



The Como-tion

Blueprint Special Edition

Hey Como! Do you know your neighborhood is in the midst of writing a small area plan? It's true! SECIA and members of the Como community are creating The Como Blueprint: A Small Area Plan for the Como Neighborhood of Minneapolis. In this special edition of the Como-tion please read all about the great progress made so far and the next steps in the process.

BACKGROUND

All cities in our region are required to write a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan establishes broad goals and policies that direct the growth and development of a city. In Minneapolis, this plan is called The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth. While the comprehensive plan applies city-wide, it is not intended to address the unique conditions of every neighborhood. This gap is filled by small area plans, which identify and address specific neighborhood needs and concerns while still conforming to the comprehensive plan. The Como Blueprint is an opportunity for the neighborhood to define a vision and direct neighborhood change.

PROGRESS

We've been busy! In addition to monthly steering committee meetings, we've held two large public gatherings. Our first gathering was a kickoff event in April 2012 where we gathered a great deal of input from the community. Our second gathering featured a presentation by a local planning consultant. Our consultant, Biko Associates, presented the findings of a series of stakeholder focus group meetings. Additionally, we've collected online and paper surveys, and met with countless people to discuss the Como Blueprint. The main reason for this special edition of the Como-tion is to share some of the work completed by the Blueprint Steering Committee. We recently finished drafting an important piece of the Como Blueprint – the Vision Statement. This statement is a distillation of feedback we have gathered from Como stakeholders over the last 18 months. It reads as follows:

The Como Blueprint Vision Statement

The Southeast Como Improvement Association works to enhance the physical, social, environmental, and economic well-being of the Como neighborhood of Minneapolis. To that end, the Southeast Como Improvement Association formed the Como Blueprint Steering Committee and charged the committee with the task of writing a small area plan to guide the neighborhood for the next 20 years. Following an extensive community engagement and public participation process, and in conjunction with research into best practices, the committee created this document, the Como Blueprint.

The Como Blueprint will strive to:

- Enhance the livability of the neighborhood
- Encourage development at suitable locations and at an appropriate scale
- Protect valued neighborhood and cultural resources
- Engage neighborhood stakeholders and represent their hopes and concerns for the future
- Promote homeownership as part of a balanced approach to address housing needs for multiple populations
- Encourage responsible rental property management and responsible landlord / tenant conduct
- Foster economic development
- Increase housing options, especially for seniors and long-term renters
- Steward natural resources and the environment
- Benefit from participating in the University District Alliance and proximity to the University of Minnesota
- Promote responsible maintenance of property
- Enrich opportunity for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Como neighborhood

NEXT STEPS

Our work continues! You can get involved in many ways. Generally, the Blueprint Steering Committee meets on the first Saturday of each month. Look for dates and times on the SECIA website. In addition, we plan two more major public meetings, one in early December and one early next year. The purpose of the December meeting will be to present to the community the recommendations that the Steering Committee is considering for inclusion into the Como Blueprint. It will be an opportunity for participants to ask questions and comment on the recommendations. These recommendations will also be posted on the Como Blueprint website and printed upon request. The purpose of the final meeting will be to present the final recommendations. This will be the final draft of the Como Blueprint approximately as it will be presented to the Minneapolis Planning Commission. Once again participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and to comment on the Como Blueprint. At this point small changes may be possible, but we hope that any larger questions will have been resolved after the December meeting. As before the document will be available electronically and in hard copy. After the final meeting, we will submit the Como Blueprint to the City and, upon approval, it will be amended to the comprehensive plan. At that point, our vision for the neighborhood will officially be a part of City policy and the Como Blueprint will help guide the neighborhood into the future!

Questions? Email secomoblueprint@gmail.com

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