



January 20, 2026

City of Saint Paul
Department of Planning and Economic Development
Planning Division
Attn: Planning Administrator
25 W 4th Street, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Letter of Support - Luther Seminary Lower Campus Redevelopment

The St. Anthony Park Community Council (SAPCC), the officially recognized City of Saint Paul neighborhood organization for District 12, writes to express its support for the proposed redevelopment of the Luther Seminary Lower Campus by Lifestyle Communities, in partnership with SW Group and Monarch.

This letter follows extensive community engagement and a unanimous vote of support by the SAPCC Board. The Board's consideration was informed by a multi-month engagement process facilitated by SAPCC, including the work documented in the attached Luther Seminary Lower Campus Task Force report.

Over the course of this engagement, SAPCC convened representatives from its Land Use, Transportation, Environment, and Equity Committees, along with adjacent neighbors and community interest holders, to review multiple iterations of the proposal and provide structured feedback. Through this sustained and iterative process, the development proposal evolved substantially in response to community input and now reflects meaningful improvements in site design, circulation, scale, and neighborhood integration.

SAPCC recognizes the Luther Seminary Lower Campus as a key opportunity site identified in adopted City and neighborhood planning documents, including the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and the St. Anthony Park Como 2030 Small Area Plan.

The proposed redevelopment advances shared goals related to housing diversity, thoughtful site design, pedestrian connectivity, and long-term neighborhood sustainability. In particular, the project's evolution toward a mix of housing types, improved transitions to surrounding residential areas, and increased attention to landscape and open space reflects alignment with these adopted plans. SAPCC views the proposed redevelopment as a thoughtful and substantially improved response to community priorities and an appropriate reuse of a long-identified opportunity site.

At the same time, SAPCC has identified several areas for continued attention as the project advances through City review, including sustainability commitments, housing affordability, traffic impacts, streetscape design, and quality-of-life considerations. These priorities are detailed in the attached SAPCC Task Force report.

SAPCC recommends that where commitments exceed minimum code requirements, they be incorporated as conditions of approval to ensure accountability over the life of the project. And SAPCC further recommends that the site plan be reviewed by the Planning Commission in a public meeting, given the scale and significance of the proposed redevelopment.

With these considerations in mind, SAPCC supports the proposed redevelopment and encourages the City to incorporate SAPCC's recommendations, as detailed in the attached report, into its review of future development applications related to the site.

SAPCC appreciates the developer's responsiveness to community feedback to date and looks forward to continued engagement as the project advances through the public review process.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact SAPCC should additional information be helpful.

On behalf of the Board,



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Executive Director
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cc: Zoning Administrator, City of Saint Paul

St. Anthony Park
Luther Campus Task Force (Lower Campus)
January 5, 2026

Subject: Report regarding Lifestyle Communities' proposal for redevelopment of the Luther Seminary Lower Campus site presented to the Task Force on December 16, 2025

Recommendation

The Luther Seminary Lower Campus Task Force recommends that the Saint Anthony Park Community Council (SAPCC) provide a letter of support for Lifestyle Communities' proposed redevelopment of the Luther Seminary Lower Campus. This recommendation reflects the Task Force's assessment that the proposal has substantially improved in response to Task Force and community feedback and that it aligns with adopted community planning goals. While supportive of the proposal's direction, the Task Force identifies five areas for further consideration:

- **Sustainability**
Sustainability strategies should be more clearly defined, with measurable commitments beyond code minimums. The Task Force appreciates the developer's stated commitment to PV solar-ready installation on all residential buildings, green landscaping practices that leverage native plantings when possible, underground stormwater retention, reasonable steps to minimize impacts to mature trees, and the exploration of district energy solutions. The Task Force is also encouraging usage of permeable surfaces, investment in EV infrastructure, and construction of new electrical infrastructure underground.
- **Affordability**
The lack of dedicated affordable housing remains a major concern. The Task Force encourages exploration of public subsidy and partnerships with organizations such as Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity to provide affordable homeownership opportunities. The Task Force encourages ADU-ready garage designs for garages of the single-family homes, especially along Fulham Street with street facing entrances.
- **Traffic**
Traffic impacts at Hendon Avenue and Como Avenue warrant continued study due to possible impacts resulting from trips generated by the development to/from the west. Traffic control changes identified in the preliminary traffic review (Exhibit A) should be carried out.
- **Streetscape**
The Task Force appreciates the developer's stated commitment to achieving street-facing architectural design elements for garages and homes along Fulham Street, Hendon Avenue, and Hoyt Avenue. The Task Force appreciates the developer's stated commitment to ground-level residential units along the new private north/south road (proposed to be named Keston Street) rather than a parking podium. The proposed site plan should identify a waste management solution that prevents waste containers from being placed on streets.
- **Quality of Life**
The Task Force appreciates the developer's stated commitment to providing a public access easement on all private roads, pedestrian paths, and Breck Woods. The Task Force also appreciates the developer's stated commitment to providing public gathering spaces, maintaining skyline views, and the possibility of a community-oriented commercial space.

The Task Force calls on the City to incorporate these recommendations into the review of any development applications related to the proposed project. Consistent with this request, the Task Force further recommends that the site plan be reviewed by the City Planning Commission in a public meeting and, to the extent any stated commitment is beyond minimum code requirements for the project, the Task Force asks the City to incorporate the stated commitment as a "condition of approval" as defined in Section 61.107 of the St. Paul Zoning Code.

Purpose and Scope of Report

This report documents the Luther Seminary Task Force's interactions with Lifestyle Communities from June through December 2025. It summarizes Task Force meeting discussions, community engagement activities, and revisions to the development proposal made in response to feedback. The report also identifies outstanding issues and recommendations for further proposal refinement.

Task Force Formation and Charge

The Luther Seminary Task Force was convened by the Saint Anthony Park Community Council (SAPCC) to engage with the proposed redevelopment of the Luther Seminary Lower Campus and to provide informed feedback reflecting neighborhood priorities. The Task Force includes representation from all SAPCC standing committees (Equity, Environment, Land Use, and Transportation), Friends of Breck Woods, residents of the City of Lauderdale, residents of University Grove, and neighbors to the Lower Campus.

The Task Force's approach is to engage early with the developer, identify key community concerns and priorities, evaluate proposal revisions, and advise SAPCC on decision-making regarding the proposal.

Summary of Task Force Meetings and Engagement

June 25, 2025 – Initial Task Force Meeting

The Task Force's first meeting focused on organization and scope. Members appointed co-chairs and discussed the role of the Task Force in engaging with the proposed redevelopment of the Lower Campus. The group developed a shared set of priorities and key questions to guide early conversations with Lifestyle Communities. These discussions centered on traffic and access; the relationship between density and open space; preservation of green space, including Breck Woods while acknowledging jurisdictional boundaries; housing affordability; and the importance of providing a mix of housing types and architectural character. From the outset, the Task Force emphasized the value of early, ongoing, and iterative engagement with the developer.

July 9, 2025 – Review of Initial Concepts

At its July meeting, the Task Force met with representatives from Lifestyle Communities and SW Group to review three initial concept plans that were first presented to the broader community at the June 3, 2025 open house. These concepts proposed between 283 to 314 housing units across a range of building types, with site access primarily from Hendon Avenue, Hoyt Avenue, and Fulham Street. The Task Force provided its key questions from the June 25 Task Force meeting to Lifestyle Communities and SW Group for consideration. The development team responded to the key questions and committed to further plan refinement.

August 6, 2025 – Development Plan Revision

Lifestyle Communities and SW Group returned to the Task Force in early August with a revised plan that represented a notable evolution from the earlier concepts. The updated proposal reduced the overall unit count to approximately 240 to 250 units and eliminated apartment buildings from the plan. The plan introduced a curving central spine road intended to improve pedestrian permeability and better respond to the site's topography. Parking was largely consolidated into underground or internalized facilities, and a community gathering space was identified within the development. Task Force members viewed these changes as a positive and responsive step, particularly with respect to site design, while continuing to raise questions related to traffic, affordability, building height versus footprint, and sustainability features.

August 13, 2025 – Plan Revision Discussion

Following review of the revised plan, the Task Force met again to discuss the proposal in greater detail and to identify improvements from community feedback and specific areas for further improvement. Compared to the initial concept

plans from June, 2025, the Task Force observed substantive improvements to the proposal that reflect feedback from both the Task Force and the broader community. Most notably, the overall site design evolved from more rigid, block-like configurations to a layout that responds to existing topography, circulation patterns, and landscape features. The introduction of a curving central spine road and internal pedestrian pathways improved permeability of the site and better integrated the development with the surrounding neighborhood. The proposal also improved in its treatment of scale and transitions. Greater attention was given to the placement, orientation, and massing of buildings along the edges of the site. Lower-scale building forms and single-family housing were used to transition to surrounding neighborhoods, addressing concerns raised about changes in building height or form. Resulting from its discussion, the Task Force sent a list of recommendations for further plan revision to Lifestyle Communities on August 23, 2025.

September 4, 2025 – Land Use Committee Review

At the September 4, 2025 Land Use Committee meeting, Lifestyle Communities and SW Group presented an updated version of the redevelopment proposal. The meeting was well attended by Task Force members, Land Use committee members, and the broader community. The presentation included a walkthrough of the plan's evolution and responses to the Task Force's previously submitted list of recommendations.

The development team described several refinements made in response to feedback, including shifting the senior co-op slightly east and relocating vehicle access further away from Breck Woods. Sustainability concepts discussed during the meeting included consideration of district or geothermal energy systems, solar-ready buildings, and the use of native plantings. Stormwater management was described as being handled primarily through below-grade infrastructure across the site. The development team responded to a range of questions related to site design, access, sustainability, and construction impacts.

November 18, 2025 – Community Forum

Lifestyle Communities and SW Group presented an updated version of the proposal at a SAPCC-hosted community forum. This event provided an opportunity for a broad range of neighborhood residents to review the evolving plan, ask questions, and share feedback with the developer. The development team also debuted results from a preliminary traffic review that projected the majority of site generated trips would utilize Hendon Avenue and Como Avenue to access Highway 280. Community comments echoed many of the themes raised by the Task Force over the preceding months, particularly concerns related to traffic, affordability, and sustainability commitments.

December 16, 2025 – Status Update and Forward Path

At its December meeting, the Task Force received a presentation from Lifestyle Communities and SW Group on the updated proposal. The development team responded to comments and questions from the Task Force and detailed next steps for the proposal. The Task Force resolved to prepare a report for SAPCC in consideration of the redevelopment's next steps.

Summary of Developer-led Community Engagement

In addition to engagement facilitated through the Task Force and SAPCC, Lifestyle Communities undertook several developer-led community engagement efforts throughout 2025. These efforts were intended to introduce the project at early stages, gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders, and inform subsequent refinements to the proposal.

On April 15, 2025, Lifestyle Communities hosted a neighborhood open house to kick-off engagement related to their recent purchase agreement for Luther Seminary's Lower Campus. Building on their local presence as the developers of the Zvago senior co-op, the development team intended to provide greater clarity on their specific interest in Lower Campus. The event was designed as a proactive listening session to gather community insights and concerns during the earliest stages of the site analysis. Visuals shared by Lifestyle Communities at the meeting included a site survey and tree inventory.

Lifestyle Communities first presented development concept plans to the broader community on June 3, 2025. This meeting provided an overview of the development vision, housing types under consideration, and potential site layouts. Attendees of the meeting were able to provide written feedback on fillable comment cards.

The developer conducted some engagement efforts in the City of Lauderdale regarding the portion of the site within that jurisdiction, including much of Breck Woods. Development proposals impacting Breck Woods will be considered by the Lauderdale City Council, which is evaluating the project through a mandatory Planned Unit Development process and a High Density Conservation zoning framework. The zoning framework will require specific sustainability and conservation goals, such as achieving LEED certification and protecting old-growth trees. A key component of Lauderdale's oversight involves a required Natural Resources Inventory and a long-term maintenance and management plan, which will be financed by a master association and secured through conservation and public access easements. The Task Force will continue to monitor the development process of the Lauderdale portion of the Lower Campus and provide information to SAPCC through the Land Use Committee.

Alignment with Comprehensive and Small Area Plans

The Task Force finds that the proposed redevelopment of the Luther Seminary Lower Campus is generally consistent with, and advances housing goals of the City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and the St. Anthony Park Como 2030 Small Area Plan.

The proposed redevelopment aligns with specific strategies of the St. Anthony Park Como 2030 Small Area Plan, which identifies the Luther Seminary campus as a key opportunity site. The Task Force notes in particular the following alignment:

Housing Objective H2 - Work with local institutions to develop new housing.

Strategy 2.2 - Facilitate consideration of a mixed-income housing and mixed-use development on the Luther Seminary campus.

Environmental Sustainability Objective ES1 - Support sensible increases in housing options and a jobs/service/housing mix that is more sustainable and energy efficient.

Strategy 1.2 - Work with neighborhood employers, institutions, and others to develop additional residential options along Como for seniors and those who can walk, bike, or use transit for transportation to nearby jobs and education. These residential options should bolster the market necessary for both efficient and economical public transit as well as viable neighborhood services and facilities.

Conclusion

Based on sustained engagement, documented proposal improvements, and the developer's responsiveness to feedback, the Luther Seminary Task Force recommends that the Saint Anthony Park Community Council provide a letter of support for Lifestyle Communities' proposed redevelopment of the Luther Seminary Lower Campus.

The Task Force will vote on submission of this report on January 5, 2026, in advance of the SAPCC January 15, 2026 meeting.

Exhibit A

Preliminary Traffic Review

Exhibit B

November 18, 2025 Development Proposal