

## **Statement from Councilmember Matt Privratsky about Luther Seminary campus sale**

This week we got confirmation that Luther Seminary plans to sell their campus in the St Anthony Park neighborhood as part of a realignment to better serve its mission. As was the case a few years ago, when a possible sale was also discussed at length, the Ward 4 office is hopeful the reuse of this site can help add desperately needed housing both in Saint Paul and in the City of Lauderdale.

At a time when the city's property tax base is particularly fragile, this is also an opportunity to transition significant acreage in our part of Saint Paul onto the tax rolls and relieve property tax pressure from our families and small businesses. This financial investment, as well as the chance to add new homes along a current bike route and future bus rapid transit route (the H Line), make me particularly excited about the opportunity this sale presents.

Lifestyle Communities has been engaging the community to ensure that the plans for this site align with both neighborhood and citywide goals for not only housing, density, and land use but also accessibility and green space. Based on the early development concepts I've seen, there are some differences in terms of how impacted the Breck Woods may be, but they all seem to preserve the bulk of the existing forest. It's understandable that any development of this scale — including stormwater management and utilities — may threaten portions of the woods but we know that tree preservation and Breck Woods are priorities for community members, and my hope is that the bulk of the forest can be maintained.