University of St. Thomas and the new arena. I am writing this note to show my immense support for the University of St. Thomas. As important, my support for the need for the city of St. Paul and the neighborhoods that my family along with many friends call home. In addition, both my wife and I attended the University of St. Thomas and even more so were both athletes for the program. As such, the current issue at hand is close to our heart not only because it's in our backyard, but our history with the University along with our goals to support the university now and into the future.

While I understand some residents and their initial concerns related to the arena, the upside of the arena for the university as well as the economic development for the city and state is unmatched with any other project that I am familiar with at this time. It may be that the group appealing the situation does not care for economic development and investing in our surroundings to spur additional growth and opportunity for all. Everything you read in the news and everywhere you look all you can find is "doom and gloom" or "great concern" for continued macro and micro economy concerns. Inflation is real and very present and to be so short-sighted blocking this project this would be a major detriment to hard working individuals simply trying to feed and support their families.

Times change, things evolve and as such the neighborhood that we all love will continue to evolve for the positive. It may be where I am at my life or more importantly, my love for the area including the University, the River Road, the neighborhoods themselves, but to block a major project like this will immediately elevate our consideration for moving away from St. Paul. While we are just one family, I can assure you the tax base we bring to the arena carries meaningful investment for not just property taxes, but the economic impact we have on the local restaurants, stores, etc.

Beyond the obvious economic impact which important the careful research and planning the University has utilized to pick the site, the much-needed improvement to ancient buildings and knowing the quality of construction and material will not just maintenance status quo, but positively impact the environmental surrounds and the infrastructure that needs much upgrading around Cretin Avenue. Due to poor city maintenance, investment, and upkeep to the area it's evident it now needs significant rework to bring it to par with other areas around the state. Last on the topic of environment, but my wife and I have a long history of being marathon runners as and I keep nature as "nature" is critical to us and again, there is nothing

in this project that leads me to believe the University has ignored that important component to this project.

I will close with that my family, and I are strong supporters of this project moving forward. The positive impact the University has on this unique area should strongly be considered when evaluating a go/no-go on this project. The University will continue to not only driving an important economic value to the area, but more importantly, value for the future of our students to take this world forward.

I look forward to a positive outcome for the University and the project. This is a critical time for both the University, but the continued development and positive evolution of our neighborhood. The world must continue move forward and this pocket of neighbors is subject to the continued evolution as much as anyone else. If they are not open to the much needed improvement, then I suggest they consider moving out of the neighborhood to allow growing families to come in and make these lovely streets their home now and into the future.

Thank you in advance for considering our passion and support for this project, it means a lot to the future for our family and other families in this area.

Mansur Family  
2153 Jefferson Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Matt Van Vleet](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Message  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:41:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-wzssne3b.png](#)

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This message is in reference to case 2260 Summit, St Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file number 24-029-019 and 24-029-110

As a resident of Saint Paul, 501 Grand Hill, we are writing to voice our excitement for the new St Thomas hockey arena and the continued economic prosperity it will bring to the city. We believe the removal of the inefficient buildings and installation of new green quad will provide a long-term benefit to the surrounding area and are convinced St Thomas will adequately address the logistical details of parking and traffic.

Respectfully,

Matt Van Vleet

**Matthew B. Van Vleet**  
**Vice President, Sales & Marketing**

Email: [mvanvleet@sur-seal.com](mailto:mvanvleet@sur-seal.com)  
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Charlotte, NC 28273  
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**SUR-SEAL**  
ADVANCED MATERIAL SOLUTIONS

**From:** [Brown, Megan G.](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Case 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, File Numbers 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:39:59 PM

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Hi there,

I am expressing my concerns regarding the pause of construction on the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena being built on the University of St. Thomas campus.

I am a proud student here at St. Thomas and I truly believe that the building of the arena will only bring forward new and better opportunities for our school, as well for the city of St. Paul. Becoming a Division 1 University is one of the best decisions that have been made and the need for this arena will only continue to make St. Thomas a prestigious private catholic institution.

We finally have the opportunity to expand and embrace our community and commitment to being Tommie's and now it is being threatened. Athletics are continuously getting better and not only will accrue more students, but it will also keep our campus flourishing.

Please hear the voices of Tommie's and our wishes for the Lee and Penny Anderson Arena.

Thank you,

St. Thomas Student



**From:** [Patrick Schneeman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** case: 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:27:53 PM

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Hi there,

I live in the Mac Groveland neighborhood, 1200 block of Berkeley Ave and am in support of the St Thomas area moving forward. St Thomas has been a great steward of our city and the arena will bring new economic activity that will only benefit our community. I am in support of the site being located at campus, as this will only enhance the university's presence, and provide a safe location for students and fans to attend. I fully believe the university will address issues of parking and capacity, as they have successfully completed several other on campus projects that only improved the communities footprint.

Please consider moving forward with the project as intended.

Thank you,

**From:** [Sarah & Andrew Nelson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** In Favor of the St. Thomas Arena!!!  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 5:43:23 PM

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Hello-

I am contacting you as a lifelong resident of St. Paul and graduate of Highland High School to allow the University of St. Thomas to move forward with this once in a lifetime opportunity to build a multipurpose arena wholly on its campus. The net effect of the University of St. Thomas on St. Paul - \$500 million to the city annually and \$125 million to adjoining neighborhoods - cannot be understated. As they move to Division I, being only the 2nd school in the state to participate in athletics at that level, the building of an on-campus arena will provide numerous exposure and hosting opportunities for our community as well as further raising the profile of St. Paul as a host to world class athletic events much in the manner Excel Energy Center does.

With the donations from their private donors, this project is privately paid for by St. Thomas and exclusively on their private property. Additionally, I believe there have been extensive public forums and meetings surrounding the project without the University asking for a variance.

It is frankly shocking that this project would be stopped at such a late junction due to the unhappiness of a small group of residents with no real reasons to delay at this point.

I hope that the city will not let this group ruin this project, much like they didn't let them ruin bike lanes on Summit Avenue - please allow St. Thomas to move forward with building their arena!

Thank you for your time and please see the Zoning Information and address below!

Sarah Nelson  
1555 Race Street  
St. Paul, MN 55102

- 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110



**Date:** May 1, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for The University of St. Thomas' arena development, particularly regarding 2260 Summit, St. Thomas Multipurpose Arena Appeals, file numbers are 24-029-019 and 24-029-110. As a dedicated member of our community, deeply rooted through my family's ownership of Tiffany's Sports Lounge for 54 years, and my personal involvement since 1991, I feel compelled to offer my perspective on this pivotal project.

Drawing from my experience as a parent with a daughter at Boston College, where I've recognized the symbiotic relationship between B.C. and the Chestnut Hill neighborhood, I'd like to draw parallels between Merriam Park/Macalester Groveland and Chestnut Hill in Boston:

**Residential Character:** Both Chestnut Hill and Merriam Park are renowned for their attractive residential neighborhoods, featuring tree-lined streets and a diverse mix of housing options, including single-family homes, condominiums, and apartments.

**Affluent Communities:** With their upscale homes and higher cost of living, Chestnut Hill and Merriam Park are esteemed for their affluence, boasting well-maintained properties and relatively higher median incomes compared to neighboring areas.

**Proximity to Colleges:** Both neighborhoods enjoy proximity to prestigious colleges and universities, enhancing their vibrant academic atmospheres. While Chestnut Hill hosts Boston College and parts of Boston University, Merriam Park is close to Macalester College and the University of St. Thomas.

**Green Spaces:** Residents of both Chestnut Hill and Merriam Park/Macalester Groveland have access to lush green spaces and parks, providing ample opportunities for outdoor recreation and leisure activities.

Additionally, I wish to underscore several key points that further support the arena development:

**Important Facts:**

- St. Thomas Hockey/Basketball arena seating capacity: 4,000 to 5,000
- St. Thomas Football seating capacity: 5,205
- Boston College Hockey seating capacity: 7,884
- Boston College Football seating capacity: 44,500
- Boston College Basketball seating capacity: 8,606

The proposed St. Thomas arena, though smaller in capacity compared to other metropolitan universities, this proposal is well-suited for both neighbors and fans alike to join.

St. Thomas is an anchor institution for St. Paul and their trajectory is an asset to the City of St. Paul. A new economic impact study shows that St. Thomas currently brings \$498.8 million to the City of St. Paul annually and \$124.7 million to our adjoining St. Paul neighborhoods. The arena will bring even more economic activity to our beloved city.

**Regulatory Compliance:** UST is diligently constructing the arena within established rules and boundaries, without seeking variances. They are abiding by conditional use permits and collaborating closely with the city to secure all necessary approvals.

**Campus Location:** An on-campus facility emerged as the preferred option after considering multiple sites, aligning closely with community interests and ensuring the avoidance of off-campus taxable property use.

**Community Engagement:** The community has enjoyed ample opportunities for engagement, with 17 public meetings held on the arena project. St. Thomas, with a full-time director of neighborhood relations, prioritizes fostering positive relationships with the community.

**Traffic and Parking Solutions:** UST is fully committed to ensuring a seamless fan experience by proactively addressing traffic and parking concerns, implementing solutions to minimize disruptions and maximize convenience for attendees and neighbors.

**Environmental Responsibility:** St. Thomas places a paramount emphasis on environmental stewardship, evident through a comprehensive review of the project's environmental impact. The arena development involves sustainable features such as improved water drainage and LEED-certified building construction.

In conclusion, the arena development promises to be a transformative addition to our community, shaping the future of St. Thomas, our neighborhood, and the city of St. Paul. I am grateful for the opportunity to voice my unwavering support for this project and contribute to the public record accordingly.

Thank you for considering these vital aspects of the arena development.

Sincerely,

**Blake Montpetit**

Owner, Tiffany Sports Lounge  
2051 Ford Parkway  
St. Paul, MN 55116  
bmontpetit@tiffanysportslounge.com  
+1 (612) 839-4747