



## Human Geography

Urban Renewal

Name:

Section:

Score: \_\_\_\_/5

Directions: Read the following article and use it (as well as your own personal experience and other materials used in class) to answer the thought question on the back of the other side of the page.

### Landmark smokestack? Or irreparable river eyesore? St. Paul debates

By Frederick Melo

Twincities.com (Published by the Pioneer Press)

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Paul Breckner, a co-owner of the old Island Station power plant in St. Paul, said the industrial relic is covered with graffiti, has holes in the roof large enough for a person to fall through and has cracks in its brick exterior big enough to accommodate a tennis ball.

The four Breckners behind Burnsville-based Breckner Riverfront Development would like to sell the almost century-old property along the Mississippi River just southwest of downtown. It



likely would be razed and eventually replaced by a commercial development of some sort.

"There's brick about the size of a bowling ball that has been falling down," Breckner told the St. Paul City Council on Wednesday. "If that hit you in the head, it would probably kill you."

Rather than allow it to be torn down, the city of St. Paul is leaning toward saving the 1921 coal-fired power plant by designating it a local historic site. State officials have said the interior has been too heavily modified for it to qualify for federal designation, but council members hope to restore it and add it to the growing number of older sites that have helped give St. Paul a reputation for preservation.

On July 17, they will vote on whether to designate the "St. Paul Gas Light Company Island Station" at 380 Randolph Ave. as a St. Paul Heritage Preservation Site, which would protect the massive plant and its landmark smokestack from major changes. The council passed a temporary moratorium against demolition in October.

"This is a most important center point for St. Paul on the river," said architect John Yust, who has been active on the city's Great River Passage planning efforts along the Mississippi riverfront. "It's not fair to the building to let it deteriorate to such a point."

