

Area Plan Summary

District 10 / Como Plan

Addendum to The Comprehensive Plan for Saint Paul

Recommended by the Planning Commission – June 15, 2007

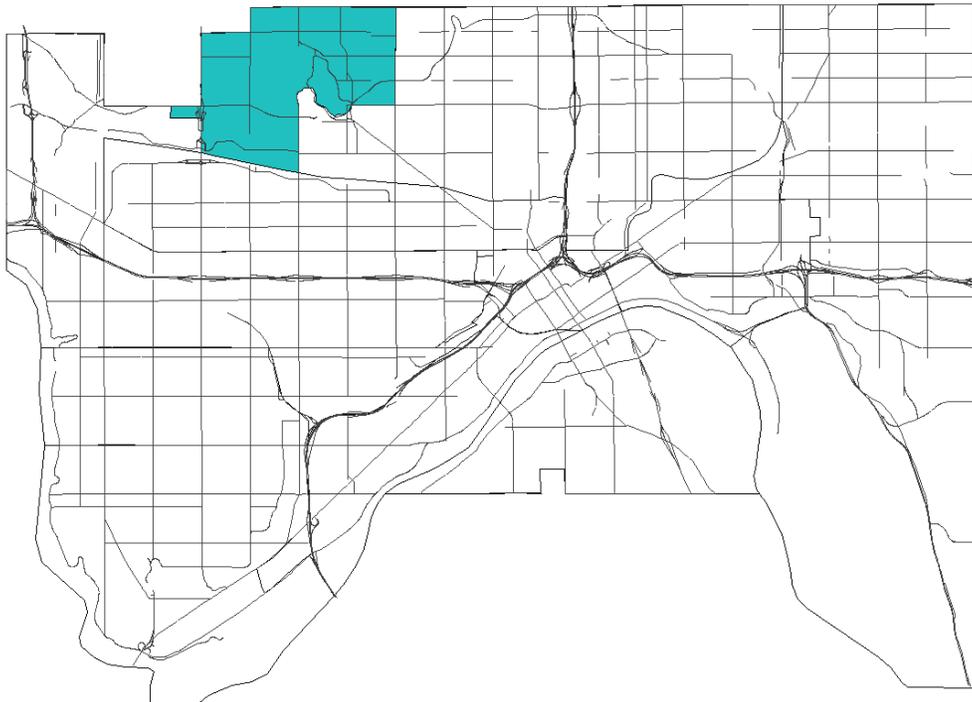
Adopted by the City Council – July 18, 2007

*This summary appends to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan the vision and strategies of the **District 10 / Como Plan**. The **District 10 / Como Plan** consists of six major areas of focus: (1)Housing, (2)Economic Development, (3)Community Development, (4)Transportation, (5)Urban Design and Natural Environment, and (6) Recreation.*

Copies of the full-length plan are available for review at the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development and the office of the District 10 - Como Community Council.

Location

The District 10/Como Community is located approximately three miles northwest of downtown Saint Paul. The district is bounded generally by Hoyt and Larpenteur on the north, Dale and Lexington on the east, Maryland and the Burlington Northern railroad tracks on the south, and Snelling Avenue on the west.



Location of District 10/Como Community in the City of Saint Paul

Vision

District 10 will be a safe, attractive, welcoming and vibrant community that has preserved and enhanced its historic character and natural and civic amenities. Its residents will have a diverse choice of housing options through their lifetimes. The commercial corridors will remain strong and vital. Citizens will have improved connections and access to services and information and to the parks, schools, jobs and institutional uses.

Specific Recommendations and Implementation Steps

Housing

The District 10 Community Council aims to enhance the homes and neighborhoods of Como Park and increase the value of the current housing stock. This goal can be achieved by maintaining and improving existing housing, and expanding housing options for seniors, younger people, and first-time homebuyers. Higher density development is encouraged if it respects the form and scale of the neighborhood.

Economic Development

The District 10 Community Council aims to maintain and promote businesses that serve neighborhood residents and visitors. In particular, the community seeks to develop and improve commercial nodes along major points of entry into the neighborhood, including Como and Snelling, Dale and Maryland, and along Larpenteur Avenue.

Another important component of economic development is maintaining a balanced mix of local and regional businesses. This objective can be accomplished through establishing a business association and working with developers in early planning stages to ensure proposed businesses are consistent with resident needs and desires. The District 10 Community Council will explore the possibility of a revolving loan fund to help existing businesses with maintenance.

Community Development

The District 10 Community Council aims to continue to foster positive relationships with public and private institutions within the district. The Council seeks to increase the visibility of police, fire and EMS to maintain low crime levels. This can be achieved through providing adequate levels of police and fire protection across the district, re-establishing horse patrols in District 10, stabling patrol horses in the area, encouraging residents to participate in local crime prevention programs, and making the physical setting of the neighborhood less conducive to crime.

To improve services to the community, the District 10 Community Council will encourage the city to establish city-wide free wireless internet and to rebuild Como Pool. The community would also like to see an outdoor classroom developed within Como Park for use by area schools and continuing education programs.

As opportunities arise, the Council will re-examine the use and zoning of land currently occupied by institutions. The plan encourages the community to explore options to

redevelop bus lots at Brewster between Snelling and Simpson if the current use is to change.

Transportation

The District 10 Community Council will promote access to adequate and convenient modes of transportation for all area residents, employees, and visitors while reducing traffic and vehicular noise pollution in the community.

The District 10 Community Council will work to reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets using traffic-calming measures, redistribute traffic onto existing arterial roads, work with Public Works to study solutions for problem intersections, work with Parks and Recreation Division to mitigate parking and traffic issues, and make paving, lighting, and landscaping improvements to enhance neighborhood character while remaining consistent with City policies.

Mass transportation is important to the Como community. As Light Rail Transit expands, the District 10 Community Council will work with Metro Transit to provide access to District 10 neighborhoods and amenities. To reduce commuter traffic, the community encourages Metro Transit to develop park and rides north of St. Paul. Zoo and fairgrounds event shuttle services should also be increased to reduce the impact of traffic and parking on the neighborhood.

Alternative transportation, including walking and biking, should be promoted. To increase pedestrian safety, the District 10 Community Council encourages Public Works to install bump-outs at crosswalks. Bike and jogging trails within the district should be connected to regional trail systems. Bike lanes on Como, Hamline, Victoria, Lexington, and Midway Parkway are encouraged. The District 10 Community Council will identify appropriate, highly visible, and secure locations for bicycle parking and facilitate the building of bike lockers.

Urban Design and Natural Environment

The District 10 Community Council seeks to foster a strong and positive neighborhood identity through design and policies that value the environment and promote sustainable development, while reinforcing the district's livability and economic vitality.

Design guidelines can help protect neighborhood character. The community will explore options for a set of voluntary design guidelines. The guidelines should address building materials (use of wood, stone, brick, stucco, etc.), storefront design, landscaping, and streetscape as well as measures for energy conservation and low environmental impact design.

Como and Lexington parkways are links to the citywide parkway system and serve as gateways to Como Park; their parkway characters should be preserved. The District 10 Community Council will promote connective "greenways" initiatives which include components of transportation, environment, heritage, and community assets.

The District 10 Community Council recommends connecting Energy Park and the rest of District 10 by expanding access and using design elements along borders of District 10 to foster inclusiveness of neighboring communities.

The quality of the natural environment is critical to the District 10 community; public green space should be protected. The community will work with the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) to improve water quality based on recommendations in the “Como Lake Strategic Plan.” The District 10 Community Council supports completion of the “Shoreline Restoration Plan”. The community will continue to work with Parks and Recreation to improve the health of wooded areas through the addition of trees and the removal of invasive, non-native vegetation, and support various citizen “hands-on” activities and policies that protect and improve the environment.

Recreation

The District 10 Community Council aims to provide and promote high-quality recreational/leisure activities for residents and visitors. Como Park receives 2.8 million annual visitors as well as local residents. It is important to balance the needs of residents with that of visitors. The council seeks to alleviate traffic and parking congestion. CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles should be used to reduce crime in all public recreation areas. Any proposed future development of the Como Park Campus should be reviewed for its impact on the neighborhood including traffic and parking, environment, views, and elimination of passive space. Existing recreational facilities should be maintained and improved, while additional venues for recreation/leisure activities should be explored.

Priority Actions for City Participation

The following actions have been identified as priorities of the community that require leadership or significant participation by city government. Community groups and city departments should implement the projects identified in this summary by applying for city resources in competitive processes such as the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) and Sales Tax Revitalization program (STAR), and working through the regular operating programs of relevant city departments.

Planning and Economic Development

1. Work with District 10 to provide life-cycle housing that benefits people in all stages of their lives while maintaining the low to medium density residential feel of the neighborhood.
2. Develop and improve commercial nodes along major points of entry into the neighborhood, including but not limited to, Snelling and Como, Lexington and Larpenteur, Dale and Larpenteur, and Dale and Maryland.
3. Encourage developers and property owners to follow design guidelines developed by District 10.
4. Explore redevelopment opportunity at Shalom Home at Snelling and Midway Parkway and other District locations as they arise.

Parks and Recreation

1. Work with District 10 and other stakeholders to mitigate parking and traffic issues that arise from the high volume of visitors.
2. Work with District 10 to expand the shuttle system to and from district attractions and events such as Como Zoo and the fairgrounds on a seasonable basis and for high-attendance events.
3. Apply CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) standards in site plans to deter crime in all public recreation areas.
4. Review neighborhood impact of any proposed future development of the Como Park campus including traffic and parking, environmental, views, and elimination of passive space.
5. Rebuild Como Pool.
6. Develop recreational trails within the district to connect with the larger regional trail systems.
7. Preserve and enhance the character of the parkways as links to a citywide parkway system and as gateways to Como Park.
8. Maintain and improve existing recreational facilities and explore additional venues for new facilities.
9. Improve the health of wooded areas through the addition of trees and the removal of invasive, non-native vegetation. Establish programs to educate visitors and residents about on-going woodland restoration.
10. Develop an outdoor classroom within Como Park for use by area schools and continuing education programs.

Public Works

1. Use appropriate traffic-calming measures to discourage use of residential streets as through traffic routes.
2. Avoid creating additional traffic routes through neighborhoods by assessing projected traffic increases and planning to distribute traffic more equitably on existing arterial routes.
3. Encourage bump-out crosswalks at intersections to increase pedestrian safety.
4. Explore ways to install traffic calming device and improve the pedestrian environment at problem intersections such as Maryland/Wheelock/Victoria and Horton/Como/Lexington.
5. Make paving, lighting, and landscaping improvements according to the character of the immediate neighborhood, while remaining consistent with City policies (lighting, signal, and street policies).
6. Reduce non-point pollution to Como Lake by building detention basins or other water management methods.
7. Work with District 10 to establish “gateways” to mark the entries to the community through streetscape design.
8. Strengthen connection between Energy Park and the rest of District 10 by expanding access.
9. Connect bike and jogging trails within the district to similar systems in surrounding communities and to regional systems.
10. Encourage development of bike lanes or paths on Como, Hamline, Victoria,

- Lexington, and Midway Parkway.
11. Identify appropriate, highly visible, and secure locations for bicycle parking including installation of bike lockers or racks as a part of sidewalk improvement when feasible.
 12. Work with MTC as Light Rail Transit expands to provide access to District 10 via bus routes. Encourage development of Park and Rides north of St. Paul to reduce commuter traffic.

Licensing, Inspections, and Environmental Protection

1. Apply CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) standards in site plan review to deter crime.

Planning Commission Findings

The Planning Commission finds that the Area Plan Summary of District 10/Como Plan is consistent with the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*.

Planning Process

The District 10 Plan was written by a committee of local residents with the help of the district council and staff. The Land Use committee met once a month or more for over two years between 2003 and 2006, and organized four neighborhood meetings to gather residents' feedback and ideas as the plan progressed. The District 10 board adopted the plan in March 2006. The revised plan was submitted by the District 10 Como Community Council in March 2007.