

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board

Biennial Report
FY 2020-2021



“We built the State Capitol on the theory that nothing was too good for Minnesota.”

- Cass Gilbert, Architect, January, 1901

Profile of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB)

Structured for the Sharing of Power

By Statute, the Board has twelve members and is chaired by the Lieutenant Governor. There are four members appointed by the Governor, three members appointed by the Mayor of Saint Paul, two members appointed by the President of the Senate, and two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. By law, an Advisory Committee of three architectural and/or landscape design professionals is required to advise the Board on all architectural, planning, and landscaping matters that affect the Capitol Area. There are two full-time and two part-time staff who serve the Board at this time. The Board normally meets every two to three months, or at the call of the Chair.

The Board, Executive Secretary and staff have the year-round duty to review and approve issues directly affecting zoning, planning, development, and/or design within the 60-block area of the jurisdiction of the Board. The Board's standards are based on quality of design, long-range planning, and timely processing and review.

All projects, both public and private, proposed for the Capitol Area must be compatible with the CAAPB-approved *Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area* and the *Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*.

Ongoing Mission to Ensure the Highest of Standards

State agencies and other public bodies who consider building projects in the Capitol Area are required to consult with the Board before they develop plans. Designs for new public buildings and memorials are obtained through architectural competitions. In addition, the Board must review and approve all plans for substantial alterations and/or improvements to public lands, infrastructure, parking facilities and buildings in the Capitol Area. The Board coordinates the implementation of major public projects in the Capitol Area.

The State Capitol Building is the most important building in Minnesota. Any significant changes to the Capitol's appearance must be approved by the Board, and in this role the Board must consult with the Minnesota Historical Society regarding the historic fidelity of the planned changes. The Board also shares responsibility with the Department of Administration for developing standards for the repair, alteration, appearance, furnishing, and general maintenance of the Capitol's public and ceremonial areas. These standards are binding upon the Department of Administration.

In developing the *Policy for Works of Art in the Minnesota State Capitol* (adopted in 1998 and updated in December 2015), the Board also shares responsibility with the Minnesota Historical Society for the design, structural composition, and location of artwork within the public and ceremonial areas of the Capitol Building. This document is currently under review by MNHS following changes during the Capitol Building restoration and subject to following results of 2020-21 Advisory Task Forces on Art and Memorials in the Capitol Building and Capitol Area.

In February 2012, the Board adopted a *Policy for Commemorative Works in the Minnesota State Capitol Area*, providing guidance for the consideration and design of statues, monuments, memorials, or other commemorative works within the Capitol Area. This document is likely to be amended following CAAPB decisions regarding work of the 2020-21 Advisory Task Forces on Art and Memorials in the Capitol Building and Capitol Area.

Planning Guided by Inter-agency and Community Collaboration

The CAAPB works closely with the Department of Administration, the Minnesota Historical Society, the City of Saint Paul, regional bodies, neighborhood planning groups and district councils, private-sector architects, engineers, developers, and, on a regular basis, the public.

CAAPB's Statutory Purpose and Authority

The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB), first established as a Commission, was created by the 1967 Legislature. One of the CAAPB's primary statutory responsibilities is to prepare a comprehensive plan for the Capitol Area. In 1974, legislation was enacted to require the CAAPB to prepare and submit biennial reports to the Legislature and the Governor on the status of implementation of the comprehensive plan, together with a program for capital improvements and site development.

Per MN Statute 15B, the **statutory purpose** for the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, hereafter referred to as the CAAPB or the Board, is to:

- 1) Preserve and enhance the dignity, beauty, and architectural integrity of the Capitol, the buildings immediately adjacent to it, the Capitol grounds, and the Capitol Area.
- 2) Protect, enhance, and increase the open spaces within the Capitol Area when deemed necessary and desirable for the improvement of the public enjoyment.
- 3) Develop proper approaches to the Capitol Area for pedestrian movement, the highway system, and the mass transit system, so that the area achieves its maximum importance and accessibility.
- 4) Establish a flexible framework for growth of the Capitol Area that will be in keeping with the spirit of the original Cass Gilbert design.



Capitol Area Boundary

Aerial view of Capitol Area, with State-owned parcels highlighted in blue. (Image- November 2020)

Responsibilities of the CAAPB

Major activities of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, as described in Statute 15B, include:

- A. **Land Use Planning.** As the governing body, the CAAPB is responsible for the physical development of the Capitol Area. This means that projects are planned long-term based on CAAPB's 1998 Comprehensive Plan (amended in 2009) and the Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (revised in 2009). The CAAPB will publish a new 2040 Comprehensive early in 2021, with updates to Zoning (Rule 2400) to follow.
- B. **Design Review.** The CAAPB maintains, in its zoning rules and policies, design review procedures and standards with respect to any construction activities significantly affecting "the dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the area." State agencies and other public bodies considering Capitol Area projects must consult with the Board before developing plans. Funds for the Board's design review and planning services must be provided by the public agencies if the Board determines its services are necessary; the Commissioner of Finance shall set aside funds for the Board's consulting services from the appropriation when a state agency plans and constructs any capital improvement in the Capitol Area. By statute, an Advisory Committee of three are appointed by the American Institute of Architects, the State Arts Board and the CAAPB to advise during the review of proposed projects.
- C. **Zoning.** Regulate, by means of zoning regulations adopted pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, character, height, and location of buildings and other structures, yards and open spaces, the percentage of lots that may be occupied, the uses of land, buildings, and other structures within the area. The *Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area* include design guidelines, review procedures, and standards for proposed construction in the Capitol Area.
- D. **Architectural Competitions.** Secure by design competition, plans for any new public building. The Board determines the need for competitions for projects estimated to cost less than \$1,000,000.
- E. **Approve Public Construction.** Approve, as to conformity with the Comprehensive Plan and requirements for competition, all plans for building or altering public buildings, parking lots, monuments, or other changes on State land within the area.
- F. **Recommend Capital Improvements.** Recommend to the Governor and Legislature a program of capital improvements. For capital budget proposals in the Capitol Area, the Commissioner of Administration must consult with the Board regarding building sites and design standards. The Board provides the Governor and Legislature a statement as to the request's impact on the Capitol Area and its compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan. The CAAPB also provides testimony to the Legislature on proposals for memorials in the Capitol Area as to their compatibility with the standards, policies, and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
- G. **Capitol Building Standards.** Prepare, prescribe, and from time to time revise standards and policies governing the repair, alteration, furnishing, appearance, and cleanliness of the Capitol Building. (*Joint responsibility with the Commissioner of Administration.*) In addition, jointly with Minnesota Historical Society, approve the design, structural composition and location of all monuments, memorials or works of art presently in or proposed for the public and ceremonial areas of the State Capitol Building.

Comprehensive Planning for the Capitol Area

By statute, the CAAPB maintains a comprehensive plan for the Capitol Area guiding land uses and recommend future uses including: areas for public taking and use; zoning for private land and criteria for development of public land, including building areas and open spaces; monuments and other memorials; vehicular and pedestrian circulation. In 2017, CAAPB staff initiated development of the *2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*. Following its approval, the *Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area* will be updated to bring zoning rules into conformance with the new 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The centerpiece and organizing principles of the comprehensive plan are the **Capitol Area Principles**.

THE CAPITOL AREA PRINCIPLES

AS THE SYMBOLIC HEART OF THE STATE,
THE VISION FOR THE CAPITOL AREA IS
TO BE A UNIFYING FACTOR FOR ALL WHO
COME TO VISIT, LIVE, WORK, LEARN AND PLAY.

PRINCIPLE 1: AS MINNESOTA'S SEAT OF GOVERNMENT AND DESTINATION FOR THOUSANDS EACH YEAR, THE CAPITOL AREA OFFERS THE HIGHEST QUALITY EXPERIENCE TO VISITORS.

PRINCIPLE 2: THE CAPITOL BUILDING AND MALL ARE CENTRAL TO THE IDENTITY OF SAINT PAUL AND ARE A UNIFYING FOCAL POINT FOR THE CITY, AS CASS GILBERT ONCE ENVISIONED.

PRINCIPLE 3: THE CAPITOL AREA IS A MODEL FOR MINNESOTA, WHERE BEST PRACTICES ARE EXPECTED IN THE PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROJECTS.

PRINCIPLE 4: THE ENTIRE CAPITOL AREA PROVIDES AN INTEGRATED, HIGH-QUALITY, HUMAN-SCALE PUBLIC REALM EXPERIENCE.

PRINCIPLE 5: THE CAPITOL AREA IS AN URBAN MULTI-MODAL DISTRICT, SEAMLESSLY CONNECTED TO DESTINATIONS.

PRINCIPLE 6: LAND USE DIVERSITY IS ENCOURAGED THROUGHOUT THE CAPITOL AREA.

PRINCIPLE 7: IN ALL PARTS OF THE CAPITOL AREA, NEW DEVELOPMENT RESPECTS COMMUNITY, ASSETS AND CONTEXT.

7A: THE CAPITOL RICE DISTRICT IS AN URBAN VILLAGE WITH LEIF ERICKSON PARK AT ITS CENTER.

7B: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN CAPITOL HEIGHTS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO THE EXISTING SCALE AND CHARACTER.

7C: THE FIVE BLOCKS OF THE CAPITOL AREA THAT EXTEND INTO THE FITZGERALD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD FORM IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS TO THE DOWNTOWN CORE AND RIVER BEYOND.

Planning Studies

From 2017-2020, CAAPB staff led several community planning studies contributing to the Comprehensive Plan:

Mall Visitors

In partnership with MNHS and the Department of Administration, CAAPB conducted surveys of visitors to the Capitol Building and Mall about their perspectives about the Building and the grounds comprising the State's front yard.

Lower Rice Street Commercial Vitality Zone

CAAPB Staff, working with City of Saint Paul Planning & Economic Development (PED), conducted planning for Rice Street. The outcome was the infusion of approximately \$350,000, through the City's Commercial Vitality Zone (CVZ) Program, in direct assistance for businesses and organizations.

Capitol Area Commutes [Travel Demand Management (TDM)] Planning

The CAAPB partnered with the Minnesota Departments of Administration, Transportation and Health, Move MN, Metro Transit, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's GreenCorps and the City of Saint Paul to develop a long-range plans addressing parking and mobility options in the Capitol Area.

Capitol Rice Development Framework

The closing of the Sears Store in 2019 reflected the greater need for new investments in the area, and in response, CAAPB Staff, Advisors and the Board developed the Capitol Rice Development Framework to guide new development.



Zoning & Design Review

The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was created in 1967 to restore a higher standard of quality to the Capitol Area (comprised of 60 blocks surrounding the Capitol Building). In 1974, the Legislature added zoning authority and changed the Commission to a Board. This higher standard of architectural design quality and urban design has been accomplished by means of a Comprehensive Plan and the *Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*, which in 2009 incorporated building form and frontage design guidelines.

At the end of 2020, three new private buildings were in different stages of implementation in the Capitol Rice District, including a new shopfront medical clinic on Rice Street (complete), a five-story micro-unit apartment building on Park and Como (complete), and a new K-12 charter school campus at University and Marion (in design review and approvals).

Preservation of the Capitol Building and Mall

In 2011, with the future of the Capitol Building at stake, the Governor and the Minnesota Legislature stepped up, not only to preserve the past, but to protect and to assure the Capitol's future. The State Capitol Preservation Commission was established, (chaired by the Governor with members from the legislature, the MN Supreme Court, State agencies and the public), and were charged to develop a comprehensive, multi-year, pre-design plan for the comprehensive restoration of the Capitol Building; review the plan periodically, and, as appropriate, amend the plan.

Restoration focused on actions to fix the building guided by the following principles and imperatives:

- The architectural integrity of Cass Gilbert's design must be respected.
- The functions of the Capitol Building must be improved to support government processes.
- Life safety and security must be addressed.



The Governor and Legislature, following the Preservation Commission's approval of the plan, supported the restoration of the Capitol Building with \$310 million worth of funding over five years.

In recent decades, the CAAPB has facilitated the development of twelve different memorials on the Capitol Mall, often through design competitions with a public-private partnership. The CAAPB and the Department of Administration have a policy that requires new memorial/commemorative project budgets set aside 20% of the construction budget for future maintenance and repair. In 2018, the Department of Administration worked with the Governor and Legislature to secure roughly three million dollars for full restoration of all memorials. Looking forward, there is still a need to establish an endowment fund to cover maintenance and repair.

Restoration work on the Capitol Building was completed in 2018, while repair and restoration activities on the Mall are on-going. Detailed information of the State Capitol Preservation Commission can be found online:

<https://mn.gov/admin/government/buildings-grounds/building-management/preservation-commission/>

CAAPB Operating Budget

The CAAPB's base budget is appropriated from the State's General Fund. The Board's base budget is \$351,000.

Salary and benefits	78%	Business operations	8%
Rent	10%	Information Technology	4%

The agency's level of activity outside of CAAPB control is contingent upon projects that require Board review or approval, and there is a need to also upgrade CAAPB planning tools. The CAAPB structure and size helps to make its operations effective and cost-efficient, as well as transparent, accessible, and sensitive to input from the public.



CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD

The Legislature intended that the Board be comprised of gubernatorial, mayoral, and legislative appointees; and that the Board report directly to the Legislature, unfiltered by any party, special interest group or person, and thus remain protected from political influences.

Board Members

Chair: Lieutenant Governor, **Peggy Flanagan**

Dr. Kate Beane

Alicia Belton*

Representative **Raymond Dehn**

Elaine Fink*

Don Grundhauser

Representative **Jerry Herta**

Ted Lentz

James McClean

Senator **Carla Nelson**

Senator **Sandy Pappas**

Daniel Yang

**Executive Committee*

Long-term Board members replaced in 2020:

Mary Ann Buck and David Lanegran

Staff

Paul Mandell, Executive Secretary (*Nov. 1987– present*)

Peter Musty, Principal Planner, Zoning Administrator (*July 2016 - present*)

Linda Spohr, Intermediate Planner (*April 2017 – present*)

Lisa Ochs, OAS Intermediate (*November 2017-2021*)

Architectural Advisors

State Arts Board Appointee:

Anthony Chevalier

CAAPB Appointee:

Denita Lemmon, AIA, CARB, LEED AP

AIA Minnesota Appointee:

Michael Bjornberg, FAIA, CID, NCARB

Contact Information

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