To Whom It May Concern:

As a City of Superior city councilor, I am writing this letter in opposition to the Nemadji Trail Energy Center Project, more commonly known as NTEC, as currently proposed. In their Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Dairyland Power Cooperative states that NTEC “…would be located ***near***Superior, Wisconsin.” (Paragraph 1.1) In fact, the natural gas power plant would be located five plus miles into the city limits if driving along the well-populated, busy Hwy 2/53 corridor from the eastern edge of the city, situated only .3 miles from the nearest residences, and built within 100 feet of the Nemadji River whose mouth flows directly into Lake Superior less than a mile away from the proposed plant site.

Earlier this week, I attended a public meeting with Superior residents--primarily residents from the Allouez, Itasca, and East End neighborhoods whose everyday lives will be affected the most because of their proximity to the proposed plant. Their concerns were that of any average homeowner whose neighborhood will be affected by the building of an industrial entity nearby—increased air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution and traffic. One couple had even driven down to Beloit, Wisconsin to tour the West Riverside Energy Center natural gas power plant which is similar to the NTEC plant being proposed. They also sat for a period of time outside the plant several blocks away--a distance equivalent to what their current home will be to the proposed NTEC plant—to observe the operations and noise level.  At the meeting they stated that if the plant is built, they will have to sell what they thought would be their forever home as they would not be able to stand keeping their windows and doors closed up to keep out the constant noisy hum and particulate matter generated by the operating plant. To which another attendee responded, “I hate to be rude, but who would want to buy your house if the gas plant is built.”

Earlier this week, I also met with the current president of the Northern Wisconsin Building & Construction Trades. He asserted that this was a good project for the City of Superior because of the 260 union jobs it could create during the three years of construction. I reminded him that a letter of intent regarding a project labor agreement is nowhere near having the actual written signed contract in hand.

During my tenure on the city council, I have been involved in approving numerous resolutions and agreements regarding spending millions of dollars of taxpayer monies on industrial waste cleanup left in our St. Louis River Estuary during the late 1800s early 1900s. We are finally turning the corner where we are discussing what it's going to take to maintain an improving, healthy estuary rather than cleaning up contaminants of a sick estuary. Why would we want to pipe in gas and fuel oil and risk an industrial accident on the shore of a river which feeds into that estuary half a mile from the plant site?

The community of Superior already takes on a great amount of environmental and human health and safety risk because of our industrial commerce. In 1992, BNSF had a benzine spill which forced an evacuation and greatly risked the health of this community; in 2018, the Husky Oil Refinery fire forced the evacuation and greatly risked the health of this community; within the last month BNSF had a train derailment which spilled an estimated 100 gallons of magnesium chloride within the city limits, and Cenovus Energy had two emergency evacuation situations of on-site personnel—one because of a propane leak and the other involving a heavy fuel oil release. The proposed NTEC project will only add to the risks, and in my opinion and the opinions of other Superior residents, the risks are not worth the potential estimated economic gains.

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