

# COMO

## NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT





## Introduction to Conservation Districts

**Part One: Understanding the District**

**Part Two: Architectural Styles in the District**

**Part Three: Conservation District Regulations**

# Introduction to Conservation Districts

Conservation districts began in the late 1900s when cities saw a need to protect neighborhood character without using the strict rules of historic landmark status. Many neighborhoods were special because of their overall look, layout, and community history — not just because of a few individual landmark buildings. Streetcar suburbs, post war neighborhoods, and culturally important areas often fell into this category.

A conservation district is a middle ground planning tool. It focuses on protecting the parts of a neighborhood that make it unique — like building size, placement, roof shapes, and the feel of the streets — while still allowing updates, new construction, and investment. In zoning, it works as an overlay, adding design rules to the normal zoning so those key features are kept. This is useful in places where standard zoning is too general and full historic rules would be more than what's needed.

In short, conservation districts help neighborhoods grow in ways that keep their history, character, and sense of community alive — now and for future generations.

This effort will be the first attempt to complete a conservation district in Fort Worth. A conservation in Fort Worth will be the next step to address concerns raised by residents about new construction in their neighborhood as outlined in detail in the Como/Sunset Heights Neighborhood Empowerment Zone Plan and Design Guidelines.



Strategic Plan  
**DESIGN  
GUIDELINES**  
Como/Sunset Heights  
Neighborhood Empowerment Zone



Neighborhood conservation is about keeping and improving the preferred qualities of the buildings that already exist in an area. These qualities, or “patterns,” may include the size and shape of houses, proximity to the street and each other, and the styles people see as they walk through the neighborhood. When new buildings are planned, they should fit in with these patterns so the neighborhood stays consistent, maintaining its visual appeal, and feels like a unified community.

Deviations from these patterns can disrupt the cohesion and make the area feel disjointed. New construction should build on the shared design features and patterns found throughout the neighborhood.

When identifying and understanding neighborhood patterns, the following elements should have particular focus:



- The placement and styles of buildings that were part of the formative, original fabric of the neighborhood.
- The extent to which newer buildings are or are not compatible with the neighborhood character.
- Any additions and new construction must be consistent with the neighborhood character and follow “best example” buildings in the neighborhood.
- The extent to which the neighborhood looks like it is a cohesive and unified whole while exhibiting architectural diversity and visual interest.
- The general location of houses on the street and the ways that those houses address the street, including porches, sidewalks, and landscaping.
- The general height and mass of the houses in the neighborhood.
- The extent of consistent neighborhood fabric, based on the original period of the houses and example residences which define the neighborhood character.
- Parking and garage patterns.

## ***Conservation District Advantages***

Creating a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) offers several advantages for communities seeking to preserve their character without the strict regulations of full historic designation.

### **1. Keeps the Neighborhood's Look**

Protects things like house size, yard space, and how far homes are from the street.

### **2. More Freedom Than Historic District Rules**

Allows people to make changes or updates as long as they fit with the neighborhood style.

### **3. Helps New Buildings Fit In**

New houses or additions must match the size and style of the neighborhood.

### **4. Builds Community Pride**

Helps neighbors feel proud and keeps the area's special look.

### **5. Can Keep Property Values Steady**

A nice-looking neighborhood can help homes keep or grow in value.

### **6. Made with Neighbors' Help**

People living in the neighborhood help make the rules.

### **7. Good for the Environment**

Encourages fixing up old homes instead of tearing them down.

## ***Using District Standards & Guidelines***

Create checklist once input is complete



we are hum  
striving to live in pea  
and harmony together,

## Part One: *Understanding the District*

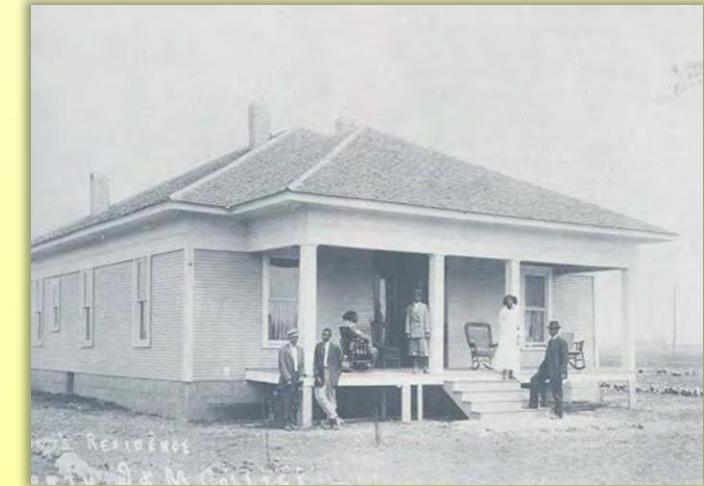
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# The Como Neighborhood: A Legacy of Resilience, Culture, and Community

Located about five miles west of downtown Fort Worth, the Como neighborhood traces its roots to the late nineteenth century, when developers envisioned an elegant resort modeled after the lakeside charm of Como, Italy. In 1889, the H.B. Chamberlain Investment Company of Denver, led by Alfred W. and Humphrey B. Chamberlin, dammed a creek to create Lake Como. Around the lake, they built a pavilion, casino, amusement rides, and an electric streetcar line connecting visitors to the luxury *Ye Arlington Inn* in nearby Arlington Heights. The resort flourished briefly, hosting pageants, water carnivals, and even a visit from actress Lillian Russell, who praised its beauty. However, the national financial panic of 1893 bankrupted the developers, and when the Inn burned down in 1894, the grand vision faded, leaving the lake as the area's enduring centerpiece.

In the early 1900s, affordable lots west of the lake began attracting African-American domestic workers employed in the wealthy homes of Arlington Heights. They purchased land, built modest homes, and cultivated gardens and livestock, forming the foundation of a tight-knit, self-sufficient community. A flood in 1922 brought new residents, and Fort Worth's annexation of Como that same year brought paved streets and increased civic organization. By the 1920s and 1930s, Como had become a haven for Black travelers navigating the restrictions of Jim Crow. Its location along West Vickery Boulevard, part of the historic Bankhead Highway, provided safe lodging and social spaces when discrimination barred African Americans from many establishments elsewhere.

The neighborhood's cultural and economic life flourished despite the segregation that defined mid-century Fort Worth. Churches such as Zion Missionary Baptist, founded in 1919, and Lake Como Church of Christ, established in 1947, became spiritual and social anchors. In 1925, the Lake Como Cemetery was founded, ensuring a place of dignity for generations of residents. During these years, the Como Theater offered entertainment for African-American audiences, and the Lake Como Weekly newspaper, founded in 1940, gave the community a voice, chronicling local events, civil rights issues, and celebrations until its closure in 1986.



# The Como Neighborhood: A Legacy of Resilience, Culture, and Community



Despite deliberate barriers meant to constrain the neighborhood after World War II, such as the infamous “Ridglea Wall” and red-lining which limited opportunities for Black families to build generational wealth, residents took immense pride in their neighborhood and by the 1950s, Como was considered one of the best-maintained, tightest-knit Black neighborhoods in Fort Worth, with tidy bungalows, thriving businesses, and low crime.

The post-World War II era brought architectural variety, as Craftsman and Bungalow-style homes were joined by mid-century Ranch houses with open floor plans and brick exteriors. The nearby Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base spurred an economic boom in the 1960s and 1970s, providing jobs but also increasing pressure from urban development. During these years, leaders such as Lenora Rolla emerged, advocating for civil rights, the elimination of the poll tax, better housing, and the preservation of African-American history. Rolla’s founding of the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society in 1977 ensured that Como’s legacy would be documented for future generations.



Even in the face of economic downturns and shifting urban policy in the late twentieth century, Como’s spirit endured. Annual traditions, most notably the July 3rd celebration now known as ComoFest, continued to unite residents in pride and joy. Civic organizations, churches, and mom-and-pop businesses maintained the community’s economic and cultural life. The Como Community Center became a hub for education, recreation, and social services, strengthening the neighborhood’s bonds.

Today, Como stands as both a living community and a historical landmark.

Lake Como still offers a peaceful place for residents to gather, much as it did more than a century ago. The neighborhood’s cultural and economic pillars—faith institutions, schools, Black-owned businesses, grassroots activism, and strong traditions—remain the foundation of its identity. From its origins as a luxury resort to its transformation into a resilient, predominantly African-American neighborhood, Como’s history reflects both the challenges and the triumphs of Fort Worth’s diverse past.

It is a place where heritage is honored, community is celebrated, and the determination to thrive continues to shape its future.

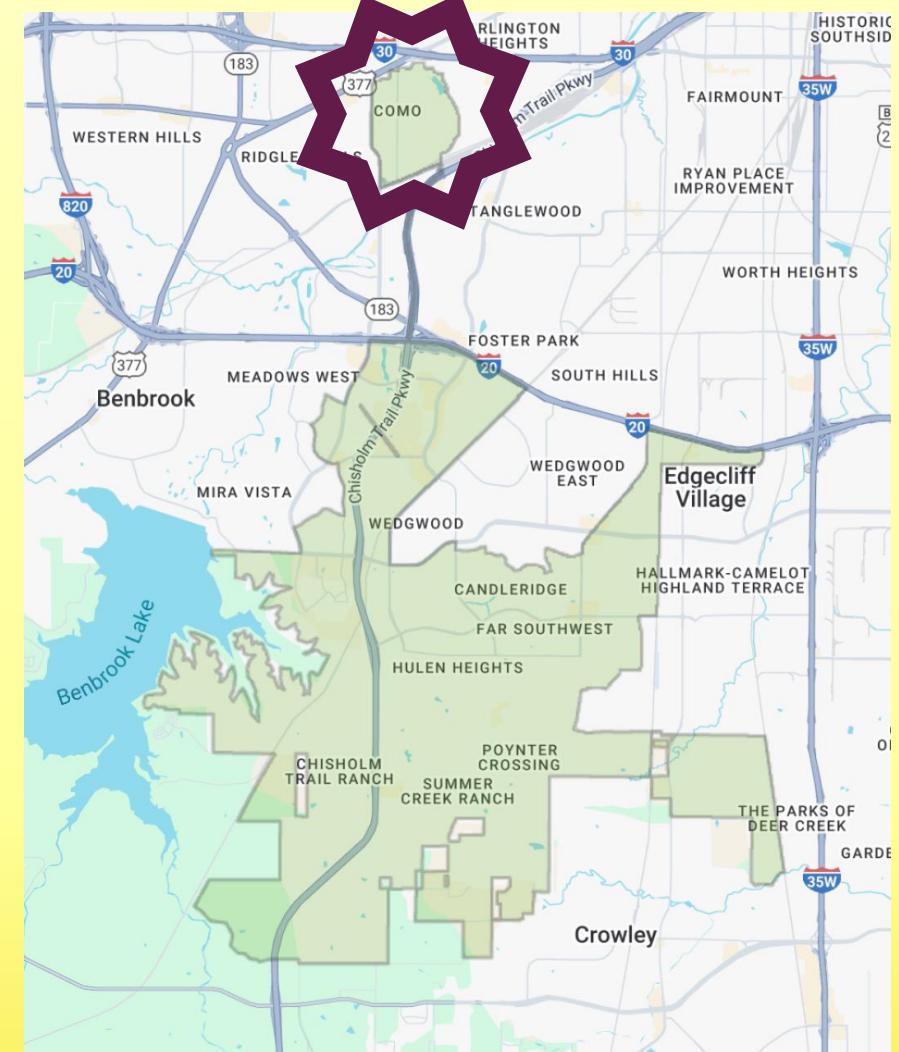
# About Como Neighborhood

Median build year	1962
Median household income	\$26,328
Families below poverty rate	23%
Unemployment rate	11%
Substandard structure violations	51 per year
Crimes against persons	45 (per 1,000)
Total population	2,464

## Improving Como Neighborhood

- Alley between Libbey Avenue and Blackmore Avenue from Littlepage Street to 275 feet east (sewer)
- Alley between Goodman Avenue and Libbey Avenue from Horne Street to 210 feet east (sewer)
- Alley between Libbey Avenue and Blackmore Avenue from 120 feet west of Bourine Street to 190 feet east of Bourine Street (sewer)
- Alley between Kilpatrick Avenue and Bonnell Avenue from Bourine Street to 230 feet east of Bourine Street (sewer)
- Alley between Fletcher Avenue and Bonnell Avenue from Bourine Street to 440 feet east (sewer)
- Alley between Goodman Avenue and Libbey Avenue from 50 feet west of Merrick Street to 50 feet west of Merrick Street (sewer)

## Fort Worth City Council District 6



# Engagement Process

Event	Location - Purpose
<b>August 7, 2025 – City/Como NAC Meeting</b>	Introduction of Conservation District
<b>August 11, 2025 – Online Survey</b>	Survey distributed to a wide audience for additional input
<b>August 23, 2025 – Community Meeting</b>	Como Community Center – Gather general input from residents about concerns in the neighborhood
<b>October 2, 2025 – Councilmember Town Hall</b>	Como Community Center – Provide residents an opportunity to share concerns raised in August to City of Fort Worth Departments
<b>October 6, 2025 – Information Meeting</b>	Como Community Center – Provide additional information on Conservation District
<b>November 22, 2025 – NAC Focus Group Meeting</b>	Como Community Center – Gain input on new construction and existing homes to refine draft ordinance
<b>December 6, 2025 – NAC Focus Group Meeting</b>	Como Community Center – Overview of draft ordinance to refine document

# Table of Contents

Regulation Category	Summary	Page Number
Architectural Styles Allowed	Minimal Traditional, Folk Victorian, Craftsman, Tudor	TBD
Architectural Styles Not Allowed	Contemporary, Neo-Eclectic	TBD
Setbacks and Yards	No changes to base zoning regulations	TBD
Renovations to Existing Homes	Must comply with base zoning; new additions must be at the rear	TBD
Garage and Driveway Standards	Rear lot garages or 10 foot offset from ; maximum driveway width of 10 feet	TBD
Height Standards	28 feet	TBD
Roof Slope Standards	Varies by architectural style; e.g., Tudor: 12:12 – 20:12, Minimal Traditional: 4:12 – 6:12	TBD
Window to Wall Ratio	Minimum 20%	TBD
Porch Standards	Minimum depth of 6 feet; minimum width of 1/3rd of the front façade	TBD
Fence Standards	Maximum height of 4 feet with 50% open design	TBD
Tree Planting Requirements	40% canopy coverage goal; specific spacing and species requirements	TBD

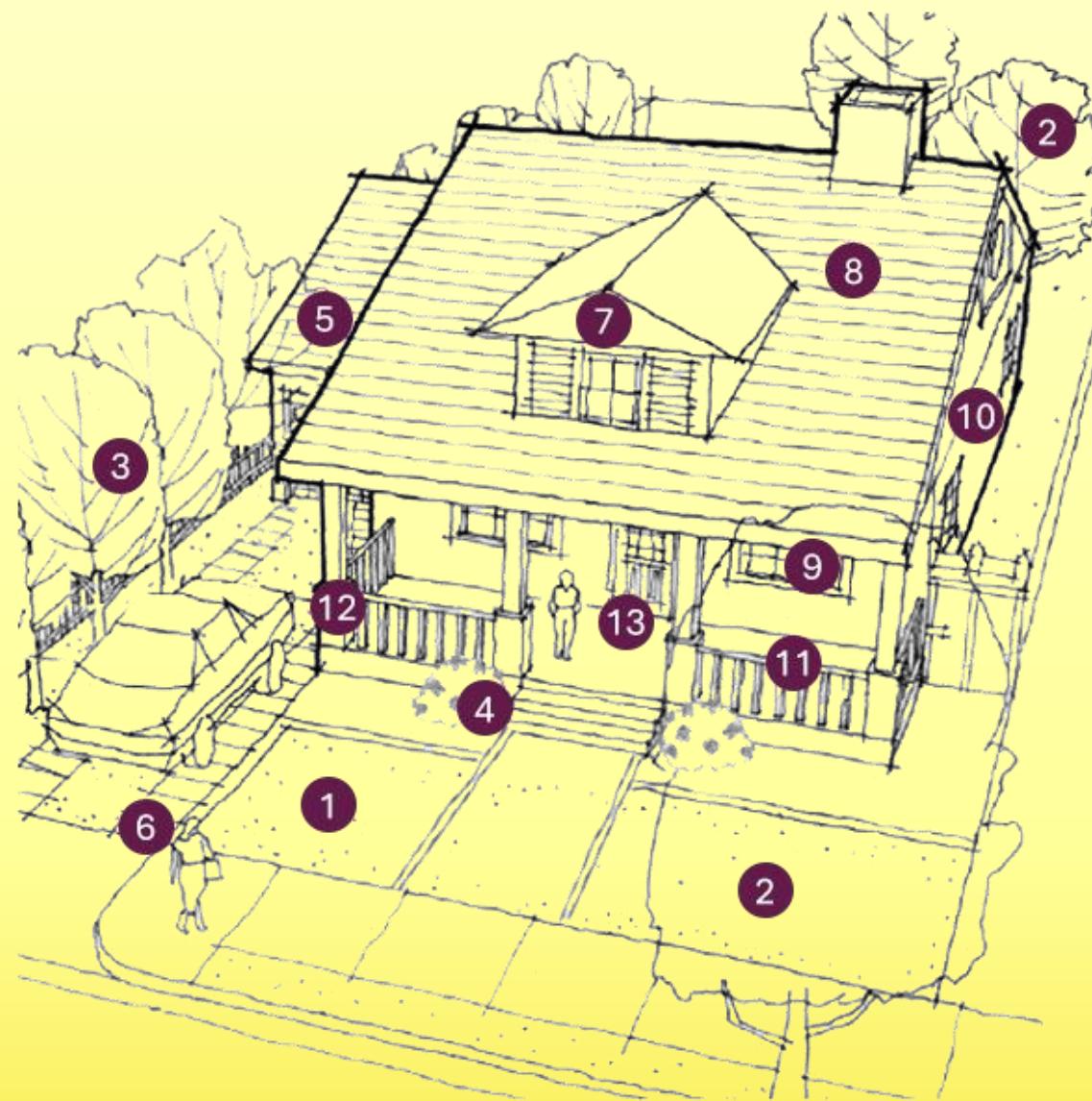


## ***Step Two: Architectural Styles in the District***

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# Elements of a Conservation District and Regulations

1. Front setbacks consistent with neighborhood design pattern.
2. Large plant elements placed to help create a sense of separation and privacy.
3. Trees placed to offer a sense of enclosure to the driveway and to separate the curb from sidewalk.
4. Landscaping clearly denotes the entryway to the house.
5. Attached rear garage.
6. Single-width driveway with planting strip at center allowing the yard and driveway to appear more like a garden.
7. Additive elements to the roof respond carefully to the mass and scale of the building.
8. Consistent roof slope and materials of primary roof and secondary elements throughout.
9. Variety of the façade should be generated by the use of simple rectangular windows in traditional configurations.
10. A minimum of two windows provided of at least 8 square feet in size of the secondary side of the house facing a public street.
11. Porches should extend the architecture of the residence.
12. Front porches consistent with the architecture of the house with a minimum 8 feet depth.
13. Front door faces and is clearly visible from the public street.



# Existing House Patterns and Types

The term “house patterns” refers to the key architectural elements and design features of the houses that represent the most desired neighborhood patterns upon which the Conservation District Standards are based.

It is important for the design professional, as well as the design reviewer, to identify the best example houses in the neighborhood in order to generate a successful design and perform a meaningful review.

Certain houses will stand out from the neighborhood fabric as clearly inconsistent. They will stand out not just because they are different, but because they may be larger in size, less complementary to surrounding elements, less deferential to impacts on neighbors, or are of a markedly inconsistent architectural style. It is important to omit these forms as important or contributing elements to a neighborhood.

New construction should follow the pattern of these example buildings to ensure a cohesive esthetic is maintained in the neighborhood.

Additionally, when considering additions to existing buildings – whether houses or commercial structures – consistency with the existing architecture will be a critical component of compatibility. New additions should harmonize with the existing structure(s) and the completed buildings should maintain a cohesive design. Ideally, there should only be subtle evidence that an addition was completed.



If these houses represent the neighborhood housing pattern...

...then this house does not conform.

# Architectural Context of the Como Neighborhood

## What are the most common housing types in Como?

The Como neighborhood's residential character is defined by two predominant historic housing types: **Minimal Traditional** and **Folk Victorian**. These styles reflect the community's layered development history—from late-19th-century vernacular forms adorned with Victorian-era ornament, to the modest, efficient houses of the post-Depression and post-war years.

Folk Victorian homes in Como often feature simple gable-front or L-shaped plans enlivened with turned porch posts, spindle work, and decorative gable trim—details made widely available through mass production and rail transport in the late 1800s.

Minimal Traditional houses, by contrast, are streamlined in form with low-to-moderate pitched roofs, minimal eave overhangs, and restrained detailing, embodying the economic and stylistic shifts of the 1930s–1950s.

Preserving these two styles is essential to maintaining Como's historic identity. They not only illustrate the neighborhood's architectural evolution, but also embody the craftsmanship, materials, and cultural influences that shaped its streetscapes.

Craftsman, and Tudor style homes are also present in the neighborhood but are sparse. Contemporary and Neo-Eclectic represent the majority of new infill construction but are the least appropriate style for the neighborhood as they do not represent the architectural traditions.

## Infill Construction Inspired by the following is allowed:

- Minimal Traditional
- Folk Victorian
- Craftsman
- Tudor

## Infill Construction Inspired by the following is not allowed:

- Contemporary
- Neo-Eclectic

# Conservation District Standards: Minimal Traditional



## Minimal Traditional (c. 1935 – 1950)

Minimal Traditional houses appeared in the United States in the late 1930s and remained common through the mid-1950s. They reflected the economic realities of the time, with designs that were compact, efficient, and stripped of excess ornament.

These homes are typically one or one-and-a-half stories, with a low-to-moderately pitched gable or hipped roof, and with very little eave overhang. Their front façades are often asymmetrical, with a small stoop or modest porch marking the entry. The windows are usually double-hung with simple trim, and exterior walls are clad in practical, locally available materials such as wood siding, brick veneer, or stone. Most decorative details are minimal, sometimes borrowing simplified elements from earlier traditional styles.

The overall effect is modest and functional, with proportions and layouts that prioritize affordability and straightforward construction while still offering a sense of permanence and dignity.

## Origins and Context

Emerged during the late Depression and World War II years, when budgets, materials, and labor were limited.

Promoted by the Federal Housing Administration as the “minimum house” most American wage earners could afford. Served as a bridge between the revival styles of the 1920s and the Ranch houses of the post-war boom. Sometimes called *American Small House*, *Victory Cottage*, or *FHA House*.

## Defining Characteristics

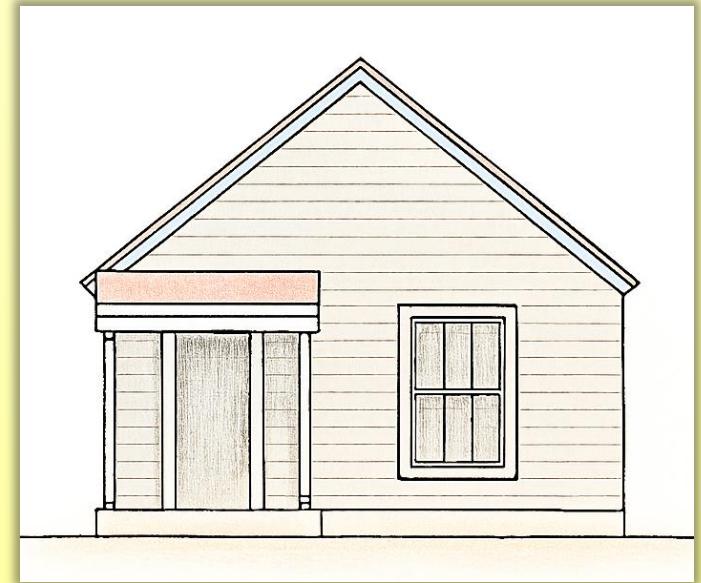
- **Chimney:** If present, not a dominant feature; often placed at a gable end.
- **Detailing:** very limited - may borrow simplified elements from Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, or other earlier styles, but stripped of elaborate trim.
- **Façade:** asymmetrical front, often with the entry set slightly off-center.
- **Materials:** wood clapboard, brick veneer, or stone; sometimes asbestos or composition siding in later examples.
- **Porch:** small stoop or modest entry porch - rarely full-width.
- **Roof:** low-to-moderately pitched gable or hipped roof, with minimal eave overhang.
- **Scale and Form:** small, usually one story (sometimes 1½), compact footprint, and simple massing.
- **Windows:** double-hung sash windows, often with shutters; minimal grouping or ornament.

# Conservation District Standards: Minimal Traditional



Label	Details
A	<b>Chimney:</b> If present, not a dominant feature; often placed at a gable end.
B	<b>Detailing:</b> very limited - may borrow simplified elements from Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, or other earlier styles, but stripped of elaborate trim.
C	<b>Façade:</b> asymmetrical front, often with the entry set slightly off-center.
D	<b>Materials:</b> wood clapboard, brick veneer, or stone; sometimes asbestos or composition siding in later examples.
E	<b>Porch:</b> small stoop or modest entry porch - rarely full-width.
F	<b>Roof:</b> low-to-moderately pitched gable or hipped roof, with minimal eave overhang.
G	<b>Scale and Form:</b> small, usually one story (sometimes 1½), compact footprint, and simple massing.
H	<b>Windows:</b> double-hung sash windows, often with shutters; minimal grouping or ornament.

## New Infill: Minimal Traditional – Compliant with Regulations



Generalized example of  
Minimal Traditional home



### Folk Victorian (c. 1880 – 1910)

Folk Victorian houses represent the meeting point between traditional American folk house forms and the exuberant decorative vocabulary of the Victorian era. They are, at their core, simple, practical dwellings—often based on long-established vernacular plans. What sets them apart is the application of ornament that was made widely available in the late 19th century through industrial mass production and the expansion of the railroad network.

Folk Victorian houses typically retain the straightforward proportions and rooflines of their folk predecessors, but their façades are enlivened with trim in the gables, decorative porch supports, and other applied details. Ornament is often concentrated on the porch and street-facing gables, leaving the rest of the house relatively unadorned. This balance of simplicity and embellishment made the style both affordable and adaptable, and it remained popular until about 1910, when tastes shifted toward the cleaner lines of the Craftsman and Colonial Revival movements.

### Origins and Context

Rural and small-town homeowners sought to emulate the ornate styles of Queen Anne and Italianate houses seen in cities, but adapted them to simpler, familiar house forms thus creating Folk Victorian.

Built on traditional folk house plans (I-house, hall-and-parlor, gable-front) with applied ornament rather than complex massing. Influenced by Victorian decorative vocabulary—especially spindle work, turned posts, and sawn brackets—applied to otherwise unadorned vernacular structures. Mass-produced wood trim and decorative elements became affordable and widely available through catalogs and rail delivery.

### Defining Characteristics

- **Detailing:** Decorative brackets under eaves; patterned shingles in gables; sawn or turned balusters.
- **Façade:** Modern and straightforward with decorative trim.
- **Materials:** Wood frame construction with clapboard or wood-shingle siding; sometimes brick in later examples.
- **Porch:** One-story porches with turned posts, spindle-work friezes, or flat jigsaw-cut trim.
- **Roof:** Predominantly gable roofs; moderate-to-steep pitch.
- **Scale and Form:** Simple, symmetrical or asymmetrical folk house shapes (gable-front, gable-and-wing, I-house, pyramidal).
- **Windows and Doors:** Double-hung sash windows, often with simple surrounds; occasional decorative crowns or pediments.

# Conservation District Standards: Folk Victorian



Label	Details
A	<b>Detailing:</b> Decorative brackets under eaves; patterned shingles in gables; sawn or turned balusters.
B	<b>Facade:</b> Modern and straightforward with decorative trim.
C	<b>Materials:</b> Wood frame construction with clapboard or wood-shingle siding; sometimes brick in later examples.
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G	<b>Windows and Doors:</b> Double-hung sash windows, often with simple surrounds; occasional decorative crowns or pediments.

## *New Infill: Folk Victorian - Compliant with Regulations*



Generalized example of  
Minimal Traditional home

# Conservation District Standards: Craftsman



## Craftsman Style (c. 1905 – 1930)

Modest Craftsman houses are small- to medium-scale homes that emphasize simplicity, human scale, and a close relationship to their surroundings. Rooted in early 20th-century design ideals, they favor natural materials, visible craftsmanship, and forms that feel both sturdy and welcoming. Roofs are typically low-pitched with wide overhanging eaves, often showing exposed rafters or decorative brackets. This can include clipped gables which is frequently seen in the Como neighborhood.

A defining feature is the generous front porch—sometimes full-width—supported by thick, tapered columns that rest on substantial masonry piers. Exterior walls may combine wood siding, shingles, and brick or stone for texture and warmth. Windows are usually grouped and feature multi-pane upper sashes over single-pane lowers, reinforcing the style's balanced proportions. Ornamentation is restrained, with detailing focused on structural elements rather than applied decoration.

## Origins and Influences

Emerged from the **Arts and Crafts movement**, which emphasized hand craftsmanship, natural materials, and honest expression of structure.

Popularized through pattern books, magazines like *The Craftsman*, and mail-order house kits from Sears, Aladdin, and others.

## Defining Characteristics

- **Clipped gables:** also called a *jerkinhead* - is a variation of a standard gable roof where the peak is “cut off” or truncated, creating a short, sloping hip at the top instead of a sharp point.
- **Design elements:** exposed rafters or decorative beams under the eaves as well as decorative braces or knee brackets in gables.
- **Materials:** a mixture of wood siding, shingles, stone, and brick often combined for texture and visual interest.
- **Porches:** prominent and usually full- or partial-width, supported by tapered square columns or piers that extend to ground level or rest on massive masonry bases.
- **Roof:** low-pitched gabled roofs - often with wide, unenclosed eave overhangs.
- **Windows:** typically double-hung with multi-pane glazing in the upper sash over a single pane in the lower; grouped windows are common.

## Variations

Front-gabled and side-gabled bungalows; cross-gabled forms for larger houses; airplane bungalows with a small second story “pop-up” centered over the main roof.

# Conservation District Standards: Craftsman



Label	Details
A	<b>Clipped gables:</b> also called a <i>jerkinhead</i> - is a variation of a standard gable roof where the peak is “cut off” or truncated, creating a short, sloping hip at the top instead of a sharp point.
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F	<b>Windows:</b> typically double-hung with multi-pane glazing in the upper sash over a single pane in the lower; grouped windows are common.

## New Infill: Craftsman – Compliant with Regulations



## *Craftsman Inspired Homes – Compliant with Regulations*



# Conservation District Standards: Tudor



## Tudor Style (c. 1890 – 1940)

Tudor-style houses, as seen in many American neighborhoods from the 1920s through the 1940s, draw inspiration from late medieval English domestic architecture but adapt it for modern living. Modest examples scale down the grandeur of large manor houses into comfortable, single-family dwellings while retaining the style's most recognizable features.

Roofs are steeply pitched, often with multiple front-facing gables, and eaves are minimal. Façades frequently combine brick, stone, or stucco with decorative half-timbering in the gable ends. Tall, narrow windows—often grouped and fitted with multi-pane or leaded glass—reinforce the vertical emphasis, and prominent chimneys, sometimes with patterned brickwork or chimney pots, serve as focal points. Entrances are typically arched or set within a small projecting bay, lending a storybook quality. In their modest form, Tudor homes balance charm and solidity, offering a romantic, old-world character on a scale suited to early- to mid-20th-century suburban lots.

## Origins and Influences

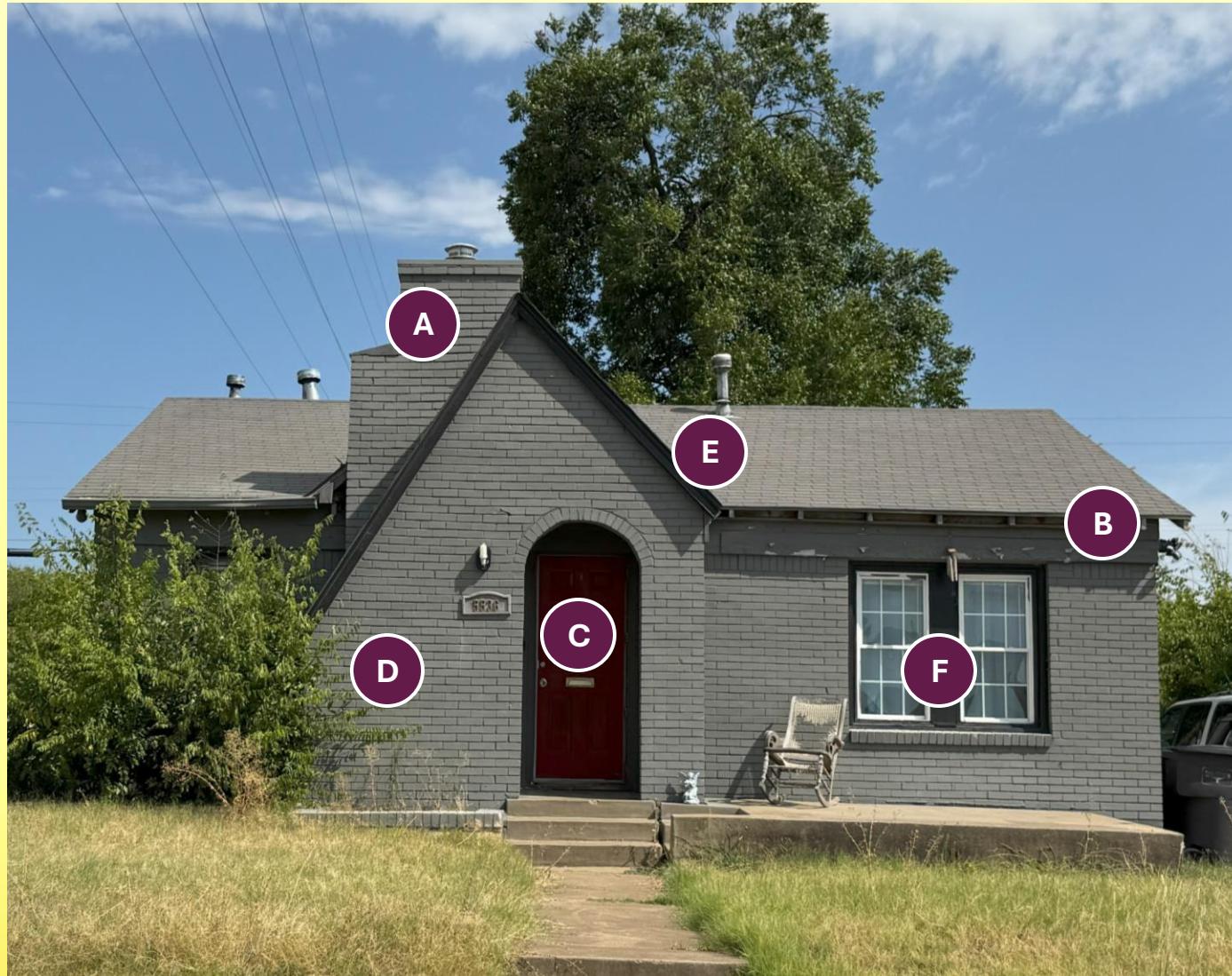
Influenced by national Period Revival trends, which brought English-inspired designs—steep gables, half-timbering, and brickwork.

Adopted by local builders in the 1920s and 1930s to convey a sense of permanence, craftsmanship, and distinction in modestly sized homes. Made possible by improved masonry veneer techniques, allowing brick and stone façades at a lower cost while maintaining the style's textured, old-world look. Scaled to fit **Como's** lot sizes, with smaller footprints and simplified detailing. Contributed to a varied streetscape, mixing with Craftsman, Minimal Traditional, and other styles to create the neighborhood's eclectic historic character.

## Defining Characteristics

- **Chimney:** prominent, often massive, sometimes with patterned brickwork, decorative chimney pots, or elaborate shoulders.
- **Eaves:** minimal overhang, reinforcing the vertical emphasis of the design.
- **Entrances:** arched or Tudor-arched doorways, sometimes recessed or set within a projecting bay; doors often feature small, decorative windows.
- **Materials:** a mix of materials—brick, stone, stucco, and decorative half-timbering—often combined on the same façade for visual richness.
- **Roof form:** steeply pitched roofs, often with multiple front-facing gables of varying heights and widths.
- **Windows:** tall, narrow casement or double-hung windows, frequently grouped in bands; many have multi-pane glazing or leaded glass.

# Conservation District Standards: Tudor



Label	Details
A	<b>Chimney:</b> prominent and often massive, sometimes with patterned brickwork, decorative chimney pots, or elaborate shoulders.
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# Conservation District Standards: Contemporary and Neo-Eclectic



## Contemporary & Neo-Eclectic

Emerging in the late 20th century and continuing into the present, Contemporary and Neo-Eclectic houses combine modern construction methods with a mix of historical references. Rather than adhering strictly to one revival style, they borrow elements from multiple traditions—Colonial, Tudor, Mediterranean, Craftsman—blending them into a single design.

These homes often feature complex rooflines, varied wall materials, and prominent garages integrated into the main façade. Advances in building technology, mass-produced components, and changing suburban lifestyles have shaped the style, resulting in houses that prioritize interior space, open floor plans, and curb appeal over strict historical accuracy. The result is a flexible, market-driven architecture that reflects both consumer tastes and the economics of large-scale residential development.

## Origins and Influences

Developed in the 1960s–1970s as a reaction to the plainness of earlier postwar Modern and Ranch houses.

Influenced by revival styles but adapted with modern materials and construction techniques. Popularized by suburban expansion and large-scale tract housing developments. Enabled by prefabricated components and improved framing methods, allowing complex rooflines and varied façades at lower cost. Driven by market demand for homes with a “custom” look while remaining affordable to build in volume.

## Defining Characteristics

- **Design elements:** simplified historical references (e.g., half-timbering, columns, or decorative shutters) used as accents rather than full stylistic reproductions.
- **Entry:** entry features such as arched or oversized doorways, sometimes with decorative glass.
- **Garage:** prominent, attached garage—often front-facing and integrated into the main façade.
- **Interior:** open interior layouts and flexible floor plans designed for modern living.
- **Materials:** mixed exterior materials (e.g., siding with brick or stone veneer) to create texture and contrast.
- **Roof:** multiple front-facing gables or varied roof forms for visual complexity.
- **Windows:** large and varied—including picture, bay, or Palladian forms—paired with standard rectangular units.

# Conservation District Standards: Contemporary and Neo-Eclectic



Label	Details
A	<b>Design elements:</b> simplified historical references (e.g., half-timbering, columns, or decorative shutters) used as accents rather than full stylistic reproductions.
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C	<b>Garage:</b> prominent, attached garage—often front-facing and integrated into the main façade.
D	<b>Interior:</b> open interior layouts and flexible floor plans designed for modern living.
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F	<b>Roof:</b> multiple front-facing gables or varied roof forms for visual complexity.
G	<b>Windows:</b> large and varied—including picture, bay, or Palladian forms—paired with standard rectangular units.



## Step Three: Conservation District Regulations

# Conservation District Standards: Overview

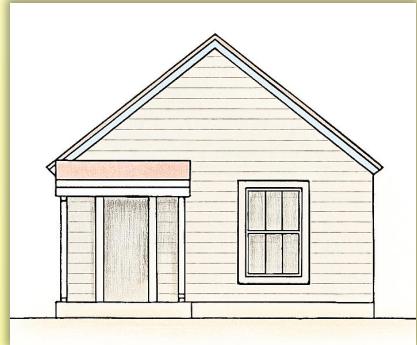
Regulation Category	Summary	Page Number
Allowed New Housing Types	A listing of the allowed future housing types, and those not allowed	
Renovations to Existing Homes	Must comply with base zoning; new additions must be at the rear	
Building Materials		
Setbacks and Yards	Maximum and minimum lot width and size are the same; 50 foot width and 5,000 square feet	
Housing Style Variety	Follow the “six-lot pattern rule” to avoid duplication	
Tree Planting Requirements	40% canopy coverage goal; specific spacing and species requirements	
Garage and Driveway Standards	Rear lot garages or 10 foot setback of garage from front facade; maximum driveway width of 10 feet	
Height Standards	28 feet	
Window to Wall Ratio	Minimum 20%	
Roof Form	Maintaining patterns of roofing styles to comply with neighborhood pattern	
Roof Slope Standards	Varies by architectural style; e.g., Tudor: 12:12 – 20:12, Minimal Traditional: 4:12 – 6:12	
Porches and Entries Standards	Minimum depth of 6 feet; minimum width of 1/3rd of the front façade	
Fencing Standards	Maximum height of 4 feet with 50% open design	

## Elements of A-5 Zoning that are NOT changing

A-5 Zoning	Current Requirement	Proposed Conservation District Requirement
<b>Purpose &amp; Intent</b>	Provides for single-family detached dwellings on lots with a <u>minimum lot size of 5,000 sq. ft.</u> ; intended to maintain compatible lot sizes and neighborhood character.	Same as base zoning
<b>Maximum Lot Coverage</b>	50% of lot area.	Same as base zoning
<b>Front Yard Setback</b>	20 ft minimum on local streets 15 ft minimum on limited local streets (see § 6.101(d) for yard measurement rules).	Same as base zoning
<b>Side Yard Setback</b>	5 ft minimum for interior lot lines; 10 ft minimum on the street side of a corner lot (see § 6.101 for yard rules).	Same as base zoning
<b>Accessory Structures</b>	Carports/porte-cochères allowed for side, rear, and, in some cases, front yards (see § 5.301 and § 6.101).	Same as base zoning

# Conservation District Standards: Allowed New Housing Types

## Housing types allowed in Como Neighborhood



*Minimal Traditional*



*Folk Victorian*



*Craftsman*



*Tudor*

## Housing types *NOT* allowed in Como Neighborhood



*Contemporary*



*Neo-Eclectic*

# Conservation District Standards: Renovations to Existing Homes



All renovations, repairs, and alterations to existing structures within the Como Conservation District shall comply with the requirements of the property's base zoning classification, which, in most cases, is **A-5 One-Family Residential**.

In addition to base zoning requirements, any new additions — including second stories — must be located to the rear of the primary structure so that the original front façade, roofline, and street-facing massing remain visually prominent.

Any second story addition must be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the front façade.

## Roof Form

New rooflines must be **compatible** with the existing house (e.g., gable-to-gable, hip-to-hip). Flat or radically different roof forms are not allowed unless historically present in the district.

## Location & Massing

Additions are usually required to be **to the rear or side** of the original structure, not projecting forward of the main façade. Height limits often prevent additions from exceeding the original roof ridge or from being taller than adjacent homes. Step-backs are required so second stories don't loom over the street.

## Materials

Exterior cladding should be consistent with or complementary to the original (e.g., brick, wood siding, cementitious smooth siding, stucco). Synthetic or incompatible materials (vinyl, metal panels) are often restricted on visible façades.

## Windows & Openings

Additions should use window proportions and rhythms similar to the original house. Large, modern window walls are usually limited to rear elevations.

## Setbacks & Lot Coverage

Additions must respect established front and side yard setbacks. Lot coverage maximums prevent overbuilding and preserve green space.

## Garages & Accessory Structures

Front-facing garages are typically prohibited. Detached garages at the rear or side are preferred, often accessed by alleys or side drives.

# Conservation District Standards: Building Materials



## Building Materials in Como

- The Como neighborhood of Fort Worth, founded in 1889 as a resort community around Lake Como, quickly transformed into a working-class, predominantly African American neighborhood after the Panic of 1893 made land affordable to domestic workers and laborers. This shift in ownership shaped the character of Como's housing stock and the materials used in its construction.

### Early Homes (1890s–1930s):

- Many of the first residences were **wood-frame cottages**, built simply and affordably by families who purchased lots at reduced prices.
- These homes often featured **clapboard siding** and tin or shingle roofs, reflecting the limited resources of early residents but also their determination to establish permanence.

### Mid-Century Development (1940s–1960s):

- As the neighborhood grew, **brick veneer houses** became more common, offering durability and fire resistance.
- Masonry construction reflected both broader trends in Fort Worth and the desire of Como families to invest in sturdier, longer-lasting housing

## Building Material Guidelines

A number of building materials are allowed for the exterior of a home under the International Building Code. The following is a list of exterior materials that are inappropriate:

### Discouraged (Allowed by IBC but Incompatible in Como)

- Aluminum Composite Panels (ACP) with polyethylene or non-mineral cores
- Vinyl siding
- Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (EIFS / synthetic stucco)
- Untreated or unfinished timber cladding
- High-gloss or reflective metal panels
- Non-UV-resistant plastic cladding products
- Board and batten

### Encouraged Building Materials

- Brick
- Wood or flat fiber cement siding
- Stucco

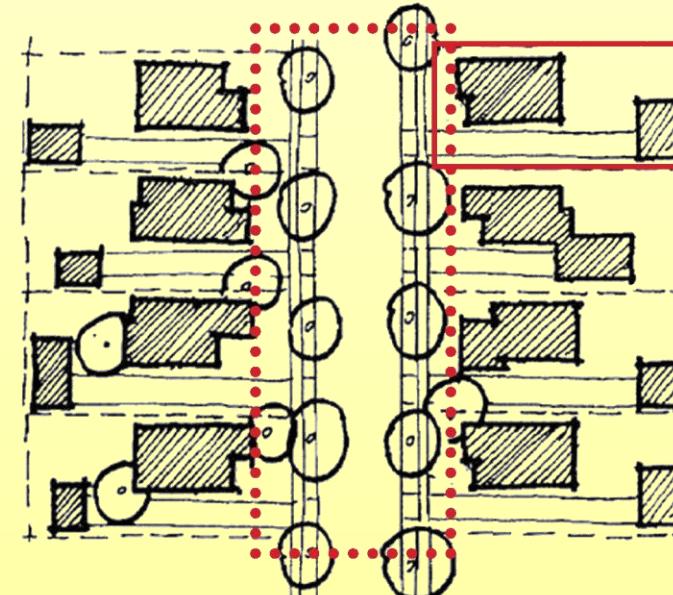
# Conservation District Standards: Setbacks and Yards



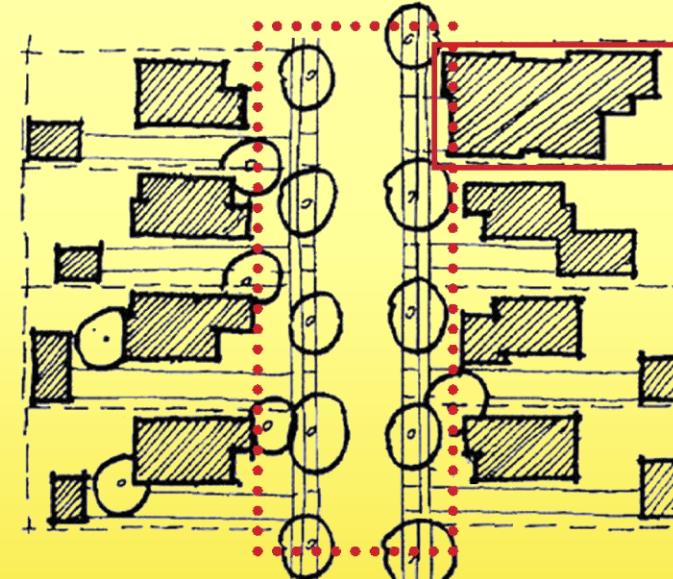
The character of a neighborhood is shaped by the location of buildings on the lots. For Como, the standard lot dimension is 50 feet in width with a lot area of 5,000 square feet. To conserve the historic lot pattern in the neighborhood, the minimum and maximum lot width and area will be maintained with administrative flexibility to adjust the width and area requirements to accommodate dimensions that may vary in size.

## Setback and Yards Regulations:

- The minimum and maximum width is 50 feet and 5,000 square feet lot area.
- Staff will have administrative authority to allow a 20% adjustment to dimension due to lot irregular lot sizes.



The front setback is consistent with the neighborhood pattern.



The front setback **does not** follow the neighborhood pattern.

# Conservation District Standards: Housing Style Variety

The City, in Section 6.507 of the Zoning Ordinance wants to avoid streets where every house looks almost the same from the front. If you are building a new one-family home, your front design, the elevation, must be **visibly different** from nearby houses in your block pattern.

## The “Six-Lot Pattern” Rule

Look at your house and the **five closest lots** around it on the same side of the street (three in one direction, two in the other), your house’s front design must be **different** from:

- Any house within that six-lot stretch; and,
- Any house that is **two lots away** from yours on either side.

## How to comply

Follow the guidelines in either of these two options.

### Option 1 – One big difference

Do **one** of these:

- Have a **different number of full stories** (e.g., one-story vs. two-story); or,
- Use a **side-loaded garage** (garage faces the side, not the street).

If two or more houses in the pattern already have that same feature, you cannot copy it — instead, use **Option 2**.

### Option 2 – Three smaller differences

Pick **three** from this list:

- Change the roofline across at least **half** the width of the house;
- Change the roof pitch by at least **two units** (e.g., from 6/12 to 8/12);
- Add or remove a front porch/entry, or change porch roof height by at least 4 ft (porch must be at least 4 ft deep);
- Change the number of dormer windows;
- Change the number of front-facing garage doors;
- Move the garage forward or back by at least 4 ft;
- Change the exterior wall material on at least **half** of the front wall (not counting windows/doors);
- Add a bay window that sticks out at least 1 ft from the wall; or,
- Change the number of windows, with at least 2 ft between them if there is more than one.

### What doesn’t count as “different”

- Changing only the paint or material color;
- Changing roof pitch by less than two units;
- Changing roofline by less than half the house width;
- Small changes to trim or decorative details;
- Flipping/mirroring the same design; and/or,
- Changing only the roof material.

# Conservation District Standards: Tree Planting Requirements



In alignment with the **City of Fort Worth Urban Forestry Master Plan**, the intent of tree canopy preservation and expansion in Como is to:

- Maintain and enhance the neighborhood's distinctive green character.
- Achieve and sustain a healthy canopy coverage target of at least 30% at maturity.
- Prioritize native and climate-adapted species that reflect the cultural landscape and thrive in North Texas conditions.
- Integrate trees into the public realm and private yards in ways that strengthen the connection between homes, streets, and shared outdoor spaces.

By embedding these principles into the Conservation District, the Como neighborhood will protect its historic identity while advancing citywide goals for environmental resilience, equity, and livability.

## Public Open Space Easements (P.O.S.E.)

### Step One:

When planting required trees, you must follow the P.O.S.E requirements.

- **Street–Street Corner:** Keep a **40 ft x 40 ft** triangular area clear.
- **Street–Alley Corner:** Keep a **15 ft x 15 ft** triangular area clear.
- **Driveway/Alley Intersection:** Keep a **10 ft x 10 ft** triangle clear on each side.
- **Height Rule:** In these triangles, nothing (plants, fences, signs, cars, etc.) can block the view between **24 inches and 11 feet** above the curb.

### Step Two:

40% canopy coverage is required on residential lots. When this is not being met, the addition of trees is required. When spacing permits, the tree must be planted in the parkway.

## General Requirements

- A large to medium size tree, at maturity, is required.
  - If the tree dies, it must be replaced.
- The tree must be planted in the parkway:
  - Minimum Distance from curb/sidewalk: 2 feet
  - Minimum width of parkway: 4 feet
  - If the required spacing is not available, it must be planted in the front yard.
- If the lot already has 40% canopy coverage, a fee in-lieu-of must be paid to the City of Fort Worth Parks and Recreation Department for future tree planting in Como.

# Conservation District Standards: Tree Planting Requirements



## Spacing from Utilities

- From streetlights & storm drains: 10 feet away
- From Underground utility boxes: 10 feet away

## Spacing Between Trees

- 25 feet

## Tree Size

- 3-inch caliper minimum

## Approved Large Tree Types Allowed

• Bald Cypress	<i>Taxodium distichum</i>
• Black Walnut	<i>Juglans nigra</i>
• Bur Oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>
• Cedar Elm	<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>
• Chinquapin Oak	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>
• Live Oak	<i>Quercus virginiana</i>
• Pond Cypress	<i>Taxodium ascendens</i>
• Red Oak	<i>Quercus shumardii</i>

## Step Three: Permits

- Any tree/shrub planted in the parkway belongs to the City.
- The City can prune or remove it if it is a hazard.
- You must get a planting permit before planting on public property.
- Call 817 392 5738 or visit [fortworthtexas.gov/forestry](http://fortworthtexas.gov/forestry).
- **Call 811** for utility markings before digging. It is the law for safety.

## *Example of Tree Impacts on Streetscape*



# Conservation District Standards: Garage and Driveway

The location of driveways and garages is a defining factor in site accessibility and vehicle vs. pedestrian focus. New garages and garage additions should be consistent with the best pattern seen in the neighborhood. This will result in positive relationships between houses and consistent resulting outdoor spaces.

Garage location affects the neighborhood in three ways:

- It determines the location of drives and curb cuts.
- It defines the quality of open space between residences.
- It enhances or impedes residents' ability to see and participate in street and sidewalk activities.

Garage location has a substantial effect in defining not only the neighborhood but also the character of the individual residences. In general, rear garages offer more positive benefits to the neighborhood, while being more consistent with historical patterns in the neighborhood. They tend to generate a greater separation between buildings, creating a greater sense of space in the neighborhood as well as a sense of greater distance between neighboring houses. Rear garages also improve neighborhood safety and walkability by bringing windows, porches, and doors closer to the street, making it easier for residents to interact with the neighborhood and view street activity.

## Corner Lot Standards:

- Garages must be located at the rear of the lot.
- Garages must be accessed from the side street.
- Garages can be attached or detached.

## Interior Lot Standards:

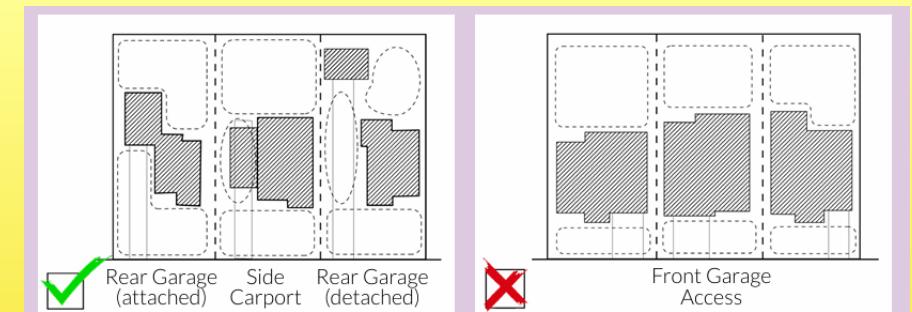
- Must be located at the rear of the lot accessed by a driveway on the side of the lot; or,
- Must be setback a minimum of 10 feet from the front façade of the house. The front façade does not include a porch in front of the front façade.

## Alley Access Standards:

- If a lot has access via a paved alley, the garage must be located at the rear of the lot with access from the alley.

## Driveway Width and Impervious Coverage Standards:

- **Maximum Width** – 10 feet
- No paving (concrete, asphalt, rock, gravel, etc., allowed outside of driveway and sidewalk.



# Conservation District Standards: Garage and Driveway



*Paving on this property exceeds the allowable amount  
of front yard paving.*

# Conservation District Standards: Height and Window to Wall Ratios



## Intent:

Roofs and windows can be some of the most notable and formative elements in defining neighborhood character. Numerous precedents exist in the neighborhood for variable roof slopes and forms. Prevalent architectural styles include combinations of sheds and gables, sheds and hips, and sloping and flat roofs. Typical windows should be observed and noted to understand and appreciate the neighborhood. Of interest should be the type of window, the ways in which window units are combined to make larger openings, and the frequency of exceptional windows. Window locations, sizes, and forms in new development and redevelopment projects should be compatible with the best examples in the neighborhood to enhance the project's positive impacts on the neighborhood.

## Height Standards

- New Construction:
  - 28 Feet Maximum

## Window to Wall Ratio Standards:

- The minimum ratio is 20% for each story/floor
  - Plans submitted for permitting must include the accurate calculation on the plan set.
- A door, even if it is glass, can not count in the calculation.

**The home below does not meet the minimum window to wall ratio or the roof slope requirements**



# Conservation District Standards: Height and Window to Wall Ratios



**This home would not meet the following standards:**

- Garage Placement
- Driveway Width
- Window to Wall Ratio
- Roof Type
- Front Porch
- Contemporary Form

# Conservation District Standards: Roof Form

## Roof Form – Importance of Simplicity

Roof form is one of the most visually dominant elements of any house. In historic neighborhoods like Como, the shape, pitch, and arrangement of roofs are central to architectural character. **Simple, well-proportioned rooflines** are a hallmark of the district's historic homes — they create a cohesive streetscape, reinforce each style's identity, and ensure that the architecture reads as authentic rather than contrived.

In contrast, **overly complex rooflines** in new residential construction — with multiple competing gables, unnecessary hips, awkward angles, or inconsistent pitches — can disrupt the visual rhythm of the street. They often appear out of scale, dilute the clarity of the architectural style, and introduce awkward junctions prone to water intrusion. **Improper slopes** (too shallow or too steep) can make a house look historically inaccurate, compromise performance, and undermine the intended proportions of the façade.

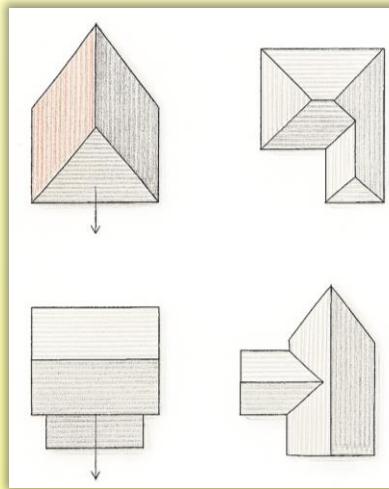
Maintaining historically appropriate roof forms is not about limiting creativity — it's about ensuring that new construction respects the established character, scale, and craftsmanship of Como's architectural heritage.



# Conservation District Standards: Unique Roofline Characteristics by Style

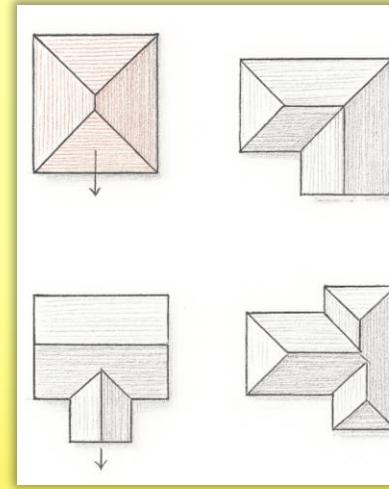
## Tudor

- **Steeply pitched gables**, often 12:12 or steeper, dominate the façade.
- **Multiple front-facing gables** may be used, but always with a clear hierarchy (one primary, others secondary).
- Occasional **clipped gables** or small cross-gables for variety.
- Minimal eave overhangs; roof massing emphasizes verticality.



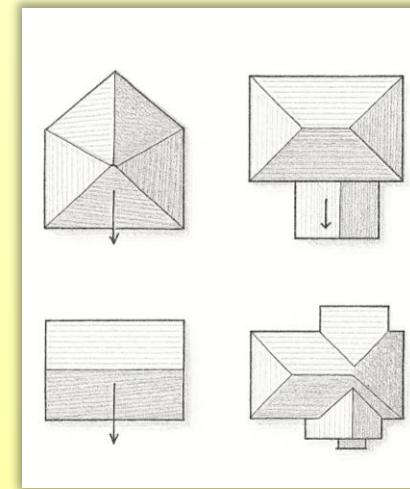
## Folk Victorian

- **Front-facing gable** is the most common and visually defining form.
- Variants include **gable-and-wing** and **gabled ell** plans.
- Moderate to steep pitches (8:12–12:12) with decorative vergeboards or patterned shingles in the gable face.
- Rooflines are simple in massing; ornament is concentrated in trim, not in complex roof geometry.



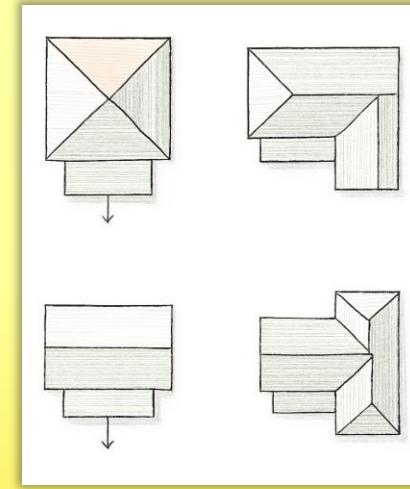
## Minimal Traditional

- **Side-gabled** or **front-gabled** forms with low to moderate pitch (4:12–8:12).
- Occasional **hipped roofs** for compact massing.
- Minimal overhangs; eaves are tight to the wall.
- Rooflines are restrained, with little to no secondary massing.

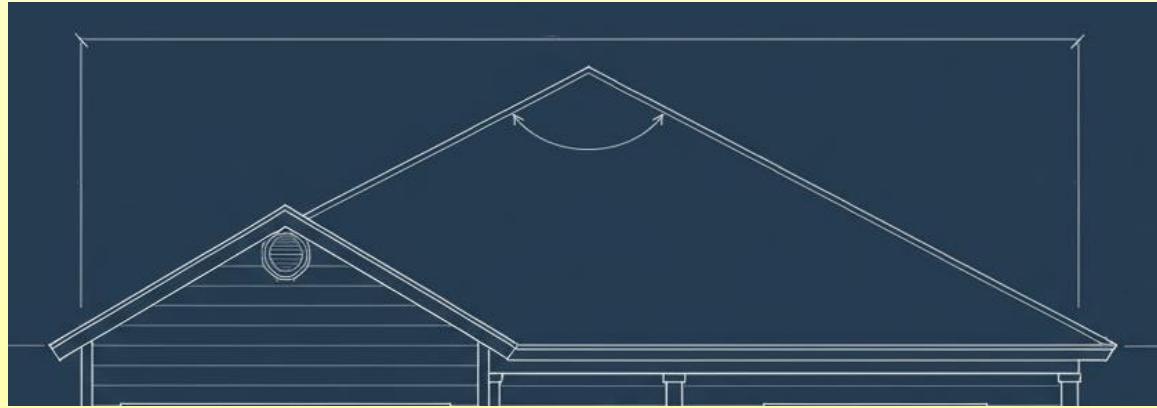


## Craftsman

- **Low-pitched gables** (4:12–8:12) with wide eave overhangs and exposed rafter tails.
- **Side-gabled** and **front-gabled** forms are both common; cross-gables used sparingly.
- Rooflines integrate porches under the main roof or with a separate, lower-pitched porch roof.
- Dormers are proportionate and subordinate to the main roof mass.



# Conservation District Standards: Roof Slope



## Intent:

The purpose of establishing minimum and maximum roof slopes for residential construction is to ensure that new development and alterations are visually compatible with the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood. Roof pitch is a defining element of a building's form, proportion, and style. By aligning allowable slopes with the historic and stylistic precedents of recognized residential types — such as Tudor, Minimal Traditional, Craftsman, Queen Anne, and Neo-Eclectic — these standards preserve the intended massing, silhouette, and streetscape rhythm. Minimum slopes prevent roofs from appearing flat or inconsistent with traditional forms where steeper pitches are characteristic, while maximum slopes avoid overly steep or exaggerated profiles that would be out of scale with adjacent structures. Together, these parameters protect neighborhood identity, reinforce architectural authenticity, and maintain a cohesive visual environment that supports both historic preservation and compatible new construction.

Architectural Style	Rise/Run Standards	Administrative Adjustment
Tudor	<b>12:12 – 20:12</b> (very steep)	<b>10 %</b>
Minimal Traditional	<b>4:12 – 6:12</b>	<b>10%</b>
Craftsman	<b>4:12 – 6:12</b> (sometimes up to 8:12)	<b>10%</b>
Queen Anne	<b>8:12 – 14:12</b> (steep)	<b>10%</b>
Contemporary	<b>House type not allowed</b>	<b>House type not allowed</b>
Neo-Eclectic	<b>Varies widely — 6:12 – 12:12</b>	<b>10%</b>

# Conservation District Standards: Balconies, Entries, and Porches



## Intent:

Porches and entries are among the most defining architectural features in the Como neighborhood, shaping both the personality of individual houses and the collective character of the streetscape. In all three of Como's predominant historic styles—Folk Victorian, Craftsman, and Minimal Traditional—the porch is more than a utilitarian threshold. It is a substantial physical component of the façade, often occupying a prominent position and serving as a visual anchor for the home.

Across all styles, porches of usable size serve the functional needs of entry and exit while also creating a semi-public “outdoor room” where public and private life can interact in a friendly way. When actively used—for sitting, chatting, or simply observing—they foster a sense of security by acting as the “eyes of the neighborhood.” They also signal that the occupants are engaged with the life of the street. In Como, these spaces remain some of the most common and cherished places for neighbors to engage.

## Porch Depth Standards:

- Minimum Depth – 6 feet

## Porch Width Standards:

- Minimum Width – 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the front façade

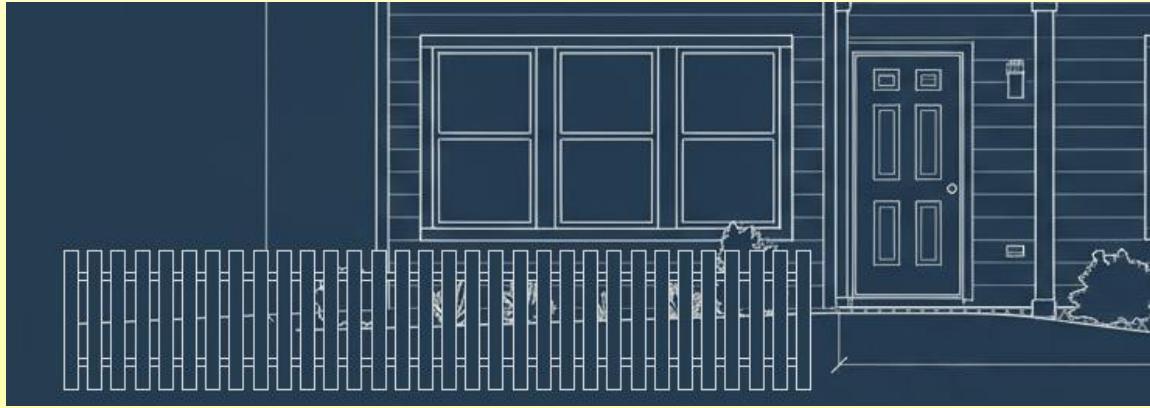
## Gallery and Balcony Standards:

- Front facing second floor galleries and balconies are not allowed.
- Rear facing second floor galleries and balconies are allowed.
- Corner lot side second floor galleries and balconies are allowed.

**The house below would not be compliant with the gallery and balcony standards.**



# Conservation District Standards: Fencing



## Intent:

Fences are a highly visible element of the streetscape and play a significant role in shaping the character, safety, and sense of openness within the Como neighborhood. They define property boundaries, frame yards, and influence how homes and landscapes are experienced from the public realm. In historic neighborhoods such as Como—where Folk Victorian, Craftsman, and Minimal Traditional homes dominate—fencing should complement the architectural style of the house, reinforce the rhythm of the street, and preserve sightlines that contribute to the neighborhood's welcoming, pedestrian-friendly feel.

The intent of fencing guidelines is to ensure that new and replacement fences:

- Respect the scale, materials, and detailing appropriate to the district's historic character.
- Maintain a visual connection between the house, yard, and street to support neighborhood interaction and safety.
- Use designs, heights, and placements that enhance rather than dominate the architecture and landscape.
- Balance privacy and security needs with the district's open, engaged streetscape tradition.

## Front Yard Fence Height Standards:

- Four (4) feet with 50% open design

## Rear Yard Fence Height Standards:

- Eight (8) feet

## Allowed Material Standards:

- Wood
- Wrought Iron
- Composite

## Materials Not Allowed:

- Vinyl
- Chain link
- Metal