

# Como 2030 Small Area Plan

## Como Avenue: Main Street of the Park

St. Anthony Park Community Council  
District 12

Submitted August 26, 2008



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# I. Introduction

## Background

In 2004, the St. Anthony Park Community Council began the process of creating a district-wide comprehensive plan. Out of necessity, this plan - the District 12 Community Plan (2005) - focused largely on the more rapidly-changing commercial areas of South St. Anthony Park, but the Council acknowledged the pressing need for a more detailed consideration of North St. Anthony Park, especially the Como Avenue corridor.

This acknowledgement was driven by several social and economic trends that caused concern among community leaders. Namely that declining population, shrinking school enrollment, increased business vacancies, and lack of housing options could have a negative long-term impact on the neighborhood.

Therefore, in November of 2006, the Como 2030 Small Area Plan Task Force was named to develop a consensus blueprint for an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable Como Avenue from Highway 280 to the University of Minnesota Transitway. Through two years of task force and public meetings, this plan has been shaped and reshaped to reflect the shared goals of all stakeholders in St. Anthony Park.

This plan is predicated on the belief that status quo is not a viable option and that change is not only inevitable, but a necessary part of preserving the long-term vitality of our community. The plan therefore lays out objectives and strategies for managing this change.

Some of these strategies present difficult choices. In order to secure these shared goals, we have to be willing to accept some alteration to the visual façade of Como Avenue. If we want increased housing options for seniors within walking distance of our downtown, there will need to be a higher vertically built presence on some sites. If we want to increase energy efficiency or retail options, there may need to be alterations to existing buildings. These changes will be made with sensitivity to neighborhood scale and design but also with the understanding that while the physical landscape plays a critical role in our lives and happiness, the ultimate character and sustainability of St. Anthony Park is based on our relationship as neighbors and on our collective stewardship of the environment both near and far.

## **Vision**

The following document presents a community vision for the next 20 years of Como Avenue from Hwy 280 to the University of Minnesota transitway. Some elements of the vision are already in place and must be preserved, while other elements need to be proactively supported as Como Avenue evolves. This vision is in compliance with the District 12 Comprehensive Plan and forms the foundation for all goals, objectives, and strategies proposed in this Plan. The vision is as follows:

Como Avenue is the heart of North St. Anthony Park—the neighborhood's social and commercial center. It is a safe, thriving, tree-lined, pedestrian- and bike-friendly mixed-use thoroughfare offering single- and multi-family housing options that support the diverse needs of residents; affordable office and retail spaces that encourage a vibrant local business community; institutions and events that provide the basis for community life; and open spaces that serve as welcoming centers for public interaction. Como Avenue is also an environmentally-friendly street that promotes transportation choices that reduce traffic congestion, noise, and air pollution, encourages energy-efficient building design, and recognizes the important role that nature plays in urban neighborhoods. Finally, Como Avenue is an architecturally-engaging street, with a lively ongoing dialogue that honors its historical roots while finding new ways to reflect the spirit of the unique neighborhood that is St. Anthony Park.

## **Areas of Interest and Goals**

This vision has been divided into five areas of interest with stated goals assigned to each. They provide the most basic framework for thinking about the future of Como Avenue.

### **Community Character:**

Promote engaging urban design that supports public interaction, critical institutions, open space, the historic Park environment, safety, and community events.

### **Commercial Vitality:**

Strengthen, maintain, and attract neighborhood commercial assets, especially locally-owned businesses and lively centers of attraction that bring neighbors together.

### **Housing Options:**

Add housing units that cater to young families, empty nesters, and seniors and that increase the range of affordability in the neighborhood.

### **Transportation Choices:**

Reinforce a safe, compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhood that reduces the need for automobile travel and supports transit.

### **Environmental Sustainability:**

Encourage sustainable, energy-efficient development with innovative, environmentally friendly design.

## II. Objectives & Strategies

This section presents the challenges related to each area of interest, restates the goals for addressing those challenges, and offers objectives and strategies for achieving those goals.

### Community Character

#### Challenges

The character of Como Avenue reflects the foundational values of St. Anthony Park. It provides safe opportunities for social interaction amidst community-friendly businesses within an architecturally eclectic and ecologically sensitive environment. This character is an important part of what makes the area an attractive place to visit, live, work, or have a business. As the other goals outlined in the Como 2030 Plan are implemented, it is important these community values are preserved and enhanced.

Como Avenue is also home to institutions and activities that play a critical role in the life of the community. There is a constant concern for their long-term viability and an ongoing need to provide the support necessary for their survival.

As the commercial and social center of St. Anthony Park, Como Avenue must continue to reflect the architectural and environmental diversity that gives our neighborhood its unique charm.

The neighborhood is also based on a natural infrastructure providing a sustainable foundation for environmental services and values.

**Goal:** Promote engaging urban design that supports public interaction, critical institutions, open space, the historic Park environment, safety, and community events.

#### Objectives & Strategies:

1. Promote interesting and engaging architecture.
  - 1.1. Ensure that the design, materials, placement, and orientation of new development relates well to the scale and character of its surroundings. Buildings should face the neighborhood on all sides and be sensitive to their relationship to adjacent properties as well as to the street.
  - 1.2. Entrances, retail frontages, and windows should face streets and public spaces to help make these places of shared public use safe, comfortable, and interesting to pedestrians.
  - 1.3. Support the preservation and renewal of significant historic buildings, such as the Library and Milton Square by ensuring that remodeling, additions, or other alterations to such buildings are done in a manner that is compatible with the original scale, massing, materials, and details.
  - 1.4. Planners and the Community Council should consider and work to limit the potential impacts of noise related to new developments.
2. Support the preservation of existing (and encourage additional) public and semi-public parks, wetlands, and gathering spaces.
  - 2.1. Maintain street trees along the entire length of Como Avenue and protect large, desirable trees that are difficult to replace, such as the large oak tree on the northeast corner of the St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church parking lot site.

- 2.2. Support existing open, gathering, and green spaces.
  - 2.3. Work with businesses to create a streetscaping plan that moves towards a more unified and attractive streetscape.
  - 2.4. Encourage developers to include easily-accessible plazas or public gathering spaces in development proposals.
  - 2.5. Promote engaging public art as part of existing and future gathering spaces.
  - 2.6. Support the continued preservation of the Sarita wetland.
3. Support institutions and activities that build community.
    - 3.1. Support existing community events such as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade & Picnic, Art Fest, Fall Festival, Progressive Dinner, Night Out, Block Clubs, and Shop Home for the Holidays.
    - 3.2. Support existing institutions such as our schools, churches, library, recreation center, and post office.
    - 3.3. Support our unique community non-profit organizations such as the Block Nurse Program, Music in the Park Series, District Council, Community Foundation, Booster Club, community newspaper, and Community Band.
  4. Support initiatives and actions that help prevent crime, including Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and encouraging business to extend hours to help generate evening foot traffic.

## Commercial Vitality

### Challenges

While commercial use along Como Avenue dates back nearly 100 years, the businesses of today have to deal with more complex market realities than at any point in the street's history. With big-box retailers within driving distance and increasing development spurred by the prospects of the Central Corridor light rail line along University Avenue, neighbors have more shopping options than ever.

With faithful neighborhood support and visitors who appreciate the local character, Como Avenue has been able to retain most of its neighborhood-oriented businesses despite the increased competition. Nonetheless, the loss of the local hardware and drug stores, increased commercial vacancies and declining or at least stagnant population growth threaten to destabilize the neighborhood's commercial center. Proactive steps must be taken to enhance commercial vitality along Como Avenue to help retain existing and attract new neighborhood-oriented businesses.

Lack of parking is also an ongoing issue in the commercial core of Como Avenue<sup>1</sup>. While street parking is usually available either on Como Avenue or within a block of the central commercial area, there is a lack of space for any new parking to accommodate business expansion or to help attract new destination businesses such as restaurants. There are a few creative parking solutions (such as underground parking and shared parking agreements) that could help alleviate some of the parking concerns in the area. The City is also considering the reduction of parking

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<sup>1</sup> The "commercial core" of Como Avenue runs roughly from Luther Place to Commonwealth Avenue. More details can be found in the Land Use and Zoning section, which begins on Page 12.

requirements for smaller-sized businesses, especially in pedestrian-oriented districts like Como Avenue. This could help but not completely solve the area's parking challenges.

**Goal:** Strengthen, maintain and attract neighborhood commercial assets, especially locally-owned businesses and lively centers of attraction that bring neighbors together.

**Objectives and Strategies:**

1. Recreate a Como Avenue business association to support and encourage cooperation among businesses.
2. Maintain and enhance the commercial character of Como Avenue.
  - 2.1. Support proposals in the commercial core for well-designed mixed-use redevelopment that increases housing options while retaining first-floor commercial development.
  - 2.2. Work toward a long-term goal of focusing auto-oriented businesses and businesses requiring substantial surface parking away from the commercial core.
  - 2.3. Support the long-term preservation and renewal of Milton Square.
  - 2.4. Work with businesses to create a unified streetscaping plan, including adding unique, pedestrian-level light fixtures in the commercial core.
  - 2.5. Collaborate with entities such as the University of Minnesota's Colleges of Architecture and Landscape Architecture to promote interesting urban design options.
3. Promote the unique assets of North St. Anthony Park.
  - 3.1. Support events that attract people from outside the community.
  - 3.2. Promote our St. Anthony Park brand by partnering with all District 12 businesses in marketing campaigns such as "Keep it. In the Neighborhood" and "Shop Home for the Holidays."
4. Widen the range of services available along Como.
  - 4.1. Work to attract new businesses. Encourage locally-owned businesses instead of regional or national chains. Recent surveys indicate a preference for the following retail needs:
    - A family restaurant
    - A hardware store
    - A drug store
    - An ice cream shop
    - A pub
    - A community activity center
    - A fitness center
    - A florist
    - An art gallery
  - 4.2. Support ownership consolidation to facilitate stated redevelopment needs.
  - 4.3. Support variances in the commercial core to attract desirable businesses.
  - 4.4. Support the incremental and contiguous expansion of commercial use onto adjacent residential properties if it helps strengthen the commercial core and if it is designed to limit the impact on neighboring residential.
5. Improve parking strategies.
  - 5.1. Maintain on-street parking on both sides of Como Avenue.

- 5.2. Create and enforce 2-hour parking limits (and shorter in some specific places) on Como between Luther Place and Hillside and on Doswell, Carter, and Luther Place within 200 feet of Como.
- 5.3. Support initiatives to reevaluate city parking standards related to the Como Avenue commercial core.
- 5.4. Support creative parking solutions (such as shared parking agreements, underground parking ramps, alley parking, parking variances, etc.) to maintain and attract desirable businesses while being sensitive to the impacts on nearby residents.

## Housing Options

### Challenges

North St. Anthony Park is a predominantly “built” neighborhood. We have permanent borders and there are few open spaces available for additional housing construction. Those realities, coupled with the trend toward fewer residents per household, limits our ability to provide lifecycle housing options that would help to sustain our most important institutions and assets.

North St. Anthony Park has a growing population of aging residents seeking multi-unit housing options in walkable proximity to shops, services, and public transportation (i.e. our commercial core). These older residents are extremely valuable to the fabric of our community. They provide experience, expertise, time, and financial support to many critical institutions. They are an important link to our past and an essential component of our future. By providing them with a variety of housing options we encourage them to stay and open up new housing opportunities for younger homeowners.

Our neighborhood also has a general need for more housing variety, especially for younger families whose children will sustain our local schools. While there are signs that our population of school age children is not following the declining trend of the rest of St. Paul, that trend still has a major impact on the viability of our public schools, especially the elementary school.

We can help meet the needs for affordable housing and increase the area’s housing diversity by exploring creative housing solutions from a district-wide perspective. It is also possible that the current comprehensive plans being considered by Luther Seminary and the University of Minnesota will help add housing options.

**Goal:** Add housing units that cater to young families, empty nesters, and seniors and that increase the range of affordability in the neighborhood.

### Objectives and Strategies:

1. Promote mixed-use development, especially in the commercial core.
  - 1.1. Support proposals in the commercial core for mixed-use development that includes new housing units and that helps improve the connectivity and attractiveness of Como Avenue.
  - 1.2. Remain open to the consideration of mixed-use development proposals that exceed three stories if they use design, location, and topography to limit the visual and natural impacts of height and if they meet important core goals listed in the Como 2030 Plan.

2. Collaborate with local institutions to develop new housing.
  - 2.1. Facilitate the consideration of a mixed-use or residential building on the Methodist Church parking lot site that would include housing for empty nesters and seniors, and increase the range of housing types and affordability in the neighborhood.
  - 2.2. Facilitate the consideration of mixed-income housing and mixed-use development on the Luther Seminary campus.
  - 2.3. Facilitate the consideration of a mixed-use redevelopment of the University of Minnesota family-student housing complex on the corner of Raymond and Como Avenue.
3. Retain existing multi-family and mixed-income housing mix.
4. Encourage creative housing solutions, such as live-work units, carriage houses, and accessory units.

## Transportation Choices

### Challenges

Como Avenue is a multi-modal street that supports walking, biking, transit, and driving. The commercial core is extremely walkable with wide sidewalks and attractive streetscaping. Bike lanes will be installed in 2008 and will connect the area to an extensive regional network of trails. There is regular north-south and east-west transit service that connects Como to Downtown Minneapolis, Downtown St. Paul, and beyond.

However, as an east-west thoroughfare that also serves as a western entrance to the University of Minnesota and State Fair, there are pedestrian safety concerns, especially with elementary school students walking to and from school.

Also, with the advent of the Central Corridor Light Rail line there will be an increased need to find non-automobile transportation options connecting Como Avenue with the future Central Corridor light rail line.

**Goal:** Reinforce a safe, compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhood that reduces the need for automobile travel and supports transit.

### Objectives and Strategies:

1. Make the pedestrian environment along Como Avenue attractive and safe for people of all ages.
  - 1.1. Ensure that plans move forward to install count-down pedestrian crossings at the intersections of Como and Raymond, Como and Carter, Como and Doswell, and Como and Eustis. Also, ensure that these plans include bump outs at the intersections of Como and Eustis and Como and Scudder.
  - 1.2. Encourage bump outs or pedestrian islands at Como and Carter and Como and Doswell.
  - 1.3. Establish a safe crossing of Como in the Commonwealth/Hillside area.
  - 1.4. Maintain existing street-side benches and public gathering areas, improve streetscaping and lighting, and consider pervious ornamental paving in the commercial core.

- 1.5. Include two sidewalk ramps at every corner to make the street environment more accessible for people with disabilities.
  - 1.6. Ensure that sidewalks are promptly shoveled and de-iced after snowfalls.
  - 1.7. Increase safety by encouraging the local schools to participate in programs designed to lower pedestrian and biking risks.
  - 1.8. Advocate for increased traffic enforcement and calming along Como Avenue, especially between Commonwealth Avenue and Raymond Avenue and between Eustis Street and Luther Place.
2. Improve the bicycle environment along Como Avenue.
    - 2.1. Ensure that plans move forward to install grind-in bike-lane striping between the Minneapolis/St. Paul border and Raymond Avenue to connect existing bike lanes.
    - 2.2. Ensure that plans move forward to include new bicycle racks at Como and Carter and Como and Doswell. Also, encourage developers to include bike racks in any development proposals within the study area.
  3. Maintain and improve transit connections.
    - 3.1. Maintain and improve bus routing and frequency. Retain direct connections between the Como Avenue commercial core and the University of Minnesota, Downtown Minneapolis, and Downtown St. Paul.
    - 3.2. Explore creative ways to connect the Como Avenue commercial core and other parts of North St. Anthony Park to the future Central Corridor light rail transit line.
    - 3.3. Maintain and enhance bus shelters along Como Avenue.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

### **Challenges**

St. Anthony Park is a community with a long tradition of passionate involvement in the environment and a strong commitment to the protection of our natural resources. We are deeply concerned with the implications of global warming and we work individually and collectively to engage in lifestyles that lower our energy consumption and pollution. This concern is fully warranted as the world moves into the uncharted territory of climate change. Therefore, as we consider the future of our neighborhood, we need to look at everything we do or any action we suggest from a perspective of environmental sustainability.

Earlier in this plan, we made a case for increasing our housing options based on the negative social and commercial implications of standing pat: we lose many of our most valued residents and prevent new neighbors from moving in thereby threatening the future of our most treasured institutions and assets. Now we must make this same case based on the environmental impact of our current and future lifestyles.

The facts are clear. Less energy is used when more people live closer together. Does that mean that we have to completely abandon the concept of single family homes and lawns to move into multiple-story high-rise buildings? No, but it does mean we have to consider how to provide the quantity and diversity of housing necessary to help us grow our neighborhood into a sustainable future.

We can do our part towards environmental sustainability by promoting “green” building practices and design for all new development, supporting energy-efficient upgrades of existing buildings, and identifying the most appropriate areas for multiple-story development along Como Avenue.

**Goal:** Encourage sustainable, energy-efficient development with innovative, environmentally friendly design.

**Objectives and Strategies:**

1. Support sensible increases in housing options and a jobs/services/housing mix that is more sustainable and energy efficient.
  - 1.1. Work to develop, maintain, and support a full range of neighborhood commercial services and public amenities, so that as many activities of daily life as possible are within walking and biking distance of residents.
  - 1.2. Work to develop additional residential options along Como, particularly for seniors and those who can walk, bike, or use transit to access nearby jobs and education. This housing will help to bolster the market necessary for efficient and economical public transit and viable neighborhood services and facilities.
  - 1.3. Work with neighborhood employers and institutions to develop housing that meets community housing needs within biking and walking distance.
2. Encourage new and existing building owners to use aspects of green building design and landscaping when building or remodeling.
  - 2.1. Work with the City of St. Paul to determine reasonable incentives to support green building design and renovation.
  - 2.2. Work with private property owners and public entities to reduce water pollution and runoff through low-impact development and other strategies.

### III. Land Use and Zoning

This section provides a block-by-block spatial overview of the existing land use along Como Avenue, offers potential land use considerations, and outlines the proposed rezoning of certain parcels. A map of the proposed rezoning can be found on page 19.

#### 1. Como Avenue and Eustis Street Area

##### 1.1. Northwest corner of Como and Eustis

- Existing Land Use: MetroTransit park-and-ride lot
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Proposed Rezoning: B3 General Business
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - Existing RT2 Townhouse Residential zoning does not fit existing or likely future use of this site, bounded by two busy streets and Highway 280.
  - B3 is a better fit with existing and likely future use of the site, and would implement Commercial Vitality Strategy 2.2 to provide for auto-oriented businesses and businesses requiring more parking at Como and Eustis instead of in the commercial core.
  - According to the zoning code, B3 “is intended for use along major traffic arteries.”

##### 1.2. Southwest corner of Como and Eustis

- Existing Land Use: HealthPartners parking lot
- Existing Zoning: OS Office-Service
- Proposed Rezoning: B3 General Business
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - B3 would implement Commercial Vitality Strategy 2.2 to provide for auto-oriented businesses and businesses requiring more parking at Como and Eustis instead of in the commercial core.
  - According to the zoning code, B3 “is intended for use along major traffic arteries.”

##### 1.3. Southeast corner of Como and Eustis

- Existing Land Use: HealthPartners clinic
- Existing Zoning: OS Office-Service
- Rezoning Idea: TN2 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - TN2 allows a broader list of retail sales and services than OS, including a retail pharmacy, as called for in Commercial Vitality Strategy 4.1. This location, at the intersection of two busy streets, is appropriate for such uses.
  - TN2 has design and parking standards that do not apply in the OS district. The TN2 design standards would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.

##### 1.4. Northeast corner of Como and Eustis and the parcel fronting on Eustis, north of Como

- Existing Land Use: Part of Luther Seminary
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential

- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - This site is RT2 now because it is part of the seminary campus, which is allowed in RT2. However, some commercial and higher-density residential uses would also be appropriate on this site.
  - TN1 would allow for some (quite limited) additional commercial uses in the Como-Eustis area as called for in Commercial Vitality Strategy 2.2, provide for widening the range of services available along Como as called for in Commercial Vitality Objective 4, and provide design and parking standards that would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.
  - TN1 would provide for mixed-use development, including housing, per Housing Options Strategy 1.1 and collaborating with Luther Seminary on empty-nester and senior housing per Housing Options Strategy 2.2, and live-work units as encouraged by Housing Options Objective 4.
  - The broader commercial uses allowed in TN2 would be appropriate on the western part of this area along Como and Eustis, but not on the eastern part of this large area. If the western part is split off as a separate parcel sometime in the future, TN2 might be appropriate to consider at that time.

#### 1.5. North of Como and Hendon Intersection

- Existing Land Use: Lutheran Social Service office building
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - This site is RT2 now because it used to be part of the seminary campus, which is a permitted use in RT2. However, it has been split off from the seminary parcel, and its sole use is for Lutheran Social Service offices, which is nonconforming in RT2. The Lutheran Social Service office is an appropriate use for this site.
  - TN1 permits office uses such as Lutheran Social Service, and has design and parking standards that would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.

## 2. Hendon Avenue to Luther Place

### 2.1. Hendon Avenue to Luther Place, excluding the large Luther Seminary-owned parcel

- Existing Land Use: Mix of single-family homes, duplexes, and a triplex
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: None
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - The mix of residential here is an asset to retain and RT2 is ideally suited for the residential mix found along this section of Como.

### 2.2. North side, corner of Como and Luther Place

- Existing Land Use: Part of Luther Seminary
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - TN1 would provide for the possibility of empty nester and senior housing on this site as called for in Housing Options Strategy 2.2, and the potential for a mixed residential-commercial use (with very limited commercial) at the corner of Como

and Luther Place per Housing Options Strategy 2.2, none of which can be done under the existing R3 zoning. This might be an attractive site for empty nester and senior housing because of its proximity to commercial and service uses, including a grocery store, bank, library, post office, medical and dental clinics and transit, in the heart of the community.

- TN1 would allow for very limited commercial use such as a coffee shop at the corner of Como and Luther that might serve as a gathering place for the Luther Seminary community and the larger community, and improve the connection between Luther and the heart of the community as called for in the new District 12 Plan.

### **3. Luther Place to Commonwealth Avenue**

#### **3.1. Southeast corner of Como and Luther Place**

- Existing Land Use: St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church
- Existing Zoning: R3 One-Family Residential
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - A church is a permitted use in R3, but R3 One-Family Residential does not fit the location of this site at an intersection in the commercial core in the heart of the neighborhood.
  - TN1 would allow such things as administrative offices for nonprofit organizations that sometimes provide economical, efficient, sustainable shared use of church space and are not allowed in the R3 district.

#### **3.2. Commercial land use between Luther Place and Commonwealth Avenue**

- Existing Land Use: This stretch forms the core commercial area of the neighborhood with a variety of small neighborhood-oriented businesses, offices, and a gas station.
- Existing Zoning: B2 Community Business
- Rezoning Idea: TN2 Traditional Neighborhood, except for Park Service gas station
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - TN2 provides design and parking standards that would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.
  - TN2 supports mixed-use development that would help implement Commercial Vitality Strategy 2.1 and Housing Options Objective 1.
  - An auto service station is not a permitted use in the TN2 district. Park Service is an important neighborhood asset and, therefore, should remain as a B2 zoning district. TN2 would be appropriate for the gas station parcel in the future if the site is redeveloped or the use is changed to one permitted in the TN2 district.
  - The incremental rezoning of residential parcels adjacent to the commercial core to TN2 could be appropriate if it helps strengthen the commercial core and if the building is designed to limit the impact on neighboring residential per Commercial Vitality Strategy 4.4.

#### **3.3. Parking lot behind Milton Square on the southwest corner of Como and Carter**

- Existing Land Use: Parking lot
- Existing Zoning: VP Vehicular Parking
- Rezoning Idea: None

- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - This parcel is really part of the commercial site and separated topographically, etc. from the residential area.
  - This parcel could potentially support limited mixed-use development, but rezoning this site to TN2 would only be appropriate as part of a redevelopment that preserves and improves the long-term sustainability of historic Milton Square per Community Character Strategy 1.3.

#### 3.4. Southeast corner of Como and Carter Avenue

- Existing Land Use: St. Anthony Park Library
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - A library is a permitted use in RT2, but RT2 Townhouse Residential does not fit the location of this site at an intersection in the commercial core in the heart of the neighborhood.
  - TN1 would allow such things as a museum, coffee shop, or tea house that are sometimes economically located in places like library basements and are not allowed in the R3 district.

## 4. Commonwealth Avenue to Raymond Avenue

#### 4.1. Southwest side of Como between Commonwealth and Hillside

- Existing Land Use: St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church parking lot
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - TN1 would allow for the possibility of a mixed-use building for empty nesters and seniors on this site, as called for in Housing Strategy 2.1, with the kind of very limited service uses such as a barber and beauty shops, tailor shop, and accountant that would be an asset to senior housing and generate little traffic.
  - TN1 also provides design and parking standards that would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2 and would ensure that any redevelopment would be sensitive to the adjacent residential properties.
  - Higher-intensity commercial use—such as the uses allowed in TN2—would not make sense on this site given its separation from the commercial core and its residential neighbors across the street and alley.

#### 4.2. Southwest corner of Knapp Place and Hillside/Como

- Existing Land Use: St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: None
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - A church is permitted in the RT2 zoning district and RT2 seems to make the best sense for this site given the predominantly residential neighbors.

#### 4.3. Southeast corner of Hillside/Como and Knapp Place

- Existing Land Use: Office building
- Existing Zoning: OS Office-Service
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood

- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - TN1 has design and parking standards that do not apply in the OS district. The TN1 design standards would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.

4.4. Mid-block parcel on the east side of Knapp Place between Hillside/Como and Knapp

- Existing Land Use: Single-family home
- Existing Zoning: RT2
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - A single-family home is a permitted use in both the existing RT2 and proposed TN1 districts. The setback requirements in TN1 are shorter than in RT2 and would allow for more flexibility on this small 50 feet by 50 feet parcel per Housing Options Objective 4.
  - Given that this parcel is adjacent to two commercial properties, rezoning to TN1 would also create the long-term opportunity for a mixed-use redevelopment with very limited commercial use that could include the small triangle of parcels to the southeast of the intersection of Como and Knapp Place.
  - TN1 also has design standards, which would ensure that any potential redevelopment would be sensitive to the adjacent residential properties.

4.5. South side of Como between Hillside and Knapp Street

- Existing Land Use: Frame shop
- Existing Zoning: B1 Local Business
- Rezoning Idea: TN2 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - TN2 permits general retail uses such as the frame shop, and has design and parking standards that do not apply in the B1 district. The TN2 design standards would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.

4.6. South side of Como between Hillside and Knapp Street

- Existing Land Use: Four-plex
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: TN1 Traditional Neighborhood
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - A four-plex is a permitted use both in RT2 and in TN1. This is the lone residential property facing Como on this block face. It might be an appropriate location, next to the frame shop, for the very limited kinds of commercial uses allowed in TN1.

4.7. Southeast corner of Como and Scudder, east to the alley

- Existing Land Use: Two apartment buildings and two single-family homes
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
- Rezoning Idea: RM2 Multiple-Family Residential
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - The existing apartment buildings are nonconforming uses under the existing RT2 Townhouse Residential zoning. RM2 would be the most conforming zoning for these apartment buildings, and would be consistent with Housing Options Objectives 3 and 4 to retain existing and encourage new mixed-income multi-family housing.

- 4.8. Residential use north of Como between the Library and Raymond
  - Existing Land Use: Single-family homes
  - Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
  - Rezoning Idea: None
  - Zoning Discussion Points:
    - RT2 supports the residential use along this section of Como.
  
- 4.9. Parcel between Knapp and Scudder on the south side of Como
  - Existing Land Use: St. Anthony Park Elementary School
  - Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential
  - Rezoning Idea: None
  - Zoning Discussion Points:
    - RT2 supports the elementary school.
  
- 4.10. Northwest corner of Como and Raymond
  - Existing Land Use: Commercial buildings and a triplex
  - Existing Zoning: B2 Community Business
  - Rezoning Idea: TN2 Traditional Neighborhood
  - Zoning Discussion Points:
    - TN2 supports the continued mixed-use commercial and housing on this site and provides design and parking standards that would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.
  
- 4.11. Southwest corner of Como and Raymond
  - Existing Land Use: Auto-convenience market
  - Existing Zoning: B2 Community Business
  - Rezoning Idea: None
  - Zoning Discussion Points:
    - B2 is the ideal zoning district for an auto-convenience market.

## **5. Raymond Avenue to U of M Transitway**

- 5.1. North side of Como between Raymond and the U of M Transitway
  - Existing Land Use: U of M family-student housing
  - Existing Zoning: RM1 Multiple-Family Residential
  - Rezoning Idea: TN2 Traditional Neighborhood
  - Zoning Discussion Points:
    - TN2 provides design and parking standards that would help to implement Community Character Strategies 1.1 and 1.2, and allow for the kind of well-designed mixed-use development including some first floor commercial use adjacent to Como Avenue called for in Housing Options Objective 2.3. It would also provide for live-work units as encouraged by Housing Options Objective 4.
    - This site could support some commercial uses that would help to widen the range of services available along Como as called for in Commercial Vitality Strategy 4.1, given that the west end of the site is at the very visible intersection of two arterial streets, and the east half of the site is across Como from I1 Light Industrial-zoned land.
  
- 5.2. South side of Como between Raymond and the U of M Transitway

- Existing Land Use: Single-family houses, apartment buildings, duplexes, and a warehouse
- Existing Zoning: RT2 Townhouse Residential, RM2 Multiple-Family Residential, I1 Light Industrial
- Rezoning Idea: None
- Zoning Discussion Points:
  - The current zoning corresponds well to the existing land use.

## **IV. Implementation Strategies**

1. Encourage the St. Anthony Park Community Council to look at options to proactively implement the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Como 2030 Plan.
2. Work to create collaborations and partnerships between community, public, private, and institutional entities with connections to St. Anthony Park.