



Saint Louis County

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

St. Louis County and the City of Duluth to form a new partnership with merger of assessor offices

St. Louis County and the City of Duluth are exploring a partnership to consolidate property assessment functions into a single county-administered operation. The proposed merger stems from the County's Blue Ribbon Panel which was charged with reviewing assessment practices. The Panel's goals were to develop a strategic plan to streamline service delivery, create efficiencies, seek collaboration with other government jurisdictions and reduce taxpayer costs for property assessment services.

Combining the two offices creates work process efficiencies and a more equitable method of conducting property assessments that follows a uniform set of standards and expectations. A single system also eliminates duplication of services and reduces cost to those taxpayers whose tax dollars currently support both the City and County assessor operations.

The proposal is subject to County Board approval. If approved, City employees in the Assessor's office would transition to work for St. Louis County by the end of this year.

The Duluth City Council will have an opportunity to discuss the proposal at the September 6, 2012 Council Agenda Session followed by further review of the County Board as part of its budget discussions on September 11.

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