



Sample Letter to the Media

Feel free to use this sample letter to craft an email or a printed letter to any media contact or legislator listed in the Media and Legislative Contacts List.

To: [contact_name]
From: [sender_name]
Subject: Ft. Collins citizens struggle against CSU stadium juggernaut!
Date: [date]

Bullied, Beleaguered, and Bewildered!

Fort Collins, CO is a city with a story that cries out to be told. For three years citizens have fought tooth and nail against the construction of a new 50,000-seat Colorado State University (CSU) football stadium that would sit in the middle of an established residential neighborhood, smack dab on top of the legendary CSU Plant Environmental Research Center (PERC) and gardens, only two blocks from the busiest intersection and train crossing in the city! And for three years, we have been bullied and badgered by the CSU Administration and the stadium investors, and overwhelmed by an onslaught of media disinformation. **Our pleas to stop the stadium have been ignored — we are barely hanging on as the bulldozers move through the gardens, at this very minute, prepared to break ground and start dozing!**

We who live in Ft. Collins are proud of our city's unique character: its old-fashioned downtown area, its commitment to environmental and sustainable living, and its focus on outdoor activities. Our city has been recognized as the best place to live by numerous organizations and publications. However, if the on-campus stadium is built, it will change the character of this city forever – to the detriment of its citizens.

We are contacting your news station because of your reputation, experience, and audience reach. The stadium construction juggernaut is on the move and we desperately need your assistance to call attention to our plight at the state and national level.

A Little Background

From the day Tony Frank, President of CSU, first introduced the idea of the on-campus stadium, the vast majority of residents, CSU students, and professors have opposed it. We already have a perfectly good football stadium, Hughes Stadium, four miles from the city center, set against the scenic backdrop of the Rocky Mountains.

But Tony Frank was adamant about a brand new stadium. Never mind that the new 50,000-seat stadium would:

- Cost \$460 M to build (versus \$30 M to upgrade the existing Hughes Stadium).
- Cost upwards of \$730 M (more than half a billion dollars) to break even and service its debt over the next 40 years.
- Be built with taxpayer money, bringing CSU debt to an all time high of \$1.2 B, thus raising taxes throughout the city, and increasing tuition and fees for students.
- Be a 125-foot structure (13 stories) that would destroy the property values and quality of life for all homeowners in the residential neighborhood where the stadium would be built.
- Create almost permanent gridlock at one of the busiest intersections in Fort Collins.

Opposition

As the months went by, stadium opponents tried to meet with Tony Frank and attend Board of Governors meets to voice their concern, but the meetings were deliberately closed to the public. Groups like League of Women Voters and NPR set up debates between pro-stadium and anti-stadium representatives to discuss the issues in public, but Tony Frank and the pro-stadium contingent refused to attend, so the debates were canceled.

Stadium opponents took their concerns to City Council, flooding the Chambers with record numbers of citizens. Elected officials ignored them and chose instead to purchase bonds to help finance the stadium. This, despite the fact that four separate surveys clearly showed that residents, students, and professors opposed the stadium by a wide margin.

Forcing Us into Submission

Citizens of Fort Collins are outraged by the callous disregard for their wishes. ... yet Tony Frank is bound and determined to “break ground by July.” We have written well-researched letters to our state representatives, yet they do nothing. We have continued to send letters to the editor of our local newspaper, The Coloradoan, but now The Coloradoan is silencing our voices through censorship – refusing to publish any anti-stadium letters!

“It’s a done deal” is the message being drummed into our hearts and our heads by Tony Frank’s media machine. Our city is being beaten into submission by out-of-state investors, a multi-national stadium firm, construction companies, bankers, and bond houses who want to see this new stadium built ... whether it’s in our best interests or not.

What’s Next?

Shine the spotlight of justice on this matter so that our Governor might sit up and take notice, and stop this travesty of justice. Sending a film crew to show what’s going on at the gardens would certainly be a step in the right direction!

I have attached a fact sheet with well-researched data (sources available upon request.

Please contact **Bob Vangermeersch** at your earliest convenience to discuss a potential article or interview. He is well versed in the stadium project and has been involved with the SOSH (Save Our Stadium Hughes) and STS (Stop the Stadium) organizations since their conception.

- **Name:** Bob Vangermeersch
- **Email:** bobvangermeersch@aol.com
- **Phone:** (970) 223-0493

I look forward to your assistance.

Sincerely,

[sender_name]
Fort Collins, CO