

# 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## FOR THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL AREA



JUNE 2021

---

CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD



# 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## FOR THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL AREA



JUNE 3, 2021

---

CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
PRINCIPLE 1: AS MINNESOTA’S SEAT OF GOVERNMENT AND DESTINATION FOR THOUSANDS EACH YEAR, THE CAPITOL AREA OFFERS THE HIGHEST QUALITY EXPERIENCE TO VISITORS .....	24
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 .....	46
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 .....	66
PRINCIPLE 4: THE ENTIRE CAPITOL AREA PROVIDES AN INTEGRATED, HIGH QUALITY, HUMAN SCALE PUBLIC REALM EXPERIENCE .....	78
PRINCIPLE 5: THE CAPITOL AREA IS AN URBAN MULTI-MODAL DISTRICT, SEAMLESSLY CONNECTED TO DESTINATIONS .....	108
PRINCIPLE 6: LAND USE DIVERSITY IS ENCOURAGED THROUGHOUT THE CAPITOL AREA.....	134
PRINCIPLE 7: IN ALL PARTS OF THE CAPITOL AREA, NEW DEVELOPMENT RESPECTS COMMUNITY, ASSETS AND CONTEXT .....	158
PRINCIPLE 7A: THE CAPITOL RICE DISTRICT IS AN URBAN VILLAGE WITH LEIF ERICKSON PARK AT ITS CENTER .....	168
PRINCIPLE 7B: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN CAPITOL HEIGHTS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO THE EXISTING SCALE AND CHARACTER.....	178
PRINCIPLE 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 .....	188
APPENDIX A: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	202
APPENDIX B: LIST OF FIGURES .....	204
APPENDIX C: LIST OF CAPITOL AREA BASELINES .....	206
APPENDIX D: LIST OF REFERENCE DOCUMENTS .....	207
ADDENDUM TO 7A: CAPITOL RICE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.....	PRINTED SEPARATELY



Topical Index ▼	Chapter/Principle ►	Intro	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7A	7B	7C
architectural standards				●								
art (public art)			●			●						
Capitol Area Principles; vision	●											
Capitol Heights (district)	●								●		●	
Capitol Mall (demonstrations, events)			●									
Capitol Mall (relationship to city, interstate, river)				●								
Capitol Rice District	●								●	●		
commemorative works, memorials			●									
community					●				●			
development frameworks									●	●	●	●
economic vitality					●							
energy and environment					●							
Fitzgerald Park	●								●			●
frontages						●						
healthy living					●							
height limit				●								
historic resources			●						●			
holistic lens					●							
housing diversity (missing middle types)								●				
land use mix								●				
parking							●	●				
parks; open space						●						
placemaking and identity					●							
planning; community engagement	●								●			
public realm						●						
streets; complete streets							●					
streetscape						●						
transit oriented development (TOD) land use								●				
transportation, mobility hubs							●					
travel demand management (TDM)							●					
urban village								●				
views				●								
visitors; visitor experience			●									
zoning	●								●			



Final Approval and Adoption by the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board at their June 3, 2021 meeting.  
All images, unless otherwise noted, are by CAAPB Staff or Erdahl Aerial Photos.





# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan

75 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. ♦ Suite 130 ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

June 4, 2021

### **Foreword to the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board 2040 Comprehensive Plan**

This Comprehensive Plan is the aspiration for the Capitol Area through 2040. The plan's vision – to be a unifying factor for those who come to live, work, learn and play – emphasizes the importance of the Capitol Area as a connector. The Capitol Area is a physical connector, geographically positioned in the center of our city, at the edge of downtown and at the intersection of two major freeways serving our state. More importantly, the Capitol Area is a symbolic connector: between state-wide and local interests, the government, and the people they serve, and the many cultures and identities that are part of our great state.

Over the past three years staff of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board have engaged the people of the Capitol Area – residents, workers, business owners and visitors – to understand their vision and hopes for this area. Public input helped to establish a set of aspirational principles, The Capitol Area Principles, which form the basis of this plan and are the standard by which all policy is measured.

The comprehensive planning work here has both statewide and local importance.

As this comprehensive plan is published, a new K-12 school will be breaking ground at University and Marion; the Sears site is in the first stages of design for a new multi-use development; small locally-owned businesses along Rice Street are continuing to serve the community through a global pandemic; and neighbors in Capitol Heights are opening their hearts to a new community in the former Bethesda Hospital, now a temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness, a county-wide need made more acute by the pandemic.

On a statewide scale, we have just celebrated the completion of a decade-long restoration of the Capitol Building, an investment in our future and a symbolic testimony to the lasting significance of government for the people, by the people. At the same time, as in cities and states across the country, Minnesotans are questioning how we have commemorated our history and looking for a way to have a voice in the process. In 2020 two Task Forces were created: one to engage the public in this conversation, and one to examine the policy and process by which individuals or organizations can initiate an addition, modification or removal request of a commemorative work on the Capitol grounds. This work was still under way when this plan was completed.

The goals and policies of this plan aim to bring the vision for the Capitol Area to life and make the aspirational principles a reality. It has been my honor to be a part of this work. It is now up to us to work together to implement this plan. Please join me in support of this vision for the Capitol Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peggy Flanagan".

Peggy Flanagan  
Lt. Governor

Voice: (651) 201-3400 or (800) 657-3717  
Website: <http://mn.gov/governor/>

MN Relay (800) 627-3529  
An Equal Opportunity Employer







# INTRODUCTION



June 3, 2021



# STATUTORY AUTHORITY



## 15B.01 PURPOSES OF THE BOARD.

The purposes of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board are:

- (1) to 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) to protect, enhance, and increase the open spaces within the Capitol Area when considered necessary and desirable to improve the public enjoyment of them;
- (3) to develop proper approaches to the Capitol Area for pedestrians, the highway system, and mass transit system so that the area achieves its maximum importance and accessibility; and
- (4) to establish a flexible framework for growth of the Capitol buildings in keeping with the spirit of the original design.



Figure 1: Boundary of the Capitol Area

## CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD

In 1967 the Minnesota legislature passed Chapter 15B: Capitol Area Planning and Preservation, setting in place the purpose, structure, role and statutory authority for the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission (CAAPC). In 1975 the CAAPC became the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB). The original four-point mission still guides the work of CAAPB's twelve member Board, Executive Secretary, staff and architectural advisors.

The CAAPB's additional responsibilities include:

- Providing design context and architectural guidelines to individual projects so that each project is a step towards making the Capitol a more vibrant, architecturally cohesive and well-planned area.
- Ensuring that future buildings contribute to the streetscape and the greater community.
- Encouraging public awareness of the Capitol Area as a district unique in the State and an asset to its host city.
- Shaping public space as a critical element of urban infrastructure.
- Outlining the major features that constitute the public environment in such a manner as to create a whole that is more than the sum of individual projects.

## CAPITOL AREA BOUNDARY

Section 2 of the statute outlines the boundary of the Capitol Area, which encompasses approximately 60 blocks of the City of St. Paul surrounding the Capitol building. The area includes the Capitol Campus as well as residential and commercial development in three city neighborhoods.



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A central function of the CAAPB is development and implementation of a Comprehensive Use Plan for the Capitol Area. Section 5 of the statute outlines the contents of the plan.

### Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to:

- assist in implementing the four-point purpose of the CAAPB by setting in place zoning and development criteria for public and private land, a circulation system, infrastructure, parking and landscape elements;
- express the current values and future needs and goals of the Capitol Area community; and
- define and improve relationships from Capitol Campus to the area and outward.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan strives to make the planning intent of the CAAPB explicit. It provides a framework for action by the CAAPB in its guidance of the area's development over the next 20 years. It is also a baseline against which complex proposals for action can be measured by the public and by those entrusted with decision-making. It provides a foundation for the formulation of public policy and the allocation of public resources. A comprehensive plan connects the visions and aspirations of the present with their realization in the future.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RELATIONSHIP TO ZONING

The Comprehensive Plan sets the vision for the Capitol Area. The RULES FOR ZONING AND DESIGN FOR THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL AREA (hereafter referred to as the Rules for Zoning and Design) sets out the specific rules and standards with which all development must comply. The Rules for Zoning and Design are reviewed and updated following any update to the Comprehensive Plan.



### 15B.05 COMPREHENSIVE USE PLAN.

Subdivision 1. Comprehensive plan required. The board must have, and prescribe for the Capitol Area, a comprehensive use plan called the comprehensive plan in this chapter.

Subd. 2. Land uses. The comprehensive plan must show the current uses and recommend future uses of land including, but not limited to:

- (1) areas for public taking and use;
- (2) zoning for private land and criteria for development of public land, including, but not limited to, building areas, open spaces, and monuments and other memorials;
- (3) circulation of vehicles and pedestrians;
- (4) utility systems;
- (5) storage of vehicles; and
- (6) elements of landscape architecture.

### 15B.06 ZONING RULES.

Subdivision 1. Zoning rules. (a) Under the comprehensive plan, the board may regulate in the Capitol Area:

- (1) the kind, character, height, and location of buildings and other structures;
  - (2) the size of yards and open spaces;
  - (3) the percentage of lots to be occupied; and
  - (4) the uses of land, buildings, and other structures.
- (b) The regulation must be done by zoning rules adopted under chapter 14, the Administrative Procedure Act.



# ORGANIZATION OF THE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## THE VISION FOR THE CAPITOL AREA

The vision adopted in 1998, of the Capitol Campus as a good neighbor to the surrounding area, has been updated and strengthened.

Compared with the ‘Good Neighbor’ vision, the 2040 vision strives to turn boundaries into connections, integrating the elements of the Capitol Area to each other better, while also continuing policies that restore historic urban fabric between the Capitol Area and downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The previous plan was organized by geography, treating the Capitol Campus and Capitol Area Neighborhoods differently. This plan seeks to remove boundaries for a truly integrated Capitol Area. While the Capitol building and Mall is acknowledged as a symbol and focus of Minnesota, the sixty-block area in which it is located, the Capitol Area, is now recognized not just as a neighbor, but as an integral and critical functioning part of St Paul, providing connections between downtown and neighborhoods.

## THE CAPITOL AREA PRINCIPLES

The Plan is now organized by a set of aspirational outcomes that support the vision, which are called **The Capitol Area Principles**. These principles will be applied to the entire Capitol Area, not only the campus or neighborhoods and districts of the Capitol Area. The principles were developed using several criteria. **The Capitol Area Principles:**

- express the current values of the Capitol Area community;
- have relevance today and in the future;
- define and improve relationships from Capitol Campus to Capitol Area, and from Capitol Area outward; and
- are effective as guides to decision making by the CAAPB Staff and Board Members in all their work.

The Capitol Area Principles anchor the policy that serves to guide the CAAPB in transforming the Capitol Area into a complete and healthy community with vibrant public spaces, a range of movement options, a diverse mix of land uses, and attractive buildings framing lively, pedestrian-friendly streets. They are designed to reinforce the visual pre-eminence of the Capitol Building, maintain the Capitol Campus as a visitor destination, preserve its component neighborhoods as vibrant urban villages, acknowledge the inherently productive nature of community building and neighborhood interdependence, and produce a clear direction for a future in tune with Saint Paul’s aspirations.



## 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 THOSE WHO COME TO 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.
- PRINCIPLE 7A: THE CAPITOL RICE DISTRICT IS AN URBAN VILLAGE WITH LEIF ERICKSON PARK AT ITS CENTER.
- PRINCIPLE 7B: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN CAPITOL HEIGHTS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO THE EXISTING SCALE AND CHARACTER.
- PRINCIPLE 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.



## PRINCIPAL INFLUENCES ON THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is influenced by our shared history, the Capitol Area today, and major trends, challenges and opportunities facing the Capitol Area and Saint Paul in the future.

### HISTORIC EVOLUTION OF THE CAPITAL CITY

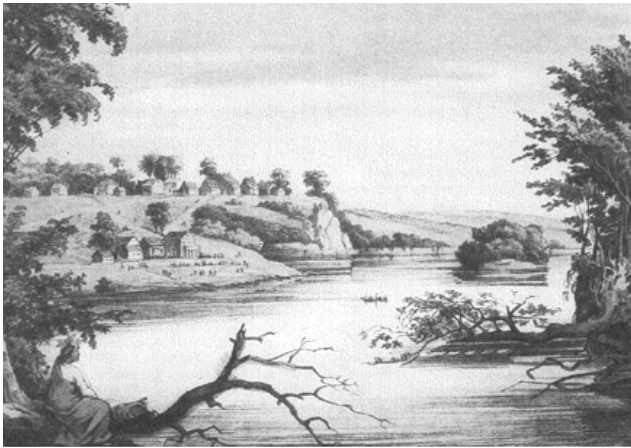
#### Early History

---

*“This region was the home of the Dakota people generations before us, and for generations after us it will remain our homeland.”*

~Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota, by Gwen Westerman and Bruce White, pg 15

---



*Saint Paul early development along the Mississippi River.  
(Image courtesy of MNHS)*

The land upon which our State Capitol stands, now known as Saint Paul has a history extending long before the arrival of the first European settlers who named the city. The formation of the land itself, with a river extending to the southern end of the continent and bluffs overlooking the beautiful river valley, made this place special, drawing communities of people to the area for generations. The Dakota name for St. Paul, Imnizaska, describes the white sandy cliffs along the river’s edge, speaking to the historically strong relational connection between the people, animals, and many waterways flowing throughout this sacred landscape. This is a place where people have interacted, traded goods, and voiced their own ideologies and perspectives of what the future holds for us all for generations.

Archaeological evidence verifies that human occupation in this area dates back at least 10,000 to 12,000 years. Ancient burial mounds, dating back approximately 2000 years, are still visible today at places like Indian Mounds Park. The mounds, sited atop the bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, represent a place of ceremony and reverence. Just below the bluffs is a cave, Wakan Tipi, a sacred space to Dakota people, where petroglyphs of many animals were carved into the walls. This was a place of meeting and alliance, where many nations came together to maintain peace and make important decisions.

Oral history passed down by Dakota people mark the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers specifically, less than ten miles down river from the current capital city, as one site of creation. This place, known in Dakota as Bdote (or Mdote) is remembered and passed down through oral history as one locale where the first Dakota man and woman were created from the earth, and missionary Stephen Return Riggs documented in 1893 that, “The Mdewakantonwan think that the mouth of the Minnesota River [Bdote] is precisely over the center of the earth and that they occupy the gate that opens into the western world.” The Ojibwe migrated from the east into the northern part of this territory around 1,500 years ago, traveling to this land by a prophecy towards the “land where food grows on water,” which is recognized as being wild rice.

An abundance of sites with important historical significance dot Minnesota’s riverways. The proximity to the water (known as Mni in Dakota) is significant, and water is viewed as one of the first medicines given by the Creator, playing a central role in many Dakota traditions. The confluence of Bdote hosted both social and early trade interactions amongst the Dakota and other tribes, as well as later meetings with the burgeoning United States. Eventually Fort Snelling was erected at this sacred location. Throughout the 1700s and early 1800s lands were ceded from Native American people to the United State through a series of treaties. In many cases, there were questionable practices from which



these treaties were translated to the Dakota, and the United States did not fulfill terms of the treaties. The pain of the cessation of land rights and forced removal is ongoing.

### Development of Saint Paul, a River City

From the earliest communities of people living here, to the ongoing development of Saint Paul as a Capital City, the Mississippi River has been an important part of daily life. For Native American communities, the river is not only life-giving and sacred, it has always been a connector to other communities through trade all along the river to the north and south. The Dakota used traditional dug out canoes to travel the river ways, and these lines of transport were places of trade and commerce between various tribes who frequented the area such as the Ioway, the Sac and Fox, and Ho-chunk peoples. These lands continue to be home to Native peoples from all tribal Nations today.

As the City of Saint Paul developed, the river made the city a natural trade center, being the northernmost navigable port. Saint Paul became a destination and connection to the west for both goods and people. Many railroad companies moved into the city, with tracks laid following the curve of the river. By the mid-1800s white settlers started arriving in great numbers. In 1850, there were approximately 5,000 white settlers in the area; by 1860, there were over 170,000. Saint Paul was settled by British, Irish, German and Scandinavian laborers, tradesmen, shopkeepers and domestics. Among the oldest neighborhoods was the Capitol Heights area, with houses on the top of the hill overlooking the growing downtown. The historic character of the area as an immigrant community remains today, with a large population of immigrants on the west side of the Capitol Area in neighboring Frogtown.

These interwoven stories of this place form the history of many people, these lands upon which our State Capitol stands today, has long been a place of meeting, for peace and alliance, and the exchange of ideas. This has been a place of industry, of trade along the river and later the railroads. This has been a place of connection and home—a place of a birth of a people, as well as a place where many came through to settle and call home over time. It is a place of hope of new beginnings, of ongoing connection, and a place of forced removal and injustice. These stories influence our shared values and goals for our future.

### Cass Gilbert's Vision: Siting of the Capitol Building and Development of the Capitol Mall

When Minnesota was granted statehood in 1858, the City of Saint Paul became the nation's 32rd State Capital. The first two Capitol Buildings were in downtown Saint Paul at Cedar and Exchange Streets. The 1893 decision to relocate the Capitol Building marked the first effort to provide the City of Saint Paul with a civic place that communicated the high ideals of government and the importance of accessible government by the people, for the people. Numerous sites were considered for the Capitol Building, including a high point in Merriam Park, also along the streetcar line between the two growing downtowns. The selected location was at the head of Wabasha Street where it ended at University

---

*“The historic Dakota villages of the 17th through 18th centuries were most often located along the river or a nearby lake, where fish were in abundance as were foods such as wild rice, well supplementing the game diets of local Native populations. These lands and waterways were lush with many plants and medicines, a portion of which still remain today, and the knowledge on these Indigenous plant names and uses are documented and still used by local Native American community members.”*

~Dr. Kate Beane, Flandreau Santee Sioux  
Director, Native American Initiatives, Minnesota  
Historical Society; Member of the Capitol Area  
Architectural and Planning Board

---



---

*“We built the State Capitol on the theory that nothing was too good for Minnesota. Let us develop the city on the theory that nothing is too good for Saint Paul.”*

~Capitol architect Cass Gilbert, in remarks to the Saint Paul Municipal Art Association, Saint Paul Dispatch  
(January 11, 1909)

---



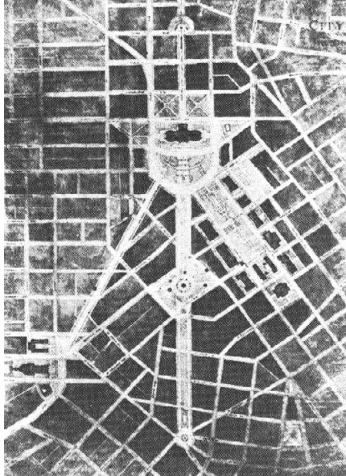


Figure 2: Cass Gilbert Vision of the Capitol Mall, 1903 (Image courtesy of MNHS)

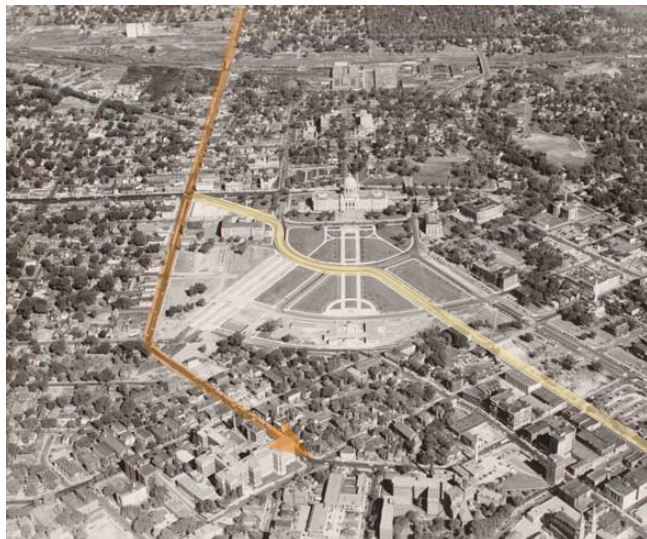


Figure 3: Capitol approaches, 1954. In 1954, Wabasha Street (highlighted in yellow) was still a vehicular route connecting through the Mall to downtown. Through the 1940s Wabasha cut on a diagonal across the Mall, converted to the curved connection in 1951. This image shows Rice Street (highlighted in orange), before construction of the Interstate, as a major connector from neighborhoods north to downtown. To the west, the original neighborhood small block pattern prior to the development of Sears can be seen. (Image courtesy of MNHS)



Figure 4: Capitol approaches, 2020.

Avenue, chosen because it was a main thoroughfare between Minneapolis and Saint Paul and on elevated ground. Both the accessibility of the location and the grandeur of the location atop a hill were important factors in the siting, as was its relationship to the future site of the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

The Capitol project's first phase involved the siting, design and construction of the building. Cass Gilbert was the selected architect, and the construction team was made up of hundreds of men and women, many new arrivals in the city.<sup>1</sup> This first siting and design phase did not address any considerations for the creation of ceremonial civic approaches to the building or an appropriately scaled civic space around the building in which to accommodate large gatherings. Early on, architect Cass Gilbert recognized the deficiencies in this approach, understanding the important connection between the siting of the Capitol Building and the development of the Capital City. A total of six separate plans for ceremonial approaches and a mall were introduced between the years 1902 and 1909. In the 1930s Gilbert's plans extended to the downtown core, connecting the Capitol Building approaches even south of the Mississippi River. These plans give us a sense for what his vision for the Capitol and Capital City was to be; one in which the grounds and approaches to this monumental civic building support its landmark status while at the same time connecting it to other landmarks and neighborhoods throughout the city.

While the Capitol Building was completed in 1905, development of the Capitol Mall and civic approaches took many decades. Through the 1940s the Mall ended at Wabasha Street, which cut on a southeastern diagonal through today's mall. It wasn't until the 1950s that Cass Gilbert's vision of the Capitol approaches was realized. In 1950 Wabasha Street was closed after its streetcar line was abandoned and the curved road in front of the Capitol was created (named Constitution Avenue in 1976 as part of the country's Bicentennial celebration and now renamed Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd). From 1950-1967 five government buildings were opened including the Veterans Service Building, the Centennial Building, the Transportation Building, the Armory and the Administration Building.

With construction of I-94, more streets and blocks were cleared, many giving way, first, to parking. By the 1980s, Governor Perpich had reclaimed green space with clearance of many vestiges of surface parking, resulting in the far more pedestrian-friendly Capitol Mall we see today. There are still three small surface parking lots present in areas dedicated as open space on the Capitol Mall. Development of a full vision of the Capitol Mall is still underway today.

The emphasis on the grandeur and connectedness of the Capitol and the landscape surrounding it is still the goal today. From 2013-2017 the Capitol Building underwent extensive renovation, restoring it to its original splendor. The grounds, approaches and views should be maintained and improved to match that original vision.

<sup>1</sup> The website "Who Built Our Capitol" provides an excellent recording of the many men and women who built our State Capitol. Six men lost their lives while working on the Capitol construction. <https://www.whobuiltourcapitol.org/>



## The Impact of Urban Renewal

During the streetcar era, at its height in the 1930s, Wabasha at University and Rice was a thriving neighborhood hub. Traffic counts here were the second highest in the city. The streetcar ran along Wabasha Street and then turned down University Avenue. There was a strong multi-modal focus of the area, with transit connections to downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The Capitol Tavern, at the corner of Wabasha and Rice was a gathering place for legislators and community (an interaction that is not present today).

However, in the 1950s and 60s here and across the country there was a shift taking place: the growing popularity of the automobile and suburban living as the ideal of the “American Dream.” People became enamored with efficient connection of their home to their workplace, delivery of farm goods to their markets, and the expansion of interstate markets for their commercial and financial business interests. Major city infrastructure changes took place during these decades, altering both how we move and how we live. The development of I-94 (development in the 1950s, opening in 1967) greatly altered the Cass Gilbert vision of Capitol approaches and connection to downtown and the river. This period also introduced surface parking as a major land use around the Capitol.

Along with the development of the freeway, the streetcar was abandoned in the 1950s by its private owners in favor of buses that could share the roadways with the cars. To accommodate this, Rice Street, which was a thriving main street, was widened to accommodate the increased vehicular traffic. Much of the older and, in some cases, historic buildings on the west side of the street were demolished. The multi-block apartment complex at Rice and Como was a product of publicly supported “urban renewal,” clearing away some of the more blighted buildings and thus, at least at the time, seen as an improvement. The commercial vitality of Rice Street has never recovered its former vitality. The quality of Rice Street as a neighborhood “main street” should be restored.

Also during this period the 187,000-square-foot St. Paul Sears store was built to the west of the Capitol. Roads and a variety of residential and other structures were removed for development of this super-block, changing the site to a commercial focus. The super-block development pattern, geared toward automobiles, has reduced the walkability of the area. This development pattern also creates large empty spaces when the building is not in use, such as at night. As of 2020, the store is closed and the site is considered a prime opportunity for redevelopment. There is an excellent opportunity to restore the urban fabric by breaking up the super-block at this important location, thus connecting the Capitol Area to the western neighborhoods.

These developments during the “urban renewal” era not only changed the physical layout of the Capitol Area and the city; they damaged trust between the community and the government with top-down infrastructure decisions made with little or no input from those affected and which led to the tearing apart of entire communities. I-94 did more than create a physical barrier between the Capitol and downtown; the development of this freeway destroyed homes and businesses in the well-established Rondo neighborhood.



*Construction of I-94 at the former intersection of Rondo and Fairview Avenues, September 1, 1967. (Image courtesy of MNHS)*



*The widening of Rice Street in 1951 to accommodate more cars and buses demolished buildings on the west side of the street. (Image courtesy of MNHS)*



---

*“The Vision is for a Capitol Area that is memorable as the symbolic heart of the state, and as a good and responsive neighbor to those who live and work nearby.”*

~Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area, 1998

---



Cover of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, 1997. “The vision for Saint Paul is of a system on interconnected urban villages nestled in the lush green of a reforested river valley.”

Similar decisions were made in cities around the country, often with little regard for the livelihood of individuals in the name of a greater public good. This led eventually to a new era of Community-Based Planning, neighborhood organizing and historic preservation. (See The Good Neighbor Policy Era)

### Creation of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board

The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was created in 1967. The creation of the CAAPB was in response to the aesthetics of the building development in the 1950s and 1960s, most notably the Transportation and Centennial Buildings. At the time, only placement of buildings, not architectural quality, was considered by the CAAPB’s predecessor. The resulting buildings were generally thought to fall far short of the grandeur of the Capitol. The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was meant to preserve and enhance the dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the Capitol and Capitol Area. In 1974 the Commission was changed to a Board with zoning authority. Over the next decades, the Capitol Area was expanded across I-94 to the south.

### The Good Neighbor Policy Era: Reconnecting the City

The experiments of urban renewal were mixed in terms of success. Nationally, voices such as Jane Jacobs, active since the 1950s in calling for restoration of traditional walkable urbanism and preservation of historic fabric, found their platforms, and their audiences, more widely recognized in the 1970s and 1980s. The foundations of community-based planning were forged in this era, and impacted planning in Saint Paul and in the Capitol Area. In the 1970s and 1980s, the implied threat of acquisition by the State and or the growing hospital complexes led to deferred maintenance and in some cases, blight of properties that merited improvement. The 1998 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area stated: “The Vision is for a Capitol Area that is memorable as the symbolic heart of the state, and as a good and responsive neighbor to those who live and work nearby.” This “Good Neighbor” policy of the 1990s and onward, along with slower growth for both the hospitals and the State, clarified State development intentions by identifying and differentiating areas into proposed uses including residential, State, and mixed-use (State, retail, cultural, office, and residential). Within the Capitol Area, potential development sites for State agencies were restricted to the grounds of the Capitol Campus and designated mixed-use areas.

This new focus began to break down barriers, real or implied, between the Campus and the surrounding community. In the 1980s and early 90s, the beautification of the I-94/I35 Commons Section with architecturally detailed bridges reinvigorated the connections between districts of downtown and the Capitol. In the 1990s, the new League of Minnesota Cities building was built with a design that began to re-establish and the sense of place along Rice Street. Across the city, Saint Paul increased focus on maintaining neighborhood identities. In its 1997 plan, Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, it stated, “The vision for Saint Paul is of a system on interconnected urban villages nestled in the lush green of a reforested river valley.”



## THE CAPITOL AREA TODAY

The Capitol Area today is made up of five interrelated districts:

### The Capitol Campus

The **Capitol Campus** is the heart of State government. The Campus, going from Rice Street to Jackson Street and from Sherburne Avenue to the I-94 freeway, houses 13 government buildings and the Mall, which extends along the grand axis of John Ireland to include the Minnesota History Center and Summit Park in front of the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

The **Capitol** is the seat of representative government in Minnesota. The Capitol is flanked by Minnesota Supreme Court, Administration Building, the Senate Office Building, and the State Office Building (House of Representatives). Leif Erickson Park and Cass Gilbert Park also flank the Capitol.

The **Mall**, directly south of the Capitol Building, is known as Minnesota's 'front yard' – and the primary place for Minnesotans to gather, express themselves, and commemorate. The Veterans Service Building is at the south end of the Mall; the Transportation Building anchors the Mall on the west.

The **East Campus** includes the former Central Park area, and is home to several headquarters of State Government, including the Judicial Center, Centennial Building, Orville L. Freeman Office Building, Harold E Stassen State Office Building, Minnesota National Guard Armory Building, and the Agriculture and Health Laboratory.

The grand axes of **John Ireland Boulevard** and **Cedar Street** are the primary view corridors and connections to downtown. Cedar Street, forming the east edge of the Capitol Mall, stretches down the hill into the core of downtown Saint Paul and visually to the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. It also serves as the downtown alignment for the LRT as it enters downtown. John Ireland Boulevard stretches to Summit Park in front of the Cathedral of Saint Paul and is an important viewshed to the Capitol Building. This extension of the campus includes

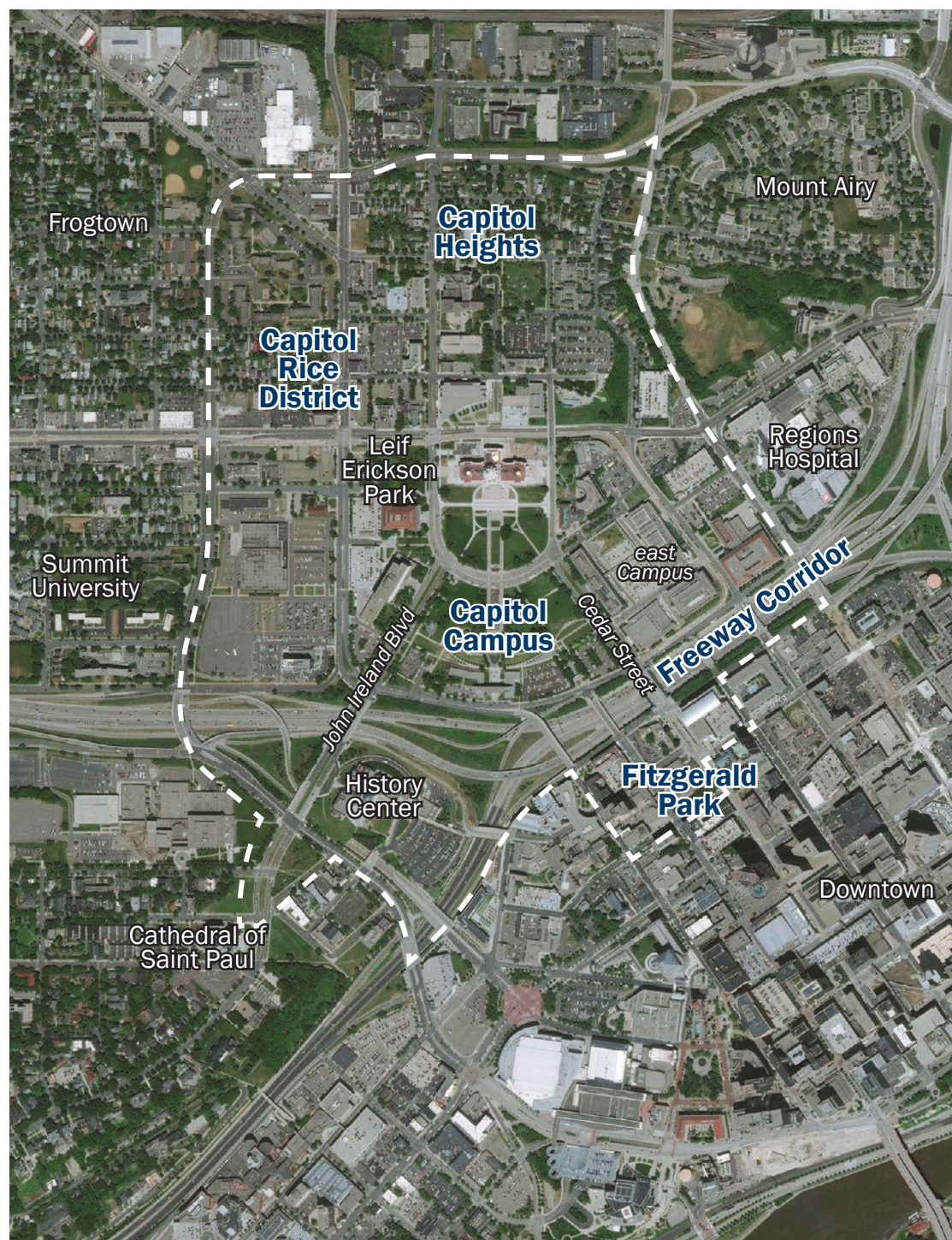


Figure 5: The Capitol Area neighborhoods and surrounding area



the Minnesota History Center, which stands at the southwest corner of the Capitol Area, bounded by John Ireland Boulevard, Kellogg Boulevard and Summit Park, I-94 and 35W. The History Center was built at the same time that I-35E was connected through Saint Paul, with decisions made by the Supreme Court calling for a speed-regulated parkway. The History Center is an extension of the Capitol Campus and an important destination between the Capitol Building and the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

### Capitol Rice District

The Capitol Rice District is a newly defined area encompassing the west of the Capitol Area and centered on the Capitol Rice LRT station at Leif Erickson Park. The area is roughly defined by Marion Street to the west, Park Street to the east, Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, and I-94 to the south. The eastern portion of Frogtown and western portions of the Capitol Campus and Capitol Heights fall within the Capitol Rice District.



*Aerial view of Bethesda Healing Gardens and new townhomes to the east in Capitol Heights. (Image: Google Maps)*

The recognition of this area as a district began with station area planning in the early 2000s and was confirmed by the community during the Capitol Rice Strategy planning process in 2017-2018. In 2018 the city of Saint Paul designated Rice Street between University Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue as a Commercial Vitality Zone eligible for public funding for business and streetscape enhancements.

Rice Street and University Avenue are both important corridors with significant relationships to both the State Capitol and surrounding neighborhoods. Surface parking lots at University Avenue and Rice Street, as well as the large Sears site, present opportunities for redevelopment. The center of the Capitol Rice District is Leif Erickson Park, home to the Capitol Rice LRT station. The southern portion of the park is a surface parking lot. The area west of Rice Street has been designated a Qualified Opportunity Zone.

### Capitol Heights

Capitol Heights is a well-established neighborhood that has an intimate neighborhood scale and diverse mix of buildings that is attractive to residents and visitors. With the former Bethesda Hospital and garden at its center, Capitol Heights lies directly to the north of the Capitol Campus and is entirely within the boundaries of the Capitol Area. The area is bounded by Sherburne Avenue to the south, Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, Jackson Street to the east, and Rice Street to the west. While the area is officially the eastern portion of the Frogtown Neighborhood (District 7: Thomas Dale), it functions like an independent neighborhood due to the strength of the Capitol Heights block club. In 2014 Capitol Heights block club updated its plan.

### Fitzgerald Park (Neighborhood)

Fitzgerald Park is situated to the southeast and directly across I-94 from the Capitol Campus. The five city-blocks of Fitzgerald Park that fall within the jurisdiction of the CAAPB are bounded by 11th Street Minnesota Street to the north and east, and St. Peter Street and Exchange/10th Streets to the south and west. Significant religious, cultural and institutional purposes are served either within or adjacent to this neighborhood. As the transition between the Central Business District and the Capitol Campus, Fitzgerald Park



*Aerial view of Fitzgerald Park, with the Capitol to the northwest just across the I-94 freeway.*



(neighborhood) is an important gateway. Its development should be consistent with Cass Gilbert's vision for the area and with the vision expressed in the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan, adopted by the Saint Paul City Council in 2006 after an extensive community-based public process. One State office building, the Elmer L. Andersen Building, is south of the freeway in Fitzgerald Park.

### I-94 and I-35E Freeway Corridor

The I-94 and I-35E freeway corridors are both a benefit and a barrier in the Capitol Area. Adjacency to these freeways provides automobile access to the Capitol Area from around the state and country; yet this corridor is also a physical barrier to walkable and bikeable connectivity from the Capitol Area to downtown and the Mississippi River. Six bridges over I-94 are within the Capitol Area. The sustainability of vegetation in the freeway corridor, established at the highest levels of quality and intensity as part of the "green river," is a growing concern as climate change and water management necessitates new solutions.

### The Capitol Area Community

**Racially and Ethnically Diverse Community:** The Saint Paul population is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, with a trend line moving toward majority people of color in 2017. The five census blocks surrounding the Capitol Area provide a wonderful diversity of race and culture, with a near-even split between African American, Asian and white populations (2010 census data). This mix of people is representative today of a more diverse future Saint Paul.

**Both a Young and an Aging Population:** While the population of the Capitol Area is younger than St. Paul average, the overall population of the city is aging. There is a need for a public realm that works for all ages and allows people the choice to age in place, remaining in their communities.

**Many Lower Income Households:** Nearly the entirety of the Capitol Area is designated as an Area of Concentrated Poverty with over 50% people of color (ACP50). In the five census blocks surrounding the Capitol Area 34% of households are below poverty level.

**Many Transit Dependent Households:** Many households in the Capitol Area have community members that can't afford an automobile in their cost of living. Creating a robust, multi-modal transit system and high-quality public realm is critical to serving this population.

**Majority Renters:** 75% of the housing units in the five census blocks surrounding the Capitol Area are renters.

**Changing State Workforce:** The Capitol Campus, with about 8,500 employees, estimates 65% of its workforce will be eligible for retirement by 2030. This could cause a significant shift in the employee population of the Capitol Area. To stay competitive as a workplace the Capitol Area must offer the urban work environment desired by so many of today's younger workers.

---

*"Saint Paul's racial and ethnic diversity is a unique asset that should be tapped to fuel economic growth, especially as it brings innovative economic models to our neighborhoods."*

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL  
2040 Comprehensive Plan, page 7

---



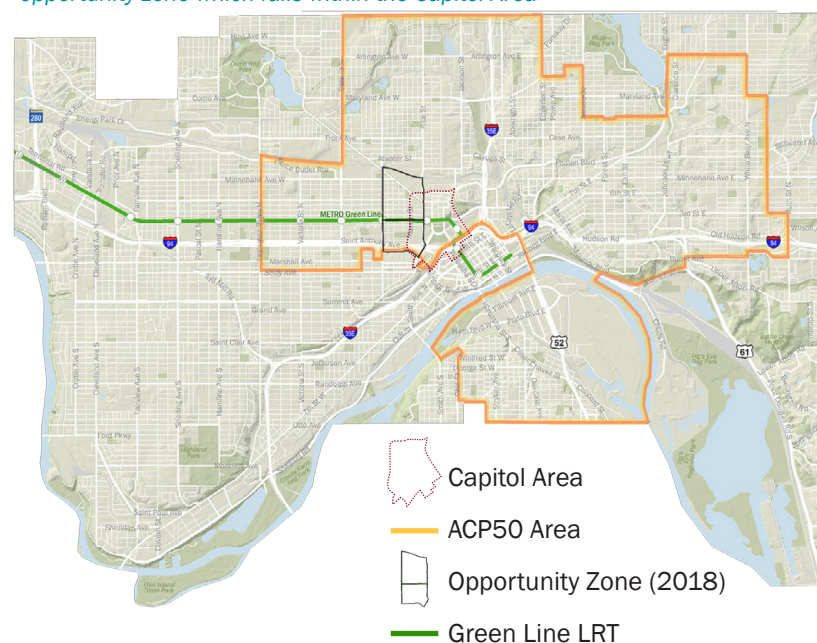
---

*"A vital, healthy city is one where people of all ages and abilities can thrive and live productive lives."*

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL  
2040 Comprehensive Plan, page 8

---

Figure 6: Saint Paul ACP50 Area, also showing the Capitol Area and the opportunity zone which falls within the Capitol Area





### What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

Building on the City's Comprehensive Plan: The Capitol Area is part of St Paul and builds on the city's trends, challenges and opportunities. SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, pages 7-8 outlines the *Major Trends Informing Comprehensive Plan Policy*:

- Climate change
- Aging housing stock and infrastructure
- Constrained financial resources to pay for City services and facilities
- Changing demographics
- Challenges and Opportunities for the Future
- Equity
- Growth and density
- Economic development
- Large redevelopment sites
- Climate change mitigation, adaptation and resiliency
- Designing a city for all ages and abilities
- Fostering the next generation
- New technologies and their impact on development patterns

*“How we grow, develop and invest over the next 20 years must be done in a way that reduces racial disparities in jobs, income, education and homeownership.”*

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 8

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: MAJOR TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Capitol Area is part of Saint Paul, and performs a critical role in Saint Paul. This document follows the tradition of previous Capitol Area comprehensive plans, relying on a base of underlying City guidance in many areas of policy. The SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in November 2020, identifies major trends, challenges and opportunities affecting the City over the next 20 years. These trends take into account broader physical, economic, social and environmental trends that impact the city's planning and development. The Capitol Area shares in these as an integral part of Saint Paul, yet has unique challenges and opportunities.

### The Importance of Equity

There is a broad trend among metropolitan areas (especially those with large, diverse economies) of rapidly increasing investment in core urban areas. This is already causing (and will only exacerbate) displacement pressures of low-income and other at-risk populations. In the Capitol Area there are several layers of improvements – the Capitol itself, the Mall, Rice Street widening, Urban Renewal, the Interstate and Rondo – that, whether intended or not, led to the displacement of people, buildings, streets and communities. The physical impacts and, in some cases, emotional trauma from many of these decisions can still be felt today among community members.

There is a continuing opportunity going forward to respect existing community, assets and context in the Capitol Area. While far more investments and improvements to the Capitol Area are both necessary and desired, the displacement of community families and small businesses that have lived and invested here for years, is not.

We have examples of recent community-based planning success. Among them is the 2018 Frogtown Small Area Plan (SmAPL). The Frogtown Neighborhood Association, working with the City's Planning and Economic Development staff and Councilperson's office, created the Small Area Plan that is a long range vision for the district as an urban village that will attract new investment while serving the people that live there now and are investing every day in the success of their community. This document is an excellent example of government and community working together to plan for the future, the test dependent on how future investments following the plan, achieve greater vitality than might have been the case in the past.



An older example in the Capitol Area is the development of former State Lot V, a State surface lot leased from Bethesda HealthEast. After being re-zoned in 1990 by the CAAPB, the lot was sold and redeveloped, with extensive input from Capitol Heights community members, as twenty-nine paired townhomes and one live-work unit with well-articulated porch frontages. The inner court contains parking via tuck-under garages, including two central townhouses developed above a number of the co-located garages. Today there is a mix of owner-occupied and rental in these homes.



## Climate Change Mitigation, Adaptation and Resiliency

The State of Minnesota and the City of Saint Paul are committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resiliency. In a 2013 Executive Order, Governor Mark Dayton called for State Agencies to establish sustainability goals and implement sustainability programs and policies. Specific directives for reduction of waste, air pollution, energy consumption, GHG emissions and fuel consumption were set with requirements for every State Agency to plan for and report progress toward these goals. In 2015 Saint Paul signed the Compact of Mayors agreement, the world's largest cooperative effort among mayors and city officials to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks in cities. The Capitol Area, as the seat of State government, should serve as an example of best practices in efforts to lessen dependence on fossil fuels and increase resiliency.

There is also great implication of climate change on the Capitol grounds with the possibility of changes to plantings needed to meet the new climate demands. Climate change is also putting stress on urban forests, introducing new disease and pests, and dramatically altering weather patterns that produce longer and more intense periods of drought or more intense flooding. Mitigating the effects of climate change will likely require both new hybrid species resistant to disease as well as attention to preservation of the existing mature tree canopy.

### Land Use Efficiency

Developing in cities near multi-modal infrastructure is sustainable, focusing growth where we have invested in infrastructure that can handle urban populations. The State, region, county and city have policies in place that support development near transit as a way to decrease vehicle miles traveled and to meet energy and carbon goals. The Capitol Area has three new LRT stations that can contribute to a livable urban life for people that choose it, at a more affordable cost of living due to decreased transportation costs.

Large development opportunity sites, many of them currently serving as surface parking lots in the Capitol Rice District, provide opportunity to improve economic vitality and overall livability of the entire Capitol Area. The high amount of surface parking in the Capitol Area today undervalues the land in terms of development potential, but also undermines the pedestrian experience.

These large development sites represent over 40 acres of development opportunity, making up approximately 13% of the entire Capitol Area, the vast majority of it found in the vacant Sears block. Smaller infill parcels scattered throughout the Capitol Area also provide opportunity to increase density, diversify housing choice and broaden commercial variety to create livable, walkable neighborhoods.

There are challenges to new growth. Along with displacement, an increased population living, working, gathering and recreating in the Capitol Area will place new demands on infrastructure. If new development does not provide housing choices and services, the district could become too homogeneous, and increasingly susceptible to fluctuations in the market and economy as buildings age and life cycles evolve. It will also be important

---

*“Minnesota has set aggressive goals for securing a future that incorporates great use of clean energy and reduces the state’s greenhouse gas emissions, including the goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050 and the goal of having 25 percent of our energy come from renewable energy resources by the year 2025.”*

~Executive Order 11-13: Strengthening State Agency Environmental, Energy and Transportation Sustainability

---



---

*“For the first time in decades, several large sites are ready for major redevelopment... These projects will have a significant impact on Saint Paul’s vitality, tax base and livability.”*

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 8

---



---

*“Considering pedestrians first will ensure a safe transportation system that works well for everyone. Our transportation system will also work hand-in-hand with land use by supporting employment, providing quality transit where we expect more density via redevelopment and infill, and presenting a finer-grained streetscape as larger contiguous sites are redeveloped.”*

---

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 52

---



---

*“While older housing may initially be more affordable, the extraordinary maintenance costs could lead to neglect and loss of the stock over time. This adds to the challenge of maintaining diverse and affordable housing options in Saint Paul.”*

---

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 7

---

to ensure that new streets and buildings are designed with the urban context, creating a district that works better for those living, working and investing here now.

### **Evolution of Urban Mobility**

This area was designed originally to rely on multiple modes of transportation. The streets once accommodated a balanced mix of streetcars, trucks, carriages, pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles. It is debatable if the era of automobile dependence has run its course. The Capitol Area, like many other districts near downtowns of American cities, has struggled mightily with how to address parking, the desire for convenience, and the resulting environmental and social cost of the auto-dependent model.

In the last twenty years, the state, region and the city have moved to restore a multi-modal balance. Increased investment in transit, walkability and bike infrastructure have alleviated the need to accommodate as many cars. In 2014 the Metropolitan Council and City of Saint Paul made a significant investment in its multi-modal infrastructure with the opening of the Green Line LRT. The City of Saint Paul also made significant investment in bicycle infrastructure with the beginning of the buildout of the Capital City Bikeway. These investments show a commitment to a greater focus on multi-modal transit system. The effects on transportation patterns as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020/2021 are yet to be seen. We can anticipate that telecommuting will increase. Whether the pandemic will spur a long-term preference for single occupancy vehicle commuting over shared or public transportation is yet to be seen.

For the State of Minnesota (as an employer in the Capitol Area) the cost of parking infrastructure is significant. The State has had a long-range goal, set in the 1993 Strategic Plan for Locating State Agencies, of decreasing single-occupancy-vehicles (SOV) to 50%, meaning that only half of employees would drive alone to work, and the other half would share rides, use transit, or use some other form of transportation. While only limited progress has been made toward this goal in the past 25 years, the opening of the Green Line LRT with three stations in the Capitol Area, enhanced bicycle infrastructure near the Capitol Campus, increased telecommuting by employees, and a potential future mobility hub centered on the Capitol Rice LRT station (see chapters 5 and 6A), may provide a chance for future success.

While the future of transportation patterns post-Coronavirus pandemic are unknown, multi-modal transportation, especially the focus on designing for the pedestrian and bicyclist first, is a core value. Building on past investments with a high-quality public realm that is comfortable, safe and legible will further encourage multi-modal transit use.

### **Aging Housing and Call for Increased Density**

As in all of Saint Paul, housing in the Capitol Area is aging. Seventy-four percent of housing units in the Capitol Area are 100 years or older. The median construction year for all housing structures is 1909. Over the next 20 years there will be opportunity for new housing to follow suit with the City of St Paul by providing diversity of “Missing Middle” housing choices while maintaining affordability. (See Chapter 6.)



## Healthcare Sector

The Capitol Area includes four major healthcare institutions within it or at its edge. A Capitol Area vision that attempts to connect better to itself, but also outward to the city will recognize the strength and stability these places provide. They are also built in markets for new and improved housing and services, especially if the streets of the district are designed to connect to them.

## Reflecting on and Revisiting our History

A challenge that many cities are facing today is in how we tell our stories. There will be many opportunities over the next 20 years for Minnesota to review how it tells its story, especially regarding the civic art and memorials in the Capitol Area. Following important events in 2020, the CAAPB, working together with Minnesota Historical Society and the Administration Department, have launched a statewide policy and public engagement initiative aimed at ensuring that all Minnesotans have a voice in decisions made about commemorative art on the Capitol Mall and in the Capitol Building. The recommendations will result in a new policy for commemorative works.

## Unifying Factors: The Need for Connectedness and Sense of Place

2020 brought the Coronavirus pandemic and, with it, physical distancing and a change in how we experience our shared and public spaces. In the coming years there will be increased need to focus on building connectivity and sense of place in our communities. A “sense of place” has been defined as “memory, emotion and meaning in architectural and urban design.” Each district or neighborhood in the Capitol Area has a unique community and sense of place.

This Comprehensive Plan calls for the Capitol Area to be a “unifying factor” for surrounding communities, and an integral part of the urban landscape. Major corridors connecting different parts of the City and State run through the Capitol Area. There are significant development opportunities within the Capitol Area that have potential to build community and create a strong sense of place. Keeping placemaking and identity in mind will be a major factor in future development.

## The Yet Unknown

“New technologies, such as autonomous vehicles and district stormwater systems, have the potential to significantly alter our physical development patterns. Autonomous vehicles may allow for narrower streets, require fewer parking spaces, and influence our housing patterns. District stormwater systems may allow for higher densities on larger infill sites. While the Comprehensive Plan cannot anticipate or predict all new technologies, it has to set the stage for a physical development pattern that is flexible and adaptable.” ~quoted from SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, pg 8.



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PLANNING PROCESS

The CAAPB has undertaken this update to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan through four concurrent and interrelated steps occurring over a 4-year period:

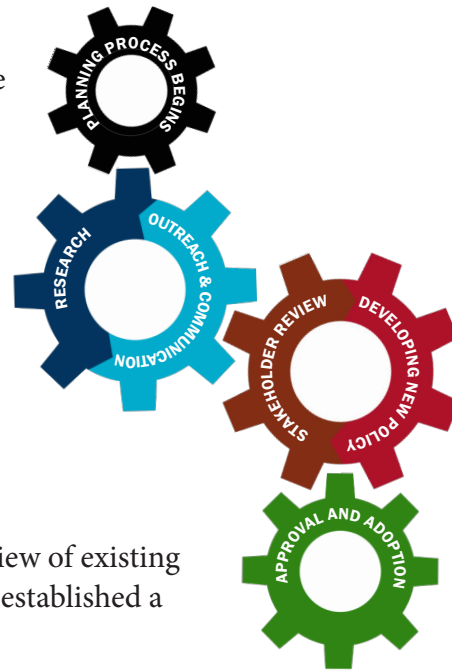
- Research
- Outreach and Communication
- Stakeholder Review
- Development of new policy

## RESEARCH

Research began with extensive review of existing policy. An extensive policy review established a hierarchy of reference documents:

- **Primary References:** Primary references are the three existing Comprehensive Plan documents: Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (February 1998); Specific Actions for Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (February 1998); and 2009 Amendment to Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (July 2009)
- **Secondary References:** Secondary references are those containing binding policy for the Capitol Area. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan must comply with these documents unless CAAPB Board approval is granted for specific deviations.
- **Tertiary References:** Tertiary references contain guidelines and standards that are relevant to the Capitol Area, but are not binding. The Comprehensive Plan should look to these documents for guidance and adopt recommendations where appropriate, but deviation from these documents requires no approval from the CAAPB Board Members.
- **Best Practice and Context References:** References are relevant for policy guidance in the Capitol Area, including historic and context documents as well as the latest trends in practices from development, street design, housing, sustainability and mobility.

See Appendix C for a list of full list of reference documents.



To establish a clear trail of what past policy content has been referenced and integrated, a protocol was followed for review of primary, secondary, tertiary and reference documents related to the Comprehensive Plan. Various publications of policy compilations occurred over the development period:

- **Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area 1998-2009 Unified Texts.** Compilation to one document from the three primary comprehensive plan texts. The *Unified Texts* was published on the CAAPB website in June 2017.
- **Built Form & Land Use Policies** and **Public Realm Policies.** These policy lists and accompanying maps provided a geographic communication of existing policy affecting the Capitol Area. Both maps were published on the CAAPB website in October 2018.
- **Planning Drafts.** The first version of every chapter was a compilation of unedited existing policy and supporting text, distributed in the proposed chapter structure. This raw material (unedited) served as foundational first draft of each chapter.

## OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

Outreach and Communication were organized around several planning initiatives. These concurrent Planning Tracks and Studies informed the development of principles and policy outlined in this plan.

### Planning Studies

**Visitor Experience:** A high quality visitor experience is of central importance in the Capitol Area. The first Principle for the Capitol Area states: As Minnesota's seat of government and destination for thousands each year, the Capitol Area offers the highest quality experience to visitors. (See Principles chapter) By surveying visitors (and people who interact with visitors) we aim to better understand what the visitor experience is and where there are gaps in providing the highest quality visitor experience.

**City + Off-Campus Parks & Open Spaces:** Study of non-mall parks and open spaces in the Capitol Area and nearby context. There is a need to better understand the parks and open spaces in the Capitol Area and how they contribute to a quality public realm. Additionally, how is the Capitol Area connected to adjacent public spaces, such as Western Park and Valley Park.



**Land Use Diversity:** This study established a baseline understanding of the land use mix within the Capitol Area. This knowledge, continually updated as changes happen, helps inform future decisions regarding commercial and housing developments: as projects come before the Board in the future, this data provides the basis to answer the question: Do the proposed new developments contribute to more diversity in the Capitol Area?

### Planning: District Frameworks

**Capitol Rice:** The Capitol Rice Planning process was born out of a combined effort of three public sector initiatives: Ramsey County: Rice Street Transportation Safety Study; City of St. Paul: Commercial Vitality Zone (CVZ); and Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board: 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update. This planning track included two successive community and stakeholder involved planning initiatives led by CAAPB staff, resulting in two plan documents:

The Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy was an initiative funded by the City of Saint Paul's CVZ program. The goal of this initiative led to a clear set of implementable actions that would help foster increased commercial vitality on Rice Street north of University in the Capitol Area. The outreach efforts included multiple survey stations that generated 500+ ideas, a survey, creative placemaking projects capturing community values, and four open studio design sessions where community members were invited to review and impact the emerging community planning in more depth. The City began implementation with the Building Upgrade Fund in early 2019.

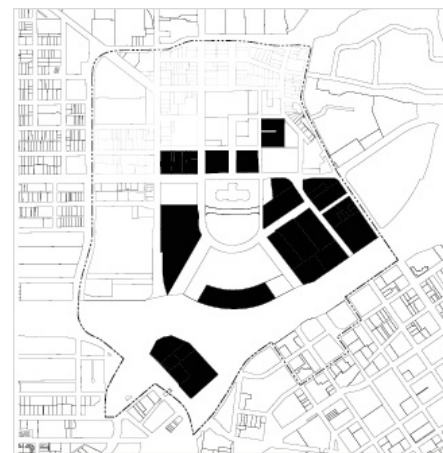
The second document, The Capitol Rice Development Framework, was approved in January 2019 as an addendum to Chapter 7A of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Nearly twenty stakeholder community groups and public agencies reviewed and provided comment on the plan ahead of unanimous Board approvals in late 2018 and early 2019.

**Capitol Heights:** The entirety of the Capitol Heights neighborhood falls within the Capitol Area. A thorough small area planning process is required to update the Area Plan for Capitol Heights.

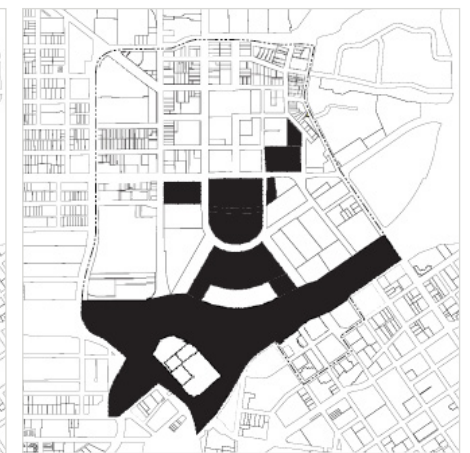
**Fitzgerald Park:** Five blocks of the Fitzgerald Park neighborhood fall within the Capitol Area. As such, the CAAPB is a major stakeholder in the city's planning efforts. Additionally, the five blocks are important in how the Capitol Area connects the downtown



*Capitol Connections Issue Identification Meeting, June 2018*



*Figure 7: G-1 Zoning District*



*Figure 8: G-2 Zoning District*



*Paul Mandell, Executive Secretary of the CAAPB, administering a survey to a visitor on the Capitol Mall, summer 2019.*



Saint Paul. This planning track outlined our efforts to work with the City of Saint Paul PED in its planning efforts, as well as CAAPB responsibility to reach out to building owner/managers regarding our Comprehensive Plan and upcoming zoning update.

### Planning: State Campus

**G-1 Zone: Future Growth State Campus and Buildings:** The overall goal for this planning track was to review, affirm and update (as necessary) comprehensive plan policy impacting the zoning and design regulatory guidance determining the long-range land use and built form of parcels in the G-1\* Zoning District as well as State-owned land in other districts of the Capitol Area. This planning track also addressed a Ford Building study.

\*The intent of the G-1 Governmental District is to provide for the orderly growth of state government and the preservation and enhancement of existing structures within the Capitol area.

**G-2 Zone: The Mall, John Ireland, On-Campus Parks & Open Spaces:** The overall goal for this planning track was to review, affirm and update (as necessary) comprehensive plan policy impacting the zoning and design regulatory guidance for areas in the G-2\* Zoning District, Capitol Mall and Open Space.

\*The intent of the G-2 Government District is to provide for the preservation and enhancement of the State Capitol, and the creation and preservation of open space within the Capitol area.

### Other Multi-Jurisdictional Planning

**Capitol Area Commutes and Rethinking I-94:** The CAAPB was the center-point agency coordinating staff from the Department of Administration, City of Saint Paul, Move Minnesota, Metro Transit, MN Department of Health and MNDoT in an continuous effort to increase multi-modal transportation in the Capitol Area. This long-range planning focused on the reducing the parking demand and improving mobility options in the Capitol Area. Major tasks included a comprehensive parking study, mobility survey of all State Campus employees, and recommendations for future actions to reduce single-occupancy commuting for State employees.

**Capitol Connections:** As a portion of I-94 runs through the Capitol Area, the CAAPB was a major stakeholder in the Rethinking I-94 Study conducted by MnDOT from 2016-2020. The CAAPB led a multi-agency initiative, called Capitol Connections, to

work in parallel with the I-94 study. The work focused on five areas: connectivity improvement concepts, land bridge feasibility, public realm framework (especially regarding future Sears site redevelopment), key intersection studies and multi-agency bridge maintenance models.

## STAKEHOLDER REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW POLICY

Development of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan was established as an update to the 1998 Comprehensive plan and 2009 Amendment. As such, a full public participation process was not required, however, extensive stakeholder input was sought throughout the development process. A summary of the groups included are:

- Capitol Area businesses and residents (including renters and owners)
- Public agency staff from the State, County and City
- Neighborhood groups including Frogtown Neighborhood Association, Summit University Planning Council and Capitol River Council
- Comprehensive Plan Committee, a seven-member committee made up of four Board Members and the three CAAPB Architectural Advisors
- The 12-member CAAPB Board Members were responsible for final approval of the Comprehensive Plan and all interim policy decisions.

*Also see Appendix A, Acknowledgments, for a full list of key stakeholders who contributed to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan development.*











## PRINCIPLE 1

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





## INTRODUCTION

The Capitol Area plays a fundamental civic role for Minnesotans.

**It is our seat of government.** At the center of Minnesota's Capital City is the Capitol Area. At the center of the Capitol Area is the Minnesota State Capitol Building and its campus, which is home to the legislative, judicial and executive branches of state government, and to the headquarters of many of our statewide agencies. This is a place of work, where laws are written, debated and enacted that affect all Minnesotans. This is where grand civic architecture establishes an enduring visual for the people of Minnesota of the stable presence of State government. This is where a welcoming and beautiful campus creates fair and open access for all to the political process.

**It is Minnesota's front yard.** The Capitol Area provides a grand shared open space to celebrate being Minnesotan. This is a place for gathering to celebrate democratic values. It is a place to honor individuals, groups and ideas that have shaped Minnesota and contributed to our place in the nation. This is a place to share our many stories and create new ones. The Capitol Mall is known as Minnesota's Front Yard, where all are welcome.

**It is a unifying symbol.** The design for the Capitol Building was selected to represent Minnesota as a state progressing into the future with a deep respect for the past. For many today, the building and its dome, the second largest self-supporting marble dome in the world, have become part of the identity of Saint Paul and of Minnesota—a unifying icon that reminds people we are Minnesotan, and that we all share a grand place and many common ideals worth cherishing. As Minnesotans, each of us can take pride in ownership of the Capitol Building.

Visitors to the Capitol Area deserve the highest quality experience.

Hundreds of thousands of people visit the Capitol Area each year from around the state, nation and world. Visitors come for many reasons. Each visitor is as important as the next, and each deserves a Capitol experience that is welcoming, inspiring, informative, and that works well for all the reasons they are there. ≈



View of the Capitol dome and Quadriga. (Image courtesy of Senate Media Services)

*“The Minnesota State Capitol is one of the most beautiful public buildings in the United States. Since its completion in 1905, visitors have been awed by its art and architecture, its magnificent spaces, intricate stonework, and striking murals. ... Minnesotans have come to their capitol to debate important issues for more than a century, it is where women gained the right to vote in 1919. Where the Minnesota Miracle, which transformed public education, became law in 1971. And where Marriage Equality was finally legalized in 2013.”*

~ Governor Mark Dayton





*View of the Capitol at night, from Cass Gilbert Memorial Park.*



### *In this chapter...*

This chapter outlines the civic role of the Capitol Area in Minnesota followed by policy to enable the fundamentals of a high quality visitor experience. Sections in this chapter include:

- Minnesota's Seat of Government
- Minnesota's Front Yard
- The Heart and Identity of Minnesota
- Fundamentals: Ensuring the Highest Quality Visitor Experience

*Images on title page, left image by CAAPB staff; right images courtesy of Senate Media Services*



# THE CIVIC ROLE OF THE CAPITOL AREA IN MINNESOTA

The Capitol Area plays a fundamental civic role for Minnesotans.

## MINNESOTA'S SEAT OF GOVERNMENT

### The Capitol Building

Cass Gilbert set out to design a Capitol Building that would inspire awe for all who visited. The grandeur of its architecture was meant to represent the high ideals of its people and their hopes for a strong and lasting future. But the Capitol Building is more than a symbol, it is also a place where work is done, and where the diversity of our population debates the path to a better future.

The Capitol Building is also a place to learn about our government and our history. With its grand array of murals, portraits, sculptures, artifacts, commemorative works and curated photography and art exhibits, people visit as one visits a museum, to revere the past and learn from it. Every year thousands of school children come to the Capitol Building to learn lessons about civic duty, leadership, historic events, and the function of state government.

With the restoration of the Capitol Building in 2017, its role as the people's house is given greater prominence. The restoration added 40,000 square feet of public space, more than half of which is reservable conference rooms available to the public.

The people of Minnesota must feel welcome here. This is their house.

### Branches

At the heart of the Capitol Area and campus are four buildings that represent the three branches of Minnesota government: legislative, executive and judicial. Each branch, working together but with its own powers and responsibilities, is set up to ensure people's rights are protected through the balanced separation of powers. See Chapter 2, which explains the intentional relationships and hierarchy of the branches within the Capitol Building and on the Capitol Campus.

### Agencies, Headquarters and Institutions

Filling out the Capitol Mall and north of the Capitol Building are many of the State agencies and headquarters that serve the people of Minnesota. These buildings, too, welcome the people of Minnesota. These are places to do business, but they also offer amenities to visitors during work hours, such as public cafeterias and restrooms.

The Veterans Service Building at the end of the Mall, with its fifth floor mostly glass meeting spaces open to the public, has stunning views of the Capitol Mall and buildings to the north, as well as a panoramic view of downtown Saint Paul to the south.

The Minnesota History Center, home to the Minnesota Historical Society, sits at the southwest end of John Ireland Boulevard, completing the range of state institutions on campus that serve Minnesotans. Built in 1992, it is a major civic and cultural center for Minnesotans. Sited along of John Ireland Boulevard, its halls frame grand views to the Capitol, downtown and the Cathedral of Saint Paul, providing a stunning welcome to many thousands of visitors each year, while educating them about our diverse and evolving shared heritage and history.



The Minnesota History Center sits along John Ireland Boulevard between the Capitol Building and the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

*“The Minnesota State Capitol stands at the intersection of high ideals and everyday life. It is home to lofty discourse and petty arguments, graceful allegorical paintings and tons of mundane paperwork. The building has served as Minnesota’s statehouse since 1905. That old-fashioned term suggests the dual requirements of a building that is central to the commonwealth. A statehouse has functional and symbolic duties. It needs sufficient size and working space to accommodate the branches of state government. But a statehouse is more than square footage. It is the heart of civic life, and deserves a grandeur of expression that Minnesota’s Capitol delivers in design, decoration, and craftsmanship. Its noble spaces and fine materials are reminders to anyone who enters – whether senator or schoolchild – that this is a special place for important business.”*

~ Thomas O’Sullivan, North Star Statehouse, 1995



## Preservation of the Capitol Building: The Work of Many Hands

In 1893 a Board of the State Capitol Commission came together to make a commitment to the future by constructing one of the greatest State Capitol buildings in the United States. The first Capitol Building (top right) had burned down, and the second (middle right), built on the same site as the first, was acknowledged upon opening to be too small for the growing state. A new Capitol Building, the third, was intended to put Minnesota on the map in a more serious way by making a statement with a shining example of civic architecture, and it succeeded.

When it opened in 1905, the Capitol Building housed the entire Executive branch, state agencies and commissions, the Judiciary, Legislative branches and the Minnesota Historical Society. Over the next fifty years, many of the departments moved out to their own buildings on the campus or elsewhere throughout the metro and then greater Minnesota. Legislators first moved into their own offices in the State Office Building in 1973, with Senators (of the majority) remaining in the Capitol.

### Initial 1905 Capitol Occupants

**Executive Department:** Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, and Attorney General

**The Judiciary:** The Supreme Court

**The Legislative Department:** Senate and House of Representatives

**The Appointive Offices:** Adjutant General, Art Society, Board of Control, Board of Health, Board of Immigration, Bureau of Labor, Bureau of Public Printing, Capitol Commission, Dairy and Food Commission, Farmers' Institutes, Fire Marshall, Forestry Department, Game and Fish Commission, Grand Army of the Republic, Highway Commission, Historical Society, Hotel Inspector, Insurance Commissioner, Law Library, Military Storekeeper, Oil Inspector, Public Examiner, Superintendent of Banks, Public Instruction, Pubic Library Commission, Railroad and Warehouse Commission, and Tax Commission.



*The first Capitol Building (Image courtesy of MNHS)*



*The second Capitol Building was built on the same site. (Image courtesy of MNHS)*



*The third and current Capitol Building, sited just up the hill from the second Capitol Building, was constructed for \$4,500,000, including building, site work, boiler house, tunnel, furniture, and decorations (Image courtesy of MNHS)*



New demands on the building grew over time. New laws opened up the legislative process, resulting in an increased importance of hearings, requiring more and more meeting rooms to be carved out of the 1905 building that were never originally intended. In 1976, a design competition was held to explore Capitol expansion options under the Capitol Mall, incorporating underground parking, a new secure Judicial Center, and expanded offices and hearing rooms. This work was not funded and did not proceed. In the early 1980s additional hearing rooms were added to the State Office Building by filling in the building's courtyard and adding two stories to the building.

In the 1990s and 2000s, additional attempts were made to incrementally address mounting structural issues such as water intrusion, accessibility, electrical systems and integrity of art and masonry, as well as evolving space needs. In 2006, a pre-design study, executed as part of the building's Centennial, showed a great need for additional office space and hearing rooms to facilitate the process of government. The Study reiterated prior studies from the 1980s and 2001 that recommended pursuit of options including relocating existing tenants to other facilities, construction of a new office building or adding on to the existing Capitol Building. This study included a conceptual design for an underground addition to the Capitol Building. This design was not funded and did not proceed.

Then in 2010, with the physical integrity of the Capitol Building at stake, the State of Minnesota had another opportunity to invest in its statehouse. The State Legislature, under the leadership of Governor Mark Dayton, stepped up, not only to preserve the past, but to protect and to assure the Capitol's future as a workplace where State business is conducted daily. Chaired by the Governor, the State Capitol Preservation Commission was established in 2011 to develop a comprehensive, multi-year plan for the restoration of the Capitol Building. The Commission included representation from the Governor's Office, the Supreme Court, both legislative chambers, the Attorney General's Office (as another tenant), as well as numerous appointed members of the public, along with ex officio leaders of the Administration Department, the Minnesota Historical Society and the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board.

The restoration would be guided by a three-tiered approach:

- 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 Legislature supported the restoration of the Capitol Building with \$310 million bond funding; along with \$3.25 million (Legacy funds) for restoration of the fine art in the building.

In 2014, the new Minnesota Senate Building became home for the entire Senate, freeing up much of their old space in the Capitol Building and contributing to a significant increase in public spaces in the Capitol Building now available through a reservation system.

The restoration was completed in 2017. This significant investment shows the commitment by Minnesota's leadership to maintain this statehouse for the people of Minnesota. The restoration approach resulted in the project receiving state and national recognition for historic preservation, while also providing a modern building with life-safety systems and functional space for today's and tomorrow's state government. ➤



*The Capitol's dome is the second-largest self-supported marble dome in the world. (Image courtesy of Senate Media Services)*





Restoration work on Walker's 'The Sacred Flame' above the West Grand Stairs. (Image courtesy of Senate Media Services)



North wing stone work and new scrolls early on in the repair project.



Fully restored 'Civilization of the Northwest' in the Rotunda.



Overlooking old Aurora Avenue and Mall from Capitol steps, newly restored as a pedestrian plaza.



The newly renovated L'Etoile Du Nord Vault is a beautiful room two levels directly below the rotunda now used for business meetings, community gatherings and private events such as weddings.

## Capitol Building Timeline of Projects and Studies

- 1905: Current State Capitol Opens
- 1907: Capitol Grounds Commission is established, and purchase of land between Cedar and Wabasha for eventual construction of a mall
- 1918: Minnesota Historic Society moves out of Capitol Building
- 1932: State Office Building opens
- 1956: Highway Department relocates to new Building (Transportation Building)
- 1958: Centennial Office Building opens
- 1967: Administration Building opens
- 1968 (-1972): Executive Office spaces moved from Capitol Building to satellite offices
- 1973: Exterior Window Replacement
- 1975: House and Senate Minority Office move to State Office Building
- 1975: Exterior Masonry Conservation
- 1976: Minnesota II: National Design Competition for the Capitol Expansion
- 1980 (-1990): Office space, Committee Room and Chambers, Public space renovations
- 1981: Roofing Replacement (verify)
- 1984: Preservation and Planning Study for Public and Ceremonial Spaces
- 1986: State Office Building Renovation & Expansion to meet need for hearing rooms and two new floors added for library and office space
- 1988: Comprehensive Preservation Plan and Implementation Study
- 1988: Capitol Exterior Restoration
- 1989: Attention to Detail: Capitol Furniture Study
- 1991: Supreme Court relocates to new Judicial Center
- 1993: Accessibility Compliance Study
- 1994: Roofing Replacement
- 2001: Interior Restoration and Pre-Design Study for Capitol
- 2003: Capitol Building Humidity Study
- 2006: Capitol Building Pre-Design Study / Centennial
- 2007: Pre-Design Update and Conceptual Design
- 2007: Capitol Restoration Working Group Formed
- 2009: Capitol Complex Pedestrian Tunnel Study
- 2010: Capitol Building Dome and Drum Window Investigation Study
- 2011: Comprehensive Exterior Masonry Study
- 2011: Capitol Building Roof Study
- 2011: Exterior Masonry Restoration work begins
- 2011: Capitol Preservation Commission Formed
- 2013: Capitol Restoration Funded
- 2013: Capitol Building Pre-design Study
- 2013: Capitol Art Inventory
- 2014: Capitol Quadriga Condition Study
- 2016: Senate Office Building opens
- 2017: Capitol Restoration Completed



## MINNESOTA'S FRONT YARD

The Capitol Mall as Minnesota's 'front yard' continues to provide a place for people to come together. It is at times a place to learn our history; a place of quiet reflection to honor the past and think to the future; a place to gather, to celebrate, or speak out; and a place to relax and meet neighbors and friends.

Many community events and programming now occur in the new and improved range of public spaces inside the building, out on the monumental steps, Aurora Promenade and the Upper and Lower Malls, as well as in Leif Erickson Park, and the more contemplative Judicial Plaza and Cass Gilbert Memorial Park. Marches often start at the Cathedral or from elsewhere in the community and proceed to the Capitol along John Ireland Boulevard. The landscaping of each sets up a diversity of civic spaces that can accommodate political activity, commemoration, contemplation, artistic endeavor, recreation and interaction. These spaces also create human-scaled and protected environments within the open vastness of the campus.

### Gathering, Celebrating and Speaking Out

The Mall serves an important civic role for Minnesotans to congregate and exercise their first amendment rights to civic

expression. Along with spaces in the Capitol Building and its monumental steps, all areas on the Mall can be reserved free of charge during business hours, and are booked regularly, with the busiest times during Legislative session.

Over the years, large community events have included celebrations of the 1987 Twins World Series victory, Taste of Minnesota and the three-daylong celebration of the reopening of the Capitol Building after its five year restoration. Recent recurring events such as India Fest and the annual Twin Cities Marathon finish line, along with countless other events, have brought Minnesotans together to celebrate our state and each other.

Gatherings on the Capitol Mall can be large or small, political, social, or contemplative in nature. People come at all times to relax, play, or spend time with friends and family. Local workers come for lunch or take a break in their workday in a beautiful, natural environment. Many come to walk the Capitol Mall for exercise. While the Mall is first a place for civic expression, it also serves the local community much like a park.







Photo taken on June 14th, 1905 at the transfer of the battle flags ceremony (from 2nd capitol to the present Capitol). The man posing proudly amidst the crowd is a Civil War veteran. The flags on the building are at half-staff in honor of William Colvill, colonel of the First Minnesota who died days before the event. During the proceedings, his body lie in state in the rotunda - the first to have that honor in the new Capitol. (Image courtesy of MNHS)



Photo taken in August 1957 at the third Lutheran World Federation Assembly. It is estimated to be one the largest events ever held on the mall. (Image courtesy of MNHS)



Peaceful gathering on the Mall, June 2020.



## Commemorating People and Ideas Important To Minnesota

Monuments belong to a particular category of commemorative public art that convey the values of a community. Commemorative art, particularly memorials, attempt to tell the moving stories of important people and events. Using carefully crafted forms, materiality, words, sound, water and light, memorials seek a truth about a person, place, or event, and records their facts. They are attempts to connect the viewer to those stories, often presenting messages about a set of aspirations or values that the sponsors and artists shared and felt worthy of preserving.\*

The memorials on the Capitol Mall all carry living messages for the future generations of Minnesotans. Over the years, monuments have been dedicated that are of significant civic importance to Minnesotans on a personal level. In 1993, the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board developed spatial and thematic groupings for artwork within the Capitol grounds drawing from the designs generated by 1986 Plans for the Capitol Mall Landscape Design Competition. The strategy affirmed Gilbert's original notion of a "memorial approach." Under this plan, the area closest to the Capitol Building on the Upper Mall is designated for recognition of those in the executive, legislative and judicial branches, while military and public safety memorials cluster in an arc surrounding the Veteran's Service Building, with other important Minnesotans honored along John Ireland Boulevard. Since then, memorials to Hubert H. Humphrey and civil rights leader Roy Wilkins (who grew up near the Capitol in Saint Paul's North End neighborhood) found a home along John Ireland Boulevard, while the lawn areas along Cedar Street were reserved for three larger theme gardens.

\*It can be expected that calls for new memorials will come in the future; however, installation of further commemorative works should balance the primacy of maintaining the open space of the Capitol Mall along with the importance of including commemorative works that are representative of all Minnesotans.

## Art in the Capitol Area

Art on the Mall enriches and improves our understanding of the history of Minnesota. Interestingly, Cass Gilbert's original vision for the Capitol Campus did not call for monuments or statues near the Capitol Building. Gilbert preferred the building itself to serve as the focal point. It should be noted that over the recent decades, as the discussion and advocacy for more public art throughout our everyday environments has increased, the CAAPB has been very emphatic in putting forth the concept that the beauty of the Capitol Building (one of the most artistically-adorned of all Gilbert's buildings), as well as the dignified setting of the thirty-six acre Capitol Mall, its various memorials, and even the ornately designed Interstate Bridges of the 1990s, all serve as public art in form and function.

---

*"A day will come when diverse representation of Minnesotans will seek creative proposals other than memorials on the Mall or within the Capitol Building."*

---

~ Nancy Stark, CAAPB Executive Secretary 1996-2014

---







### Upper Mall / Leif Erickson Park

- 1-Leif Erikson
- 2-Floyd B. Olson
- 3-Quadriga
- 4-John Johnson
- 5-Knute Nelson
- 6-Christopher Columbus
- 7-Judicial Plaza

### Eastern Mall

- 8-Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial
- 9-Minnesota Workers Memorial Garden
- 10-Peace Officers Memorial
- 11-Minnesota Korean War Veterans Memorial
- 12-Military Family Tribute: Story Stones

### Central Mall

- 13-Minnesota WWII Veterans Memorial
- 14-Court of Honor
- 15-Promise of Youth and Minnesota Medal of Honor
- 16-Earthbound Monument
- 17-Liberty Bell

### Western Mall

- 18-Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- 19-Military Family Tribute: Gold Star Table
- 20-Monument to the Living
- 21-U.S.S. Ward Gun
- 22-Minnesota Fallen Firefighters Memorial
- 23-Special Forces in Laos Memorial
- 24-Roy Wilkins Memorial
- 25-Charles Lindbergh
- 26-Hubert H. Humphrey Memorial

### Transportation Building

- 27-Transportation Worker Memorial

Figure 1.1: Map of Memorials and Commemorative Works, as of December 2020

Images opposite page: Minnesota Fallen Firefighters Memorial, Minnesota Korean War Veterans Memorial, Minnesota Workers Memorial Garden, Promise of Youth, Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial



---

*“One hundred years, the age of Minnesota’s Capitol, is not long in the span of historical time. But it is long enough to test the character of a building. Minnesota’s Capitol has scale, mass, and excellent design, but more than that, it has a wonderfully ethereal quality. It conveys the spirit of a people. It exudes the remarkable optimism of the generation that built it, less than a half-century after Minnesota became a state. Those pioneers wanted a center of government suitable for the state of distinction they were sure Minnesota would become. Their love of Minnesota, their dreams for its people, and their respect for its public servants are embodied in this Capitol, in ways grand and minute. The result is a hallowed place in which every Minnesotan can take pride.”*

~ELMER’S TOUR, by Elmer L. Anderson (MN Governor 1961-1963) with Lori Sturdevant, 2005

---



---

*“The Capitol Building is more than a product of its architect or time. It also is a product of the people it represents, both past and present. It must strike a balance, retaining those qualities that clearly inform us of its significance to our heritage while also reflecting and welcoming our evolving identity.”*

~Denis P. Gardner, Our Minnesota State Capitol (2017)

---

*Visiting Minnesota students, many on school field trips, are encouraged to participate in civic events and see democracy in action. While here, some may witness the Capitol and grounds providing places for heartfelt expressions of shared beliefs and of protest, as a place for expressing collective emotions, and where the true spirit of Minnesota can be experienced. The Capitol and its grounds are their house. (Images courtesy of Senate Media Services)*



## THE HEART AND IDENTITY OF MINNESOTA

The concept of a state is not easy to grasp. It is more than an area of the earth’s surface. A state is a combination of people, values, memories, landscapes and economic activities that shape its sense of identity. The shared identity of its citizens produces a spirit of place. Although it is possible to sense this spirit of Minnesota, it can only be symbolized in ways that produce a legacy to represent its very existence.

The Capitol is a building designed to facilitate the workings of the elected government and to be a symbol of the state. The design of the structure and the art within convey a sense of our place and people. It combines expressions of democratic ideals, history and progress. It is true that the buildings and grounds express the pride of those who initially created the spaces, and the careful additions made by subsequent generations testify to the continued relevance of the Capitol as a symbol of the collective identity, power and spirit of Minnesotans. This is on-going, and may never be finished.

### The Capitol as Minnesota’s Common Ground

Much like the workings of democracy it hosts every day, the Capitol Building and grounds are both a grand achievement and an exciting work in progress. It is a place designed with the goal of bringing Minnesotans together to learn about, discuss and celebrate our shared values and our differences. As the state has changed, Minnesotans have always cared that this is a place that reflects Minnesota values.





The largest front steps in the state (a hallmark of Gilbert's Capitol Building) say that this is a place where everyone is welcome. The message is amplified in the promenade with the tiered mall spaces stretching south, and the grand avenues extending outward as if they were arms embracing all Minnesotans. From three directions the visitor is brought into the Capitol Building, always through multiple doors under sheltering arcades to a grand circular space under the dome known as the Rotunda.

To many, the Minnesota State Capitol is transcendent; it is an architecture of timelessness, principle, beauty and permanence, executed with an excellence consistent with and worthy of the values and standards we as Minnesotans hold up as representative of who we are. Gilbert's Capitol has become a part of the fabric of the city as much as an expression of a Minnesota identity. These forms deserve to be cherished and protected.

At the same time, it is also true that for some Minnesotans (including many native and many new Minnesotans who are immigrants), the same soaring white marble dome of the Capitol Building can have an imposing, or additional less-welcoming meanings that go beyond the symbolic warm welcome adorned by the high ideals of freedom and democratic self-government. To some, these forms also symbolize the unintended/unconscious bias connected to ongoing or past displacement or oppression, government excesses or the control by the powerful. To others, the details of western classical architecture are simply not as familiar or comforting, despite the varied intents of the leaders that commissioned the work over a century ago. An example of this is the growing understanding that memorials and commemorative artworks in the building and on the Mall can express multiple histories depending on the viewer.




---

*“...classical architecture is not a style; it is a dedication to principles of community, resilience and beauty. This idea of the classical was first articulated in the 15th century by Leon Battista Alberti, a key figure in the Italian Renaissance. Buildings are not meant to be mere objects, he said, but should contribute to the fabric of the city, promoting a healthy and nurturing community...”*

---

~Michael Lykoudis (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/02/10/i-teach-architecture-trumps-plan-federal-buildings-is-bad-idea/>)

---





The Most Livable  
City in America



Time and events change attitudes, people, and their values—and the ongoing discourse about these realities has increased recently. A survey of Mall visitors in the fall of 2019 indicated that approximately 90% of people surveyed were very happy with the experiential aspects of the memorials on the mall, but less than half of the people felt that the memorials connected to their lives (38%) or current events (41%). Approximately 30% of the people surveyed indicated they would like to see more diverse representation of Minnesotans, including women, native communities, communities of color and other traditionally under-represented groups. It is important to note, however, that the State itself does not initiate memorials. Commemorative art projects start as ideas from Minnesotans wishing to honor something or someone special. Projects typically take many years and significant funding to bring to fruition.

### The Capitol as Symbol

The Capitol presents a truly civic symbol for Minnesotans. There are other logos, icons or slogans used to represent Minnesota as a destination, to promote trade, or to label sports teams, etc. These symbols are important. Yet, the Capitol stands apart from all these because it is not used to market products or services. It remains an expression of a unifying common identity, symbolizing our very best hopes for the future.

Although the Capitol serves and symbolizes the entire State of Minnesota, it is located in Saint Paul. Since its founding, Saint Paul civic boosters have used the Capitol to promote the city's amenities and potential. They also used it to differentiate it from its larger twin west of the Mississippi. A familiar element of the city's skyline, it gives Saint Paul unique status among the cities of Minnesota. Many residents of Saint Paul are proud of its identity as the Capital City.

The image of the Capitol was used to represent Saint Paul in various contexts, but the relationships between the City and the Capitol are complex. The Capitol is a center point for state and national issues; however, its location in the city affects both downtown and several neighborhoods. Although the public land of the State Capitol campus itself is exempt from local property taxes, it has a great economic impact on the city through its large workforce and visitors.

No matter the layered and intertwined relationships of the Capitol, the Capitol Area and Saint Paul, there is an underlying resolve by many to make this place even more welcoming for visitors and a common ground for all Minnesotans. ~



## Who Are Our Visitors Today?

Visitors to the State Capitol come for many reasons and represent the rich diversity of our state and nation, such as:

- Tour groups of all ages (school groups, seniors)
- Tourists/sightseers (locals, Minnesotans, others from around the United States or other countries)
- People attending rallies or demonstrations for political reasons
- People attending organized, non-political events or celebrations on the Mall
- People visiting the memorials
- Constituents visiting their legislators or observing the legislative process
- People here on business (media, lobbyists, visitors on official government business, state employees)
- People visiting agencies of the State for personal or business needs
- People visiting because of the resources at the Capitol (history buffs, researchers, architecture buffs)
- People seeking a park experience



*Images of visitors to the Capitol, courtesy of Senate Media Services and Minnesota House of Representatives.*



# FUNDAMENTALS: ENSURING THE HIGHEST QUALITY VISITOR EXPERIENCE

From the very beginning, the siting and design of the Capitol Building was key to conveying the high ideals of our democratic government and the importance of accessibility by the people to the public process. The Capitol was placed on a hill, visible from all points in the early Capital city, the grandeur of the soaring marble dome implying the importance of government. The location was also selected because of its accessibility – University Avenue and Rice Street being the second busiest intersection and due east of the largest city in the State. Visitors to the Capitol are meant to be awed by its grandeur, as well as welcomed by the ease of arrival and access.

Ensuring a high-quality visitor experience is the first principle of this Comprehensive Plan. The following seven fundamentals, and the policy that follows, set a high bar for future decision-making both on and off the campus. These fundamentals shall apply to every scale of project and all types of improvement throughout the Capitol Area, whether proposed by public or private entities.

**The Capitol Area visitor experience is and will continue to be that of a sense of being in a place bigger than oneself.** The timeless grandeur of the Capitol Building, the beauty and cleanliness of the grounds, the sightlines which connect the Capitol with downtown Saint Paul and the Cathedral, all of these contribute to the sense of community and of a higher purpose. As visitors approach, sight of the Capitol Building's classical rotunda, large arcades and monumental steps become a welcoming civic language. On arrival, the Capitol grounds convey openness, access and connection—the spaciousness inviting visitors to gather together—while the architecture, art and commemorative works further convey the centrality and permanence of government and a shared commitment to high ideals. This sense of location and ceremonial arrival are to be of utmost consideration.

**The Capitol Campus speaks to all Minnesotans.** Visitors should have the sense that the Capitol and Mall are their space – that they belong here and can see themselves represented here. This includes ensuring images/statuary/memorials each strive to relate history from many points of view to communicate a more inclusive story. Images that are already present should not offend by telling a part-truth; and steps will be needed<sup>1</sup> to add representation for Minnesotans that are not currently included.

**The Capitol Campus is a place to learn about our government and our history.** Together, the Minnesota Historical Society's sites along John Ireland Boulevard (the State Capitol & Mall and Minnesota History Center) have made the Capitol Area a destination for those seeking to learn about and honor our past, understand and celebrate our present, and hope and plan for our future. Collaboratively improving and/or integrating visitor information for Capitol Area visitors supports the mission to increase learning about Minnesota's history, as well as lessons about civic duty and the function of government.

**Visitors feel welcomed to and comfortable in the Capitol Area.** A visit to the Capitol should be intuitive to all. The impressions created by signage and visitor information influence the overall experience of visitors to the Capitol Campus. The sense of welcome should be evident even before one arrives, through clear online information, including directions and information about government buildings and other sights. As one nears the Capitol Area, the sense of welcome is enhanced by distant views of the Capitol Building, legible directional signage as one approaches, and enhanced Mall and building lighting. A comfortable stay includes basic needs being met, such as access to bathrooms, water or food options. As people move about the Capitol Area, a high-quality public realm both on and off campus contributes to a positive Capitol experience.

---

**1 State-Wide Initiative in 2020: Hearing the Voices of All Minnesotans.** Following important events in 2020, the CAAPB, working together with Minnesota Historical Society and the Administration Department, have launched inter-related policy and public engagement initiatives aimed at ensuring that all Minnesotans have a voice in decisions made about commemorative art on the Capitol Mall and in the Capitol Building. The resulting recommendations may further strengthen (or change) the policies of this plan.





**The Capitol Campus meets people’s needs to gather, demonstrate and celebrate in groups large and small.** Provision of open space to allow for public gathering is a fundamental right of our free society and form of government and is essential to the Capitol visitor experience. Different areas of the Mall and Capitol Building meet various needs of gatherings for groups and individuals. The Capitol Mall must remain a place that accommodates both individual quiet reflection and public gathering.

**The Capitol Area is accessible to all.** In this case, “accessible” has two meanings: At the most basic level, government should be physically accessible. People of all physical abilities should be able to come to enjoy, learn, speak, celebrate and meet with their legislators. Accessible also refers to economic or social challenges to visiting the Capitol. People of every socioeconomic status should be able to come to enjoy, learn, speak, celebrate and meet.

**Visitors feel safe in the Capitol Area.** A welcoming and safe environment should be evident from the moment one leaves their car, exits transit or arrives by bike or on foot. This requires a balance between adequate security measures and a sense of personal freedom. Measures such as cameras, metal detectors, or other more intrusive security infrastructure are sometimes necessary, but can often make people feel uncomfortable and unwelcome. There has long been a consensus between all that the Capitol should be safe but never seen as ‘fortress like’. Adequate lighting that guides and provides a safe environment should always be a design standard of the Campus Mall and buildings. The safety of the Capitol Area must extend beyond the Capitol Buildings and Mall, to ensure safe passage from arrival points to nearby visitor destinations. ∞

### Events: Permitting

A reservation/permit is required to hold an event in the Capitol Building or on the Capitol Mall. The type of event –social, political, celebratory – and the size –thousands of people or a small group – does not alter the need for a permit. Permits are required for any event or gathering and are granted on a first-come-first-served basis.

Permits are free and easy to obtain on the Department of Administration website. Permits help all events to be successful and safe.

When do you need a permit? A good rule of thumb is, if you are inviting more than one other person, get a permit.

*First, second and third images, above, courtesy of Senate Media Services Minnesota House of Representatives.*



# GUIDANCE

## Honor Minnesota's history with appropriate siting of selective works of art on the Capitol Mall or elsewhere in the Capitol Area.

- 1.1. Maintain the physical integrity of existing works of commemorative art and memorials, and their settings.
- 1.2. Assure the continuation of both State and private funding for the implementation and on-going maintenance of memorials and other works of art.
- 1.3. In all improvements (involving existing or new works), explore ways to help make stories speak to all Minnesotans, and to represent Minnesota's diverse history.
- 1.4. Continue ongoing examination of the current understandings and policies surrounding art, representation and placement in the Capitol allowing for increased discourse about current representation of images, statues and monuments in the Capitol Building and on the Capitol Mall.
- 1.5. Memorialize significant persons and events by renaming existing features or buildings as an alternative to adding monuments.
- 1.6. In evaluating additional art or memorials in the Capitol Area, follow adopted thematic plans and consider the larger urban design context by establishing relationships with existing axes, vistas, entry points, and landmarks. (*See Chapter 2 for policy calling for an updated Mall Design Framework.*)
- 1.7. Expand consideration of sites off the Mall, such as use of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Cass Gilbert Memorial Park, the pocket park at Rice and Como or the open space west of John Ireland Boulevard across from the History Center, as commemorative sites. (*See map of potential sites in Chapter 4.*)

- 1.8. Continue to utilize the Policy for Works of Art in the Minnesota State Capitol (adopted in 1998 and updated in December 2015), which outlines the shared responsibility of the CAAPB with the Minnesota Historical Society for the design, structural composition, and location of artwork within the public and ceremonial areas of the Capitol Building. Update periodically as necessary.
- 1.9. Continue to utilize the Policy for Commemorative Works in the Minnesota State Capitol Area (adopted in February 2012), which provides guidance for the consideration and design of statues, monuments, memorials, or other commemorative works within the Capitol Area. Update periodically as necessary.
- 1.10. Following updates to policies called for in 1.8 and 1.9, update the Rules Governing Zoning to reflect changes to this Comprehensive Plan and updates to policies regarding Works of Art in the Minnesota State Capitol and Commemorative Works in the Minnesota State Capitol Area.

## Preserve open space on the Capitol Mall and continue to provide for public cultural and recreational programming of all types.

- 1.11. Revisit the Mall Design Framework by 2025 (*See Chapter 2*).
- 1.12. Recognizing the need to maintain the majority of the campus grounds as open space, exercise discretion and restraint in the siting and authorizing additional artworks and monuments on the Capitol Mall.
- 1.13. Continue to monitor the impacts of large events on the grounds and provide an appropriate balance that encourages use while at the same time ensures the function, health, safety and beauty of the grounds for all visitors.



**Maximize the educational value to visitors.**

- 1.14. Recognizing the three primary educational destinations for visitors as the Capitol Building, Mall and Minnesota History Center (Minnesota Historical Society), evaluate existing interpretive materials and encourage collaborations that improve the visitor experience.
- 1.15. Encourage the development of educational programming (such as walking tours) around the Capitol Mall and between the Capitol Building and other visitor destinations.
- 1.16. Explore the establishment of a self-serve visitor station and/or kiosk(s) that could provide educational, historical and directional information for visitors. The station/ kiosk(s) should be sited as strategically as possible for visibility and accessibility, and should be designed to maximize the comfort, safety, and efficiency of non-motorized travel.

**Extend a welcome to Capitol Campus visitors by continuing to provide helpful directional signage in and around the Capitol Area and online.**

- 1.17. Ensure signage is appropriate in scale and does not overpower the visible presence of the Capitol Building in the landscape.
- 1.18. Ensure that major arrival points, including transit stations and parking lots, have adequate lighting and signage to direct people safely to Campus buildings and the Mall.
- 1.19. Provide clear and consistent online directions which provide information on the various means of getting to the Capitol Area.
- 1.20. Use clear, distinctive and consistent signage graphics for automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians and coordinate the design and placement to enable visitors to find their destinations quickly.

- 1.21. Clearly identify all public parking areas in the Capitol Area; ensure this information is online and on roadway signs.
- 1.22. Continue implementation of exterior and interior signage for the Capitol, State Office Building, the MN Senate Office Building and other publicly accessible buildings, as well as the tunnel system.
- 1.23. Provide signage around the Mall to ensure visitors can easily navigate around the complex.
- 1.24. Explore ways to provide information in multiple languages.
- 1.25. Explore providing more information to legislators and other Capitol workers to answer visitor questions.
  - a. Provide information on all Capitol Campus events to lobby staff of buildings on the Mall, especially the Transportation Building and Centennial Building where visitors may go for food or restrooms.
  - b. Explore and encourage easier ways to provide legislative offices with general information on parking and area amenities.

**Extend a welcome to Capitol Campus visitors by providing access to personal comfort amenities.**

- 1.26. Explore opportunities to expand access to personal comfort amenities around the Capitol Mall. This could include improved signage to direct visitors to restrooms or other needs.
- 1.27. Explore options for providing for personal comfort amenities to visitors to the Capitol Mall when State buildings are closed.

**Ensure the Capitol is reasonably accessible for all people.**

- 1.28. Provide for multiple modes of transportation options, including transit, automobile, bicycle, personal scooter and walking.



- 1.29. Provide parking for visitors that is within reasonable walking distance to the Capitol Campus buildings. This may necessitate gradual transition of some commuters to other transportation modes or moving commuter parking to satellite locations in order to make available parking nearest the campus for visitors.
- 1.30. Explore means of access to visitors unable to pay for transportation or parking to visit the Capitol Area.
- 1.31. Redirect bus or coach parking to an area that does not interfere with pedestrian or bicycle traffic or views of the Capitol.
- 1.32. Explore opportunities to facilitate movement between the major visitor destinations of the Capitol Area—the Capitol Building and Mall, the Minnesota History Center and the Cathedral of Saint Paul.
- 1.33. Provide adequate seating, especially on the Mall, so people who need it have a place to rest as they are moving about.

**Take steps to ensure visitors safety and perceptions of safety in the Capitol Area.**

- 1.34. Recognizing that the Capitol experience begins once visitors leave their car, bike, scooter or step off transit, work with the City of Saint Paul and Metro Transit to improve safety at transit stations and on public streets surrounding the Campus.
- 1.35. Maintain sensitivity that certain types of security measures can be perceived differently by different populations, and continue to provide discreet security on campus.
- 1.36. Ensure that walkways, building entrances and major arrival points, including transit stations and parking lots, have adequate lighting to maximize safety.
- 1.37. Continue excellence in caring for the landscaping and cleanliness of the Capitol Mall and buildings, recognizing that this is a visual cue to visitors that this space is looked after, which can contribute to their sense of safety.











## 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.





## INTRODUCTION

The Capitol Building and Mall are central to the identity of the City of Saint Paul. The dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the urban design, buildings and landscapes of the Capitol Area are as important today as when they were envisioned over 100 years ago.

The Capitol Building is a preeminent and unifying focal point for the city. The Capitol Building, with its soaring white marble dome, has become part of the identity of Saint Paul and a symbol of the city. Views of the dome serve to reinforce that this is the Capital City.

The campus plan, as Cass Gilbert envisioned, was both practical and symbolic. The fan of streets, like spokes on a wheel with the Capitol at the center, provided a practical reconciliation the city's two major street grid systems: the downtown streets aligned with the river and the burgeoning neighborhood streets set on a grid east/west and north/south. Gilbert's campus plan was also highly symbolic of the connection of state government to:

- commerce (connection to downtown along Cedar Street);
- culture (connection to the Cathedral of Saint Paul along John Ireland Boulevard); and
- nature (connection directly south to the river). This southern connection, part of Gilbert's early plans, was never fully realized as the city developed.

In the developing city of Saint Paul, the campus plan provided a unifying urban design to physically connect the city fabric as well as symbolize the role of government in society. Cass Gilbert could not have known the impacts that Urban Renewal and the highways would introduce in the middle of the twentieth century, as much of the urban fabric that his plan was to lace together was destroyed during that era. Still, the campus today, which sits at the center of the city, connects neighborhoods to the west, north and east through campus to downtown and forms both the termination and spring-point for several major commercial and commuting corridors. Gilbert's grand plan for a walkable, connected and green unifying campus is still evident in the layers present in the Capitol Area today, and are worthy of study for preservation and strengthening. ∞



*In this chapter...*

This chapter outlines the role of the Capitol Area in Saint Paul, including:

- The Preeminence of the Capitol Building
- The Campus Plan
- Fundamentals: Preserving Dignity, Beauty and Architectural Integrity



Figure 2.1: The Capitol Approaches, Showing General Plan. Report on Capitol Approaches; Cass Gilbert, Inc. Architects. January 24, 1931.



# THE PREEMINENCE OF THE CAPITOL BUILDING

*Gilbert advocated zoned building height restrictions so that “...no building in the immediate vicinity would rise as high as the main cornice of the Capitol, or certainly not higher than that level, and such buildings should be kept sufficient distance from the Capitol. This refers to the blocks north as well as south of the Capitol...”*

~Gilbert, Cass, “Capitol Approaches, St. Paul, Minn., Supplementary Report,” March 24, 1931, 10

As one moves about Saint Paul, glimpses of the Capitol dome constantly remind one that this is the Capital City. For neighborhoods close to the Capitol, this identity is of even greater significance. Consequently, protection and enhancement of views are important in strengthening ties between the Capitol Area and the Capital City.

## BUILDING HEIGHT

The Capitol Building is the primary standard for height in the Capitol Area. In 2009, height districts that had been established in the Capitol Area in the early 1980s were refined to ensure views of the Capitol Building were not obstructed by the new developments coming to the East Capitol Area. In general, the limit is set to not exceed the shoulders of the Capitol Building – elevation 944'. South of the Capitol the heights of existing buildings follow the contours of the hill as it rises to the Capitol. This pattern preserves the image of the Capitol on the hill, as originally envisioned by Cass Gilbert. To the north, as the hill continues to rise, building heights may rise slightly above the shoulders of the Capitol without obstructing the view.

\*944 feet above sea level (sea level elevations are 694.1 ft. above Saint Paul datum elevations)

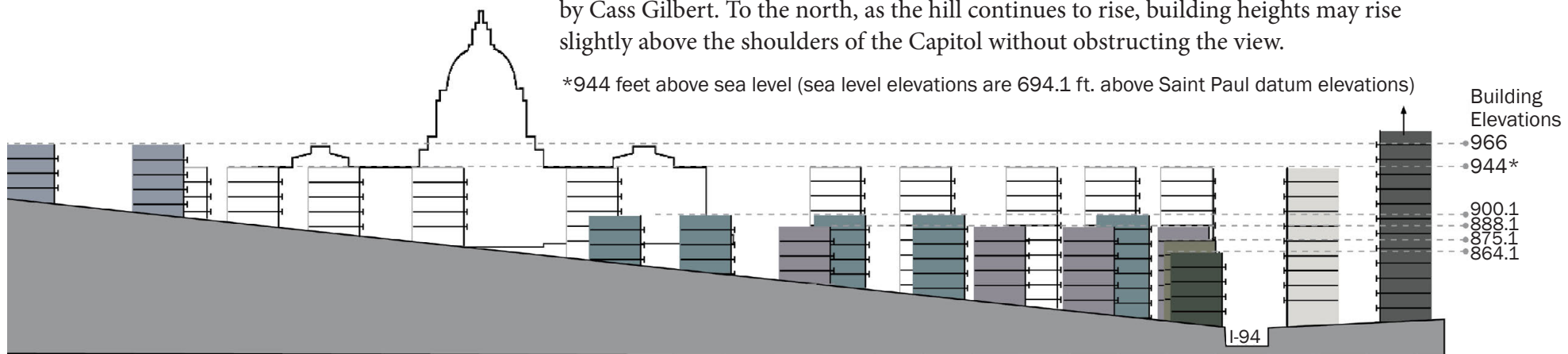


Figure 2.2: Diagram of height districts in the Capitol Area



View of Capitol and downtown Saint Paul from the High Bridge.



# CAPITOL VIEWS

Views of the Capitol Building as one approaches as well as glimpses one gets from a distance serve to reinforce that this is the Capital City.

## Approaches and View Corridors

Lines of sight along approaches are important to our visual orientation and comprehension of the Capitol Campus. These approaches and view corridors are not exclusively inward-looking, but work in two directions. Many places along Capitol Area streets afford unobstructed views of the Cathedral of Saint Paul, the city skyline, or the bluffs and river valley to the south and east.

### Primary View Corridors:

Figure 2.3: Capitol Views



1. John Ireland Boulevard looking north toward the Capitol

John Ireland Boulevard links the Saint Paul Cathedral and the Minnesota History Center with the Capitol. This view was planned in 1903 by Cass Gilbert to be one of the main axial views from the Capitol. Today, this is also a major ceremonial route for events marching to the Capitol from the Cathedral, as well as the finish line for the famous Twin Cities Marathon.



2. John Ireland Boulevard looking south toward Cathedral of Saint Paul.



3. Cedar Street looking north toward the Capitol

The view along Cedar Street is the primary axial view established by Cass Gilbert in his plans for the State Capitol and Capitol Mall. In addition to stunning views of the Capitol Building from the south, the historic churches that line the street are an important feature of this view corridor and help create a particularly attractive urban village in the area of Exchange Street and the old Fitzgerald Park.



3. Cedar Street looking south from Martin Luther King Boulevard.



Secondary View Corridors:



4. Wabasha Street, terminating at the Peace Officers Memorial, provides numerous opportunities for attractive views.



5. From the north, the view from Capitol Boulevard looking south down the hill.



6. Aurora Avenue toward the Capitol also provides visual cues to people arriving by vehicle.

Principle 2



7. Looking East from Rice Street: University Avenue, as a major vehicular and transit route, is an important view corridor directing visitors to and from the Capitol. A strong sense of arrival and view of the Capitol at the Capitol Rice LRT Station helps to orient visitors to the Capitol Area.



8. Looking East from Marion Street: Future development between Marion and Rice south of University Avenue may hide part of the Capitol view; however, a setback will be required to ensure pedestrian safety near the southern alignment of the LRT tracks along this block. This setback will help preserve the Capitol Building view from Marion.



9. Some part of the view from the exit at Marion Street from eastbound I-94 should be protected with any new development at the Sears site, in order to help convey the sense of arrival. (Image: Google)



10. Seasonally, views of the Capitol can be seen when driving south along Rice Street shown here from Pennsylvania Avenue.



## Views from inside buildings:



11. The framed view of the Capitol dome from inside the Minnesota History Center shows the architects' attention to the importance of Capitol views. (Image: MNHS)



12. The view from the 5th floor of the Veteran Services Building provides a stunning backdrop for meetings and events. Image courtesy Benjamin Johnson, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs



13. The RiverCenter and arena at West 7th Street and Kellogg Boulevard, site of the original Seven Corners as envisioned by Cass Gilbert, is a significant public space that could capture an impressive view of the Capitol dome. The new hotel being erected on the site should look to maximize Capitol views from multiple levels in the development.



# Distant Views and Vistas

Some of the best views of the Capitol are from distant locations. These distant views help to establish the preeminence of the Capitol Building and strengthen the identity of Saint Paul as the Capital City. Distant views are most important from Lexington and Dale Streets (looking down University Avenue), Wheelock Parkway (seasonally, due to growth of trees along the public open spaces atop the east rise), Mounds Boulevard and Smith Avenue.

**View from the south:** The view from Smith Avenue is particularly important as a southern extension of the connection between the Capitol and the Mississippi River. This view also aligns with Cass Gilbert's original vision of a direct southern connection to the River, which was never realized.

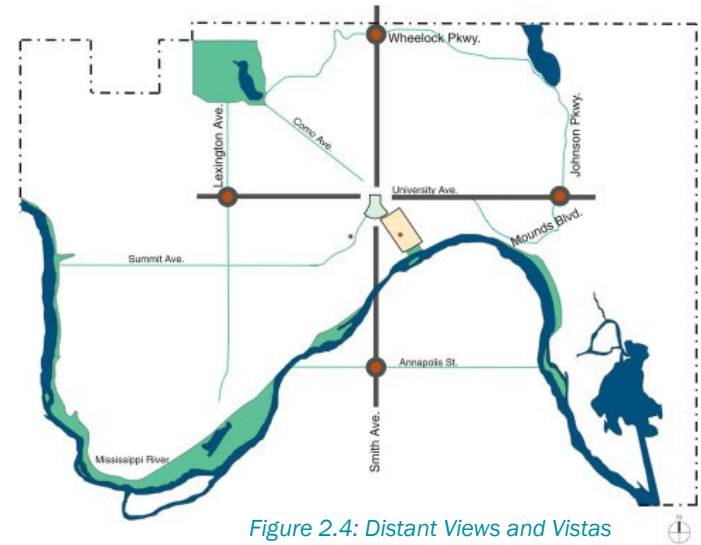


Figure 2.4: Distant Views and Vistas



View from Smith Avenue (from the overlook at the south end of the High Bridge)



View from Smith Avenue (at George St)



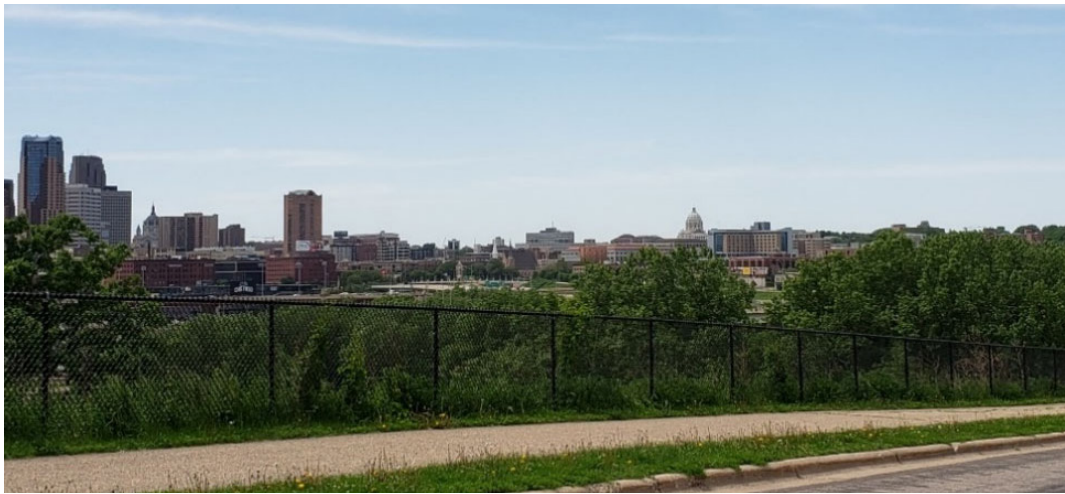
View from Smith Avenue (at Annapolis), the southern boundary for the City of Saint Paul.



**View from the east (Mounds Bluff and I-94):** Mounds Boulevard and the park overlooks of Mounds Bluff provide stunning views of downtown Saint Paul and the Capitol Building. The benefit of height restrictions near the Capitol Building are evident from this view. For drivers on westbound I-94, glimpses of the Capitol may be a first introduction to their destination, or the totality of their experience of Saint Paul as the Capital City. Protecting this view enhances the sense of Saint Paul as the Capital City.

**View from the west:** As the University Avenue rises at Lexington Parkway and Dale Street, one can view the Capitol dome in the distance. This view is an important visual landmark for Saint Paul as the Capital City.

**View from the north:** The view of the Capitol from Wheelock Parkway, although no doubt present from within private buildings or sites, is no longer visible to the general public from Wheelock due to growth of trees and vegetation (especially in warmer months) and other development. Views of the Capitol from the north are only seasonally visible through the trees. Through City of Saint Paul park planning (or neighborhood/community scale planning) to reestablish overlooks and/or simple landscaping at key sites, there is an opportunity to recreate this view for the general public. ∞



*View from the east, from Commercial Street just north of I-94*



*View from the east, from Mounds Bluff*



*View from the west, down University Avenue from Lexington Avenue.*



*View from the west, down University Avenue from Western Avenue..*



# THE CAMPUS PLAN

Minnesota's three branches of government (judicial, legislative and executive) form the core of the Capitol Area and Capitol campus. Their relationships establish a visual reminder of our government's commitment to the separation of powers which was built into our governmental structure at the start of our nation. The balanced separation begins within the Capitol Building. It has been stated that the view from the Chief Justice's seat across the great hall to the Senate is intentional, recognizing the roles of enacting the laws and that of upholding the laws of the state; while the seat of Speaker of the House faces the Capitol Mall, symbolizing the privilege of representing the people of the State. The independence of each branch organizes the greater campus plan.

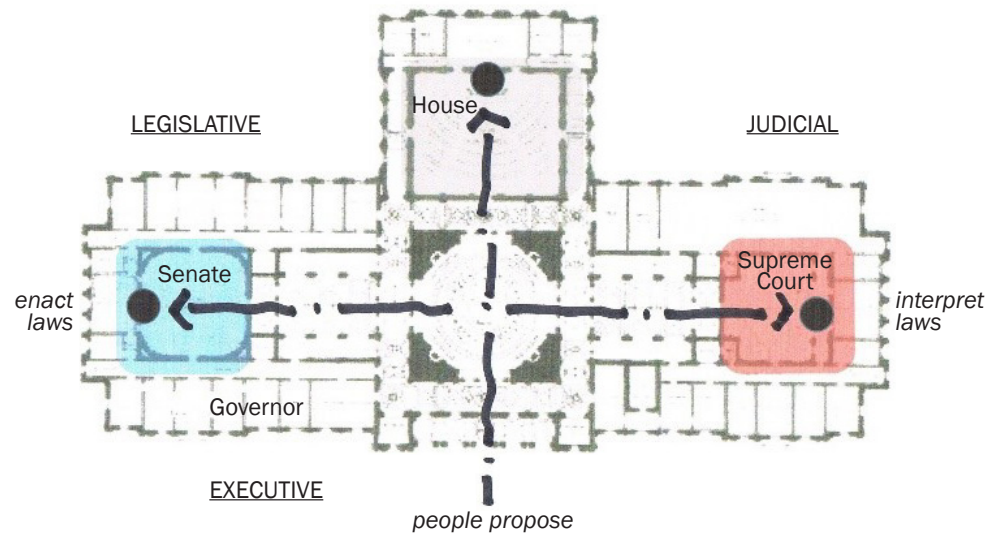


Figure 2.5: Floor plan of the Capitol Building showing physical relationships of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.



Figure 2.6: Map of Campus showing executive, legislative and judicial branches of government represented in the Administration Building (executive branch), State Office Building and Senate Building (legislative branch), and the Judicial Center (judicial branch).

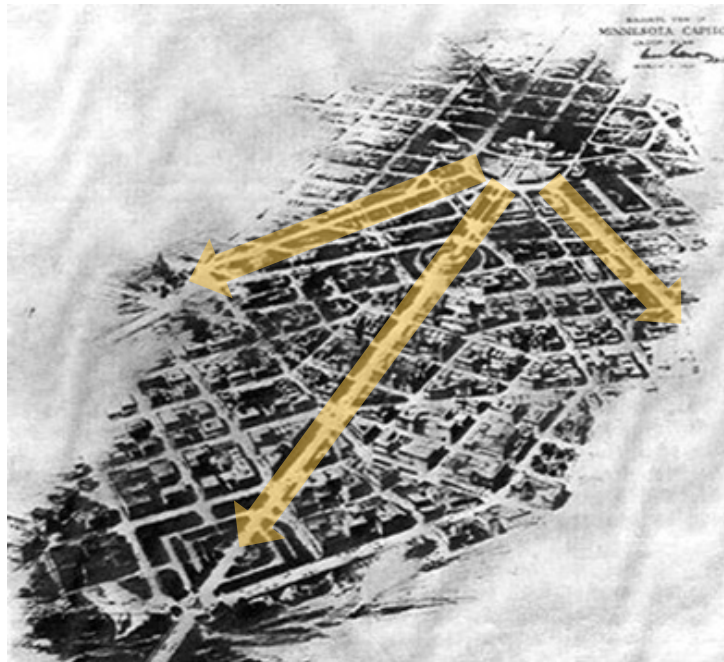


## INTENTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CAPITOL CAMPUS AND THE CAPITAL CITY

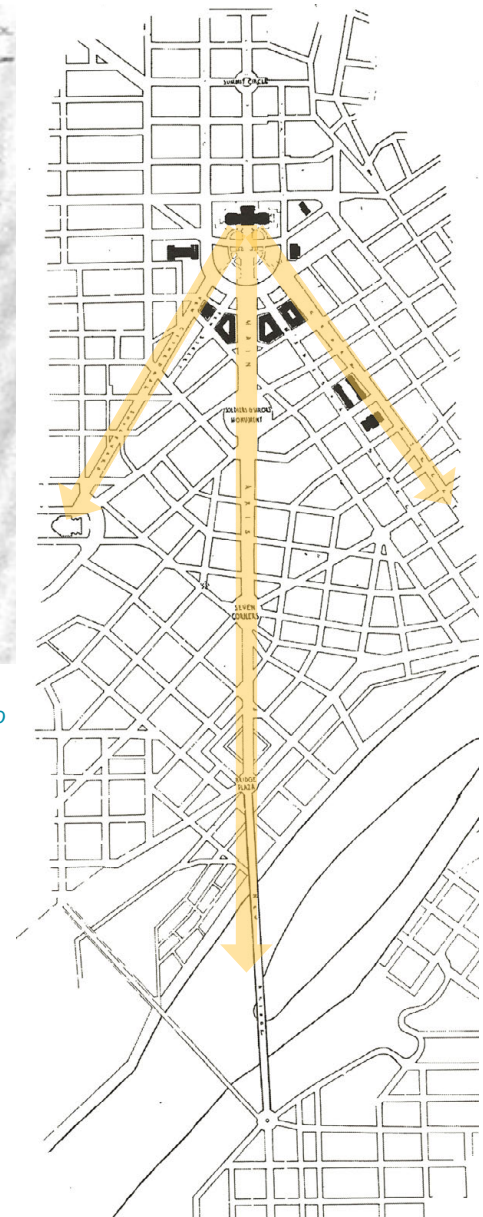
While the Capitol Building itself and the layout of the Campus buildings is symbolic of the three branches of government, the layout of the Campus within the Capital City is symbolic of the relationship between government and commerce, culture and nature. These relationships continue to serve as the basis for the urban design of the Capitol Area.

In addition to providing for the functional movement of vehicles and pedestrians, the major axes of John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street give form to the geometry of the Mall and provide focus on the Capitol Building. These axial approaches are important urban design elements that establish the scale and characteristics of the Capitol Campus. They also serve as symbolic connections to commerce and to culture.

From the beginning, Cass Gilbert recognized the importance of the physical and visual connection between the new location of the Minnesota State Capitol and the future site of the Cathedral of Saint Paul, which was to be built to the southwest on an even higher hill (one of Saint Paul's seven hills<sup>1</sup>) starting the year after the new Capitol opened. The grand boulevard connecting the two represents the connection between government and culture – a connection later fortified by the construction of the Minnesota History Center. Likewise, Cedar Street was envisioned as the connection to downtown Saint Paul.



Figures 2.7 and 2.8: Cass Gilbert's 1931 plans showing primary connections along Cedar to downtown, along John Ireland Boulevard to the Cathedral of Saint Paul, and directly south to the Mississippi River. This plan envisioned a connection across the river to Smith Avenue.



<sup>1</sup> Since the city of Rome was founded on seven legendary hills, cities around the world have claimed seven hills connect their cities to the glories of Rome. For Saint Paul, this idea was first posited by columnist Gareth Hiebert (aka Oliver Towne) in his collection of columns from 1954-1986: *City on Seven Hills: Columns by Oliver Towne* (1999). A few businesses based in Saint Paul have adopted the "Seven Hills" distinction as part of their name. For more information, see Andy Sturdevant's *MinnPost* articles at: <https://www.minnpost.com/stroll/2015/07/st-pauls-7-hills-there-seems-be-agreement-5-them/> and <https://www.minnpost.com/stroll/2015/08/st-pauls-7-hills-6-contenders-vie-last-2-spots/>.



## CONNECTION TO THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Cass Gilbert envisioned a network of public gardens connecting the Capitol Campus with the Mississippi River. These public gardens would serve those who live and work near them and connect different parts of the city with greenery. This window to the water that Gilbert envisioned—the view along the north-south axis from the Capitol to the Mississippi River and beyond—is now obstructed by the Veterans Service Building. (This building was constructed in the 1950s, prior to the creation of the CAAPB.) In its place, Cedar and Wabasha streets have become important linkages between the Capitol Campus, the downtown core and the Mississippi River.

At the south end of Cedar Street, a special water feature in Kellogg Mall, atop the Mississippi River bluffs, acknowledges the connection between the Capitol and the river. The Capitol dome can be seen at the other end of Cedar Street through the skyways from this spot. Wabasha Street is an important vehicular spine through downtown Saint Paul. It also connects both the Capitol and the downtown to the West Side neighborhoods, the only parts of Saint Paul south and west of the Mississippi River. Wabasha Street, terminating at the Peace Officers Memorial, provides numerous opportunities for attractive views.



View of the Capitol looking south toward the Mississippi River, showing primary connections of Saint Peter Street, Wabasha Street and Cedar Street.

## INTERSTATES IN THE CAPITOL AREA

There is no doubt that development of Interstate 94 immediately in front of the Capitol Campus forever altered the ability to implement Cass Gilbert's original vision for a physical connection and approach to the downtown core and Mississippi River. At the same time, the addition of this major roadway is an important physical connection for people coming to the Capitol Area by car or bus from around the region and state. Over the years, many steps have been taken to re-establish the connection to downtown and the river. ∞

*For more detail on the history of the Capitol Mall, also See: HISTORY OF THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL AREA (CAAPB, 2008) [https://mn.gov/caapb/assets/Complete%20History%20Document\\_tcm1087-280136.pdf](https://mn.gov/caapb/assets/Complete%20History%20Document_tcm1087-280136.pdf)*

*Also see "Approaching the Capitol: The Story of the Minnesota State Capitol Mall", by Marjorie Pearson, Minnesota History, Winter 2016-2017*



## Development of the Capitol Mall

- 1903: Cass Gilbert's 1903 Plan outlining three major axes extending from the Capitol building
- 1907: Capitol Grounds Commission is established, and purchase of land between Cedar and Wabasha for eventual construction of a mall
- 1913: Minnesota Historical Society purchases its current site and turns it over to the state for a future building
- 1930: The curve of Central Avenue (now Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) is established on the mall
- 1931: Cass Gilbert's 1931 Plan focuses on additional building placement and details the southern extension across the river to West Side of Saint Paul
- 1932: Morrell & Nicols plans for grading and planting around the Capitol grounds; State Office Building opens
- 1944: The first Johnston/Nelson/Nichols Plan extends the fan of the Capitol Mall to what is today and identifies the location for the future Veterans Service Building (altering Gilbert's plan for the southern axis; even at this early date, the freeway was a significant design consideration)
- 1950: Significant clearance in area between Wabasha and St. Peter
- 1953: Construction begins on Veterans Service Building, seven years after the architectural competition (altering southern axis from Gilbert's original plan)
- 1956: Saint Paul releases plans for new health center on the site just north of the old Capitol at Tenth Street, which had served as a parking lot
- 1957: Legislative Building Commission created
- 1958: Transportation Building dedicated
- 1958: Centennial Office Building opens
- 1959: Legislature authorizes additional two floors for Transportation Building (exceeding height limit recommendations by Cass Gilbert in 1931)
- 1961: Armory constructed
- 1967: Interstate 94 opens south of Capitol; Legislature creates Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission
- 1973: Upper level connection (offices) completed in Veterans Service Building, altering southern axial vistas to and from Capitol
- 1986: Minnesota Capitol Landscape Design Competition
- 1986: Concept of the green river planting enhancements to beautify the interstates going through the Capitol Area
- 1986: State Office Building courtyard infilled during office renovation
- 1989: Development begins on enhanced bridges over I-94 within the Capitol Area
- 1990: CAAPB originated two studies of the East Campus for future development
- 1992: Supreme Court relocates to new Judicial Center; Minnesota Historical Society relocates from Judicial Center to the new Minnesota History Center
- 2014: Green Line LRT opens
- 2016: Minnesota Senate Building opens
- 2017: Capitol Restoration completed, including landscaping around the Capitol Building and restoration of Aurora Promenade as Capitol Mall open space
- 2020: Ash trees along frontage roads north and south of I-94 removed due to Emerald Ash Borer; replaced with a variety of trees to complement mix of trees in downtown Saint Paul

## Interstate 94

The year that the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was created, 1967, was the same year I-94 opened to traffic south of the Capitol. While not involved in the early design, CAAPB staff later found that the I-94 freeway bridges fell under the Board's purview. Thus, when MnDOT proposed structural improvements to the bridges, necessitated by the newly-approved connection of I 35E through Saint Paul, a nine-year coordinated effort began to assure that the new bridges would be designed to be compatible with the Capitol Area. The CAAPB Board, Advisors and staff set out to be intimately involved in the actual designs for the seven bridges from Jackson Street to John Ireland Boulevard. The bridges were to become extensions of the landscape of the Capitol Campus over I-94 to connect the Campus to the downtown core.

Completed in 1992, with architectural direction from HGA Architects and the Mall Designers, Mayernik and Rajkovich, and CAAPB Architectural Advisor John Rauma; the bridge designs include gate houses, ornamental railings and a glass-covered walkway on the Cedar Street bridge. The team adopted the concept of a "green river" for the landscaping, intended to create a more human scaled, pedestrian friendly set of approaches befitting the Capitol. The dramatically enhanced landscaping, some of which proved problematic, has been modified over time. Larry Millet, a Saint Paul architectural critic, wrote in a 1992 Inland Architect,

*"The capitol area has also been the scene of an extraordinary work of public engineering: the rebuilding of an interstate highway that slices a deep trench in front of the Capitol Mall. As originally built in the 1960s, this highway (Interstate 94) created a barrier between the Capitol and downtown and also caused massive traffic tie-ups in a particularly convoluted interchange known as Spaghetti Junction. By a bit of serendipity, the Minnesota Transportation Department decided in the 1980s to untangle the junction once and for all while completing work on another interstate nearby. At this point, the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board stepped in and helped devise a plan to make the rebuilt interstate sympathetic to its surroundings.*

*The result of all this planning is what might be called the Freeway Beautiful, a mile-long stretch of interstate near the capitol that is decked out with new bridges, piers, railings, retaining walls, lighting, and classically inspired ornament. The effect of this transformation has been almost magical. The interstate, once an industrial strength interloper, has been tamed, and its edges are now a surprisingly pleasant place to stroll."*



**Going Forward: Leveraging investments in the green river vision.**

It has been three decades since the bridge and landscaping improvements innovatively transformed the foreboding barrier between the Capitol Area and downtown - from an unwalkable interstate trench into an attractive and relatively pleasant experience. Maintenance needs mount each year, as does the loss of some original landscaping. As land use needs evolve on both sides of the gap, there is an opportunity to now refocus attention on several key north-south connections, such as Saint Peter Street bridge and connections to and around the Minnesota History Center, leveraging the civic beauty of the green rivers' grand visual elements to create even more sheltered, walkable green connections. These efforts complement projects such as the Rondo Land Bridge initiative just to the west, an initiative also attempting to bridge the very deep divides caused by the destruction of so much of Saint Paul's urban and cultural fabric that made way for the interstates.

*See Guidance 1.0 in this Chapter, as well as Chapters 4 and 5 policies supporting transformation of the north-south 'Capitol Rice corridor' re-connecting downtown to northern neighborhoods through the Capitol Area.*



*Cedar Street gatehouse (left) and covered walkway (right) extend the ceremonial walkway from the Capitol Campus into downtown Saint Paul..*



*A variety of ornamental pillars adorn the bridges at Jackson, Minnesota and Wabasha Streets. (Left: Minnesota Street, Right: Wabasha Street)*



*The gatehouses along John Ireland Boulevard mirror those on Cedar Street, extending the grand axial boulevards into downtown.*



*Though worn and needing redesign and repairs, the protected walkway along the St. Peter Street bridge provides an important pedestrian connection from the Capitol Campus and neighborhoods north to the downtown core.*



# FUNDAMENTALS: PRESERVING DIGNITY, BEAUTY, AND ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

---

When the CAAPB was formed in 1967, architectural excellence was central to the purpose. The first purpose of the CAAPB is “to 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.” (MN Statue 15B.01)

The singular experience of the Capital City is derived from the urban design, buildings and landscapes in and around the Capitol Area. The following seven fundamentals, and the policy that follows, set a standard for future decision-making both on and off the campus. These fundamentals shall apply to every scale of project and all types of improvements throughout the Capitol Area, whether proposed by public or private entities.

## URBAN DESIGN

**The Capitol Building is the dominant feature and primary visual focal point of the Capitol Area and a landmark for orientation within the Capital City.** Views of the Capitol dome are an important identifying feature of Saint Paul. In 1931 Cass Gilbert identified the need to limit the height of surrounding buildings in order to maintain the preeminence of the Capitol Building and preserve important views, reinforcing the image of Saint Paul as the Capital City.

**The layout and trajectory of the street network in and around the Capitol Area is intentional, practical and symbolic, prioritizing physical connections to the Capital City and beyond.**

The landscape surrounding the Capitol Building is designed to reinforce its connection to Saint Paul as the Capital City, with major thoroughfares providing direct physical connections between the urban campus and the surrounding neighborhoods, the Capital City, Minneapolis (the state’s largest city), and the entire state.

## BUILDINGS

**The Capitol Building is the centerpiece that sets both the tone and standard for all buildings around it.** In order to support the primary architectural grandeur of the Capitol Building, governmental buildings on the Capitol Campus complement the Capitol, each creating an environment that is inspirational for those who work in them and memorable to those who visit them. Each building is significant in how it contributes to or detracts from the Capitol Building and how it forms space on campus. Building composition, materiality and detailing should be consistent with the civic qualities of the Capitol Campus.

**Non-governmental buildings in the Capitol Area acknowledge the proximity to the Capitol in their design, as well as the values of the larger residential and urban community.** Buildings are not isolated entities but are important pieces in a larger framework, and each should be designed with skill and sensitivity to this context. In order to ensure consistent and appropriate quality in new and remodeled buildings in the Capitol Area, a set of zoning and building form regulations will be maintained which guide projects toward high standards in building materiality, proportion, massing and relationships.



*The Centennial Building on Cedar Street. The Centennial Building on the eastern Mall was built prior to establishment of the CAAPB. Although the Centennial Building meets height, massing and siting requirements, it does not meet expectations of aesthetics appropriate to the architectural integrity sought in government buildings on the Mall. While the design of the Centennial Building was consistent with standard building practices of the day, it prompted the legislature to evaluate the architectural standards for buildings in close proximity to the Capitol. It was in response to this building and others like it developed in the 1950s and 1960s that prompted the establishment of the CAAPB.*

## LANDSCAPES

**Thoughtfully conceived and well-managed open spaces are key civic features that make up an important element of the Capitol Area.** Open space on the Capitol Campus is an important element of the overall campus plan. Open spaces provide a focus and orientation for buildings and other features around them, and create intimate settings to balance the monumental nature of the campus buildings.

**The design and character of the interconnected streetscapes and paths extending through and outward from the Capitol Area are in some cases extensions of campus open spaces, reflecting a quality appropriate to the public realm at the State Capitol.** As an ‘urban’ campus (see Chapter 6), streetscapes surrounding and connecting the Capitol Area should contain pedestrian-scaled elements that, when taken as a whole, are compatible with their larger Capitol context. Streets and pathways should be consciously designed as extensions of open spaces into the surrounding built environment and future development. *See Chapters 3-7 for both general and location-specific guidance on planning and design for public realm improvements.*

**Plantings enhance open spaces, reflecting Minnesota’s natural history and helping to bring the monumental nature of governmental buildings to human-scale.** Plantings at building edges help to ground buildings visually into the overall landscape, creating a more human-scale environment amongst the grandeur of governmental buildings. The selection of plantings also reflects the values of a community: a diversity of plantings and native landscapes prioritize sustainability and resilience, especially in a time of climate change. ➤



*The League of Minnesota Cities Building at Rice and University (center) and the new Senate Building at Park and University (bottom) are good examples of excellence in design in governmental and non-governmental buildings. Use of high-quality, natural and low maintenance building materials (brick, stucco, or stone) contribute to the overall design framework of the Capitol Area.*



## GUIDANCE

**Urban design in and around the Capitol Area should be both practical and symbolic, prioritizing the physical connections to the Capital City and beyond, as well as reinforcing the symbolic connections envisioned by Cass Gilbert.**

- 2.1. Connect the Capitol physically and visually to and from downtown Saint Paul and the Mississippi River.
- 2.2. Maintain John Ireland Boulevard between the Capitol, the Minnesota History Center and the Cathedral of Saint Paul as a primary civic boulevard and gathering space in Minnesota.
- 2.3. As the Minnesota History Center evolves and changes over time, maintain its importance as a connection between St. Paul's downtown and Cathedral Hill areas to the Capitol, giving special consideration to improving both physical infrastructure and human-scale elements of the street network.
- 2.4. Reinforce Cedar Street as a major visual, pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Capitol Area and downtown Saint Paul.
- 2.5. Reinforce Wabasha Street as a connection to a river crossing, the Wabasha Street Bridge, and connections to points south of the river.
- 2.6. Reinforce Robert Street as a major organizational spine within the Capitol Campus, the visual terminus of Cass Gilbert Park and a primary connector with downtown Saint Paul.
- 2.7. Improve the civic connection between the Capitol Area and downtown with an enhanced pedestrian bridge along St. Peter Street.
- 2.8. Provide connections to major State buildings, plazas and parking, for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles.
- 2.9. Maintain the highest standard of streetscape elements along all key corridors connecting the Capitol to and from the downtown core and the Mississippi River.

- 2.10. Continue to improve connections across I-94 which link the Capitol Area community to downtown Saint Paul and the Mississippi River.
- 2.11. Focus attention on smaller connections and approaches to the west, north and east in neighborhoods - as specified in Chapter 4, 5 and the Development Frameworks referenced in Chapter 7 of this plan.

**Recognizing the Capitol Building as the primary focal point of the Capitol Area and as a landmark for orientation within the Capital City, maintain the Capitol Building as the primary standard for height in the Capitol Area.**

- 2.12. New development in and around the Capitol Area should consider height and location of buildings to maintain and reinforce the preeminence of the Capitol Building when viewed from the campus and the surrounding community.
- 2.13. Continue to implement through Capitol Area zoning height limitations to protect the visibility of the Capitol.

**Seeking inspiration from Cass Gilbert's vision, preserve and enhance distant views and nearby view corridors to and from the Capitol Building.**

- 2.14. Seek appropriate viewshed protection outside of CAAPB jurisdiction to preserve and enhance Capitol views.
  - a. Explore with the city of Saint Paul key locations where height limitations and setbacks can enhance Capitol views.
  - b. Encourage or require formal interagency reviews and collaborations to achieve protection of primary view corridors.
- 2.15. Within the Capitol Area, refer to location-specific guidance provided in the Comprehensive Plan and attached Development Frameworks which outline specific viewsheds.



- 2.16. Encourage removal of billboards, skyways or other built forms that disrupt views of the Capitol.
- 2.17. To the extent feasible, encourage elements (such as bus shelters, plazas, and seating) to be designed in a manner that enhances views and connections to the Capitol Campus.
- 2.18. Use landscaping and pedestrian connections to enhance the streets in the Capitol Area and emphasize axes and view corridors.
- 2.19. Within concept, schematic and design development stages of development projects, encourage preservation and/or creation of views of the Capitol Building from the interior of buildings.
- 2.20. Distant views of the Capitol Building from Wheelock Parkway (seasonally available), Dale Street (down University Avenue), Dayton's Bluff and Smith Avenue should be thoughtfully presented and preserved in order to reinforce the identity of Saint Paul as the Capital City.

**Preserve and enhance the dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the Capitol and other governmental buildings in the Capitol Area.**

- 2.21. Create civic architecture consistent with the civic qualities of the Capitol Campus.
- 2.22. The spatial hierarchy of buildings around the Capitol should support the concept of civic design and a cohesive Capitol Campus.
- 2.23. Maintain design quality through continued use of statutorily required design competitions conducted according to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) rules and CAAPB criteria.
- 2.24. Building composition and detailing should be compatible with the Capitol through appropriate design, quality materials and creative use of color.

- 2.25. Be responsive to the surroundings in the scale and massing of buildings.
- 2.26. Encourage the integration of the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines into new state buildings and major renovations of state buildings.
- 2.27. Orient entries to public open space and emphasize major pedestrian entrances with ceremonial architectural treatments.
- 2.28. Buildings that house governmental agencies with the highest need for public access should be the most prominently placed, with distinct entrances for easy access.
- 2.29. Accommodate State agency space needs in the Capitol Area and Capital City for a balanced approach.
- 2.30. Redevelop under-utilized surface parking lots on the periphery of the Capitol Campus for new State office buildings and civic spaces, or consolidate when possible into structured parking.
- 2.31. Prioritize new State building growth at Lot C and Lot AA to remove surface parking and contribute to the revitalization of the intersection of University Avenue and Rice Street. *(Also see Chapter 7a and the Capitol Rice Development Framework)*

**Ensure that the quality of buildings in the Capitol Area is consistent with their proximity to the Capitol and in keeping with their neighborhood context.**

- 2.32. Develop architectural design guidelines for Capitol Area buildings and adapt them to the specific circumstances of each Capitol Area neighborhood. Incorporate material, building form and frontage guidelines as zoning regulations where appropriate.
- 2.33. Promote high quality design and materials with longevity in mind, commensurate with the Capitol Building, for all new buildings and major renovations adjacent to the Capitol.



2.34. Ensure development proposals are compatible in height, massing and architectural character with existing housing, commercial and residential uses in the neighborhood.

2.35. Use materials higher in quality than typical for infill or expansion housing. Favor a mixture of natural and low maintenance building materials (brick, stucco, or stone), and transparent storefront facades.

### **Ensure the highest standards for civic space and landscapes.**

2.36. Provide for the protection, development and enhancement of the public open space essential to the beauty of the Capitol Campus.

- a. Preserve and expand open spaces on the Capitol Campus that work together to create a network of people-oriented spaces radiating from the Capitol.
- b. Refine thematic groupings that expand consideration of locations off the Mall as commemorative sites.
- c. Explore ways to reinforce the human scale of the Capitol Campus, providing enclosure and accessibility.
- d. Utilize landscaping, such as tree groupings and terraces, as settings for a variety of activities or commemorative art.
- e. Provide elements that enhance the visitor experience, as outlined in Chapter 1 of this Comprehensive Plan.
- f. Reinforce the use of the Mall as an urban park. (*Also see chapter 4*)
- g. Continue to require reserves within new projects (or promote endowments) that support the maintenance of open spaces, commemorative art and landscaping.

2.37. Design connecting streets and pathways as extensions of open spaces, reflecting a quality appropriate to the public realm at the State Capitol.

a. Continue to maintain and improve, where needed, campus walks, streets, promenades and boulevards.

b. Extend the natural and historic landscape established by Saint Paul's extensive parkways and boulevards to and through the Capitol Area.

c. Increase the emphasis on expanding the Capitol Area's civic language beyond the Mall into other areas of the Capital City, especially along boulevard axes and major visual corridors.

d. Incorporate attractive, well-designed security measures, such as bollards, into the streetscape as needed.

e. Delineate paths between pedestrians, and those on bikes, scooters and other alternative modes of transportation.

2.38. Utilize sustainable, human-scale plantings to enhance the landscape.

a. Encourage landscape elements that allude to Minnesota's uniqueness, especially symbols of Minnesota heritage such as the state tree, flower or grain, where possible and appropriate.

b. In compliance with MN Statute 15B.05 Subd. 8, give priority to planting native trees and shrubs, or native grasses wherever appropriate, within the Capitol Area.

c. Incorporate principles of sustainable landscape design into the public open space of the Capitol Campus, identify potential concerns with existing vegetation (for example, the Emerald Ash Borer) and prepare plans to address the concerns in advance.

d. Promote tree diversity as a risk management technique for limiting the impact of diseases, pests, and other problems associated with climate change.

e. Encourage dense tree planting and continuous tree canopy along sidewalks to visually define approaches and to shade pedestrians.



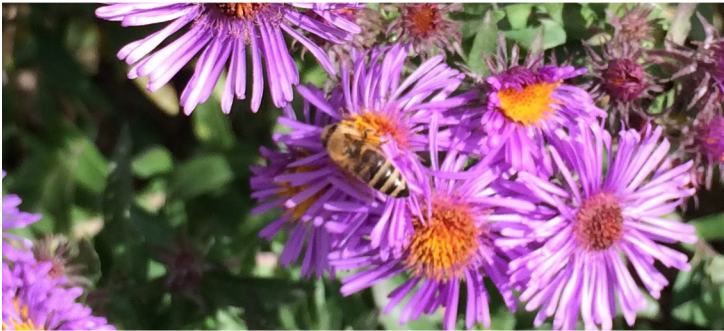
- f. Plantings near building entrances should help transition the monumental nature of governmental buildings to the human-scale.

**To ensure implementation of the highest standards for the civic spaces of the Capitol Campus, update the CAAPB Mall Design Framework (1990) by 2025, addressing the policies of the chapters of this Comprehensive Plan.**

- 2.39. In addition to addressing the policies of this plan, focus effort on updating location-specific planning and policy addressing issues including but not limited to: design and architectural of civic spaces and streets, memorial and commemorative art siting and programming, safety, wayfinding, sustainable landscaping, water, visitor experience and comfort, while ensuring continuity of primary functions such as supplying a range of places for speaking out and convening events.
- 2.40. Work with a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency team to garner input on the update to the Framework, especially regarding changes or upgrades to public or private buildings and the public realm surrounding them.
- 2.41. Include John Ireland Boulevard from the Cathedral of Saint Paul to the Capitol Building as part of the Mall, recognizing the importance of this ceremonial route as an extension of the Mall.
- 2.42. Address the site and connectivity issues of the Minnesota History Center.
- 2.43. While the focus is the design of the Mall, the Framework should address movement and connectivity to locations both within and outside the Mall.
  - a. Address the impact of the addition of the Green Line Light Rail Transit on access to the east campus.

- b. Specifically plan for improved connectivity to ensure maximum access and safety from the Capitol Mall to surrounding public spaces, including Leif Erickson Park, the Judicial Plaza, Call Gilbert Memorial Park, and to entrances of public buildings.
- c. Encourage keeping public entrances of buildings on the Mall open to ensure access to public lobbies.
- d. As new development occurs on or around the Capitol Campus (such as future development at the Sears site) ensure appropriate connectivity is considered within or as an addendum to, the updated Mall Design Framework.







### 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.





## INTRODUCTION

The Capitol Area is home to nearly 1,000 households and approximately 12,000 daily workers. In addition to this, hundreds of thousands of visitors come each year to visit the Capitol Campus, and even more pass through the area on their way elsewhere. The Capitol Area, at the very center of Saint Paul, is a connector for neighborhoods from the north to downtown, and the entrance point to the city for travelers along the interstates.

The Capitol Area should be a model for Minnesota, employing the best practices in healthy living, environmental quality, economic vitality, community cohesion and identity.

The Capitol Area aspires to be a living demonstration of innovative development that balances equity, sustainability and environmental responsibility with economic vitality, a strong sense of place, focus on communities and families, and an affordable, healthy quality of life. The best time to implement best practices is in the earliest stages of design and planning. Community trust is built early in the project, and prioritizing best practices from the beginning demonstrates commitment to the high ideals of the Capitol Area and Minnesota.

The first two chapters of this plan focused on the Capitol Campus. The next four chapters guide how we physically maintain, restore and develop the Capitol Area surrounding the Capitol Campus. These chapters outline the public realm, multi-modal transportation, land use diversity, and communities of the Capitol Area. While the content of these chapters covers physical elements of our environment, such as parks and open spaces, roads and transit, housing and land uses, and historic assets, the community and its people are at the heart of the plan. ~



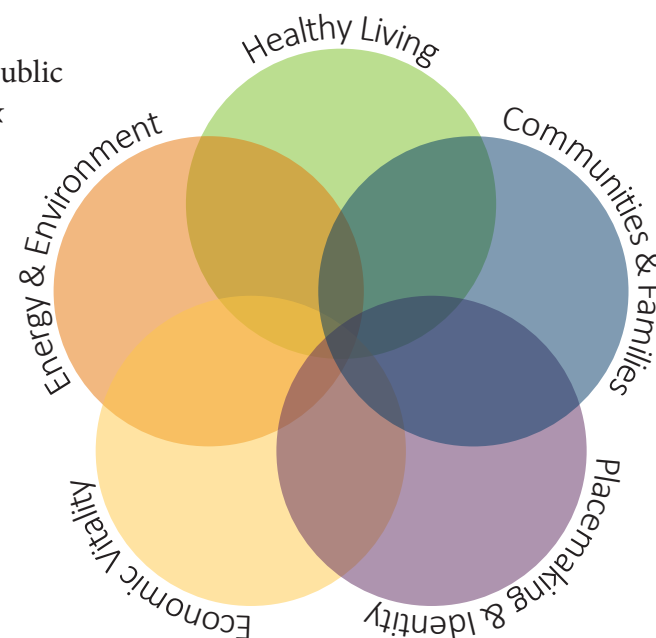
*In this chapter...*

This chapter covers the five lenses which define best practices for projects in the Capitol Area:

- Healthy Living
- Communities & Families
- Placemaking & Identity
- Economic Vitality
- Energy & Environment

## THE HOLISTIC 5 POINT LENS

Each Principle in this Comprehensive Plan is rooted in equity and sustainability and is viewed through a holistic 5-point lens, balancing public health, environmental quality, economic vitality, strong communities & families, and placemaking & identity. The CAAPB expects application of these lenses in the earliest stages of planning and design.



*Images on title page by CAAPB Staff, with the exception of lower left, courtesy of Shobi's Table.*



## HEALTHY LIVING

Much of our health is affected by the *community* in which we live. While many people would like to make healthy choices daily, it can be hard if parks, healthy foods, and other health-supportive amenities are not available where they live. If public transportation systems are not available in a neighborhood and a person cannot get to a well-paying job, decisions between rent and food might be made, or long hours worked over multiple jobs, ultimately affecting health. If a community is unsafe or sidewalks are deteriorated or missing, even something as simple as walking can be a difficult decision.

Community planning has the potential to impact the majority of our health outcomes. How can we create a community in which everyone has an opportunity to make healthy active living choices? As planners for the Capitol Area, we have an important responsibility to plan with health in mind.

---

*“Health is a state of complete physical, social and mental well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”*

~World Health Organization definition of health

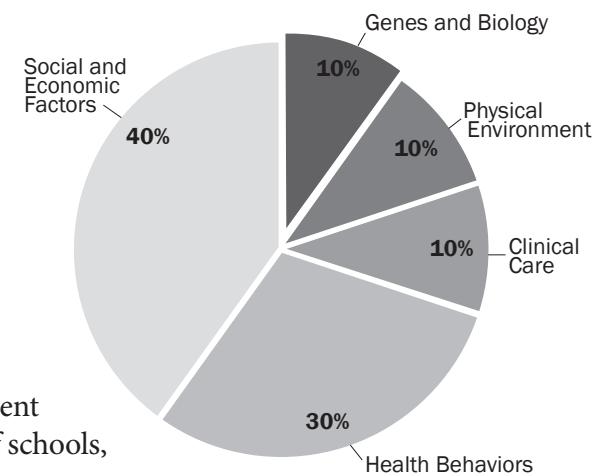
---

### What Are the Determinants of Health?<sup>1</sup>

The ability to live a healthy life is determined by more than a person’s genes. The determinants of health are commonly characterized as a mixture of five factors:

- genes & biology – what we are born with;
- physical environment – such as living conditions, access to green space and parks, exposure to toxins, neighborhood context, transportation options, and air quality;
- clinical care – such as access, quality, insurance coverage and affordability;
- health behaviors – such as diet and exercise;
- social and economic factors – such as housing stability, food security, employment opportunities, job stability, and quality of schools, to name a few.

Figure 9: Determinants of Health



It is estimated that only 10% of a person’s health is related to their biology, leaving an astounding 90% of a person’s health outcome to access to healthcare, health behaviors, the physical environment in which they live, and other socioeconomic factors. All of these factors influence our health and well-being – and are partly out of our own control.

“The negative or positive impact of social determinants of health can accumulate over a lifetime, alter a person’s life course, and be passed down to future generations. According to the World Health Organization, about 75% of health inequalities, or differences in outcomes, could be considered unfair and potentially avoidable, and as a result are labeled health inequities, differences in outcomes that are avoidable, unfair, or unjust.” (MN Department of Health)

For more information on Health Equity, see the Minnesota Department of Health’s “Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature,” February 1, 2014.

<sup>1</sup> Text and pie chart data gathered from: Comprehensive Plans - A guide to improving health in Ramsey County, August 8, 2017. Healthy People 2020: Social Determinants of Health. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>



## COMMUNITIES & FAMILIES

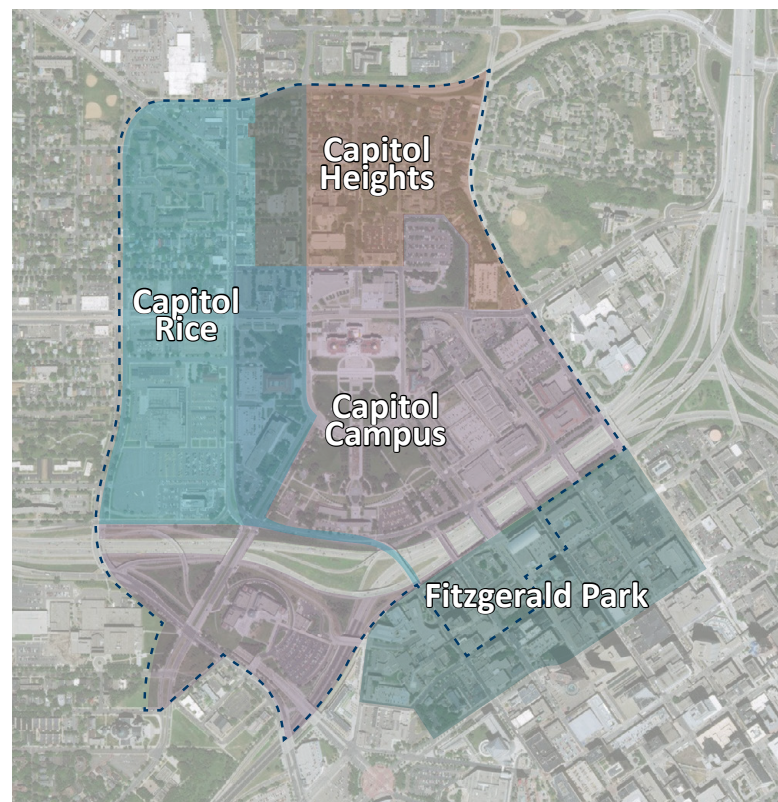
People are at the heart of every policy in this plan. Planning and zoning policies enacted by the CAAPB affect not only State of Minnesota employees and visitors to the Capitol Campus, but the thousands of others who live and work in and near the Capitol Area. Large employers and office buildings, many small businesses and nearly 1,000 households make up the Capitol Area's diverse community. The Capitol Area has always been, and must continue to be, a place that welcomes everyone.

A public realm that encourages a safe and enjoyable pedestrian and bicycle experience, a variety of housing types, a diversity of small businesses to meet daily needs, access to parks and open spaces, and the ability to live near work all strengthen Capitol Area communities and families. As the Capitol Area grows and develops over the years, it must be done in a way that respects existing communities, making every effort to maximize retention of families and small businesses.

## PLACEMAKING & IDENTITY

Placemaking and Identity is a multidisciplinary design approach to planning and development done in collaboration with the community that lives, works and uses the space. When done well, it can inspire communities to “own” the places where they live, work, and gather. Placemaking and identity can help foster a sense of community by honoring the voices of community members and creating a strong sense of home, unique to other places.

The Capitol Area is at a critical nexus between the Frogtown-Rondo, Summit-University, Downtown and North End neighborhoods. It is an area of great ethnic diversity and land use diversity. The sixty blocks of the Capitol Area are home to four overlapping districts that each have a distinct character. Capitol Rice is an area in transition, with a historic commercial main street and major development opportunity on the Sears block. Capitol Heights is a quiet residential neighborhood overlapping Capitol Rice and home to several large office buildings. Fitzgerald Park is a downtown neighborhood with an increasing residential population in condominiums and apartments. Each of these districts borders the Capitol Campus and interacts with it in different ways. *(See Chapter 7 for introductions to each district.)*



*Each neighborhood, even each street, has a unique history and community.*



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

For a plan to be sustainable, it must be economically sustainable, fostering growth in ways that enhance the quality of life of a community. Urban planning/design & economic development are intrinsically related. The practice of economic development aims to improve the well-being of people through a focus on creating jobs and making goods and services available. The means by which this is done is part of the urban planning process. Techniques such as transit-oriented development and mixed-use zoning can aid in creating economic vitality and affordable living. Zoning supportive of small businesses helps contribute to a community's economic vitality as well as supports community identity. Multi-modal transportation opportunities give people the ability to live with fewer cars, making living more affordable.

Both public and private investments are welcome additions to the Capitol Area. Inter-jurisdictional planning and investments will be required for building and public realm improvements.

### Case Study

In 2019 the City of Saint Paul awarded 14 businesses and organizations funding for physical improvements as part of the Saint Paul Commercial Vitality Zone designation. The Capitol Rice Planning effort, led by the CAAPB in partnership with multiple governmental and non-profit partners, was a 6-month process which informed the financial awards.

## ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT:

Many factors contribute to the sustainability and resilience of a place. Green building guidelines, adherence to water and waste standards, access to public transportation to limit single-occupancy vehicle use, and availability of goods and services within walking distance of home or work, all contribute to the environmental sustainability of a community. ≈

---

*“Despite increasing awareness around the impact of climate change from human activity, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions continue to rise globally. A recent climate report shows trends toward more extreme climate scenarios than previously predicted. In Saint Paul, impacts are felt and observed most noticeably as extreme heat events, poor air quality, increases in frequency and severity of precipitation (both rain and snow), river flood events, ecological changes, and psychological impacts. These changes also have a disproportionately negative impact on vulnerable populations and historically marginalized communities of color.”*

~Saint Paul Climate Action & Resilience Plan, page 5

---



## Energy and the Environment: What is on the books today?

Development in the Capitol Area is subject to city, county, state and other institutions sustainability regulations. Policy/zoning in the Capitol Area requires minimum compliance with these plans. This comprehensive plan does not set additional sustainability metrics, but rather will enable city, county, state and other institutions' priorities for water and energy/carbon through policy and zoning and will encourage implementation of higher standards.

### Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 Guidelines) (v3.2 released January 2020)

Minnesota Statute 16B.325b requires all new buildings and major building renovations receiving funding from the bond proceeds fund to comply with Minnesota's sustainable building guidelines. The guidelines can also be used on a voluntary basis on any project. The B3 Guidelines (which stands for Buildings, Benchmarks and Beyond) can be applied to the design of new buildings or renovations to meet sustainability goals for site, water, energy, indoor environment, materials and waste. [https://www.b3mn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/B3GuidelinesVersion32\\_FINAL\\_20200122.pdf](https://www.b3mn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/B3GuidelinesVersion32_FINAL_20200122.pdf)

By using the B3 Guidelines, projects will automatically be applying the SB 2030 Energy Standard. SB 2030 Energy Standard is a progressive energy conservation program designed to significantly reduce the energy and carbon in Minnesota commercial, institutional and industrial buildings. Adherence to SB 2030 standards is strongly encouraged in all commercial development in the Capitol Area. <http://www.b3mn.org/2030energystandard/>

After design, during the building occupancy period, the building will also use the B3 Benchmarking tool to track and compare actual energy use. B3 Benchmarking is an online tool which uses basic building and meter information to summarize

energy consumption, costs, and carbon emissions in monthly and annual reports for Minnesota public buildings. <https://mn.b3benchmarking.com/>

The B3 Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) is another tool to survey occupants on the indoor environmental quality of the building after occupancy. If a building is enrolled in the B3 Guidelines project tracking, the developer is required to complete a post-occupancy evaluation (POE). This online form is free for use with B3 buildings. Buildings not following the B3 Guidelines can participate for a fee. <https://www.b3mn.org/poe/>

### Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB)

"A first step in achieving a more harmonious relationship between human activity and the environment is understanding the impact which a proposed project will have on the environment." (MN Statute 4410.0200) The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board regulates the environmental review process for new developments in the state. The CAAPB and the City of Saint Paul will work closely with the EQB on projects requiring environmental review.

An Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) process is a hybrid of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) review processes. "The AUAR document uses a list of questions adapted from the EAW form, but provides a level of analysis of typical urban area impacts comparable to an EIS." *For information on the AUAR process, visit:* <https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/auar-process>

In 2019 the EQB, along with multiple state agencies, prepared the 2019 Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card. This report provides a snapshot of Minnesota's environment, focusing on five key areas of Minnesota's environment: climate, energy, air, water and land. This report provides valuable

information for the public and policy-makers. *For more information and to download the report:* <https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/2019-EE>

In 2020, the EQB is developing a 2020 State Water Plan. The plan outcomes include:

- "Deeper understanding of how climate change / variability affects water management
- Prioritized actions for the coming decade
- Shared priorities and vision across agencies"

*For more information on the 2020 State Water Plan, visit:* <https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/>

### MN Statute 115A.551 Recycling

Subd. 2a of the statute sets out county-level recycling requirements. By December 31, 2030, each county in the metropolitan area will have as a goal to recycle or compost 75% by weight of total solid waste generation. This goal is important to consider in the design phase of renovations and new construction to allow adequate space in the building and surrounding to accommodate recycling and organics collection. Even if organics collection is not immediately planned for building operations, the design must incorporate future ability for organics collection. *Also see:* <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/2019/cite/115A.551>

### MN Statute 15B.05 Subd. 8. Priority for Native Vegetation

The statute requires a priority for use of native vegetation. Native vegetation, in addition to providing beauty and color in multiple seasons, works with the environment, not against it. Native plants can withstand the extreme temperatures of Minnesota, as well as the typical rainfall for the area. The University of Minnesota Extension and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have detailed information on native species. *See:* <https://extension.umn.edu/find-plants/native-plants> and <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/gardens/nativeplants/index.html>



### **Minnesota Housing's Enterprise Green Communities Criteria (EGCC)**

The Minnesota Green Communities Initiative seeks to integrate green building and affordable housing by promoting resident health, environmental health and economic benefit to the residents and communities in affordable housing construction and rehabilitation. The EGCC, developed by the Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., is adapted to meet Minnesotan's needs and conditions through an overlay (MN Overlay and Guide). Unless specifically noted otherwise, all projects receiving a Housing Tax Credit (HTC) allocation or other capital improvement funding from Minnesota Housing must meet all requirements of the EGCC, as amended in the MN Overlay and Guide. See: <http://www.mnhousing.gov/wcs/Satellite?cid=1358905261142&pagename=External%2FPage%2FEXTStandardLayout>

### **Ramsey County 2040 Comprehensive Plan: Resilience Chapter**

Ramsey County has identified key goals for resilience in its 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Among the key themes is the goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 from 2008 levels. Other themes include working with community partners to eliminate food insecurity, implementing a countywide renewable energy plan, and recovering value from waste to add value to the local economy. See: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/projects-initiatives/comprehensive-plan>

### **Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) Rules (Revised June 2019)**

The entirety of the Capitol Area falls within the Capitol Region Watershed District. All development within the Capitol Area must comply with standards and practices for water management. All construction projects disturbing more than one acre of land require a permit from the CRWD. "Most

of CRWD is fully developed, making it necessary to utilize stormwater improvement technologies as part of redevelopment projects to reduce stormwater pollution to CRWD's lakes, wetlands and the Mississippi River. In order to achieve CRWD's goal of cleaner water resources, the rules require volume reduction practices that capture 1.1 of rainfall over all newly constructed impervious surfaces. This is most often achieved by infiltration of runoff into the soil." (CRWD) See: <https://www.capitolregionwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/06-05-19-CRWD-Amended-Signed-Rule.pdf>

### **Saint Paul Climate Action & Resilience Plan (December 2019)**

The City of Saint Paul's Climate Action & Resilience Plan (adopted by the City Council in December 2019) focuses on achieving carbon neutrality in city operations by 2030 and citywide by 2050. Strategies focus on what residents can do in their daily lives, as well as policy and regulatory actions the City can take, to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to the changing climate, and improve quality of life in the city. See: <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Mayor%27s%20Office/Saint%20Paul%20Climate%20Action%20%26%20Resilience%20Plan.pdf>

### **Saint Paul Sustainable Building Policy (November 2010)**

The Sustainable Building Policy requires minimum compliance standards for development of commercial and residential properties that receive more than \$200,000 in City/Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)/public funding; are owned by the City or HRA or; are built with the intent of having the City or HRA become the sole tenant. See: <https://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentCenter/View7/Building%20Policy%20for%20Private%20Development.PDF>

### **Saint Paul's Energy Benchmarking Ordinance (February 2020)**

Energy use in commercial and residential buildings accounts for over half of Saint Paul's greenhouse gas emissions, so increasing building energy efficiency is critical for Saint Paul to achieve its climate goals. The Energy Benchmarking ordinance requires that owners of multi-family and commercial properties 100,000 square feet and larger must benchmark energy and water use by June 1, 2020; properties 50,000 square feet and larger must comply by June 1, 2021. See: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/mayors-office/energize-saint-paul>



# Energy and the Environment: Other Trends and Tools

## Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicle use is on the rise. Minnesota and the City of Saint Paul have launched Electric Vehicle Mobility Networks to communicate and facilitate management of increased electric vehicle use. Ramsey County also encourages public and private transition to electronic vehicles in its 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Capitol Area properties are encouraged to provide electric vehicle charging capability. *For more information about the Electric Vehicle Mobility Networks, visit: <https://www.driveelectricmn.org> and <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/transportation/twin-cities-electric-vehicle-mobility-network>*

## Solar-Ready Flat Roofs

While solar is not required on new buildings, all flat roofs are highly encouraged to be built solar-ready. A solar-ready roof is one that is structurally built to make later installation of a solar power system an easier task. *See “Solar Ready Building Design Guidelines for the Twin Cities, Minnesota” for more information: <http://mn.gov/commerce-stat/pdfs/solar-ready-building.pdf>*

Xcel Energy Basic Energy Design Assistance Program. Xcel Energy provides free, comprehensive services to identify energy and cost-saving strategies to help developers in the design of a project. All new developments in the Capitol Area above 20,000 square feet should perform, minimally, the “Basic” Energy Design Assistance track provided by Xcel Energy. *See Xcel Energy’s Energy Design Assistance website for more information: [https://www.xcelenergy.com/programs\\_and\\_rebates/business\\_programs\\_and\\_rebates/new\\_construction\\_and\\_whole\\_building/energy\\_design\\_assistance](https://www.xcelenergy.com/programs_and_rebates/business_programs_and_rebates/new_construction_and_whole_building/energy_design_assistance).*

## Urban Tree Canopy

Urban tree canopy provides many environmental benefits including reducing summer temperatures, improving water quality by intercepting rain, reducing air pollution and providing shade to lower air conditioning costs. A tree canopy also beautifies the public realm and increases property values. A diverse tree canopy provides beauty, as well as guards against large-scale destruction due to climate changes or disease (such as Emerald Ash Borer that killed large areas of trees in the 2010s). The City of Saint Paul has assessed and monitors the city’s tree canopy. New developments and changes to the roadways are encouraged to plant trees that increase and diversify the existing tree canopy. *For more information, see the Saint Paul Urban Tree Canopy Assessment at: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/natural-resources/forestry/urban-tree-canopy>*

## Plants for Pollinators

Priority for native vegetation is a requirement in the Capitol Area (MN Statute 15B.05 Subd. 8). Preference for native pollinator-friendly plants are also highly encouraged. In 2019, Governor Tim Walz issued Executive Order 19-28 recognizing pollinators as important to Minnesota’s economy, ecology, and way of life and directing state agencies to restore pollinator health in Minnesota. The EQB then published a Minnesota State Agency Pollinator Report, which includes a range of ideas for pollinator conservation. *See the report at <https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/pollinators>*



## IMPLEMENTING THE BEST PRACTICES PRINCIPLE

The best time to implement best practices is in the earliest stages of design and planning. For instance, the best time to implement energy efficient options is in the earliest stages of design, when changes are the least expensive. Going beyond standard energy efficiency up front can have long-term savings on energy bills and operating costs. In addition, financial incentives from utility companies may be available to developers that implement energy conservation investments in their projects. Retrofitting a building later for solar, electric vehicle charging or other features can be expensive. All projects should meet, and where possible exceed established regulations for water, waste and energy/carbon set by applicable institutions. The Capitol Area can set an example for Minnesota by ensuring that projects are smart investments and that they have considered the areas of sustainable building practice introduced in this chapter.

### **Best practices should be considered during the earliest stages of design.**

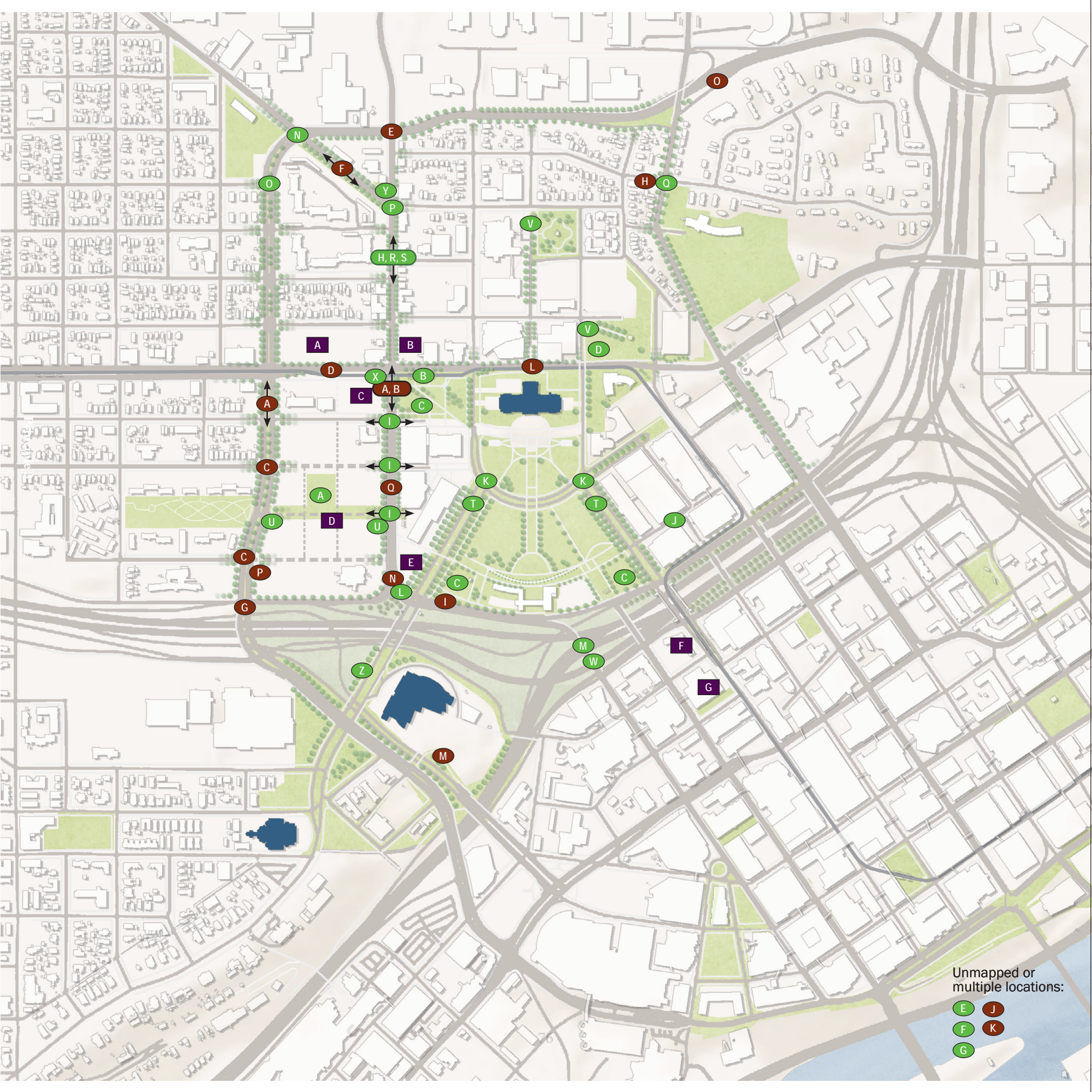
- 3.1. Public and private projects in the Capitol Area should consider the five holistic lenses—healthy living, communities & families, placemaking & identity, economic vitality, and energy & environment—in the earliest stages of planning and design.

### **All policies of this comprehensive plan are a means of accomplishing best practices.**

- 3.2. The policies of this comprehensive plan are to be considered written as means of accomplishing best practices. The policies in Chapters 1 and 2 address ways the Capitol Area can meet this principle while serving the people of Minnesota. The following four chapters extend this principle into all of its roles as an urban district, illustrating how best practices will be implemented in the Capitol Area public realm (Principle 4), transportation network (Principle 5), and land use (Principle 6), while keeping community at the center of every planning decision (Principle 7).

The figure on the following page is a visual summary of the location-specific policies of this plan, all of which strive to implement the best practices principle.





Unmapped or  
multiple locations:

- E
- F
- G
- J
- K



## Public Realm

### Top Opportunities for Improvement (Principle 4)

- A New park space in the Sears site redevelopment
- B Leif Erickson Park mobility hub
- C Mall open space
- D Cass Gilbert Park improved visitor signage
- E Privately Owned Public Spaces\*
- F Designated Dog Park\*
- G Pedestrian Access to Parks\*
- H Streetscape Improvement: Rice Street north of University
- I Crossing Improvement: Rice Street
- J Streetscape Improvement: Columbus Avenue and Centennial Parking Ramp
- K Key Intersection Improvements: Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. at John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street
- L Key Intersection Improvement: John Ireland at Rice/12th/St Anthony
- M Key Bridge Improvement: St. Peter Street Bridge
- N Key Intersection Improvement: Marion St and Como Ave
- O Crossing distance along Marion Avenue
- P Key Crossing at Como Avenue and Rice Street
- Q Key Crossing at Jackson and Winter Street
- R Seating or areas of refuge along the streetscape
- S Community Identity Signage: Capitol Rice District
- T Capitol Mall Pedestrian Signage
- U Public art installation connecting the Mall and Western Sculpture Park
- V Public art installation connecting the Capitol Building and Mall and Bethesda Healing Gardens
- W Public art incorporated into a new pedestrian/bikeway bridge design at St. Peter Street
- X Public art installation at University and Rice
- Y Public art installation at Rice and Como
- Z Public art along John Ireland Boulevard

## Multi-Modal Transportation

### Top Opportunities for Improvement (Principle 5)

- A Multi-Modal Streets
- B Pedestrian-Friendly Main Street
- C Crosswalks: Marion Street
- D Improved Pedestrian Environment Adjacent to Light Rail
- E Intersection Improvement: Rice and Pennsylvania
- F Como Avenue Improvements
- G Freeway Access
- H Missing Sidewalk: Winter Street
- I Missing Sidewalk: 12th Street
- J Dedicated Bike Lanes\*
- K Bike Racks Near Building Entrances\*
- L Bike Lane Review: University
- M Bike Lane Review: MN History Center
- N Capital City Bikeway Extension
- O State Trail Connection
- P Bus stop at Marion and Ravoux
- Q Bus rapid transit line along Rice Street

*\*unmapped or multiple locations*

## Land Use

### Top Opportunity Sites (Principle 6)

- A Future site of Saint Paul City School
- B State Lot C and the Ford Building
- C State Lot AA
- D Sears Site
- E State Lot G-with cont'd access to underground parking
- F County Building
- G McNally Smith Building

## Community

### Development Frameworks (Principle 7)

- 7A. Capitol Rice
- 7B. Capitol Heights
- 7C. Fitzgerald Park

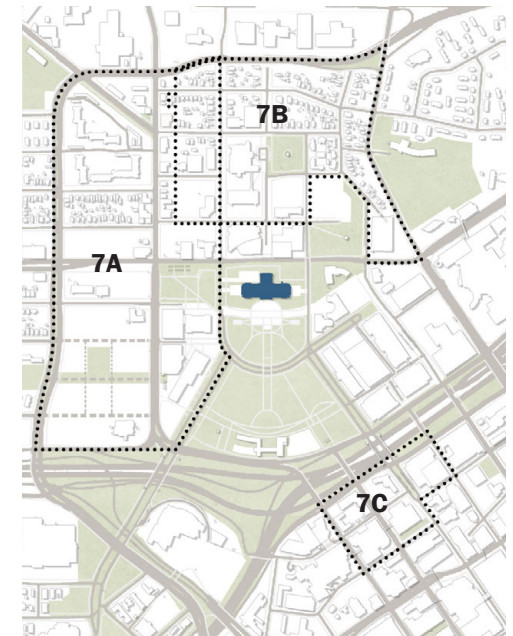


Figure 3.1: (left) Top Opportunities for Improvement and Top Opportunities Sites in the Capitol Area

Figure 3.2: (above) Capitol Area Neighborhoods/Districts







PRINCIPLE 4

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





# INTRODUCTION



The public realm refers to the network of public spaces that extends beyond the Capitol Campus into the surrounding neighborhoods. This network includes open spaces—such as parks and plazas—and the linkages that connect them—streets, pathways, trails, and bridges. The fourth principle of this Comprehensive Plan deliberately specifies a vision for the Capitol Area as an **integrated, high-quality, human-scale** public realm experience:

**Integrated.** An integrated public realm pattern coordinates multiple elements to create a harmonious whole. The Capitol Area will continue to gradually restore its physical re-integration with the surrounding City. In recent decades light rail transit, mall improvements, the Capital City Bikeway and interstate bridges were key investments leveraged to help re-connect the Capitol Area with the surrounding city, following the end of the streetcar, interstate construction and the removal of older urban fabric (and communities). Looking forward, new public and private investments in Rice Street from north to south hold a big opportunity to continue the re-integration of the Capitol Area with the surrounding city.

**High-quality.** A well-designed pedestrian<sup>1</sup> experience, tied to green spaces, parks and places for people to enjoy, is a fundamental part of the Capitol Area experience. High quality street furnishings, lighting and signage help to extend the grandeur of the Capitol and reinforces a strong sense of place. Consistency in the quality of design elements can extend through the Capitol Area and blend into the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Human-scale.** A human-scaled public realm is designed for the pedestrian, creating an environment that encourages walking. Walkable streets include continuous street-level building frontages and openings with well-designed windows, doors and stoops; as well as a system of streetscape elements, such as benches, lighting and street trees. Wide and well-maintained sidewalks with shade, benches for rest and adequate lighting encourage use by all, helping to create successful and safe spaces.

---

<sup>1</sup> This plan uses a broad definition of the term “pedestrian”. Pedestrians include people who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs and people who travel on foot. The term “walking” includes people who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices to move around. A “walkable” street also means “wheelable” street. (See Chapter 5 for more information about accessibility in the multi-modal transportation network.)



The public realm network is what visitors first encounter when they enter the Capitol Area, and what residents and workers move through every day as they live, work, learn and play. Excellence in design in the public realm will have a powerful impact on enhancing visitor and worker experience, improving quality of life for residents, and increasing commercial vitality for area businesses.

**Community is created in the public realm.** The public realm is not only what people move through to get to their destinations, it is a place where people meet their community. An integrated, high-quality, human-scale public realm encourages walking and increases the chance of interactions between community members. These casual interactions are the seed for deeper relationships and the feeling of safety and belonging in a community.

**Businesses benefit from more people in the public realm.** Just as Minnesota's Front Yard invites people into the Capitol Building, a beautifully designed commercial street sets an inviting stage for businesses. Investment in the public realm encourages use and reflects positively on surrounding businesses. Likewise, businesses that have invested in their properties and storefronts contribute to the overall attractiveness of a street. Main streets with attractive, local-oriented retail where pedestrians dominate are more successful.

**The public realm plays an important role in urban health.** Physical, mental, social, environmental and neighborhood health are all enhanced by a high-quality, comfortable, public realm. Streets designed to encourage walking and biking can help people get exercise while going about normal daily activities. Inviting streets and quality parks get people outside and provide access to social interactions and nature, so important to individual mental health. Safer, well-designed streets with a balance of transportation simply makes for a healthier environment for all.

**More people in the public realm increases overall neighborhood safety.** Public safety begins with the felt presence of community. More people doing more things at more times of the day makes people feel safe, which in turn draws more people. Clean streets, good lighting and well-kept property signals the greater presence of a community that cares. Well-designed building frontages that are interactive and engaging create safety by putting more eyes (and people) on the street.

**A strong public realm is good for family economics and housing.** Cohesive walking and biking networks also allow families to choose alternatives like transit, putting more money back into pockets for housing, food or education.

*Images on title page courtesy of Senate Media Services and MN House of Representatives.*



Four big moves support the vision for the public realm in the Capitol Area:

**1. Transform the Capitol/Rice corridor, the major north/south corridor of the Capitol Area connecting neighborhoods to the northwest with downtown Saint Paul, into a human-scale “great street.”**

*“First and foremost, a great street should help make community... A great street should be a most desirable place to be, to spend time, to live, to play, to work... Streets are settings for activities that bring people together.” ~quoted from Great Streets by Allan Jacobs (1995)*

Rice Street is an important corridor connecting neighborhoods to the north and northwest through the Capitol Area to downtown. For many, the large parking lots on the former Sears site, Rice Street itself and the interstate are still an uncomfortable walking environment, and many avoid these areas altogether unless traveling by car. With smart investments and good design, this corridor (and other key connections) will be transformed over time, restoring more modes of travel. While vehicular traffic is an important consideration in the Rice Street design, traffic movement needs to be balanced with a safe and vibrant pedestrian realm which encourages walking and creates community building opportunities.

**2. Restore connections from the Capitol Area to the west through re-introduction of streets and improved greenways, increasing walkability for residents and workers.**

The historic small block pattern of the early 1900s gave way to superblocks mid-century. Superblocks, such as the Sears block, degrade walkability and cause a physical separation between the Capitol Mall

and neighborhoods to the west. Good design and reintroduction of east-west streets, particularly through the Sears site, will improve connectivity and walkability of the area.

**3. Incrementally improve the pedestrian-scale of the entire Capitol Area, extending the quality of the Capitol Campus outward into the surrounding neighborhoods.**

All streets in the Capitol Area should reflect a safe, high-quality, human-scale pedestrian experience. Improving the quality of the public realm will happen over time, street-by-street as new development occurs, or streets are repaired. With every development effort, attention should be placed on improving the pedestrian experience.

**4. Further establish the Capitol Mall as a part of the integrated and linked system of community parks and open spaces in and nearby the Capitol Area.**

The Capitol Mall, in addition to its role as Minnesota’s Front Lawn (see chapters 1 and 2), serves as an important park space for area workers and residents. The Mall is a park destination, much like the key neighborhood parks surrounding the Capitol Area, which offers unique amenities that contribute to the overall open space experience of the Capitol Area. The Mall is where residents and workers go to walk for exercise, eat lunch, take in the sights, learn history, and enjoy nature. Recognizing the Capitol Mall as both Minnesota’s Front Lawn and a community park will enhance the public realm of the Capitol Area. ~



Figure 4.1: The Capitol/Rice Corridor



Figure 4.2: Public Realm Top Opportunities for Improvement



**In this chapter...**

This chapter outlines four key elements of the public realm, followed by policies that will enable those patterns:

- A Linked System of Parks and Open Spaces
- A Comfortable Streetscape Experience: The Public Right of Way
- A Comfortable Streetscape Experience: Building Frontages and Street-Level Activation
- Art in the Public Realm

- A New park space in the Sears site redevelopment
- B Leif Erickson Park mobility hub
- C Mall open space
- D Cass Gilbert Park improved visitor signage
- E Privately Owned Public Spaces\*
- F Designated Dog Park\*
- G Pedestrian Access to Parks\*
- H Streetscape Improvement: Rice Street north of University
- I Crossing Improvement: Rice Street
- J Streetscape Improvement: Columbus Avenue and Centennial Parking Ramp
- K Key Intersection Improvements: Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. at John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street
- L Key Intersection Improvement: John Ireland at Rice/12th/St Anthony
- M Key Bridge Improvement: St. Peter Street Bridge
- N Key Intersection Improvement: Marion Street and Como Avenue
- O Crossing distance along Marion Avenue
- P Key Crossing at Como Avenue and Rice Street
- Q Key Crossing at Jackson and Winter Street
- R Seating or areas of refuge along the streetscape
- S Community Identity Signage: Capitol Rice District
- T Capitol Mall Pedestrian Signage
- U Public art installation connecting the Mall and Western Sculpture Park
- V Public art installation connecting the Capitol Building and Mall and Bethesda Healing Gardens
- W Public art incorporated into a new pedestrian/bikeway bridge design at St. Peter Street
- X Public art installation at University and Rice
- Y Public art installation at Rice and Como
- Z Public art along John Ireland Boulevard

*\*unmapped or multiple locations*



## A LINKED SYSTEM OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Parks and open spaces are essential parts of the public realm, providing places for people to recreate, rest and interact with fellow members of the community. Beautiful park spaces provide residents, visitors and workers access to nature in an urban setting and serve an important role in people's physical and mental well-being. Parks and open spaces can influence and even shape community identities. If well designed, they can serve a multicultural society, celebrating the diversity within neighborhoods while providing a measure of identity and connection for the community.

In Saint Paul, great public spaces are critically important, and the City's system, made up of a variety of park types (see sidebar), has consistently been ranked among the best park and recreation systems in the country. For the Capital City, the Capitol Mall is an important part of the city-wide system. The Capitol Mall, sitting in the center of the city, acts as a fulcrum of the change in the street grid as it follows the Mississippi, and it should connect—figuratively, visually and physically—to key points in Saint Paul's system of parks. (*Also see chapter 2.*) A series of linked open spaces can connect neighborhoods to each other, to the Capitol Campus, and to the city-wide system of parks, complementing existing landmark parks such as Rice, Mears, and Summit Parks.

In addition to City and State park and open spaces, private entities can contribute to open space in the public realm. Vacant lots can have a negative impact on walkability and commercial vitality; however, the same lot developed as an interim park<sup>1</sup> or pocket park<sup>2</sup> can provide injections of green in the streetscape and connective tissue between larger parks and open spaces. Public and private entities may also install temporary parklets<sup>3</sup> in the street right-of-way to expand the reach of their business or organization. These parklets provide a respite for pedestrians and a place to interact with neighbors, while giving the business a new and interesting way to serve their customers. All of these small park spaces on vacant lots or in the street provide more space and amenities for people using the street, enhancing activity, community gathering and support of businesses.

Ideally, the mix of parks and open spaces should provide residents, workers and visitors with a variety of amenities and recreation options. A single park need not do it all. One park may provide a recreation center for community gathering and sports fields for active recreation. Another park may provide a quiet respite from urban life, immersion in a rich nature setting, or opportunity for passive recreation<sup>4</sup>. While relying on city parks to take the lead in providing space for active recreation, all public spaces in the Capitol Area, including the Capitol Mall, can play a role in providing a mix of outdoor experiences and amenities for residents, workers and visitors. ∞

---

1 Interim parks could occupy space between buildings or on empty lots to fill in gaps in the urban fabric until future development occurs.

2 Pocket parks may be temporary or permanent installations on irregular lots that are not slated for future development.

3 Parklets are temporary parks along the street right-of-way, typically installed in one or two parking spaces, which provide new and interesting gathering spaces for the community.

4 Active vs Passive open space: Active open space is land set aside for the primary purpose of formal outdoor sports for the community. Active open space is used for sports, exercise or active play (including playgrounds). It is generally large and without obstruction to support team sports and often includes sports facilities such as playing fields. Passive open space describes land set aside for parks or gardens for unstructured physical activity, play, sitting and relaxing.



## What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

Saint Paul's robust park system is made up of many types of parks. The park types found within and near the Capitol Area are: *(park types quoted from the Parks and Recreation Vision Plan, 2008)*

**Mini Park:** "Typically less than two acres and providing opportunities for passive recreation close to home. Facilities may include: overlooks, open lawns, tot lots, tennis courts, basketball courts, gardens, and open space."

**Neighborhood Park:** "Typically 2-15 acres and developed primarily for active recreation such as field games, court games, playground play, and skating."

**Recreation Center:** "Provides indoor recreation and meeting room space."

**Passive Park:** "Open or natural areas with limited recreational development, primarily devoted to picnicking or strolling. May include paths, mature trees, nature areas, gardens, and lawn areas."

**Urban Park:** "Parks that provide for gathering space within the downtown area offering a primary social, rather than recreational, experience. May include plazas, band shells, and lawn areas."

**Regional Park:** "Parks that are designated part of the Metropolitan Regional Park System. Uses vary widely, but focus is on outdoor and natural resource-based recreation and learning. Como, Phalen, Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm, Lilydale-Harriet Island, Mississippi Gorge, Battle Creek-Indian Mounds are all regional parks within the City of Saint Paul." *(While there are no regional parks within or bordering the Capitol Area, the Capitol Mall sits in the center of the city; a connection to the regional park system—figuratively, visually and physically—is a goal. Also see chapter 2.)*

**Non-city Park and Recreation Amenities:** "In addition to City owned park land, residents of Saint Paul are fortunate to have additional park, trail, and recreational amenities not specifically managed by the city." *(The State Capitol and Grounds are identified on this list.)*

The objective for the Capitol Area is to connect to and complement the broader Saint Paul park and recreation system. The goals guiding the Parks, Recreation and Open Space chapter of the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan are:

1. *Equitable allocation of programs, resources and amenities.*
2. *People, programming and spaces responsive to changing needs.*
3. *Environmental and economic sustainability.*
4. *A healthy network of community partnerships.*
5. *Strong and accessible connections.*

See the *Guidance for Regulation* section in this chapter for Capitol Area policy supporting specific Saint Paul policy items.



# A COMFORTABLE STREETSCAPE EXPERIENCE: THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

*“Streets are the lifeblood of our communities and the foundation of our urban economies. They make up more than 80 percent of all public space in cities and have the potential to foster business activity, serve as a front yard for residents, and provide a safe place for people to get around, whether on foot, by bicycle, car or transit. The vitality of urban life demands a design approach sensitive to the multifaceted role streets play in our cities.”*

~NACTO, Urban Street Design Guide, 2013

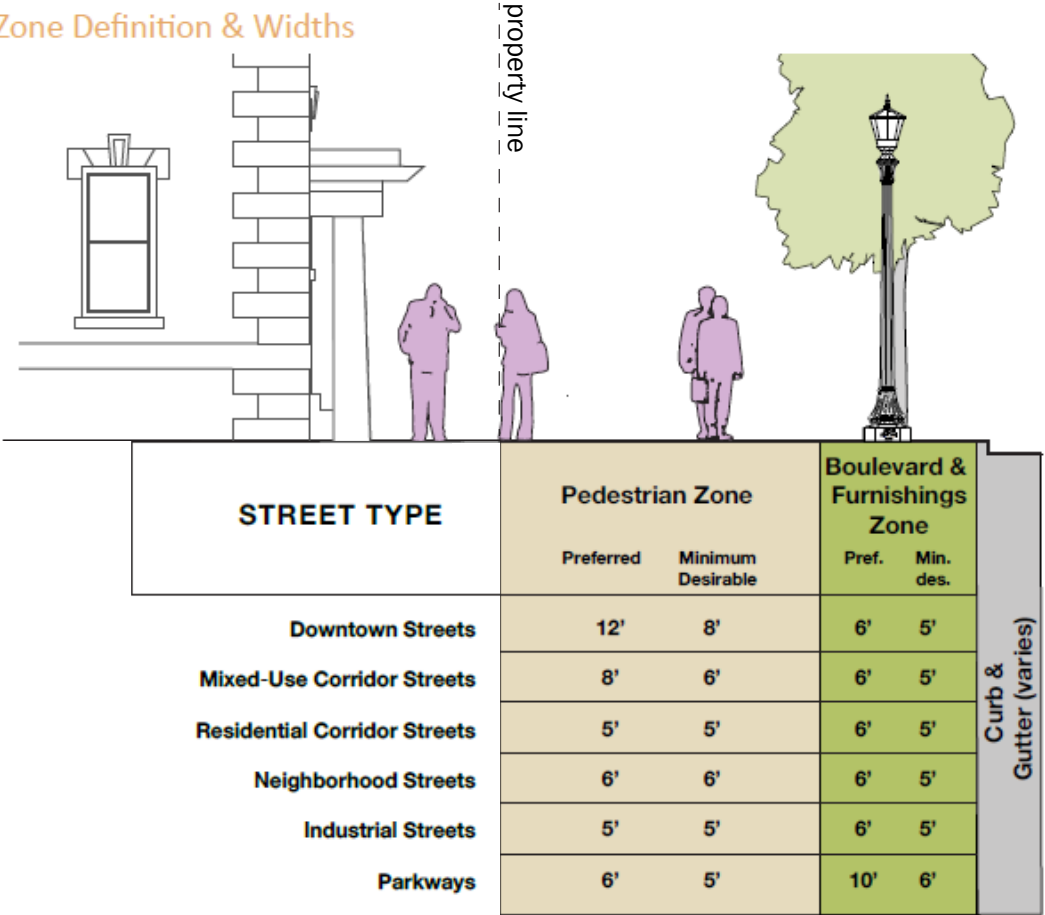
Like parks and open spaces, streetscape can provide a sense of identity for a neighborhood. Attention to the quality and continuity of details is an effective way of tying disparate areas together to create neighborhood and City identity. In the Capitol Area, quality streetscapes surrounding the Capitol Campus can extend the reach of the Campus into the neighboring community and downtown Saint Paul, serving to create a cohesive Capitol experience.

Comfortable streetscapes are not only for moving through to a destination, but also where people can meet their neighbors and create community. A comfortable streetscape not only encourages people to walk, but also to linger. Community is built in our public spaces, and streets are the framework of the public realm.

This chapter covers the area of the public right-of-way between the curb and the property line. (See chapter 5 for information on the street – the area between the curbs.)

## Sidewalks and the Zone System

### Zone Definition & Widths



The **Pedestrian Zone** is the area of the sidewalk that is meant for pedestrian travel. It should be functional in all weather conditions and be free from obstacles such as garbage cans, benches or other elements, or wide enough to accommodate them without interfering with travel.

The **Boulevard & Furnishings Zone** is the area closest to the curb where vegetation, utilities, public art, lighting, bike parking and street furniture should be located. This zone also provides space for storm-water management and snow storage. This zone keeps streetscape elements and infrastructure from interfering with pedestrian flow, and provides a buffer for pedestrians from the roadway, adding greater levels of comfort and safety.

The design of a comfortable streetscape experience will differ based on street type and surrounding land use. Throughout the Capitol Area, there are disparities in features of the public realm, and several streets in the Capitol Area fall short of minimum design standards found in the Saint Paul Street Design manual. Capitol Area street design standards, based on Saint Paul’s Street Design Manual, should be developed. (See chapter 5 for street types and further policy on streets.)

Figure 4.3: Sidewalk Zones showing Pedestrian Zone and Boulevard and Furnishings Zone. Adapted from the Saint Paul Street Design Manual, page 25.



### What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

The entirety of the Capitol Area falls within the *High Priority Area for Walking Investments*, as identified in the Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan (adopted June 2019). Participants in the planning process shared their top three priorities for walking investments:

- Equity: Make investments in neighborhoods where residents rely on walking the most
- Safety: Make investments along and across busy streets such as four-lane roads
- Connectivity: Make investments in areas of the city that lack sidewalks

The Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan “describes how these priorities translate into measures that are used to score areas of Saint Paul and prioritize the need for walking investments in these areas. Saint Paul census tracts were assessed on measures of equity, safety, connectivity, health, access to transit, population and employment density, and destinations to establish High Priority Areas for Walking Investments (see Figure 1). Equity, safety and connectivity are the most heavily weighted factors in the analysis. The city will prioritize future walking investments in High Priority Areas for Walking Investments. The map in Figure 1 will guide the location of future capital investments such as sidewalk infill, sidewalk repair and crossing improvements.” ~quoted from Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan, pg. 7

The Capitol Area is key to Saint Paul’s 2020 Pedestrian Plan, connecting many High Priority Areas.

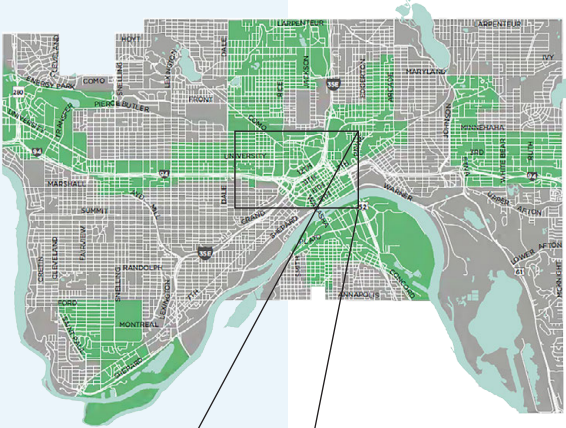


Figure 4.4: High Priority Area for Walking Investments are shown in green. Image adapted from Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan, page 7.



## A COMFORTABLE STREETSCAPE EXPERIENCE: BUILDING FRONTAGES AND STREET-LEVEL ACTIVATION

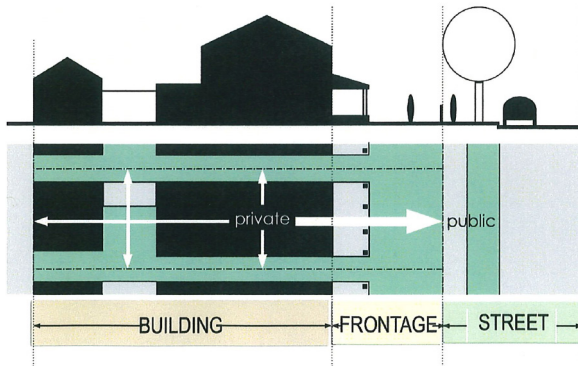


Figure 4.5: Building Frontage relationship to street.  
Image credit: City of Roseville MN 2002 CharretteCenter.  
com Inc, Minneapolis, MN, published 10/28/2002

Frontages, defined simply, are the relationships of buildings – at ground level – to the sidewalks, streets and public spaces those buildings face. How buildings address the street is a primary determinant of whether a street feels comfortable, safe, walkable, and interesting visually. Along with the design of the street itself, and the overall sense of enclosure created by the height and scale of buildings, frontages are a primary determinant of a street's character.

The careful design and ongoing regulation of these relationships is critical to the creation of an interesting, walkable urban environment. Frontages negotiate the transition from inside buildings out, connecting private spaces to the shared public realm. Configuring frontages correctly helps to define the public-to-private relationships from sidewalks inward. In addition, the arrangement of frontages on the street helps to define urban-to-less urban and busy-to-quiet transitions we often see in older urban fabric of America's most walkable cities (such as Saint Paul).

Walkable, safe and livable transitions from busier to quieter areas of the Capitol Area are ensured through careful regulation of frontage design.

On residential streets, setbacks or front yards provide transitional zones between the private and public domains of the street. Interaction and communication between neighbors in this transition zone fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility for the welfare of the neighborhood.

On mixed use and commercial streets, frontages more typically meet the street, greeting passersby with inviting doors and transparent windows that allow people to see both in and out, activating the street and making it safer.

Gaps in the streetscape due to vacant lots, surface parking, or buildings set too far back degrade the experience of moving throughout an area. Gaps increase walking distance between potential destinations and create unwatched spaces that decrease the perception of safety.

Gaps in the street can also come in the form of buildings that do not provide street-level activity. The vitality of commercial streets depends on the level of pedestrian activity and commerce at street level. Continuous storefront facades and retail that serves the needs of residents and workers, provide interest and attraction which draw both motorists and pedestrians along the street. An increase in street level activity encourages the movement of people along a street and between the Capitol Campus and its neighborhoods. Bearing in mind that commercial streets in the Capitol Area often occupy Capitol view corridors, their building frontages should be continuous in order to frame views along the street. ~







# ART IN THE PUBLIC REALM



Public art at the intersection of St. Peter and Exchange Streets, in the downtown portion of the Capitol Area.



Temporary public art in the vacant shopfront at the intersection of Sherburne and Rice Streets provide visual interest and community identity.

Public art enriches the built environment and can improve our understanding of a place and its meaning in ways that buildings, landscape and infrastructure do not. It can tell the story of where a place has been and where it hopes to go.

## The Many Stories of the Capitol Area

The previous two chapters addressed urban design and commemorative art on the Capitol Campus. The grand gestures of the campus plan are found at every scale—from the stories told by the memorials and commemorative works of art, to the naming of the streets—and function as formal organizing principles to which all art in the Capitol Area can respond.

Beneath and just beyond the grand evolving story of the Capitol is found the layered stories of the communities and neighborhoods of the Capitol Area. Here we find communities of people who have lived here for millennia, as well as different waves of immigrant American communities that have come and called this place home. We find stories of decline and rebirth, of public infrastructure replacing neighborhoods, of industry and unions rising up as the city grows. We see the advance and retreat of grand residential neighborhoods, with stately mansions and parks giving way to redevelopment in the evolution of a city. We see the clearance of row houses and tenement housing to make way first, for temporary parking lots and eventually, for new government buildings and the beautiful green spaces that today comprise the Capitol grounds.

These stories reflect both the evolution of Cass Gilbert's plans over time and the influences of city development over time. These intertwined stories will continue to evolve. Public art can help tell the story of the city and its neighborhoods, just as it helps tell the story of the State on the Capitol Mall.

Building on the manner that public spaces and art in the Capitol Area relate to each other, more opportunities for public art (especially those that tell or honor the intertwined stories of the Capitol Campus to Capitol Area neighborhoods and vice versa) should be encouraged and guided. To that end, the similar rigor applied to on-campus works and projects should be extended to apply to art in the public realm throughout the Capitol Area. *(See Baseline 4: Public Art)*

## Evolving Forms of Art in the Public Realm

As the public art world is evolving, so the Capitol Area will see new forms of art and civic expression in the next decades. Public art can include many types of artistic expression. Sculptures and memorials, so prevalent in the Capitol Area, are just two examples. Saint Paul is rich with many forms of public art throughout the city, from the design of LRT stations to poetry on sidewalks.

The Department of Administration and the City of Saint Paul have developed a process that encourages public events, demonstrations, gatherings, and political and community events. Public art in Saint Paul has been supported by the civic commitment and private generosity of its community.

The Capitol Area will continue to be a place where expression is encouraged. It will continue its tradition as a place of free speech and will continue to benefit from allowing expression by individuals and groups. Temporary creative expression, permanent and temporary art installations and creative placemaking will add to the tradition of civic art in the Capitol Area. ∞



## What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

In 2009, the City of Saint Paul passed an ordinance supporting public art. The ordinance states:

*“Public art shall mean publicly accessible original art that enriches the City and evokes meaning. It may include permanent visual art, performances, installations, events and other temporary works, preservation or restoration of unique architectural features, ornamentation or details. It may also include the artist designed infrastructure and structures themselves. Public art should consider the site, its context and audience. Public art may possess functional as well as aesthetic qualities; it may be integrated into the site or a discrete work.”*

The ordinance established the principle that artists should be involved from the earliest stages of conceptual planning and continue through project design and implementation. It directs that sufficient resources should be committed to sustain an innovative public art and design program that is distinguished by its high quality.

The ordinance along with supporting documents can be found at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/financial-services/public-art-ordinance-program>. The *City of Saint Paul Public Art Ordinance Program Guidelines* (September, 2012), along with the companion *Technical Manual* (June, 2014), and *Public Art Ideas List* (March, 2017) outline the vision, goals and ideas for public art in Saint Paul.



Public art at the Green Line LRT stations are an excellent example of function and form coming together to elevate public spaces. Learn more about the art of the Green Line LRT at <https://www.metrotransit.org/green-line-public-art>.



# Baseline 4.1: Parks and Open Spaces in and around the Capitol Area

The Capitol Area is well-served by parks and open spaces. Access to park space is well-within the Saint Paul policy of every resident within a 10-minute walk of a park (Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan policy PR-4). Park and open spaces, owned by the State, the City, and private entities, offer a mix of typologies and amenities to serve residents, workers and visitors.

Figure 4.7: Map of Capitol Area Parks and Open Spaces

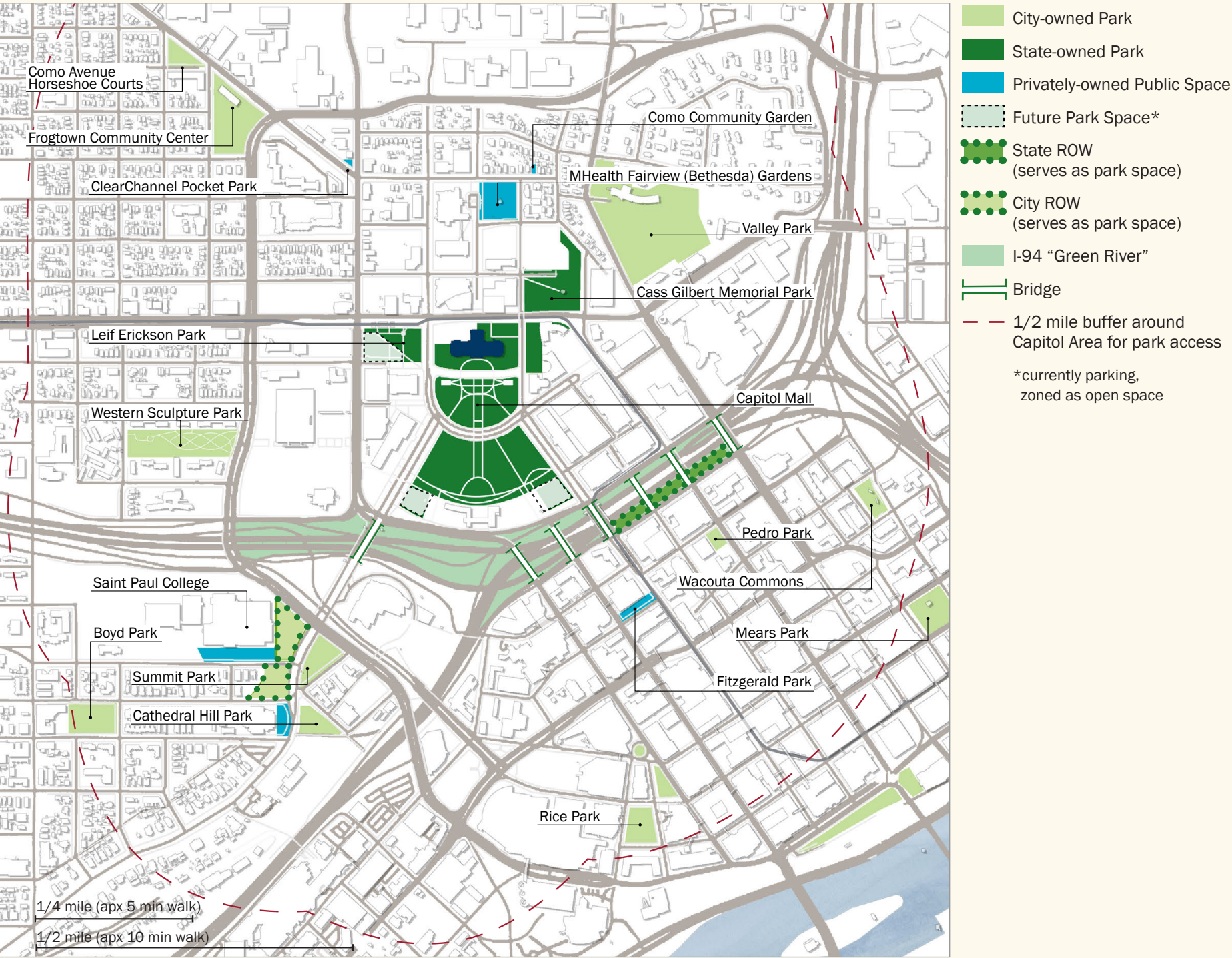




Figure 4.8: Table of Capitol Area Park Ownership, Typology and Amenities

	Valley Park	Frogtown Community Center	Western Park	Summit Park	Cathedral Hill Park	Boyd Park	Pedro Park (current condition)	Wacouta Commons	Saint Paul College, Apts,	Fitzgerald Park	Bethesda Park	ClearChannel Pocket Park	Capitol Mall	Leif Erickson Park	Cass Gilbert Memorial Park
Ownership	City	City	City	City	City	City	City	City	Private	Private	Private	Private	State	State	State
Park Typology	N	N	N	N	P	N	U	U	P	U	P	M	P	P	P
Public Rec/Community Center	● <sup>1</sup>	●													
Fitness Room		●				●									
Baseball Field															
Softball Field	●														
Football/Soccer Field		●													
Basketball Court	●	●													
Tennis Court															
Volleyball/Sepak Takraw		●													
Skateboard Park															
Horseshoe Court															
Play Area	●	●	●			●		●							
Dog Park															
Picnic Shelter											●				
Picnic Tables	●	●	●			●		●			●				
BBQ Grill						●									
Fire Ring															
Theater Seating/Classroom	●												● <sup>2</sup>		
Acres Open Space (active)	~5	~2			~1	~1.5		>1							
Open Space (passive/gather)			●	●			●		●	●	●		●	●	●
Public Art featured		●	●	●		●	●		●		●	○	●	●	
Native Vegetation featured											●	○	●		●
Capitol Views		●		●	●				●		●		●	●	●
Access: LRT														●	
Access: Bus	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	
Access: Bike Trail/Lane				●	●				●				●	●	

1 Mt. Airy Boys and Girls Club and Administration Center  
2 Judicial Plaza

●=present  
○=planned

**Ownership Code:**  
C=City-owned  
S=State-owned  
P=Privately-owned

**Park Typology Code:**  
M=Mini Park (includes community gardens, pocket parks, interim parks)  
N=Neighborhood Park  
P=Passive Park  
U=Urban Park



## Key Takeaways

### 1. Mix of Park Amenities (see Table 1)

- The three neighborhood parks bordering the Capitol Area are important destinations for residents. Residents to the north are well-served by Valley Park and Frogtown Community Center. The new park plan at Frogtown Community Center represents a move from traditional baseball diamonds (three were in the previous version of the park) to a more culturally diverse variety of amenities, including sepak takraw, soccer and basketball. This park is an excellent example of Saint Paul's commitment to more culturally relevant park offerings serving the wide variety of Saint Paul residents.
- Capitol Area residents in the west and south have close access to many beautiful parks; however the mix of amenities offers a limited number of larger spaces for active play. Still, recreation centers are only a ½-mile away from most residents.
- There is one community garden in Capitol Heights on a tax-forfeited parcel. This is excellent use of the vacant space, but this important community amenity is temporary.
- There is no dog park in the Capitol Area. The closest dog park is north of CHS Field. It is, however, commonly known that the residents who live within several blocks of the I-94 Commons Section regularly use either the landscaped areas along Eleventh Street and/or, in better weather, the Mall itself, to walk their dogs, just as those living in Capitol Heights. Should Pedro Park ever get expanded, it too would serve in the same way.

### 2. The Impact of New Development on Open Space

- The development of the Sears site will bring new residents to the area. This may put a burden on the existing neighborhood park, Western Sculpture Park and the Capitol Mall. Park space, which is required as part of large developments per the Saint Paul

2040 Comprehensive Plan, ensures that some park space will be included in the redevelopment of the Sears site.

- The intersection of Winter and Jackson is identified as a Neighborhood Node by the City of Saint Paul. Future BRT service (The Rush Line) along Jackson, with a stop at Winter and Jackson, may increase activity around this park. (Also see Chapter 6 regarding Neighborhood Nodes, page 6.)

### 3. New and Improved Parks and Open Spaces

- The playground at Western Park is in the plan for redevelopment by the City of Saint Paul. Information about the redesign indicates improvements to include “the installation of distinctive features that are accessible and safe for children and adults to interact with in a playful setting.”
- Pedro Park is slated for redevelopment. This park has the potential to fill gaps in amenities and active play space for the growing downtown population.
- Three surface parking lots in the Capitol Area are part of the Mall Open Space: State Lots D, H and K. Surface parking in these locations is considered temporary (per longstanding policy, dating back to the 1998 Comprehensive Plan). (Also see Chapter 6 for policy regarding surface parking.)

### 4. Access to parks

- Everyone in the Capitol Area is within a 10-minute walk of a park, meeting Saint Paul's park access goal in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, policy PR-4.
- Access to many parks, including the Capitol Mall, is hindered by intersection and street condition. (Also see Baseline 2: Public Right-of-Way Conditions)
- Longstanding policy has called for a greenway connection from the Capitol Mall to Western Sculpture Park.



New park plan for Frogtown Community Center



New playground plan for Western Park



Cass Gilbert Memorial Park



- Cass Gilbert Memorial Park offers excellent downtown views and is a beautiful example of native prairie as well as future home of a solar array on the hillside. The park will continue to be a native prairie landscape with a mix of prairie grasses and wildflowers under the solar array. This park is an important part of the Capitol Area park system and, while frequented by residents and workers, it is not readily apparent to visitors. Improved signage could help direct visitors to this park.

#### 5. Opportunities for Activity Programming

- There are many options for residents, workers or visitors to reserve park space for private or public programming. Locations on the State Campus as well as surrounding public and private parks are reservable.
- There is opportunity to activate underutilized spaces in the Capitol Area with programming or interim park spaces. For example, large surface parking lots or wide right-of-way along Como Avenue could be utilized as market space when business traffic is low, such as on weekends; vacant lots could be developed as community green spaces.

#### Going forward...

The vision for parks and open spaces presented in the chapter can only be implemented through a coordinated effort from multiple entities, both public and private. There are opportunities, both large and small, to expand the current offerings. Future parks and open spaces in and around the Capitol Area should look to complement the existing mix of typologies, amenities and programming that are present. Further examination of amenities and programmed activities should be explored with neighborhoods and the City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation to determine if additional features are required.

#### Top Opportunities for Improvement:

- A. **New park space in the Sears site redevelopment.** The new park space to be included as part of the Sears site redevelopment (required as part of large developments per the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan) should consider surrounding park typology and amenities in its design for current and future residents, workers and visitors; and should connect to surrounding parks and bikeways.


- B. **Leif Erickson Park Mobility Hub.** Leif Erickson Park has been evolving as the center of a mobility hub. Bus service has long had stops at University and Rice, and in 2014 the Green Line LRT began service with a station in Leif Erickson Park. Bike racks and short-term parking are also present at the park. This strong mobility base, multiple development opportunities surrounding the intersection, increasing shared mobility and advancing mobility technology, and proximity to the Capitol make it a prime focus for future envisioning as an integrated mobility hub.<sup>1</sup>

- C. **Mall open space.** State Parking Lots H and K on the Capitol Mall and State Parking Lot D in Leif Erickson Park should finally be returned to open space (per longstanding policy, dating back to the 1998 Comprehensive Plan), enhancing the Capitol Mall. Redesign of Lot D, again as open space, would extend Leif Erickson Park and could also incorporate elements of the integrated mobility hub, provided it contributes first and foremost to the restoration of the park as a key open space. A viable parking/transportation alternative for state employees and visitors to the Capitol Campus, along with improvements such as a mobility hub and smart parking technologies, could help eliminate some of these temporary parking facilities. (See Chapter 4 for more information on Mobility Hubs, and The Capitol Rice Development Framework for the vision of Leif Erickson Park as the center of a mobility hub at University and Rice.)

- D. **Cass Gilbert Park improved visitor signage.** Cass Gilbert Park is a beautiful example of native prairie and future home of a solar array on the hillside. This park is an important part of the Capitol Area park system. While frequented by residents and workers, it is not readily apparent to visitors. Signage could alert visitors to this park.

- E. **Privately Owned Public Spaces.** Opportunities to activate underutilized spaces in the Capitol Area with programming or interim open spaces should be explored with private land owners. Examples may include a parklet along Rice Street to expand the pedestrian realm and create sidewalk cafes; or an interim park on vacant lots.

- F. **Designated Dog Park.** As the trend in pet ownership is on the rise, a designated dog park to accommodate the growing number of residents should be explored.

- G. **Pedestrian Access to Parks.** Pedestrian access to parks should be improved through improved crosswalks, bump-outs and sidewalk improvements. 

<sup>1</sup> The Capitol Rice Station area was identified as one of two locations in Saint Paul that could serve as an integrated mobility hub in the Twin Cities Shared Mobility Action Plan, published in 2017 by the Shared Use Mobility Center in partnership with multiple Twin Cities organizations including ST/TLC (currently Move Minnesota), Nice Ride Minnesota, the City of Minneapolis, the City of Saint Paul, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit. The vision for an integrated mobility hub at University and Rice, with Leif Erickson Park, the home of the Capitol Rice LRT Station, as the center, was further affirmed in the Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy (CAAPB and City of Saint Paul, 2018) and the Capitol Rice Development Framework (CAAPB, 2019).



## Baseline 4.2: Public Right-of-Way Conditions

Throughout the Capitol Area there are disparities in features of the public realm. Four planning tracks/studies contributed to the streetscape analysis. Through three walkability audits (Capitol Area Commutes planning), an issue identification walk (Capitol Connections planning), a Rice Street Market Study (Capitol Rice planning) and the Park and Open Space Study, various walkability issues were documented by an interdisciplinary team. Issues can be grouped into four areas:

### 1. Sidewalk Issues

- Poor sidewalk condition makes walking and wheeling difficult.
- Missing sidewalks
- Narrow sidewalks - some sidewalks do not meet the minimum standard based on street type.
- Encroachment - sidewalk amenities (for example: street light poles or signage) encroach on the pedestrian walk area.

### 2. Intersections

- Intersections too wide for comfortable crossing.
- Safe access at crossings (especially at Marion/Como)
- Crosswalks - Lack of crosswalks, crosswalks not well-aligned, or inconsistent markings on crosswalks.

### 3. Pedestrian-Scale Amenities

- Lack of amenities related to corridor typology: including pedestrian-scale lighting, vegetation, signage.
- Gathering - lack of benches where space exists off the sidewalk not only makes the area less walkable for some, it is also a missed opportunity for creating community meeting places.
- Vegetation and Rain Water Management - Grey infra-structure is almost exclusively used throughout streets surrounding the Capitol Campus.
- Consistency of tree canopy throughout the Capitol Area.
- Signage – lack of neighborhood identity signage and way-finding signage, especially for visitors.

### 4. Bridge Condition

- Railings along I-94 in need of replacement by MnDOT
- Cedar Street Bridge covered walkway needs rehab from water damage

### Going forward...

Today the Capitol Area does not have an integrated, high-quality, pedestrian-scale public realm outside the State Capitol grounds. While the Capitol Mall is well maintained and provides a high-quality pedestrian experience, this quality is not consistently present in the surrounding area. This is especially important in creating a cohesive visitor experience, as visitors pass through the

surrounding Capitol Area from parking or transit to reach the Capitol Campus. The quality of sidewalks and transit stations is part of the overall Capitol experience.

Rice Street is an important corridor connecting neighborhoods to the north and northwest through the Capitol Area to downtown. Additionally, Rice Street is a historic commercial corridor which should be restored to its Main Street quality. Bus and vehicular traffic are important considerations in the street design; however, traffic movement needs to be balanced with a safe and vibrant pedestrian realm which encourages walking. Over the years, development has removed the urban grid in favor of super blocks. This is most clearly seen at the Sears Site. Effort should be made to restore the urban fabric to increase connectivity and walkability. In addition, an effort should be made to encourage more user-friendly retail and businesses that invest in and serve local residents and workers with a more attractive, clean and vibrant offering of services than currently exists.



Missing sidewalk at Jackson and Winter Street



Sidewalk along Rice Street



Missing sidewalk along 12th Street



Rain Garden at Marion and University



Water damage on Cedar Street Bridge



11th Street narrow due to trees and planters



### Top Opportunities for Improvement:

- H. **Streetscape Improvement: Rice Street North of University.** Rice Street, the major commercial corridor, suffers from disinvestment, both at the public and private level. County streets and sidewalks are in disrepair and are in places too narrow for a mixed-use corridor. A wider clutter-free pedestrian zone north of University Avenue with a healthier boulevard zone for trees, lighting and signage to buffer pedestrians would make the street more walkable while fostering stronger retail that would be more inviting to the general public.
- I. **Crossing Improvement: Rice Street.** Crossing Rice Street south of University Avenue is difficult. As development of the Sears lot proceeds (as well as the eventual development of Lot AA) the crossing at Aurora Avenue will be more heavily used. This is a major crossing for people connecting to transit. The crossing at Fuller Avenue is a complicated one for pedestrians going to and from Lot X. The intersection needs an improved, well-articulated crosswalk and at least some kind of traffic controls. Fuller Avenue also is home to Ramp F (Transportation Building) and the State Office Building loading dock. The high volume of cars during traditional arrival/departure times, combined with being one of the major entrances into the Capitol Campus, makes the area difficult to navigate at certain times of day.
- J. **Streetscape Improvement: Columbus Avenue and the Centennial Parking Ramp.** Vacated Columbus Avenue runs along the south end of Centennial Office Building and is a key route to the Centennial Building Parking Ramp, the Freeman Building, Ag-Health Lab, and the Armory, as well as all the loading docks for these buildings. This street is a pedestrian connection from the Mall to the Robert Street LRT Station. Only one side of the street has a sidewalk, and there is no bike lane—this creates issues especially at arrival and departure times when cars are entering and exiting the Centennial Ramp. The walking pattern across the southern Mall connects those coming from the west side of the campus to the LRT station and state buildings in the west Capitol area.
- K. **Key Intersection Improvements: Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. at John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street.** John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street are major pedestrian corridors for visitors and workers. The crossing distance at both intersections is wide and the crosswalk minimally marked. At Cedar Street the crossing distances are large and difficult to navigate for pedestrians due to cracks and other trip hazards in the crosswalks. Because of the size of the intersection at Cedar Street, it can be difficult to discern who has the right-of-way for motorists and pedestrians. The steep grade of Cedar is problematic in the winter when icy or snowy, creating further dangers for pedestrians.
- L. **Key Intersection Improvement: John Ireland at Rice/12th/St Anthony.** Rice Street is a key connector through the Capitol Area. Today, it is primarily a vehicular route. As Sears site redevelops, one can expect a greater number of pedestrians walking along 12th toward downtown. This intersection has been identified as the western connection to the Capitol City Bikeway from downtown.
- M. **Key Bridge Improvement: St. Peter Street Bridge.** Rice Street, continuing along 12th to St. Peter Street is an important connector to downtown. The bridge today is functional, and pedestrians are protected, but crossing 12th Street to the bridge is challenging, and the bridge has potential to be enhanced for a more pleasant walking experience. This type of investment could increase the desire to walk, especially as residences are built on the Sears site.
- N. **Key Intersection Improvement: Marion Street and Como Avenue.** The intersection of Marion and Como has serious ADA compliance and general accessibility issues with large crossing distances. Several cross walks do not feature curb cuts, making navigation impossible for people using wheelchairs. Sidewalks are also in very poor condition. This is an important crossing for access to Hmongtown Marketplace and Frogtown Community Center and park.
- O. **Crossing distance along Marion Avenue.** Marion Street is a wide boulevard, making crossing difficult for people. At Thomas Street there is a crosswalk to Frogtown Community Center, but the crossing distance is approximately 90 feet. Bump-outs could shorten the distance, helpful especially for children who may be crossing from the housing complex on the east side of Marion to the park. South of University Avenue, the redevelopment of the Sears site will bring new people to the area, increasing the importance of safe crossing to Western Park.
- P. **Key Crossing at Como Avenue and Rice Street.** The intersection at Como and Rice is wide and difficult to cross. This crossing not only provides access to two bus stops and the new ClearChannel Pocket Park, it is also an important intersection for access to Frogtown Community Center from Capitol Heights.
- Q. **Key Crossing at Jackson and Winter Street.** From Capitol Heights, access across Jackson at Winter Street is limited by the missing sidewalk on the south side just west of Jackson Street. This is a key access point to the future Rush Line BRT station, and to Valley Park, especially given the steep



slope and lack of crosswalk to the park at Valley Street to the south. Any future development at the intersection of Winter and Jackson, identified as a Neighborhood Node by the City of Saint Paul, should carefully consider park access. Safety of children entering and leaving this park should be a top consideration in any redevelopment effort.

- R. **Seating or areas of refuge along the streetscape.** Either permanent in the boulevard zone or temporary via parklets, well lit and safe seating would be especially useful along Rice Street or on neighboring streets near the intersection with Rice Street. Several Rice Street businesses could benefit from community gathering space, as would non-profit pop-ups.

- S. **Community Identity Signage.** Capitol Rice District. As Sears redevelops or Rice street improvements occur, there is an opportunity to improve Capitol Rice identity signage in the entire district. One possibility is incorporating the Capitol Rice logo (created by Witt Siasoco) as part of the signage. (Also see *Chapter 7a and the Capitol Rice Development Framework*)



*Capitol Rice District logo, by community artist Witt Siasoco (Capitol Rice CVZ planning process)*

- T. **Capitol Mall Pedestrian Signage.** The two pillars at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard's intersections with John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street are helpful, but are primarily positioned for automobile traffic. Additional pedestrian-focused signage covering the campus (such as a map of memorials, location of buildings, locations of bathrooms) and nearby amenities would be helpful. There is no existing funding to add pedestrian focused signage on the Capitol campus and therefore a legislative appropriation for this purpose would be required. ↻

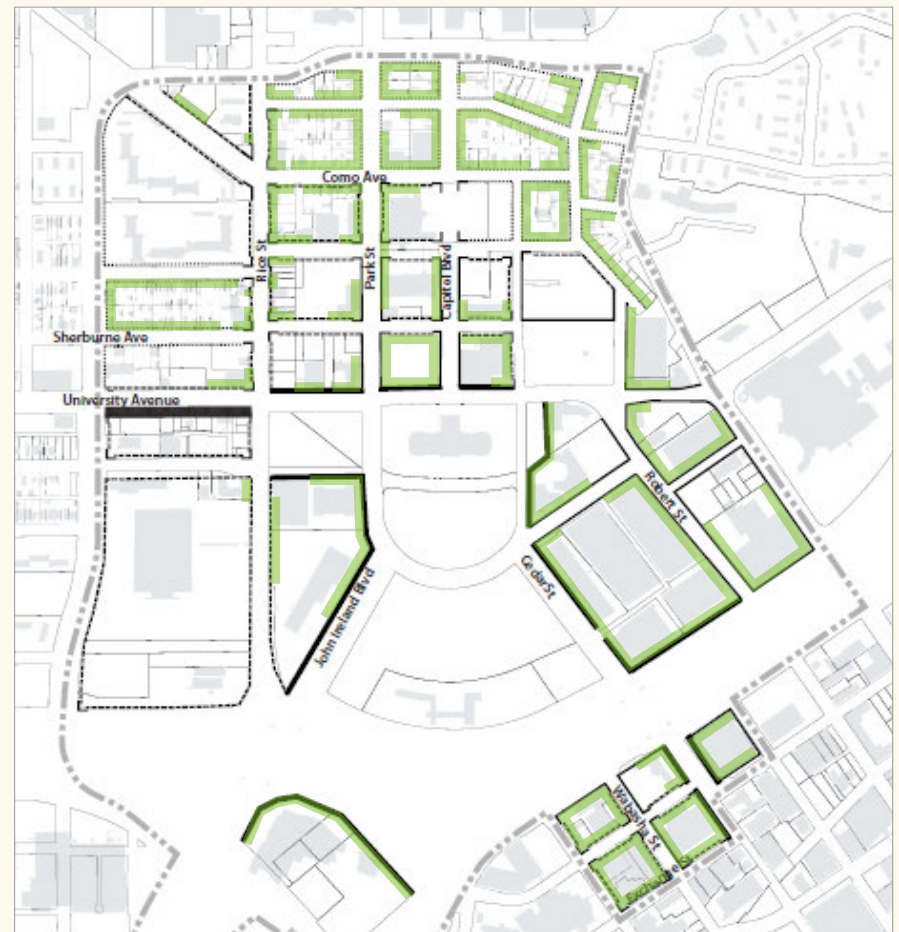


*View of Mall signage at Cedar Street*

## Baseline 4.3: Frontages

The Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (2009) outlines five frontage types, one of which is assigned to every block in the Capitol Area that is not park or open space. These frontage types are the aspirational goal. While some properties meet the current frontage code, many do not due to a number of factors (see illustrations next page):

1. Figure 10: Setback of properties built before frontage code was put in place. Particularly on the west side of the Capitol Area, many structures were built to different urban design standards and are not in compliance with current code.
2. Figure 11: Large Vacant parcels. Both large and small, vacancies present a break in the streetscape and do not meet frontage code. Large vacancies that cover the entire or nearly-entire blocks, however, can have a detrimental effect on neighboring blocks as well. Large, vacant parcels are most seen on the west side of the Capitol Area along University and Rice Street, degrading walkability of this important corridor near the LRT station.
3. Figure 12 Surface Parking. Surface Parking presents a gap in the built form. Surface parking lots are not in compliance with the current frontage code but may meet all design standards for surface parking. Such uses would generally be considered an interim or temporary use, and once redeveloped with a building, would be expected to meet frontage as well as other design standards.



98 *Figure 4.9: Current Frontage Compliance in the Capitol Area*

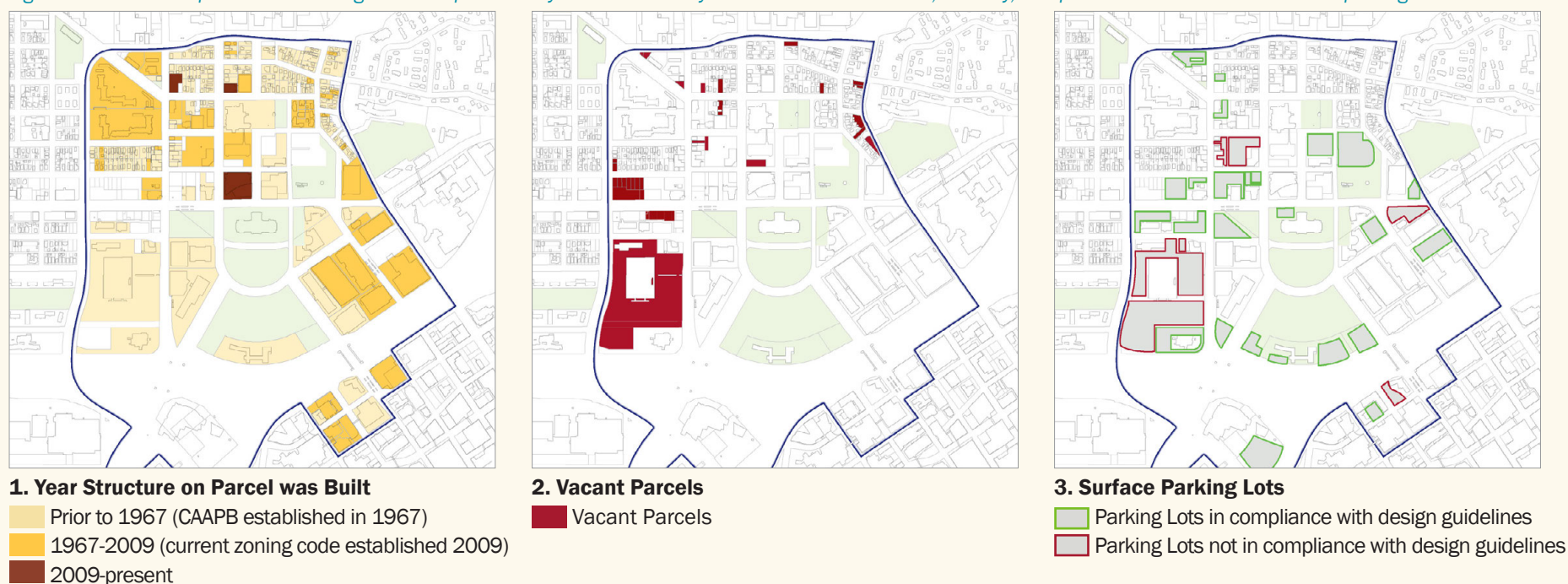


## Going forward...

Frontage code compliance should be sought in two ways:

1. When redevelopment of the Rules for Zoning and Design are updated, the existing frontage code should be evaluated and updated to ensure it reflects the objectives and policy set forth in this Comprehensive Plan. This may be done in several ways:
  - A new frontage type may be required, such as a Storefront frontage, to better regulate design on commercial streets to fulfill urban design goals laid out in this and previous plans. Rice Street has already been identified through previous policy and planning as a location for a Storefront frontage. As additional District Frameworks are developed, other blocks may be identified for a new frontage type designation.
  - Frontage type assignments may need to be changed in order to bring a parcel into compliance. One example is the residential frontage assigned to the block of Bethesda Healing Gardens and Park. This park is an important component of the overall Parks system in the Capitol Area. Zoning code should be updated to reflect this desired use.
  - Frontages may need to be assigned to new block faces as development occurs. The Sears site development will introduce new block faces in an area that is now a superblock. Part of the pre-development design review and approval process will include assigning a frontage type to each new block. (See Chapter 7A and the Capitol Rice Development Framework.)
2. Incrementally over time, and as properties are developed or renovated, effort should be made to bring properties to compliance with the existing (and/or future) frontage code.
  - Non-compliant properties that do not plan renovation or redevelopment, especially large properties that affect an entire block, should make efforts to improve frontage through landscaping as soon as practical.
  - As properties are renovated, effort should be made to bring properties into compliance. Renovation may not be such to allow for full compliance, but incremental improvements should be sought through built form or landscaping.
  - As properties are redeveloped, frontage compliance should be required, except in the case of a variance being granted by the CAAPB Board members at a public meeting.
  - Surface parking lots that are not in compliance with design standards should be made compliant as soon as practical.
  - Over time, surface parking should be reduced in favor of other uses, or structured parking. (Also see Chapter 6, Land Use Diversity.) This is especially important on parcels that are designated as “temporary” parking on the Capitol Mall and zoned as G2 – Government District Open Space. ↻

Figures 4.10-4.12: Maps illustrate frontage non-compliance may be linked to the year the structure was built, vacancy, or a parcel that is in use as a surface parking lot.





## Baseline 4.4: Public Art

Public Art is an important part of the Capitol Area, as well as surrounding areas. In addition to the art and memorials on the Capitol Mall, Western Sculpture Park and Bethesda Healing Gardens feature large-scale, unique public art. Even the bridges over I-94 in the Capitol Area are designed as public art.

### Going Forward...

The Capitol Area today is home to many permanent art installations as well as public gatherings, but there is an opportunity to increase temporary and performance art opportunities. Maximum consideration should be given to creating safe and practical settings within the public realm and, where possible, within private development, for temporary public art and other creative activities to occur. It is important that artistic activities of any kind are carefully pre-approved and curated following established regulations and standards to ensure protection and appropriate use of public assets, safety, fairness and balance so that both the welfare of the general public and that of individual free speech are protected. In addition, it is critically important that any plan for art installations carries a maintenance plan for its upkeep and/or replacement.

Rice Street is a place of integration and settlement. The strong and diverse immigrant history should be celebrated as a place where a variety of people feel welcome and at home. Public art that humanizes spaces and the area, enjoyable at pedestrian scales and that celebrates the rich history of the district is encouraged.

### Top Opportunities for Improvement:

There is an opportunity to bring public art into the streetscape, celebrating the community and extending the reach of the parks featuring public art in many forms, be it actual original artwork or streetscape features designed to help humanize the space and tell stories, such as creatively design informative kiosks, plaques, and even ornamental street furniture such as bike racks, restful benches, etc., as well as connecting them, such as<sup>1</sup>:

- U. Public art installation connecting the Mall and Western Sculpture Park along Rice Street (1) and Marion Street (2) (as part of the Sears redevelopment).
- V. Public art installation connecting the Capitol Building and Mall and Bethesda Healing Gardens along Cedar Street as part of Cass Gilbert Memorial Park (1) or in the park near Como Avenue on axis of Capitol Boulevard (2).

<sup>1</sup> Note: funding has not been identified nor has a formal request been made for art at these locations. These are possible locations for future guidance as decisions about public art are made and as various permanent initiatives come forward.

Figure 4.13: Art in the Capitol Area



- W. Public art could be incorporated into a new pedestrian/bikeway bridge design at St. Peter Street.
- X. Public art installation at University and Rice, as part of redevelopment of State surface parking lot AA at time of new construction, incorporated into new building.
- Y. Public art installation at Rice and Como as part of Rice Triangle Park.
- Z. Public art along John Ireland Boulevard south of gateway bridge over I-94 to further connect the Minnesota History Center to the Mall.



## GUIDANCE FOR REGULATION

### **Ensure the enhancement of linked park and open space offerings within the Capitol Area as an integral factor in the city-wide system of parks.**

- 4.1. Designate, where possible, sites for additional, connected green space with focal points within each distinct neighborhood. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 37)
- 4.2. Encourage owners of vacant land to create temporary neighborhood green spaces on lots where new construction is not immediately foreseen. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 31)
- 4.3. To support Statute 15B.05 Comprehensive Use Plan, subd.8. Priority for Native Vegetation: “The board, as part of its comprehensive plan and adopted zoning rules, must give priority to planting native trees and shrubs, or native grasses wherever appropriate, within the Capitol Area” establish guidelines for native plantings and rain water management, with consideration for disease control and the changing climate for long-term success. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policies PR 19 and PR-20)
- 4.4. All new park and open space projects, to obtain approval, should:
  - a. Complement and/or improve the overall mix of existing park typologies and park amenities within the Capitol Area and nearby. (For example, see 2019 Baseline 1 in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.)
  - b. Provide public spaces that serve visitors, workers and residents.
  - c. Accommodate a variety of community and recreational needs that reflect the diversity of cultures, resources, and ages within the district.
  - d. Encourage community involvement in the design, maintenance and programming.
- e. Explore opportunities to incorporate native plantings, rain gardens and other low impact development into public open space, where appropriate. (Follow guidelines called for in policy 1.3 once they are established.)
- 4.5. During design review of private development projects:
  - a. Encourage private developers to create new publicly-owned spaces or privately-owned public spaces (POPS) within their projects, where appropriate. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 31)
  - b. In projects which require parkland dedication, follow City of Saint Paul requirements and continue regulation of it in the Rules Governing Zoning and Design subdivisions of property (2400.3120). (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 18)
  - c. Ensure the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation is involved in planning and design meetings for large-scale redevelopment in the Capitol Area. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 42)
  - d. Continue to ensure new developments provide outdoor public or private space for residents by regulating within the Rules Governing Zoning and Design.
- 4.6. Work with the State of Minnesota to:
  - a. Return to open space land zoned G2-Open Space that is currently used for parking. This space, designated as Open Space since the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, should be returned to Mall open space at the earliest possible time.
  - b. Maintain the landscaping along the freeway corridors to reinforce the concept of a “green river” that flows along the south edge of the Capitol Area. Landscaping is required to soften the highway environment and create attractive vehicular corridors with memorable glimpses of the Capitol.



- 4.7. Work with the city and county to enhance streetscapes and intersections to ensure safe park access for all. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 36)
- 4.8. Work to establish the Capitol Mall, Minnesota's Front Lawn, as a recognized asset complementary and connected to the system of parks in Saint Paul and the region. (*Also see Chapter 2*)
  - a. Where possible, encourage linkages from the Capitol Area to the larger Saint Paul park and trail system. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 38)
  - b. Explore opportunities to enhance the connection between the Gateway Trail (at Cayuga off Jackson Street) through the Capitol Area to connect with the Summit Avenue or downtown.
  - c. Continue to improve connections across I-94 to connect the Capitol Area community to downtown Saint Paul and the Mississippi River. (Supports City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan policy PR 44)

#### **Enhance the pedestrian environment throughout the Capitol Area.**

- 4.9. Incrementally improve the pedestrian-scale of the entire Capitol Area, extending the quality of the Capitol Campus outward into the surrounding neighborhoods.
- 4.10. Ensure that pedestrian areas are fully accessible to all.
- 4.11. Ensure pedestrian ways are adequately buffered from bicycle, scooter and motor vehicle circulation.
- 4.12. Establish Capitol Area street design standards, by street type, in compliance with the Saint Paul Street Design Manual. Standards should include, but are not limited to, sidewalk zone widths, landscape, lighting, tree planting, benches, trash receptacles, etc. This updated guide would then supersede older documents, such as the CAAPB Lighting Design Framework for the Capitol Area, written in 1991.
  - a. Keeping mindful of the cost burden of higher-quality streetscape should be balanced with the desire for design standards that complement and extend the Capitol Campus into the surrounding neighborhoods.
  - b. Promote pedestrian activity with design standards for the streetscape to respond to people as well as to place.
  - c. Continue to promote a continuous tree canopy in boulevards on streets throughout the Capitol Area.
  - d. Promote improved pedestrian crossings and encourage their use.
  - e. Widen sidewalks at crosswalk locations (using bump outs, possibly with streetscape amenities such as trees or other planting) to reduce crossing distances and enhance pedestrian safety on the street.
  - f. Delineate the edges between neighborhood streets and commercial and institutional streets with distinctive streetscape elements such as pedestrian-scaled lighting and possibly banners.
  - g. To the extent feasible, encourage the greening of streets and incorporate low impact development elements, such as pervious pavement, into streetscapes.
  - h. Recognizing the Capitol Area as having the potential to be a model for the State, develop aspirational greening guidelines for streets in the Capitol Area and work with the City, County and State to promote green infrastructure as roads are redeveloped.
    - The rain gardens at University and Marion provide a good precedent for beautification and water management for the district. Other opportunities to implement similar systems should be investigated.



- In addition, work with the City to re-examine their prohibition on use of herbicides in the City. While their use should understandably be controlled in park spaces where small children play, the impact of an apparent ban has led to unsightly weed growth along street and sidewalk right-of-ways, making the impression that there is no care for appearances.
  - i. Promote special features within the Capitol Area and at key points of arrival, where possible, such as landscape features, that can confer a distinct identity on the place.
  - j. To provide a visual terminus at street ends, encourage development of parks, public art or buildings, on axis with street ends and visual corridors, where possible.
  - k. Encourage the use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques in the design and maintenance of pedestrian ways to help ensure the safety of pedestrians.
- 4.13. Recognizing streets are a place for community interaction, work with the City and County to explore opportunities for space in the right-of-way where community members are encouraged to engage with one another.
- 4.14. Improve connections between neighborhood streets and commercial and employment centers.
- 4.15. In consultation with property owners, encourage the use of street lighting on neighborhood commercial streets to serve both pedestrians and drivers.
- 4.16. Plant boulevard trees throughout the Capitol Area.
- 4.17. Enhance “park streets” identified by the City of Saint Paul to improve connections to LRT stations.
- 4.18. Encourage efforts to improve Rice Street and University Avenue pedestrian space with civic amenities such as kiosks, trees.
- 4.19. Support the restoration of the former street grid and connections across the Sears Block to Rice Street, providing pedestrian promenades and greenways between Western Park and the Capitol Mall.
- 4.20. If possible with park renovations, daylight the tunnel below Leif Erickson Park, including safe pedestrian (accessible with elevator) access into the tunnel system. Such an access point for the public to the tunnel system, which connects the State Office Building to the Capitol, would require both funding and feasibility studies to ensure accessibility to the Capitol Building. NOTE: There is no existing funding to address these modifications. A legislative appropriation would be needed to daylight the tunnel below Leif Erikson Park and make the related changes elsewhere.
- Continue the use of a frontage code as a zoning and design review mechanism to regulate how buildings will address the street and public realm.**
- 4.21. The CAAPB Board, through their appointed zoning administrator, with consultation as required with CAAPB advisors, shall continue to implement the frontage code guidelines and standards set in place in 2400.2400-2410 of the Rules Governing Zoning and Design in the Minnesota State Capitol Area (2009), that establishes a frontage map and intent, “...to ensure that buildings relate to the public realm and to adjacent buildings in a manner consistent with the statutory purpose of the board as stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 15.B.01, and the goals of this comprehensive plan”. Specifically, continue the use of the following:
- a. Frontage map. (2400.2400)
  - b. Mixed and nonresidential design standards for frontage types. (2400.2405)
  - c. Residential design standards. (2400.2410)



- d. Related regulations found in the rest of the code including but not limited to Use Standards, Sign Regulations, General Regulations and Supplemental Regulations.

4.22. Upon completion and adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, revise the regulations listed in 4.21.a-d above for clarity and to align with the intent of this comprehensive plan. Specifically:

- a. Continue to provide flexibility in frontage code to accommodate multiple frontage conditions from civic and formal areas found near the Capitol and Capitol Mall; to the Capitol Area's busier streets, to the quieter more residential areas of the Capitol Area.
- b. Add, as necessary, new frontage types or individual design standards that promote the intent of the comprehensive plan.

4.23. Throughout the Capitol Area continue to ensure the following:

- a. buildings, windows and landscaping at street level are configured with increased transparency and/or vantage points over the street, providing clear views onto sidewalks and front yards in order to promote pedestrian activity and to enhance a shared sense of responsibility for safety.
- b. there is a transition of building massing, height and frontage from busier more developed mixed use streets to quieter more residential streets.
- c. entrances and garage doors for structured and below-grade parking areas should be restricted to side streets and alleys, wherever possible. Parking access from a shared alley where abutting a residential use should be allowed.

- d. streetscapes are activated with first-floor uses, street trees, public art, outdoor commercial uses, where appropriate, and other uses that contribute to a vibrant street life, inviting residents and visitors to explore and linger and socialize. (Saint Paul Policy LU-10)

- e. street level retail and services, or at a minimum, transparent street walls are established on all new buildings on key approaches, including new State office buildings in the Capitol Area and Capitol Area neighborhoods.
- f. new skyways are highly discouraged, as they take away from active frontages at street level.
- g. vacant lots are developed, to strengthen vitality of the Capitol Area, and to further compliance with the intent of frontage map and the intent of this Comprehensive Plan.
- h. parking structures are developed with liner buildings and/or active ground-level uses that make structured parking invisible and that buildings are flexibly designed for re-use.

4.24. Reinforce design standards for building frontages consistent with the civic architecture of the Capitol Campus.

- a. Incorporate concepts such as symmetry in the facade of buildings to respond to visual axes, formal open spaces, building groupings and major entrances.
- b. Use colors and materials consistent with those existing in the area, when they are of high quality.
- c. Ensure that the street level of a building fronts adjacent sidewalks with doors, windows or landscaping.
- d. Upgrade deteriorating building frontages along view corridors.

4.25. Develop storefronts in continuous building frontages along many of Capitol Area's commercial, retail and mixed-use streets.



- a. First-floor commercial or retail uses should help animate the street by incorporating large glass frontages with limited window signage that allow the activity within to be seen from the street.
- b. A 'build-to' line should promote a consistent street edge with minimal front and side setbacks.
- c. Buildings should generally be sited to the property line, except where additional width is required to meet the public realm objectives (see policies 3.9.3 and 3.9.4).
- d. Buildings fronting busiest streets such as University Avenue should contribute to its character through interactive frontages and storefronts that are supportive of uses, such as café patios, that might "spill out" onto the pedestrian space. Encourage a sidewalk café zone in front of restaurant establishments, where sidewalk permits such uses without impairing passage.
- e. Where existing storefronts are not set at the street right-of-way line, encourage site features (such as ornamental fencing or plantings) that will provide a strong edge that defines the street and frames views.
- f. Where there is not enough public right-of-way for new street tree planting or public realm amenities, new buildings might be set back from property lines to establish an outdoor area for seating and/or landscaping, as appropriate.
- g. Assist and negotiate relocation of commercial activities that lack pedestrian-oriented frontages in favor of more active and visible uses.
- h. Strengthen the historic "Main Street" character of Rice Street with uses and building types geared to accommodate local goods and services, supporting redevelopment opportunities to increase density to allow for 2-3 story buildings that support mixed-use and increased number of residential options.

- i. Strengthen Rice Street commercial vitality, both north and south of University Avenue, by rehabilitating storefronts that are in disrepair or improving the landscaping of parking lots or area ramps.
- j. Building gaps along the University frontage should be strongly discouraged. Where gaps do exist, they should be adequately landscaped along the street frontage.

#### 4.26. Design neighborhood street frontage to cultivate community.

- a. Encourage housing development on vacant lots to strengthen the neighborhood and complete the building frontage zone.
- b. Orient front doors to the street to promote neighborhood stewardship and safety.
- c. Define the frontage of residential lots and the separation between public and private space with landscape features that relate to the street such as low fences, gates, hedges, and stoops. Avoid isolation from the street.
- d. Configure buildings, windows and landscaping to provide clear views onto streets and front yards to enhance a street-level vibrancy and shared sense of responsibility for safety.
- e. Encourage enforcement of property maintenance standards.
- f. Encourage outstanding building and site design and maintenance that contribute to the appearance and function of the neighborhood.

#### **Promote identity and uniqueness of buildings and open spaces with public and commemorative art that celebrates history, community and people.**

- 4.27. Review and update, as needed, and continue to administer standards set in place in the Policy for Works of Art in the Minnesota State Capitol (2015).



- 4.28. Review and update, as needed, and continue to administer standards set in place in the Policy For Commemorative Works in the Minnesota State Capitol Area (2012).
- 4.29. For public art that falls outside of the scope of Policy for Works of Art in the Minnesota State Capitol and Policy For Commemorative Works in the Minnesota State Capitol Area, establish a set of aspirational guidelines that seek to:
- Encourage public art that celebrates the rich cultural and immigrant history of the area.
  - Use public art to distinguish the identity of streets, parks, squares and public plazas.
  - Encourage a variety of integral designs, such as landscape features, that can confer a distinct identity on the place.
  - Encourage public art that is enjoyable at pedestrian scales.
  - Encourage creative placemaking and temporary art installations, where appropriate, throughout the Capitol Area.
  - Encourage the creation of parks and plazas designed by a collaboration of artists.
  - Encourage public and private patronage of art works in publicly accessible open spaces.
  - Emphasize urban design composition, establishing relationships with existing axes, vistas, entry points and landmarks.
  - Promote public art works along major approaches to or visible from the Capitol Building to reinforce view axes and to facilitate the orientation of pedestrians and motorists.
  - Integrate art in the design process of new construction.
  - Reinforce established City regulations and standards when curating and approving art in the Capitol Area.

4.30. On the State Campus (*also see Chapters 1 and 2*):

- Plan buildings with provisions for public and commemorative art.
- Commission works of art for specific locations in new and existing buildings. These may be commemorative pieces.
- Evaluate opportunities for further investment in public works of art based on their ability to enhance public spaces.
- Promote endowments and /or maintenance reserves for each new and existing monument and public art installation to pay for maintenance.
- Continue to support use of a portion of the building cost of major City and State construction projects for the acquisition, display and maintenance of art on-site through Percent-for-Art Programs, and explore ways to incorporate into the building design and architecture.











PRINCIPLE 5

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





# INTRODUCTION



The Capitol Area is an historically multi-modal district. Our 20-year vision calls for efforts to be redoubled to restore the focus from the individual car toward an enhanced, fully developed, multi-modal mobility infrastructure.

Though streets have distinctly different functions, all must fulfill the same basic

neighborhood and campus demands: the need to walk to work, to shop, to catch the bus, to get exercise and recreation, and the need to drive and park for services and employment. A multi-modal transportation network serves multiple needs and can reduce reliance on cars alone.

**Reduced automobile use is good for the environment.** An efficient and accessible multi-modal transportation network can play a vital role in improving the urban environment. Switching from single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs) to other modes of transportation is an effective way for individuals to reduce their carbon footprint. Cities can make it easier for people to make the switch by building a safe, efficient and reliable multi-modal transportation system.

---

*“The average passenger car in the U.S. produces just under 1 pound of carbon dioxide per mile traveled. If just one driver per household switched to taking public transportation for a daily commute of 10 miles each way, this would save 4,627 pounds of carbon dioxide per household per year—equivalent to an 8.1% reduction in the annual carbon footprint of a typical American household.”*

~ U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration, Public Transportation’s Role in Responding to Climate Change, 2010

---

**Evolving cities will require the restoration of a more efficient and nimble transportation system that can respond to changing needs over time.** Cities are changing. A preference for living in urban areas is growing, requiring cities to create more balanced transportation systems. Growing population and changing demographics alter transportation needs. According to the Metropolitan Council population forecasts, Saint Paul is projected to add an additional 45,000 residents by 2030. Our streets must increasingly integrate many layers of movement—pedestrians, bicycles, buses, light rail,

automobiles, shared vehicles, and commercial and emergency traffic—to accommodate the growing number of people. At the same time, changing retail and office patterns make shopping and working from home more feasible, potentially reducing the need for expansion of some roadway and parking networks.

**Quality pedestrian and bicycle facilities say much about the character of a neighborhood and the appeal of living there.**

Quality pedestrian and bicycle facilities improve convenience, increase safety and enhance recreation. They can serve all persons regardless of income, age or other attributes. They are the most energy efficient and environmentally friendly modes of transportation. Pedestrian connections are and should continue to be an essential element of the Capitol Area, since they form the initial and final segment of any trip. To the extent that people both live and work in the area, pedestrian facilities take on an increased importance in serving all segments of a trip.

**Considering pedestrians first will ensure a safe transportation system that works well for everyone.** A pedestrian-priority approach to movement is one that puts the pedestrian first in the decision-making process. This includes all variables affecting street design and support infrastructure including orientation of buildings, streetscape treatments, network of sidewalks and crosswalks, regulation of parking provisions and access, and placement of transit stops and stations.

---

*“Considering pedestrians first will ensure a safe transportation system that works well for everyone.”*

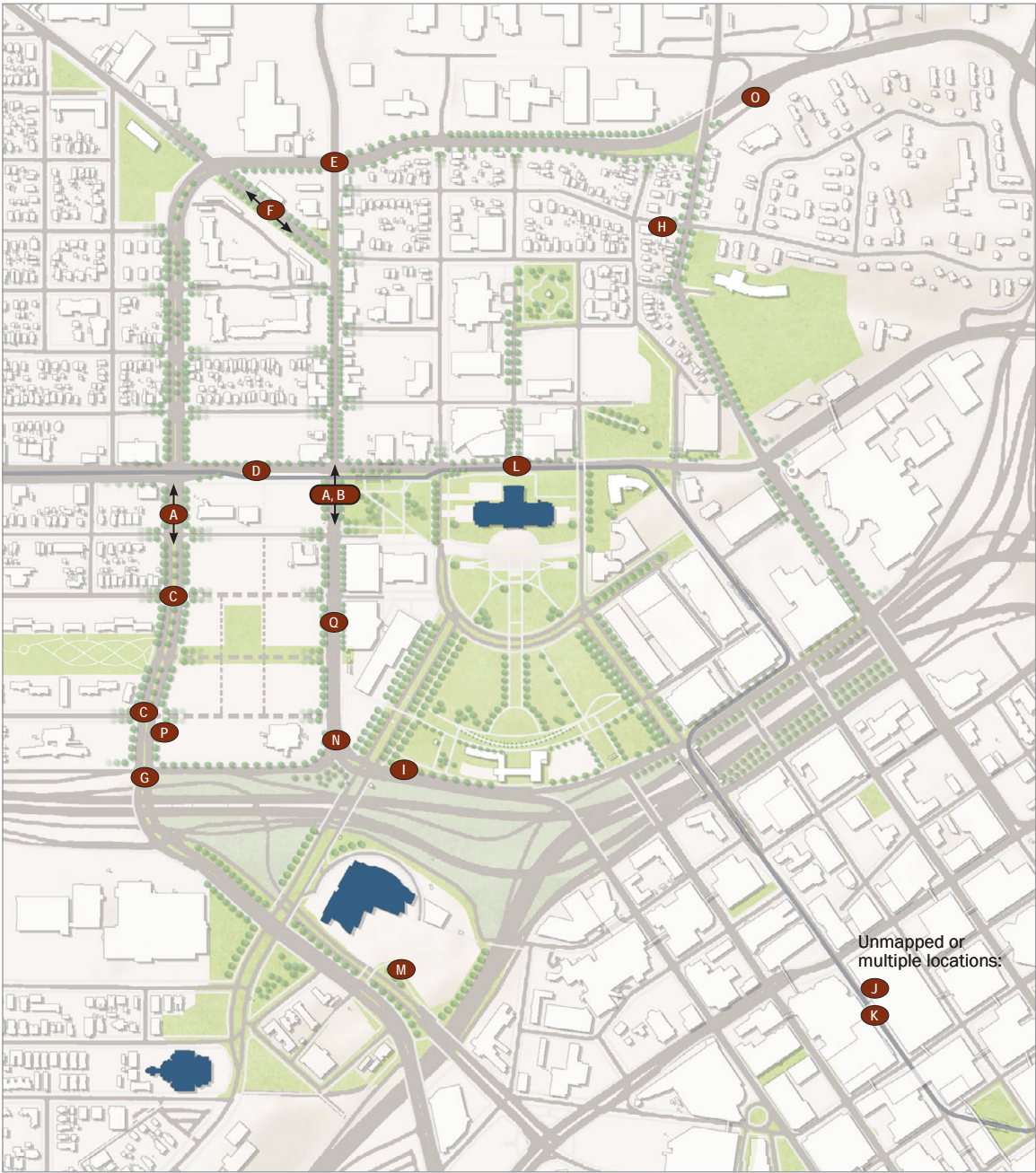
~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, quoted from the introduction to the Transportation chapter

---

Successfully moving the bar toward a balanced transportation system requires a multifaceted approach that ensures reliable, safe and affordable transportation options that allow movement from origin to destination in a timely and efficient manner. This requires a safe, clean, pleasant and reliable public transportation network that can compete with single-occupancy vehicles in convenience, experience and time. ≈



Figure 5.1: Multi-Modal Transportation Top Opportunities for Improvement



- A Multi-Modal Streets
- B Pedestrian-Friendly Main Street
- C Crosswalks: Marion Street
- D Improved Pedestrian Environment Adjacent to Light Rail
- E Intersection Improvement: Rice and Pennsylvania
- F Como Avenue Improvements
- G Freeway Access
- H Missing Sidewalk: Winter Street
- I Missing Sidewalk: 12th Street
- J Dedicated Bike Lanes\*
- K Bike Racks Near Building Entrances\*
- L Bike Lane Review: University
- M Bike Lane Review: MNHC
- N Capital City Bikeway Extension
- O State Trail Connection
- P Bus stop at Marion and Ravoux
- Q Bus rapid transit line along Rice Street

\*unmapped or multiple locations



### In this chapter...

This chapter outlines three key future mobility strategies to restore the nature of multi-modal transportation in the Capitol Area:

- A Complete Streets Framework
- Multiple Modes of Transportation Co-Located Around Integrated Mobility Hubs
- Capitol Area Mode Shift: District Strategies



# A COMPLETE STREETS FRAMEWORK

“Complete streets’ is the planning, scoping, design, implementation, operation, and maintenance of roads in order to reasonably address the safety and accessibility needs of users of all ages and abilities. Complete streets considers the needs of motorists, pedestrians, transit users and vehicles, bicyclists, and commercial and emergency vehicles moving along and across roads, intersections, and crossings in a manner that is sensitive to the local context and recognizes that the needs vary in urban, suburban, and rural settings.”<sup>1</sup>

The State of Minnesota, Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul all have resolutions or goals related to complete streets. The State of Minnesota addressed complete streets in 2010, encouraging all local road authorities to create and adopt complete streets policies for their roads that reflect local context and goals. Ramsey County approved the All-Abilities Transportation Network in 2016 to advance the county’s vision of “A vibrant community in which all are valued and

thrive.” The City of Saint Paul adopted a Complete Streets Resolution in 2009 and has since written one manual and two plans to guide implementation: the Saint Paul Street Design Manual (2016), the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan (2015, amended 2017), and the Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan (2018). *See box at right for a brief description of each plan.*

Full redesign and redevelopment of streets in the Capitol Area to accommodate all ages and abilities will occur incrementally over many years as new development occurs and streets are scheduled for repair. In the meantime, more affordable interim options could be explored to make a street more “complete” without a complete rebuild. This could include restriping to address traffic lanes, bike lanes, parking, and the pedestrian realm, especially at intersections and transit stops. ∞

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota Session Laws 2010, Chapter 351, Section 52, (MN Statue 174.75)



Figure 5.2: The above images show Rice Street as it exists today, and a possible redesign which includes development on the Sears site. The image is an example and does not represent planned development.

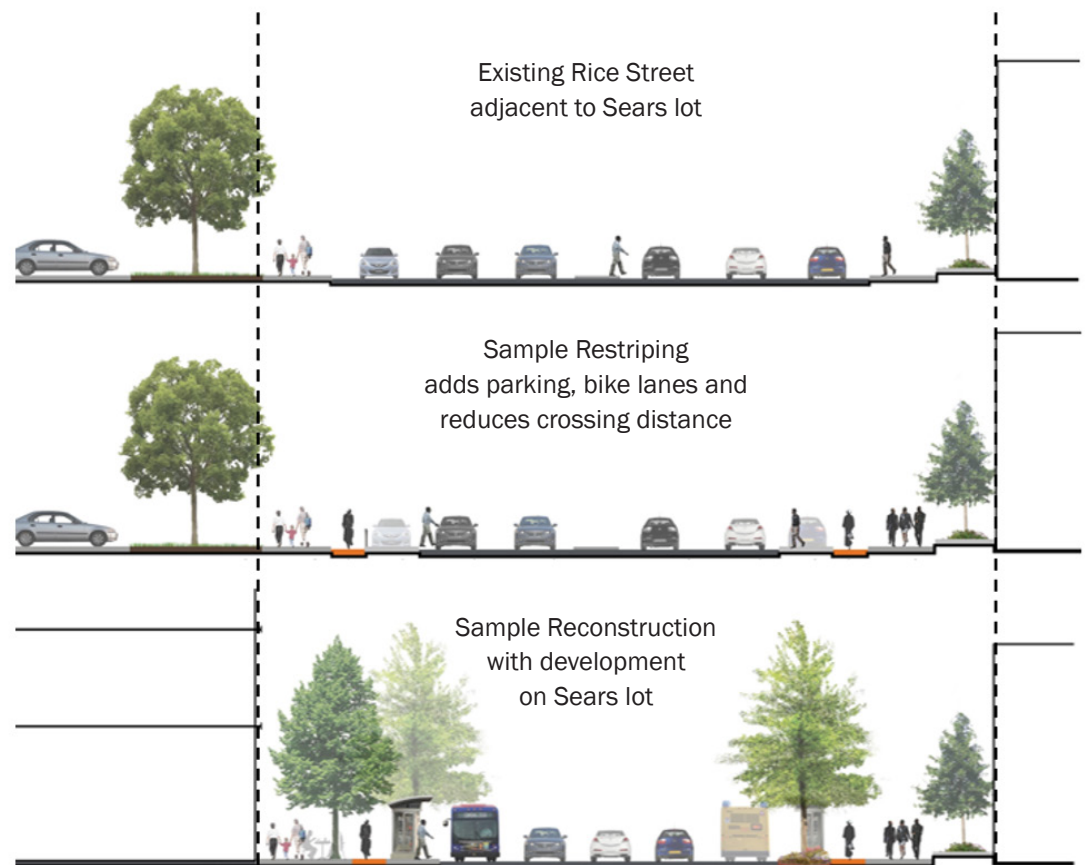


Figure 5.3: The three street sections above are examples of how incremental design changes could gradually transform Rice Street. The example alterations are made within the existing right-of-way to create a multi-modal, complete street. The street sections are examples and do not represent planned design changes.



## What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

Four documents underpin the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

### Saint Paul Street Design Manual (2016)

“The Saint Paul Street Design Manual is intended to be a tool to implement complete streets policies and guide the design of all future street projects so that each will be a well-coordinated process and contribute as part of a balanced transportation network for the greatest over-all benefit to the public.” (pg 3) The manual outlines five principles which provide a framework for the planning, design, and management of Saint Paul’s streets:

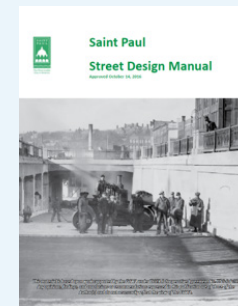
1. Accommodate All Modes of Travel
2. Ensure Safety for All Users
3. Promote Neighborhood and Economic Vitality
4. Integrate Placemaking and Public Art
5. Incorporate Sustainable Design

### Saint Paul Bicycle Plan (2015, amended 2017)

The Saint Paul Bicycle Plan “establishes a vision for how and why bicycles will play an important role in the future of the city. To increase the number of people using bicycles, this plan outlines a wide range of policies, procedures, infrastructure improvements, and programs that will collectively create an environment conducive to bicycling.” (pg 2) The plan provides a framework for the development of a bicycle network that allows all Saint Paul residents and visitors to safely and comfortably ride bicycles.

### Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan (2018)

“The Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan addresses citywide walking needs such as connecting the sidewalk system, providing safer ways to cross streets and education and enforcement programs to support safe walking. It includes recommendations to achieve the plan’s vision: *Saint Paul is a walking city—we are more healthy, resilient and connected when walking is safe and appealing for all.*” (pg 6) The plan outlines both infrastructure and program priorities to achieve goals for safe walking for everyone, connecting vibrant communities and implementation.





## MULTIPLE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION CO-LOCATED AROUND INTEGRATED MOBILITY HUBS

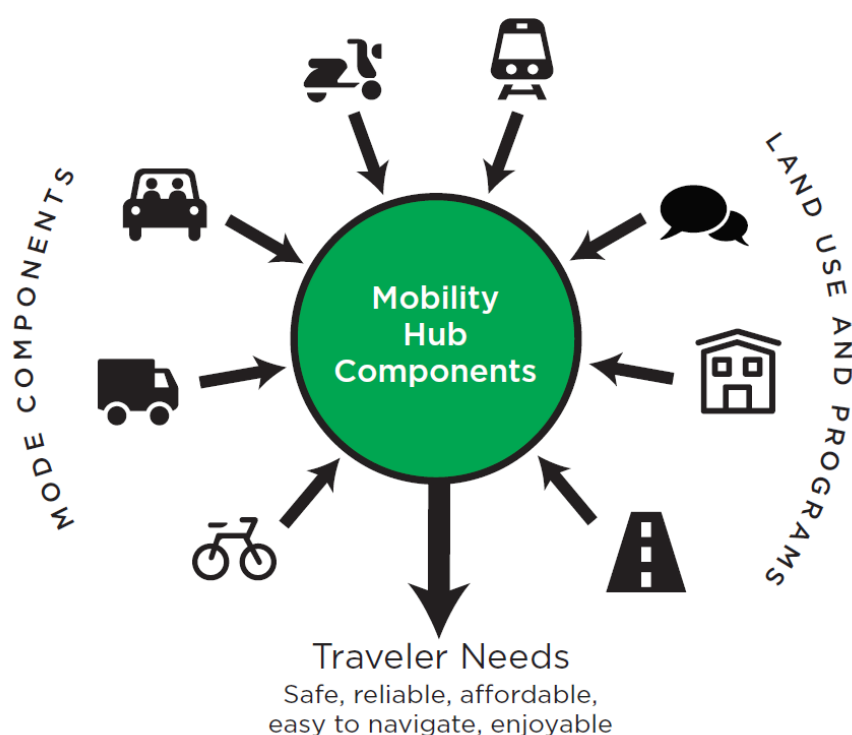


Figure 5.4: Integrated Mobility Hub image, Alta Planning and Design

*“Capitol Rice Station is already a major intersection for several forms of transportation. The CAAPB supports Capitol Area aspirations to restore more balanced and sustainable multi-modal infrastructure through coordinated planning near Leif Erickson Park and the intersection of Rice and University as an Integrated Mobility Hub. A Mobility Hub is a place where people connect to multiple modes of transportation in a safe, comfortable and accessible environment, facilitating convenient and reliable travel between origins and destinations. An Integrated Mobility Hub is set within a well-designed public environment extending to origins and destinations (first mile / last mile).”*

~Capitol Rice Development Framework (2019), pg 34

Mobility hubs combine multiple modes of transportation in one area, often clustered around a high-frequency public transit stop. Typical transportation modes may include LRT and bus; micromobility, such as scooters, bikeshare, and bike infrastructure; wayfinding elements, access or links to car-share or van pool; all in a safe and welcoming pedestrian environment. In an integrated mobility hub, these services or portion of them are located in close proximity and integrated with the urban fabric, such as in parks or in public or private buildings in the immediate area. The integrated mobility hub should increase a sense of personal safety and facilitate transfers between different transport modes.

The Capitol Rice Station area was identified in the Twin Cities Shared Mobility Action Plan<sup>1</sup> as one of two prime locations in Saint Paul that could serve as a mobility hub. The vision for an integrated mobility hub at University and Rice, with an enhanced Leif Erickson Park as the center, was further affirmed in the Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy and the Capitol Rice Development Framework<sup>2</sup>.

A mobility hub works best when improvements go beyond physical design of co-locating multiple transportation modes around one site. A mobility hub should be created in coordination with efforts to update Travel Demand Management (TDM) policy and practices for large employers, residences and destinations in an area. ~

<sup>1</sup> Twin Cities Shared Mobility Action Plan (Shared Use Mobility Center, 2017)

<sup>2</sup> Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy (CAAPB and City of Saint Paul, 2018)  
Capitol Rice Development Framework (CAAPB, 2019)

### What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

The SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan supports facilitating the development of mobility hubs:

*Policy T-28. Facilitate intermodal trips at mobility hubs (where walking, biking, public transit, ridesharing and carsharing are intentionally designed to connect) by providing enhanced security, lighting, information, shelter, placemaking, comfort and convenience.*



# CAPITOL AREA MODE SHIFT: DISTRICT STRATEGIES

In the Capitol Area, many major employers bring thousands of workers to the area every day. The abundance of parking in the area, combined with limited bus service to outlying suburbs and commuter incentives that require people to select only one mode of travel, has favored the automobile over other modes of transportation for commuters. The development of the Sears property could bring more residents, workers and visitors to the area (as well as a reduction of current parking leased by the State on the site), causing a parking shortage which could have an adverse effect on visitor/public parking, both on the Capitol Campus and in the neighborhoods. Shifting regular commuter's mode of travel can mitigate these adverse effects. This travel mode shift can be made easier by implementation of operational approaches that make selecting modes other than the car more attractive and affordable.

## Travel Demand Management

Travel Demand Management (TDM) is a set of strategies and practices that focus on understanding how people make their transportation decisions and helping people use the infrastructure in place for transit, carpooling, bicycling, walking and working from home. TDM is a complement to infrastructure. It underlies transit-oriented development, complete streets, mobility hubs and walkable urban villages.

TDM practices that can be implemented by employers or building owners help people know about and use all of the transportation options in the system. While the CAAPB is not involved in building management, implementation of TDM practices is highly encouraged in the Capitol Area. This plan supports comprehensive strategies that enhance existing infrastructure to make shared, sustainable transportation options more convenient than single occupant vehicle (SOV) travel. Elements of TDM could include:

- Educational or “how-to” programs and up-to-date information about transportation options
- Flexible parking packages that include daily packages in addition to monthly or yearly options
- New hire/new tenant packets on transportation options
- Move-in incentives, such as a Go-To Card with value and promotions for shared mobility services
- Long-term subsidized passes and memberships for mobility options
- Unbundled lease and parking for residences
- Preferential parking and rates for high-occupancy vehicles (carpools and vanpools)
- Active transportation support through on-site showers and lockers for employees

Also see Chapter 7A and the Capitol Rice Development Framework for more information on TDM strategies. It should be noted that many of the above listed measures already exist, at least to some if not full measure, by the State and other employers.

## District and Shared Parking Strategies


Parking supply and pricing is a key TDM strategy; its efficacy in reducing single-occupancy vehicle travel is well-documented. In the Capitol Area, short-term transportation and land use objectives can be met through more effective management of the existing parking supply. According to Metro Transit, “A Parking District allows all vehicle users within a geographic area to use a consolidated parking facility that serves a variety of sites and land uses. By consolidating parking into fewer lots/structures, construction and operations costs are reduced and users can visit multiple sites within the district without having to drive and re-park. Conversely, shared parking typically operates at a smaller scale than a Parking District. Shared parking restricts parking to patrons, employees or residents of adjacent properties.”<sup>1</sup> Shared parking works well when adjacent properties have opposite peak usage, such as residential and office.

District and shared parking strategies create a parking supply that serves a collective area of land uses, transforming multiple fragmented lots into a cohesive, user-friendly parking system that improves access for customers and employees. Well-located street parking is an important part of a district or shared parking plan.

District parking strategies can:

- Improve land use efficiency and can create a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Make it easier for drivers to locate parking and provide more potential for sharing among all district users, decreasing the time each space sits empty.

## Building in Mode Shift: Opportunities with New Public and Private Investment

Large new investments, such as the Sears site redevelopment, provide an opportunity to build in TDM and district parking strategies from the beginning. Through early creative collaboration between public and private partners, large developments can implement district-wide mobility and travel demand management practices and address district-wide supply and demand for parking. Also see Chapter 7A and the Capitol Rice Development Framework for specific related policy. 

<sup>1</sup> Metro Transit FAQ: Creating a Parking District, [https://www.metrotransit.org/Data/Sites/1/media/tod/districtparkingfaq\\_6-22.pdf](https://www.metrotransit.org/Data/Sites/1/media/tod/districtparkingfaq_6-22.pdf)



## What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

The City of Saint Paul identifies mode split goals in the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, stating the implementation goal: “Work towards increasing all (not just work commute) trips’ mode share for non-single-occupant vehicles, aiming to surpass the following interim goals prior to 2040, as measured via the Metropolitan Council’s Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI): 25% walking, 20% public transit, 8% bicycling.”

**The City of Saint Paul Climate Action Plan** also identifies a goal for reduction of Single Occupancy Vehicles by 40% by 2040 and 50% by 2050 (from 2020 numbers). Key initiatives to achieve that goal, quoted from the Plan, include:

*TM-1 Reduce or eliminate citywide minimum parking requirements and set parking maximums for most land-use types and require developers and landlords to “unbundle” parking from rent*

*TM-2 Redesign parking fees to capture the full cost of parking in downtown and other high-demand commercial districts*

*TM-3 Provide a stable funding source to implement the recommendations of the city’s Comprehensive Plan*

*TM-4 Bring together various stakeholders including the city, transit agencies, and community groups to create affordable housing in the transit market areas defined by the Metropolitan Council*

*TM-5 Implement pricing strategies that accurately capture the cost of driving and auto-centric infrastructure on city roads*

*TM-6 Identify strategies to mitigate the impacts of inner-city highways including capping, conversion to boulevards, or complete removal*

*TM-7 Incentivize infill development by implementing smart growth strategies described in the city’s draft Comprehensive Plan*

*TM-8 Increase the number of communities that are mixed-use and higher-density*

*TM-9 Implement the “Vision Zero” program recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan to achieve zero traffic fatalities on city rights-of-way*

## Policy quoted from the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan related to Mode Shift

*Policy T-21: Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 40% by 2040 by improving transportation options beyond single-occupant vehicles.*

*Policy T-22. Shift mode share towards walking, biking, public transit, carpooling, ridesharing and carsharing in order to reduce the need for car ownership.*

*Policy T-27. Improve public transit mode share and support quality public transit in all parts of the city through strategic establishment of transit-supportive land use intensity and design, increased traffic signal optimization for transit, working with transit providers to improve their service offerings and supporting transit facilities (See Maps T-5 and T-6).*

## Twin Cities Shared Mobility Action Plan

In 2017, the Shared Use Mobility Center (SUMC), at the request of multiple Twin Cities organizations including Move Minnesota, Nice Ride Minnesota, the City of Minneapolis, the City of Saint Paul, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit, published the Twin Cities Shared Mobility Action Plan. The plan laid out a mode shift goal for the region to remove 50,000 private cars from the roads in the Twin Cities over the next 10 years, and thereby help to maintain the region’s livability, affordability and freedom of movement. The plan recommends ten strategies to achieve the goal:

1. *Grow Shared Mobility in Support of the Transit Network*
2. *Pilot Flexible Transit that Focuses on Reverse Commute Challenges*
3. *Leverage the Metro Transit App to Establish a Data Clearinghouse*
4. *Stabilize and Grow Carsharing*
5. *Expand and Evolve Bikesharing*
6. *Elevate Vanpooling as a Viable Option for Commuters*
7. *Develop and Implement New Carpooling and Ride-Splitting Solutions*
8. *Concentrate Efforts around Integrated Mobility Hubs*
9. *Realign CMAQ Funding and Improve TDM Outcomes*
10. *Optimize Parking and Street Space to Prioritize Shared Mobility*



## Future-Proofing Parking Ramps?

Parking takes up an extraordinary amount of space in most cities. Future-proofing is a design strategy that is increasingly being heard in reference to new parking structures. Future-proofing creates a parking structure that can be converted to other uses in the future, when car storage needs decline as a result of increased carshare, improved public transit infrastructure or the rise of autonomous vehicles.

Conversion of parking buildings into other uses isn't necessarily a new concept. According to FastCompany, "a 'hotel for autos' built in Manhattan in the 1930s was converted into a warehouse a decade later, and then became apartments." Conversions are happening now more frequently, with developers looking to future-proof new parking structures with efficient future conversion in mind.

Future-proofing parking structures could include design modifications that make conversion easier, such as:

- Flat rather than sloped floors (something long incorporated in ramps within the Capitol Area)
- Adequate floor-to-floor heights, w/ floor plates aligned to surrounding buildings, to accommodate expansion/future uses
- Entry and exit ramps architecturally designed for easy removal later
- Elevators and stairwells built with future conversion in mind
- Knockout panels and modular sections that make walls and ceilings easily removable to allow for different circulation and more light
- Initial implementation of plumbing piping or utility hookups
- Providing for street-level mixed uses

Cities are taking notice, building language around future adaptable parking structures into policy. Both the City of Saint Paul and the City of Minneapolis have policy regarding adaptable parking structures:

*Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan Policy LU-15. Ensure that stand-alone parking uses are limited, and that structured parking is mixed-use and/or convertible to other uses.*

*Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan Policy 6. Action Step O. Require above-grade parking structures to be designed with active uses along the street walls and with sufficient clearance and floor grades on all levels to allow adaptive reuse in the future.*



419 Washington in the North Loop, Minneapolis is being developed by Swervo Development and CPM Companies. The building includes three stories of underground parking and five stories of above-ground parking. The building is designed with the capability to convert the parking floors to office space if the parking need goes down. (Image: Courtesy of DJR Architecture)

### References:

"These future-proof parking garages can easily morph into offices or housing" by Adele Peters. Fast Company, January 14, 2019. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90291136/these-futureproof-parking-garages-can-be-easily-turned-into-offices-or-housing>

"Adapting Parking Garages" by Brian E. Clark. National Association of Realtors, December 12, 2018. <https://www.nar.realtor/on-common-ground/adapting-parking-garages>

"Parking garages are getting a second life as places for people" by Alissa Walker. Curbed, April 26, 2017. <https://www.curbed.com/2017/4/26/15421594/parking-garages-driverless-cars-gensler>

"Why the future of Minneapolis parking garages may not include parking" by Peter Callaghan. Minnpost, Nov 17, 2017. <https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2017/11/why-future-minneapolis-parking-garages-may-not-include-parking/>



## Baseline 5.1: Capitol Area Mode Split

In transportation, mode split refers to the percentage of travelers using a particular type (or mode) of transportation.

The 2015 Saint Paul Bicycle Plan noted a shift in transportation behavior nationwide and in the Twin Cities. “In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, motorized trips per household, motorized trips per person, and the total number of car trips have all declined since 2000. Similarly, licensed drivers per household, and vehicles per household have declined since 1970. Since 2000, the Twin Cities metropolitan mode share changes reflect a 6% decrease in driving, and a 13% increase in bicycling.” (pg 10) While a variety of factors contribute to these behavioral trends, the cost of owning and operating an automobile, environmental and sustainability concerns, and a desire for an active lifestyle are among the reasons.

In January 2019, Capitol Area Commutes, a multi-agency initiative, conducted a commute travel behavior survey among state employees in the Capitol Complex. The purpose of the survey was to establish a baseline mode split for Capitol Complex commuters and better understand the factors shaping their commute mode choice. 3,324 people (approximately 35% of the 9,500 Capitol Complex employees ) responded to the survey. At the same time, the Department of Administration conducted a promotion for a month-long free Metropass to increase awareness and encourage transfer from single-occupancy vehicle commuting to transit. 38 employees signed up for the free pass. While the results of the promotion did not appear to permanently change travel behavior (the only participants that signed up for a pass after the trial had said they were planning to do so anyway), it represents another attempt to shift commuter behavior.

### Key Findings:

1. Most respondents drive alone to work every day. Approximately 77% of survey respondents affirmed they drive alone to work most of or all the time. This aligns closely with the percentage of state employees with Capitol Complex parking permits (approximately 71%).
2. Younger respondents were more likely to use sustainable transportation modes, like transit and bicycling.
3. Respondents did not seem aware of existing offerings like discounted transit passes, the Guaranteed Ride Home program, or carpool ride-matching system, although some indicated those programs would induce them to try sustainable commuting. 🌀

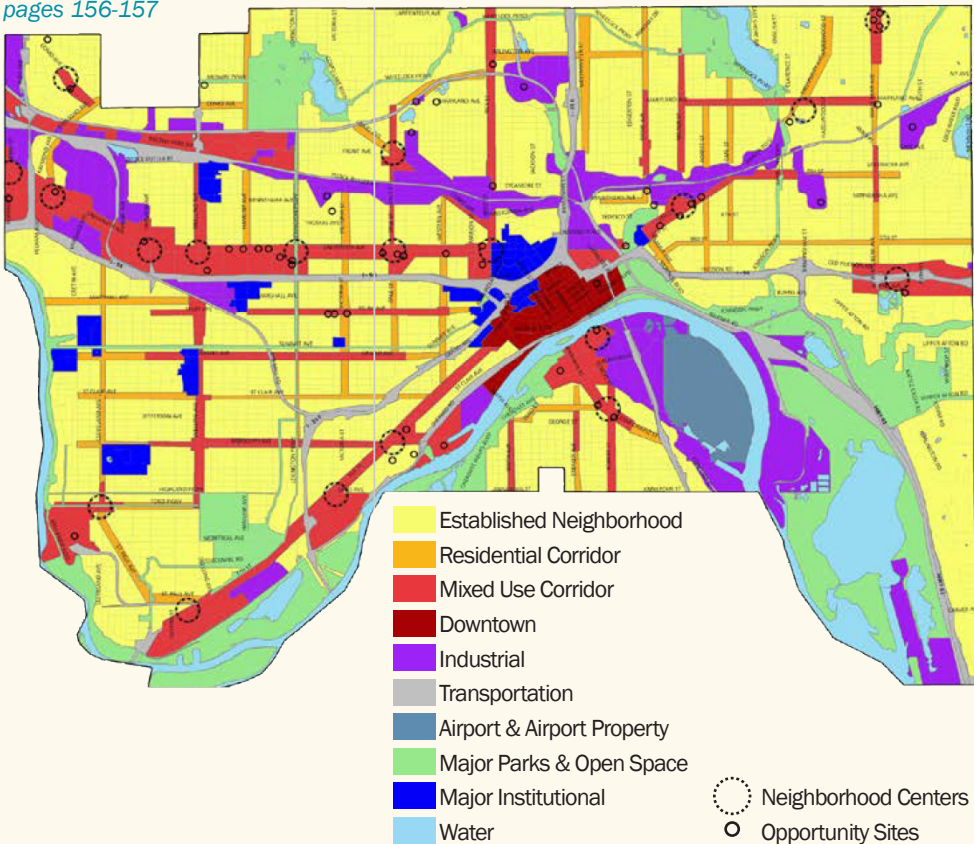
## Baseline 5.2: Street Framework

The design of every street in Saint Paul is influenced by the context in the city. This includes surrounding land use context, the current and projected traffic demands, right of way available, functional classification, and street ownership. All of these factors combined provides a framework for the design of the street.

### Land Use Context – Corridor Classification Types

The Saint Paul Street Design Manual assigns corridor types based on surrounding land use. Of the types defined in the manual, four types are identified in or bordering the Capitol Area<sup>1</sup>: downtown streets, mixed-use corridor streets, established neighborhood streets, and industrial streets. Many streets in the Capitol Area are identified as “major institutional.” These corridor classification types are the basis for more detailed planning and analysis of street types in the Capitol Area. See page 15 for application of street types in the Capitol Area.

Figure 5.5: Saint Paul Corridor Classification Types. Image: Saint Paul Street Design Manual, pages 156-157



<sup>1</sup> See the Saint Paul Street Design Manual, pages 156-167. *Important Note: The City of Saint Paul is expressed commitment to the Street Design Manual as a useful tool to design specific elements of the public right-of-way, however it is also true that the City will likely be updating the document based on policy established in their 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the designations shown here are based on slightly dated typological designations and may soon become officially obsolete. At such time of the update to the Street Design Manual, it will be necessary to review, in collaboration with the City, and with oversight of the Board, and update the future street type designations shown in this Chapter.*



Functional Classification

The map classifies each street according to its vehicular function, that is, to what extent a street operates to move traffic and to what extent it operates to provide access to abutting properties. These classifications are consistent with County, Metropolitan, and State transportation plan classifications. These designations are also shown the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 24040 Comprehensive Plan. A key takeaway in this map is that the City of Saint Paul classifies University Ave and Rice Street as “relievers” to traffic on parallel principal arterials, which may provide challenges to making these routes more pedestrian-friendly. More discussion is needed on this.

Principal Arterials: roadways on the metropolitan highway system.

The minor arterial system supplements the metropolitan highway system and emphasizes mobility. These are the main access routes to principal arterials and also provide access to the Central Business District and to regional business concentrations. In the Twin Cities region, the minor arterials are separated into two parts: the “A minors” and “other” minor arterials.

A Minor Relievers: provide supplementary capacity for congested, parallel principal arterial.

A Minor Augmentors: supplement the principal arterial system in more densely developed or redeveloping areas

Other Minor Arterials

Collectors: provide access to the arterial network. Also provide for movement between adjacent neighborhoods to replace some function of the minor arterials. Some through movement is accommodated.

Local Access Streets: provide access for neighborhoods and within neighborhoods.

Street Ownership

The map shows street ownership in the Capitol Area. Coordination with multiple organizations and governmental agencies is required to encourage and implement improvements to the street network in the Capitol Area.

Municipal

County

State/Federal

Private/Department of Administration

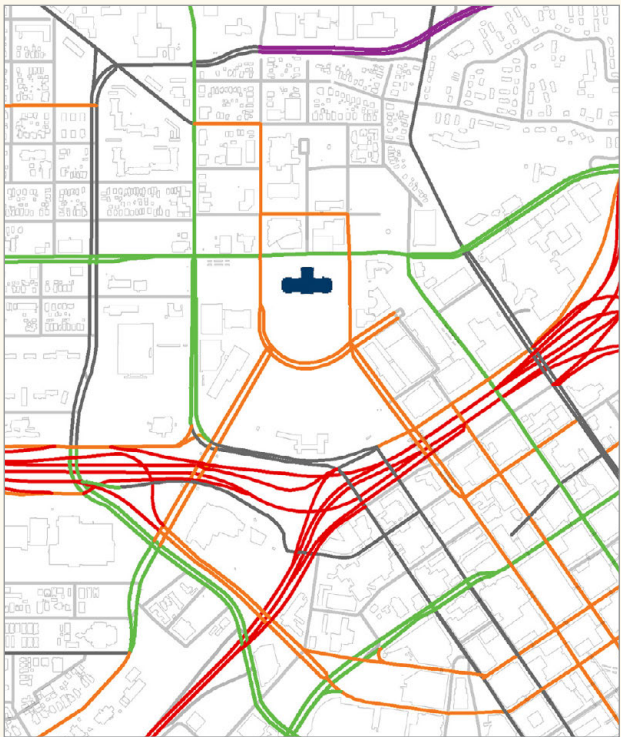


Figure 5.6: Street Functional Classification. Data Source: Enterprise MnDOT Mapping Application <https://mndotgis.dot.state.mn.us/emma/Freeway System: I-94 and 35E>

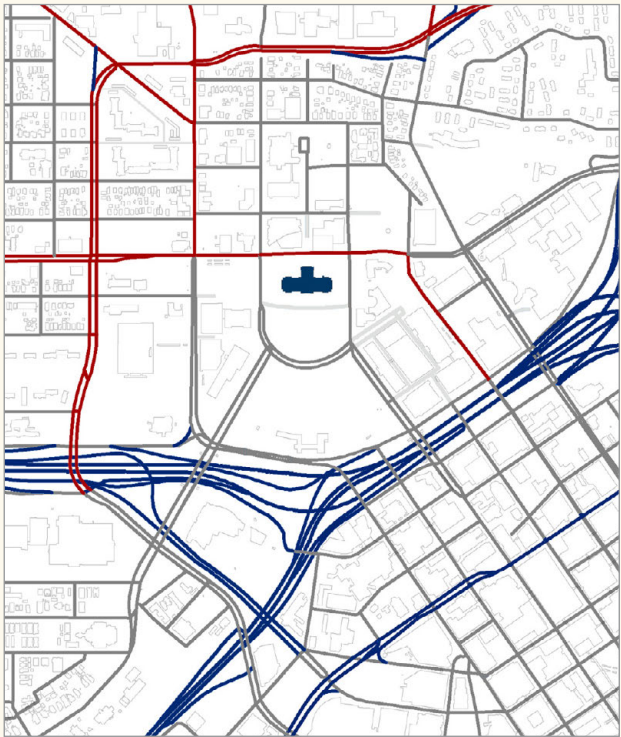


Figure 5.7: Street Ownership. Data Source: Enterprise MnDOT Mapping Application <https://mndotgis.dot.state.mn.us/emma/> and SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan



### Right-of-Way Available

The ability to modify a street is constrained by the right-of-way available. The map at right shows the existing right-of-way for each street in the Capitol Area in light gray.

### Current Traffic Demand

Traffic counts show that many streets in the Capitol Area may have been overbuilt. Current traffic demands and future traffic studies should serve to inform street redesign that responds to not only vehicular traffic, but also other modes of travel.

A goal for the Capitol Area concerning access and circulation is on improving neighborhood access so that neighborhoods are connected with employment, services and activities they seek. This includes all modes of transportation, not only cars.

### Going Forward...Calibrating City of Saint Paul Street Types to the Capitol Area

While the CAAPB does not design streets, it does, per Statute 15B, approve substantial changes or improvements to public lands or public buildings in the Capitol Area. (MN Statute 15B.08, Subd 3). Street hierarchies indicate a graded level of importance among streets, often related to their size and the amount of pedestrian and vehicular traffic they accommodate. The scale of a street should also reflect the residential densities in neighborhoods. The widths of planting strips, sidewalks, front yards and driveways vary among different streets. The scale and rhythms of streetscape elements such as street trees, lamp posts and sidewalk paving affect the character and image of a neighborhood. Establishing common elements in streetscapes will provide design continuity throughout the Capitol Area.

To guide future development, the CAAPB assigns a hierarchy of street types based on multiple factors. Future design of the streets is guided by the Saint Paul Street Design Manual, Saint Paul Bicycle Plan and Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan.

Important Note: The City of Saint Paul is expressed commitment to the Street Design Manual as a useful tool to design specific elements of the public right-of-way, however it is also true that the City will likely be updating the document based on policy established in their 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the designations shown here are based on slightly dated typological designations and may soon become officially obsolete. At such time of the update to the Street Design Manual, it will be necessary to review, in collaboration with the City, and with oversight of the Board, and update the future street type designations shown in this Chapter.

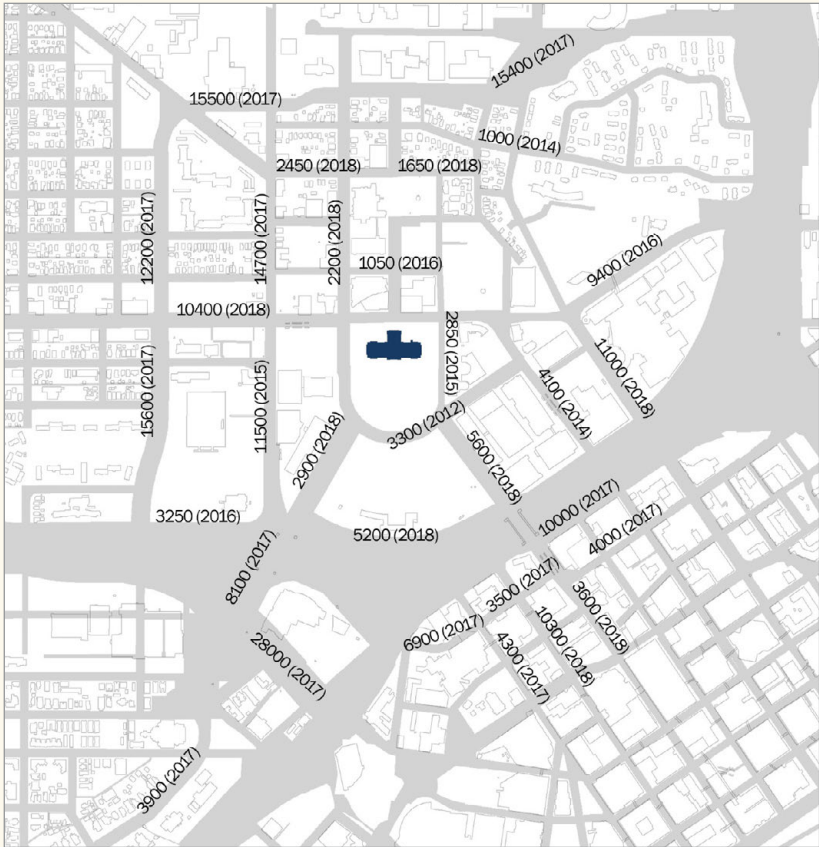


Figure 5.8: Right-of-way is shown in light gray. Annual Average Daily Traffic data sources: MnDOT Right of Way Mapping and Monitoring; MnDOT Traffic Mapping Application

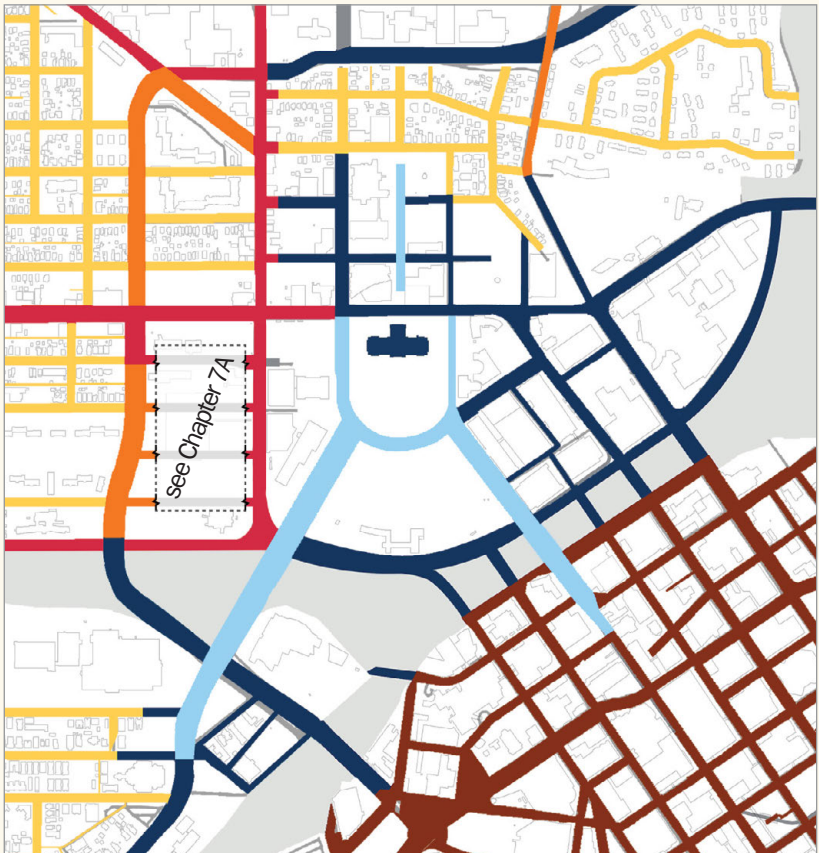


Figure 5.9: Map of Future Street Types. Also see descriptions at right.



**Downtown Streets<sup>1</sup>:** Downtown Streets within the Capitol Area host a wide range of high-density uses and provide access to a mix of office, retail, restaurants, arts and entertainment and residential uses.

**Mixed-Use Corridors<sup>1</sup>:** University Avenue and Rice Street provide access to a mix of small and medium size businesses as well as residences in mixed-use buildings. They have the highest volumes of vehicles and transit service as well as moderate to high volumes of pedestrian activity. Ideally, mixed-use corridors provide high-quality transit service while fostering a pedestrian scale in which walking and biking actively complement public transit. University Avenue and Rice Street are central to the Capitol Rice urban village (*also see Chapter 7a*) and connect adjacent neighborhoods along a common artery. Amenities and services found on these corridors should attract area residents and draw visitors from the Capitol Campus and beyond. CAAPB staff will continue to work with the local district council and organizations to improve the appearance of these commercial corridors near the Capitol Campus.

**Residential Corridors<sup>1</sup>:** While the City of Saint Paul identifies Marion Street north of University as an Established Neighborhood Street and south of University a Mixed-Use Corridor, the width, speed of traffic, access to the freeway, truck traffic and predominantly residential character contribute to CAAPB assigning this street the Residential Corridor classification. Future development on the Sears block is expected to increase the medium-density residential character south of University Avenue.

**Existing Neighborhood Streets<sup>1</sup>:** Local streets in residential neighborhoods should provide safe and inviting places to walk with direct access through the neighborhood to adjacent corridors and transit. Well-planned neighborhood streets knit a community together and offer a forum for the expression of community values. Good residential streets promote healthy communities and contribute to an increased quality of life.

**NEW: Capitol Area Institutional Streets<sup>2</sup>:** Institutional Streets in the Capitol Area provide access to state buildings and other large office buildings. Capitol Area Institutional Streets should provide an exceptional pedestrian experience with high-quality street furnishings.

**NEW: Capitol Area Civic Streets<sup>3</sup>:** Four civic streets in the Capitol Area are primary view corridors and pedestrian ways as people move about the Capitol complex. These streets have a design history dating back to Cass Gilbert. While each street has slightly different uses and design requirements, their axial relationship to the Capitol Building is a primary design consideration. Vegetation should not impede the view corridor.



*Downtown Street, Street Design Manual pg 158*



*Mixed-Use Corridor, Street Design Manual pg 160*



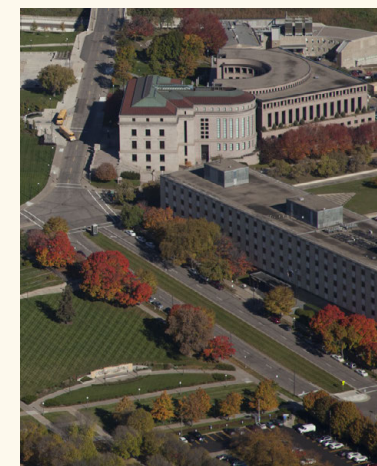
*: Residential Corridor, Street Design Manual pg 162*



*Existing Neighborhood Street, Street Design Manual pg 164*



*Capitol Area Institutional Street, Sherburne Ave (Image: Google Earth)*



*Capitol Area Civic Street, Cedar Street*

1 This corridor classification is identified and defined in the Saint Paul Street Design Manual, pages 156-167

2 Capitol Area Institutional is a subset of Saint Paul's "Major Institutional" corridor classification. Pennsylvania Avenue, which does not connect with residential Capitol Heights between Rice Street and Jackson Street functions as an institutional street in the Capitol Area.

3 Capitol Area Civic is a new corridor classification for the Capitol Area.



### Street Framework: Top Opportunities for Improvement

- A. **Multi-Modal Streets.** Preliminary study and comparing to national standards<sup>1</sup> indicate that both Marion Street and Rice Street are likely overbuilt for current traffic demands. CAAPB supports re-envisioning these roads to create a more pedestrian-friendly, multi-modal public realm environment. Avoiding conflicts between all travel modes to ensure safety should be of primary concern in particular to the concerns of the pedestrian.
- B. **Pedestrian-Friendly Main Street.** Rice Street is an important corridor connecting neighborhoods to the north and northwest through the Capitol Area to downtown. While vehicular traffic is an important consideration in the Rice Street design, traffic movement needs to be balanced with a safe and vibrant pedestrian realm which encourages walking and creates community building opportunities. In addition, any changes on Rice Street that might restrict traffic must be weighed against negative impacts on local Capitol Heights residential streets. See chapter 3 of this plan for the vision for Rice Street: Transform the Capitol/Rice corridor, the major north/south corridor of the Capitol Area connecting neighborhoods to the northwest with downtown Saint Paul, into a human-scale “great street<sup>2</sup>.”
- C. **Crosswalks: Marion Street.** Marion Street is wide and difficult to cross for pedestrians. In 2017 a community group at the Ravoux Hi-Rise succeeded in getting a temporary crosswalk at two points on Marion, including Ravoux Street. Still, the crossing of this wide boulevard is difficult for pedestrians. There is also no accommodation for bicycle, and given the landscaped boulevards and median, Marion may prove to be the safer and preferred route for a designated bike lane connecting downtown to points north via Como or Rice north of the commercial district where roadway is more limited.
- D. **Improved Pedestrian Environment.** The unique condition along University Avenue between Marion and Rice Streets due to the south running alignment of the LRT creates a pedestrian safety hazard as the LRT runs adjacent to the pedestrian with no buffer. The Central Corridor Development Strategy and past Capitol Area Comprehensive Plans call for an improved pedestrian amenity and buffering from the adjacent LRT infrastructure.
- E. **Intersection Improvement.** Rice and Pennsylvania: The intersection at Rice and Pennsylvania marks the transition to the Capitol Area from the north industrial rail area (aka North End Commercial District) north of Pennsylvania to the Rice Street commercial zone of the Capitol Area south of Pennsylvania. An urban design study could help define the character of this district better.
- F. **Como Avenue Improvements.** Como Avenue between Marion and Rice is wide and difficult for pedestrians to cross. The street’s adjacency to residences and a city park calls for improved pedestrian access and safety to provide a connection for people from Como Place Apartments to Frogtown Community Center and Hmongtown Marketplace. Today the street is more of a barrier than a connector. The right-of-way width is wider than is necessary for the current function of the street and could be re-envisioned for other uses, but has been recognized as a major bike route and this should not be lost. Also see the Capitol Rice Development Strategy.
- G. **Freeway Access.** Continued convenient access to 35E and I-94 is essential to enhancing future economic opportunities in the Capitol Area, and to making the neighborhoods convenient places to live. Given that the Capitol Area is a connector between neighborhoods to the north and downtown, as well as a major destination for people from around the state, good freeway access can protect the residential neighborhoods of the Capitol Area from excessive through traffic. ↻

<sup>1</sup> This will be referenced. NACTO or other standards on number of lanes and AADT.

<sup>2</sup> The term “great street” is from urbanist Allan Jacobs, in his book by the same name. “First and foremost, a great street should help make community... A great street should be a most desirable place to be, to spend time, to live, to play, to work... Streets are settings for activities that bring people together.” ~quoted from Great Streets by Allan Jacobs (1995)



## Baseline 5.3: Vehicular Parking Network

Today there is a large footprint of surface and structured parking in the Capitol Area, with surface parking lots especially concentrated around the Capitol Rice Station and along Rice Street in the Capitol Rice District. In all, over 11,000 parking stalls are available in public and private lots and ramps throughout the Capitol Area. This number does not include residential parking lots and drives or street parking. (See *Baseline 6.6 in chapter 6 for a map and details about available parking.*)

Throughout the Capitol Area there are shortages and excesses of parking (both real and perceived). Variations to parking supplies happen during each day, during legislative session, and seasonally:

- Large employers dominate the area creating the greatest parking demand during daytime work hours. This leaves large expanses of parking lots empty in evening and weekend hours, creating empty and unwatched spaces which can decrease safety and adversely impact the area.
- Parking demand fluctuates throughout the year, with increased demand during legislative sessions.
- Daytime shortages in some areas of the district create spill-over parking in adjacent neighborhoods. The supply of parking in the Capitol Rice District may decrease in the coming years as surface lots are redeveloped. This will likely change conditions documented in a 2018 study<sup>1</sup> of twelve parking facilities which found, “*When considering all available parking in the study area [the Capitol Rice District], many facilities are underutilized most of the time. When analyzed by ownership type, state lots and non-state lots were below the 85% occupancy rate, regardless of the legislative session (Figure 8). Only State Lots C (Ford Bldg) and Q during legislative session at noon met the 85% occupancy rate threshold. Occupancy rates at the twelve off-street parking facilities within the study area dropped off precipitously after 5pm, lowering to 17% overall.*” However, if demand for parking remains the same (a big question as commuting patterns will likely change as a result of new working norms post-pandemic), parking supplies will continue to tighten. This is most pronounced at the State, who is facing the loss of 500 leased surface parking spaces at the Sears site, now slated for private redevelopment.
- There are perceptions of parking shortages throughout the Capitol Area. Many of them are a function of an actual lack of supply at given times, others are fueled by perceptions that parking should simply be cheaper and/or easier to find.

- Anecdotally and through a limited survey of legislators<sup>2</sup>, the difficulty in finding parking for constituents (or guiding constituents to convenient parking) is cited as a top issue. (Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the visitor experience.)

Parking is now managed in several ways in the Capitol Area:

- The State of Minnesota has a district-based parking model for employees in that all State agencies share the pool of parking available in State lots and ramps. Several travel demand management practices are in place that encourage carpooling and transit commuting. Smart parking technologies that help users and increase parking facility efficiencies are being planned and implemented incrementally. In today’s State campus parking model, shared parking and public-private mixed use of parking facilities is determined by the rate setting process and financing mechanisms now are in place, administered by The Department of Administration, changes to which require consultation with Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB).
- The City of Saint Paul manages on-street supplies of parking. The 2018 study mentioned above also documented on-street parking conditions, finding that on-street parking, (specifically in the Capitol Rice District) is used by a small number of vehicles parked for long(er) periods of time (relative to other districts). Occupancy rates of on-street parking were below 85% utilization, indicating a surplus of surface parking capacity in the area. Turnover rates in on-street parking spaces were not discernably different between session and non-session observations; a relatively small number of vehicles took up a disproportionate number of the available vehicle hours. The report suggested that encouraging greater turnover of on-street parking would help improve economic vitality of the area. This finding, while helping business vitality and visitors, would also, for better or worse, lessen opportunities for employees that commute by car and rely on on-street parking.

### Going Forward...

Collaborative, district-level and shared parking strategies should be explored by area property owners and tenants to better promote and utilize shared parking.

New structured parking solutions should be implemented that are strategically located, designed and programmed to serve as many users as possible throughout the day and the year. Specifically, structured private or public-private parking solutions at the Sears site may serve to replace surface parking supplies needed by the State and other nearby customers.

<sup>1</sup> Capitol Area Commutes, Rice Street/Capitol Area Parking Study Summary..January 1, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Spring 2019 Survey of 10 legislators: 90% said constituents have difficulty finding where to park.



Innovative parking technology solutions should be explored to maximize the efficiency of off-street parking facilities. Innovative parking technology could allow operators to offer flexible parking plans combined with transit options to maximize parking facilities for more hours of the day and more days of the week.

Street parking in the area should be evaluated to ensure location, rates and meter durations result in maximum usage and compliance.

Parking should also be evaluated to ensure street parking in residential areas is not unreasonably encroached upon by commuters.

Designated curb space for drop off/pick up should be allocated to encourage turnover and shared mobility solutions.

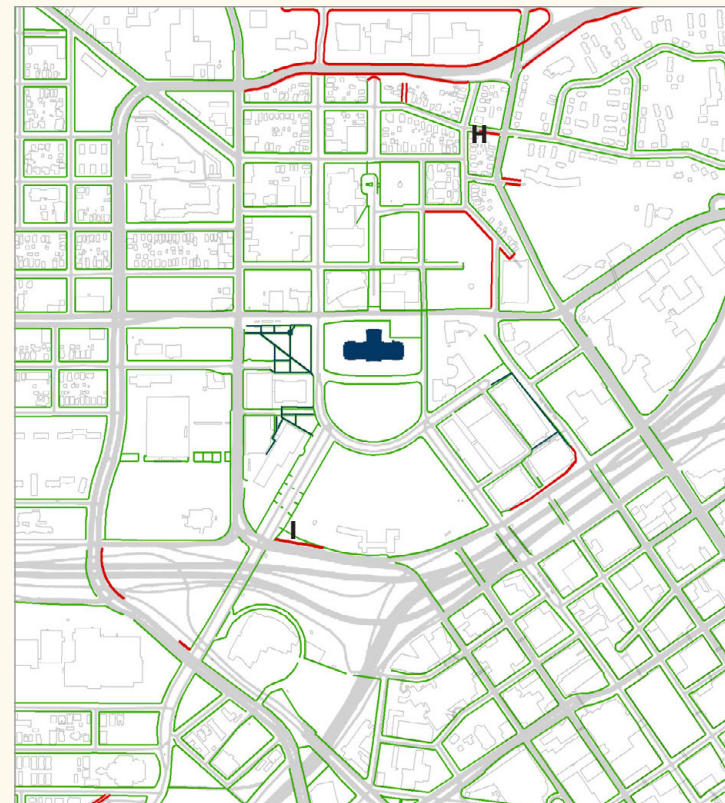
Travel Demand Management strategies outlined in this chapter will help to lessen the demand for parking by decreasing commuters' overall reliance on single occupancy vehicles (SOV's) by up to a third of current percentages.

Every effort should be made by the City to better control and limit the amount of public on-street parking on the Mall that is consumed during the busiest times by a glut of food trucks, with a strong enforcement of license rules such as times and length of stay as well as payment . Additionally, the amount of garbage generated is a burden for State to constantly handle. ♻️

## Baseline 5.4: Pedestrian Network

Supporting a high-quality pedestrian network is a key goal in the Capitol Area (also see chapter 4).

Figure 5.10: Pedestrian Network



- Sidewalks along roadways
- Pedestrian only walkways
- Missing sidewalks along roadway

### Going Forward...

Completing safe, quality connections to key locations will improve the overall pedestrian experience.

### Pedestrian Network: Top Opportunities for Improvement

- H. **Missing Sidewalk: Winter Street.** The missing sidewalk along Winter Street approaching Jackson Street from the west (labeled #1) hinders access to Valley Park as well as the northbound bus stop at Winter and Jackson. Completing the sidewalk in this location is a priority. CAAPB will work with the City of Saint Paul to encourage completion of this sidewalk.
- I. **Missing Sidewalk: 12th Street.** The crushed granite trail along 12th Street east of Rice Street (labeled #2) should be converted to a permanent, accessible sidewalk that is usable by both walkers and wheelers, which is scheduled as part of a related MnDOT project in the I-94/I-35E commons section. ♻️



# Baseline 5.5: Bicycle Network

In 2019 Capitol Area Commutes conducted a Capitol Bicycle Facility Assessment. The study involved a gap analysis of the Capitol Campus’ bicycle facilities, including outdoor and indoor bike storage, bike lanes, and end of trip facilities. The survey found that bike racks across the Capitol Campus are well-located, accessible and in good condition. Additional support infrastructure, such as bike lockers and fix-it stations are also present. The Department of Administration manages the bike facilities on the Capitol Campus and has expressed readiness to work with others on future bike planning.

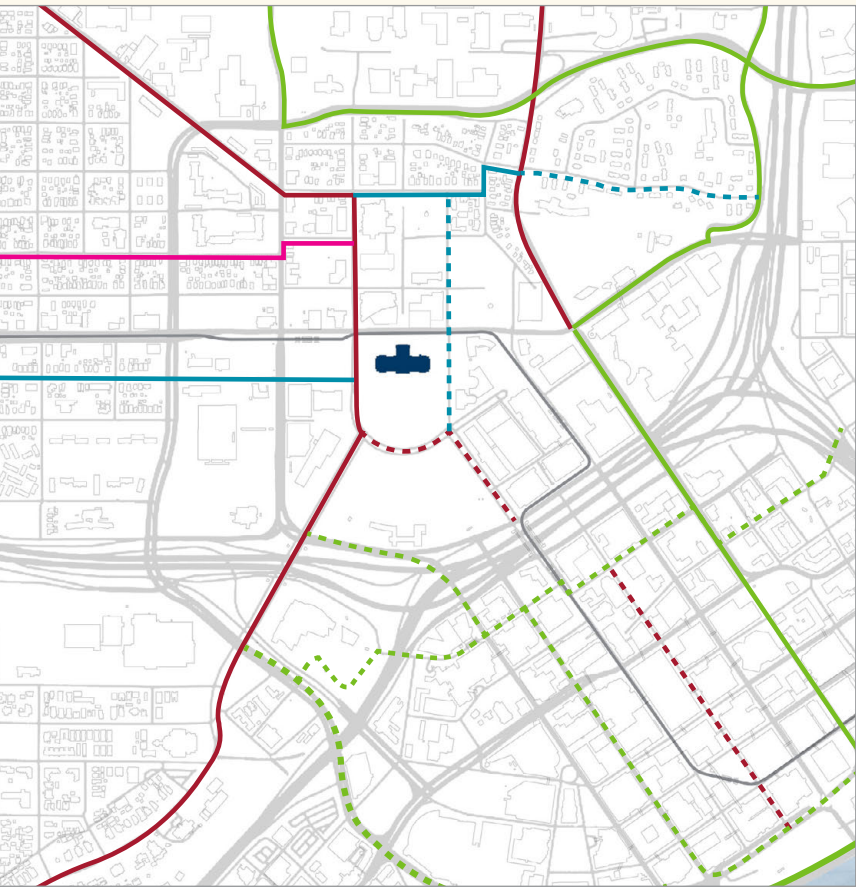
## Going Forward...

Supporting bicycle commuting to the Capitol area will require connecting seamlessly to Saint Paul’s current and future bikeway network. The Saint Paul Bike Plan includes bikeway improvements to Saint Peter Street and Kellogg Boulevard near the Capitol which will make commuting from south and southwest safer. Connecting and completing on-street bicycle lanes through the Capitol Area will expand Saint Paul’s overall bicycle network while creating a safer cycling environment for local commuters.

## Bicycle Network: Top Opportunities for Improvement

- J. **Dedicated Bike Lanes.** Major streets should have well marked bike lanes that allow cyclists to get where they’re going safely.
- K. **Bike Racks Near Building Entrances.** As a general rule, cyclists will lock their bike to whatever is closest to a building entrance, which creates issues if a bike rack is hidden along the side or in back of a building. Equip buildings with bicycle parking within sight and reasonable distance of every visitor entrance.
- L. **Bike Lane Review: University Avenue.** The enhanced shared bike lane on University Ave behind the Capitol (shown in the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan) is a potential safety risk and should be reviewed. The road is narrow due to the presence of the LRT and visibility is limited due to the hill sloping down toward Jackson Street. There is a need for a long-term re-thinking of a safe, east-west alternative for bikes in an area already shared by pedestrians, vehicles and LRT.
- M. **Bike Lane Review: MNHC.** The protected bike lane connecting through the Minnesota History Center parking lot (shown in the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan) should be reviewed and possibly revised, working in coordination with Minnesota History Center staff and planners.

Figure 5.11: Bicycle Network



- Off-Street Lane or Protected Lane (— planned)
- In-Street Separated Lane (--- planned)
- Bicycle Boulevard (--- planned)
- Enhanced Shared Lane (--- planned)

- N. **Capital City Bikeway Extension.** Extend the Capital City Bikeway to the Capitol Area along Rice and/or Marion Streets. This would provide a bicycle connection to the new Frogtown Community Center on Marion Street, to the Capitol Rice Station between Marion and Rice, and the commercial district along Rice Street itself.
- O. **State Trail Connection.** Connect the Willard Munger/Gateway State Trail to the Capitol Area. ↻



## Baseline 5.6: Bus, BRT and LRT Network

The Capitol Are is well served by the bus network.

### Going Forward...

Some bus stops, notably along Marion Street, provide no seating, no shelter from the elements, and little safety from traffic; are blocked by snow in the winter or are wet and muddy in the spring and are not accessible by a marked crosswalk directly to the stop. Crossing at these locations can be dangerous. All bus stops should be reviewed for accessibility, comfort and safety. Bus stops should provide benches, trash bins and adequate lighting and maintenance should be improved.

### Bus Network: Top Opportunities for Improvement

- P. **Bus stop at Marion and Ravoux:** Bus stop at Marion and Ravoux should be improved. Other stops may be reviewed and added, as needed.
- Q. **Bus rapid transit line along Rice Street (G-line):** Plans for a new bus rapid transit line along Rice Street were released in early 2021. This line will connect neighborhoods north through downtown to neighborhoods south of the river, and be an important amenity for future development at the Sears site.

Figure 5.12: Bus and LRT Network





**Future Mass Transit Corridors Will Enhance Accessibility to the Capitol Area**

*...and could change the way visitors and employees get here*

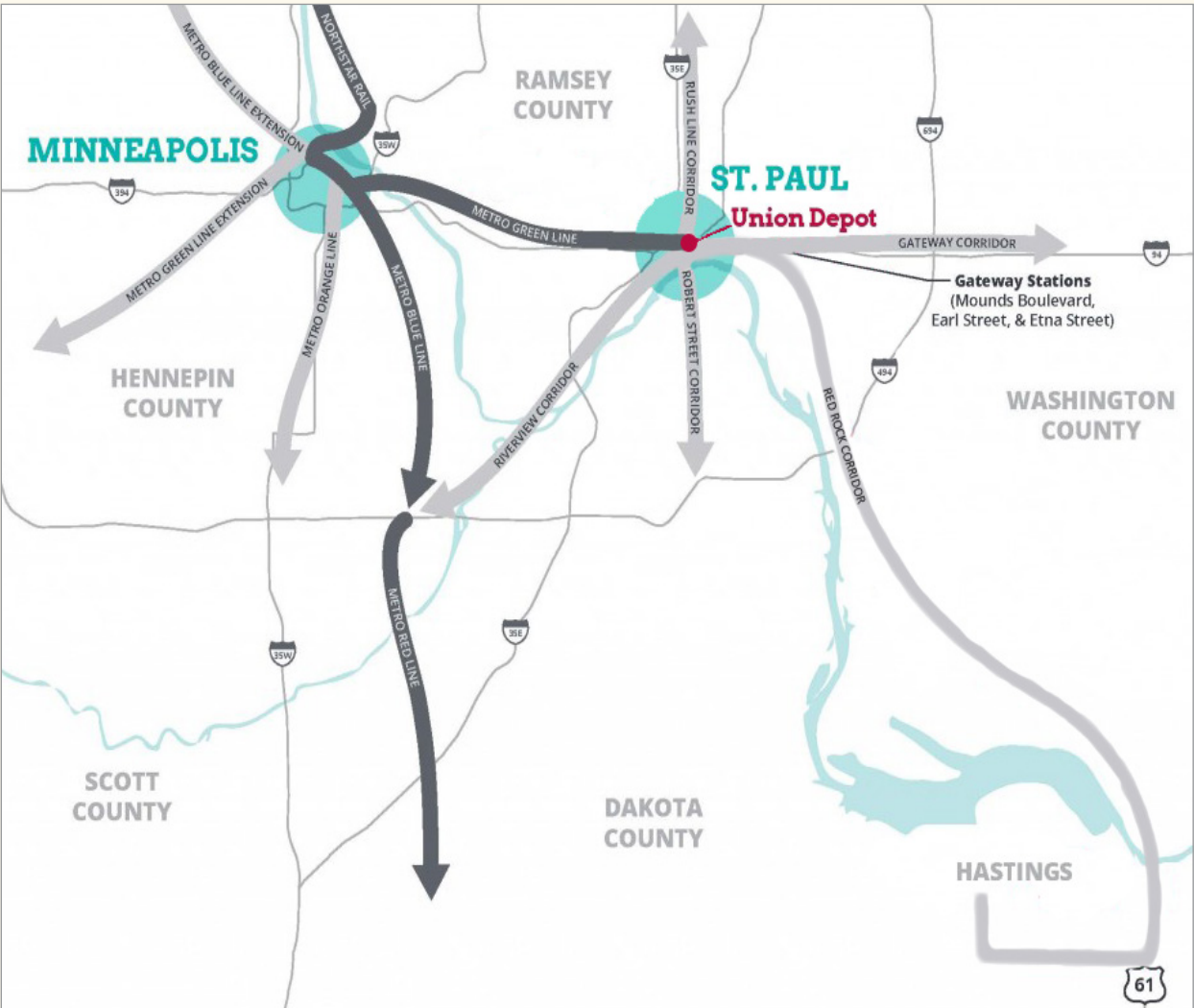
**Rush Line Corridor:** The Rush Line Corridor is to the north of Saint Paul. The future Rush Line will be a limited stop BRT route connecting White Bear Lake to downtown Saint Paul, running along the eastern border of Capitol Heights on Jackson Street, with a station at Winter Street. According to the Rush Line BRT Project website, the bus will run seven days a week from early in the morning to late at night, every 10 minutes during rush hours and every 15 minutes at other times. Based on the project’s current timeline, it is anticipated that construction will occur in 2025-2026 and the Rush Line BRT will open for service in 2027.

**Gateway/Gold Line Corridor:** The Gateway/Gold Corridor is to the east of St. Paul, connecting eastern suburbs and Washington County. The Gold Line will be Minnesota’s first BRT line that operates primarily within exclusive bus-only lanes. These exclusive lanes are dedicated only to transit buses and will be built on the north side of Interstate 94. While the Gold Line does not run through the Capitol Area, development of this BRT will affect the overall transit accessibility of the area. Gold Line BRT is anticipated to open for service in 2024.

**Red Rock Southeast Corridor:** The Red Rock Corridor is to the south of St. Paul, connecting Saint Paul to southern suburbs and Hastings, MN. The Red Rock Corridor terminates at the Union Depot. While it does not run through the Capitol area, development of enhanced transit service along this corridor will affect the overall accessibility of the area. The timing of design and construction of BRT infrastructure will depend on additional evaluation and may not occur within the next ten years.

**Rice/Robert Street Corridor:** The Robert Street Corridor is recognized as a regional transitway by the Metropolitan Council. In 2012, the Dakota and Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authorities began an alternatives study to understand transportation needs in the area and identify transit projects that could address them. In 2021 plans for BRT service on this line were announced. From north to south, the corridor begins in Little Canada, continues south to downtown Saint Paul via Rice Street, and ends at the Northern Dakota County Service Center in West St. Paul via Robert Street.

Figure 5.13: Future Mass Transit Corridors (Image modified from Ramsey County Red Rock Corridor <https://redrockcorridor.com>)



**Riverview Corridor:** The Riverview Corridor is a 12-mile planned transportation connection between neighborhoods and anchor destinations and employers in downtown Saint Paul, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. The planned modern streetcar line includes use of existing METRO Green Line stations and tracks in downtown Saint Paul and existing METRO Blue Line stations and tracks south of the Mississippi River beginning at Fort Snelling. Nine new stations are planned along State Highway 5 (West 7th Street).



# BEST PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES

**Develop balanced and coordinated networks of movement that allow for a mix of pedestrian, bicycle, LRT, bus, and vehicular circulation that is compatible with neighborhood needs.**

- 5.1. Following the standards set in the Saint Paul Street Design Manual, implement a complete streets framework in the Capitol Area. (See Baseline 2: Street Framework, page 15-16)
- 5.2. Following the standards set in the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan, identify strategic locations for bicycle facilities and new designated bike routes in the Capitol Area to connect people to destinations and to the wider bike network. (See Baseline 5: Bicycle Network)
- 5.3. Following the standards set in the Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan, the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment must be a priority in all street design decisions.
- 5.4. In certain areas where the extension of a specific character is important, develop public realm guidelines to guide future design.
- 5.5. Maintain good freeway access, as the Capitol Area is a destination for people from around the state, accessing the area by chartered bus or vehicle.
- 5.6. Discourage through traffic on residential streets.
- 5.7. Explore opportunities to incorporate traffic calming techniques (including, but not limited to, reduced street widths, traffic islands, stop signs, and bump-outs) on major corridors throughout the district, starting with temporary measures tested during the summer, paired with traffic studies of nearby streets.
- 5.8. Install sidewalks on all streets where pedestrian access is required for connection to key destinations, such as parks, public buildings and the trail system. (See Baseline 4: Pedestrian Network)
- 5.9. Work to ensure that all pedestrian ways in the Capitol Area are ADA accessible, where topography allows.
- 5.10. Continue to improve pedestrian connections in the Capitol Area and to nearby destinations.
- 5.11. Make bicycle facilities an integral feature of the Capitol Area circulation system.
- 5.12. Accommodate expanded use of regulated, shared micro-mobility options in the Capitol Area and ensure pedestrian safety by taking appropriate measures to eliminate conflicts between motorized personal vehicles and pedestrians. This may mean markings on pathways where such motorized vehicles (and bikes) are or are not permitted, should safety conflicts with pedestrians continue to proliferate.
- 5.13. Improve and embed Bike Lane/Trail maps and signage along bike paths.
- 5.14. Explore opportunities to facilitate movement between the major visitor destinations of the Capitol Area—the Capitol Building and Mall, the Minnesota History Center and the Cathedral of Saint Paul—which may include improved wayfinding; physical changes to landscaping, sidewalks and crosswalks; or shuttle services.
- 5.15. Encourage large employers or residences to provide electric vehicle charging capability.
- 5.16. Keep transit service an integral feature of Capitol Area access.
  - a. In conjunction with the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County and the area’s major institutions, identify transit needs and highlight opportunities for improving service as well as personal safety at transit stops.
  - b. Work with Metro Transit to enhance routes and frequency of service in the Capitol Area.
  - c. Work with Metro Transit to ensure that all transit stops provide clear signage and visual cues to help direct transit users to Capitol Area destinations, as well as adequate shelter, seating, recycling, and waste disposal facilities.



- d. Continue to explore opportunities to integrate other modes of transportation into existing and planned transit stops. For example, explore additional ways to provide access to scooters or bikes.
- e. Include pedestrian scale lighting within ¼ mile of transit stations where it is not present.
- f. Include drop-off area for rideshare and paratransit customers.
- g. Encourage a stronger partnership between large institutions, such as the State, and Metro Transit to share the cost of providing transit access to employees.

#### **Develop integrated mobility hubs at key locations.**

5.17. Explore development of a multi-agency public-private initiative to plan and implement an integrated mobility hub at University and Rice.

5.18. Integrate mobility hubs with surrounding context:

- a. Co-locate mobility hub elements around intersections such as University and Rice, including in any new buildings.
- b. Integrate seamlessly with existing transit options at adjacent intersections.
- c. Design to orient people using sight lines, wayfinding to nearby destinations, and signage that clearly identifies mobility options.

5.19. Endeavor to include multiple mobility hub elements:

- a. Information and wayfinding: Incorporate transit and shared mobility information in a kiosk at Leif Erickson Park. Commercial signage or advertising logos are prohibited.
- b. Include a limited number of car-share parking spots, ideally within structured parking.

- c. Continue to provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.
- d. Identify areas for bikes and scooters to ride and park that avoid conflicts with pedestrians, and enforce those rules.
- e. Provide safe, well lit, comfortable waiting areas with places to sit.
- f. Plan for comfortable pedestrian connections.
- g. Provide space for ride-share drop-offs/pick-up.
- h. Provide reserved or on-street parking for vanpools.
- i. Provide bike end-of-trip facilities in new buildings designed to meet the needs of those buildings' users. In some cases, this may require additional funding to accomplish.

#### **Reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) commuting to 50%.**

5.20. Increase the use of sustainable commuting in order to reduce the dependency on single-occupancy vehicles.

5.21. Large institutions, such as the State, hospitals and workplaces, should identify their own measures to reach the 50% SOV goal.

5.22. Large institutions, such as the State, hospitals and other large employers, should work collaboratively to accomplish the 50% SOV goal.

#### **Encourage the State and other large employers or land owners to begin or continue to implement travel demand management practices.**

5.23. Encourage implementation of the Capital Area TDM Implementation Toolkit created in 2019 with the State and other large employers or landowners in the Capital Area.

5.24. Regular consultation with regionally designated travel management organizations is encouraged.



- 5.25. Determine the costs and resources needed to develop and administer the TDM plan and identify the sources of the funding that can support the TDM plan as it is phased in.
- 5.26. Encourage designation of a Transportation Coordinator at the State and other large employers or land owners that would develop a plan to assess and document progress toward TDM goals. Encourage coordination between Transportation Coordinators in various organizations.
- 5.27. Add access control to all surface and structured parking. Access control, whether in the form of an automated gate arm or other vehicle identification system, allows for more efficient management of existing parking supply. Effectively administer parking to maximize utilization and manage demand.
- 5.28. Encourage implementation of parking strategies to shift the demand for parking, such as unbundling the price of parking from leases, offer daily parking rates in addition to monthly contracts\*, or providing preferential parking and rates for high-occupancy vehicles (carpools and vanpools).

\*Monthly parking contracts mask the real cost to drivers and disincentivize occasional non-SOV commuting. By offering a daily parking option, commuters can then be more aware of the daily cost of driving to work and have more flexibility in their transportation choices.

- 5.29. Promote active transportation by including support in building design, such as shower facilities and changing rooms or a bike repair station; or incentivizing multi-modal transportation options, such as offering discounted or subsidized shared mobility memberships.
- 5.30. Promote transit and other shared mobility by implementing workplace TDM strategies, such as subsidizing transit passes; sponsoring and hosting a car sharing service or subsidizing car-sharing or ride-sharing for employees/tenants; allowing employees to use on-demand ride-hailing services for work trips; or encouraging remote work.

- 5.31. Educate community members about the availability of sustainable transportation options through marketing campaigns and education, such as a commuter cost calculator, providing new hire/new tenant packets on transportation options, designating a transportation coordinator, negotiating move-in mobility incentives, or maintaining current information about transit options in shared/public spaces and on internal and external websites.

### **Encourage public-private collaborations on District Parking strategies to achieve parking efficiencies.**

- 5.32. Review and revise zoning requirements for parking to be consistent with transportation goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.
- 5.33. At the time of planning for large new developments encourage collaboration and communication of parking needs by both public and private entities. *See further location-specific policy established in Development Frameworks introduced in Chapter 7.*
- 5.34. Explore opportunities for shared parking arrangements that better utilize stalls at all hours of the day, including municipally and privately-owned and -operated surface lots and ramps as well as street parking. This can facilitate the redevelopment of infill sites currently used for parking.
- 5.35. Make the parking system clearly defined and logical; it should be obvious where visitors and customers can park.
- 5.36. Provide visitors the greatest convenience by allocating visitor parking to parking facilities closest to visitor destinations.
- 5.37. Provide priority parking for carpool vehicles and high occupancy vehicles.
- 5.38. Review and update as necessary parking area design policies, in coordination with Administration Department and with consideration of findings from the 2017 Capitol Area Parking Study.



- 5.39. Reduce parking spillover by commuters into adjacent neighborhoods.
- 5.40. Explore opportunities to integrate structured parking into the design of buildings. Where feasible, encourage underground parking.
- 5.41. Reduce the parking ratios required for new development in areas within walking distance of LRT stations to account for the mixed-use nature of transit-oriented development. Allow ratios to be subject to negotiation in cases of shared or structured parking approaches.
- 5.42. Eliminate parking minimums for new State projects on State property.
- 5.43. Study the feasibility of adopting a parking dedication fund that would allow property owners in the Capitol Area to contribute cash to a parking fund in lieu of providing onsite parking. The parking fund would be used for public parking improvements in the Capitol Area.
- 5.44. Minimize the adverse impacts of parking lots and parking structures on the natural environment through the use of sustainable practices such as pervious paving, landscaped islands in surface lots, infrastructure for plug-in electric vehicles and e-bikes, solar technologies, and other forms of alternative energy production and use as they relate to the design of parking lots.
- 5.45. Guidelines for design of Structured Parking Ramps:
  - a. Structured parking with shared parking should be encouraged within a district parking plan and within the guidelines set by this document. Also see the Capitol Rice Development Framework.
  - b. Design new parking ramps to blend with other buildings, using frontages that mask the function of the ramps.
  - c. Provide for active, street-oriented uses on the street level of parking ramps facing key street frontages.
  - d. Whenever possible, structured parking ramps should be designed to accommodate other uses. Ramps should have mainly flat floors with adequate clearances and with ventilation that can later be converted to windows. Inclines or spirals should be built to be able to be removed in the future without jeopardizing the integrity of the building.
  - e. Encourage the appropriate use of green roofs.
  - f. Use smart parking technology to maximize use of the ramp at all hours of the day.
  - g. Provide secure bicycle parking.
- 5.46. Guidelines for planning and design of Surface Parking Lots:
  - a. Surface parking should not be expanded unless a clear need is demonstrated.
  - b. Surface parking lots should be reduced in size or eliminated if they are underutilized (less than 85% utilization at peak periods).
  - c. Surface parking lots on State land should be reduced or eliminated in areas zoned G-2 (Government Open Space) at the earliest possible point, as they are considered ‘temporary’ or ‘interim.’ These lots are the two at the southernmost corners of the lower mall and Leif Erickson Park.
  - d. Until Parking Guidelines are updated, all surface parking lots should come into compliance with approved standards, which involve screening with plant materials and/or fences and with trees and planting in the interior of parking lots.
- 5.47. Guidelines for City on-Street Parking:
  - a. Maximize on-street spaces on commercial streets and allow on-street parking to be counted toward required parking ratios in new development to reduce the demand for private, off-street parking.



- b. Review and revise, if necessary, on-street parking restrictions including time limits, hours of operation, and handicapped parking locations to meet customer needs.
- c. Explore permit or time-limited parking for residential streets to ensure commuters use employer-provided parking facilities and commercial street parking, as available.
- d. Where off-street parking is required for private development, a payment-in-lieu option should be provided that directs funds to a Municipal Parking Authority for the construction of a shared parking ramp.
- e. Enforce rules governing food trucks for both payment and hours in order to increase availability of on-street parking for visitors.











PRINCIPLE 6

LAND USE DIVERSITY IS ENCOURAGED  
THROUGHOUT THE CAPITOL AREA.





# INTRODUCTION



How we guide land uses greatly influences how we live, move and do business. A diversity of land uses, nurtured within well-designed urban patterns, enables a balance of living, working, shopping and social opportunities in proximity, giving neighborhoods built-in efficiencies they need to be active, sustainable communities. The benefits of diverse land use have slowly been reintroduced as standard practice in urban design and community planning.

**Land use diversity is good for our health.** Historically, people met their daily needs on foot. Providing a mix of goods and services close to housing and employment makes it easier for people to walk to their destinations, increasing active living opportunities. Active living refers to the daily choices we make that reinforce physical activity in our daily routines – be it walking to the store or bicycling to work.

**Land use diversity is good for our climate.** If living, shopping and working are more integrated, or close to transit, opportunities to choose walking and other more sustainable modes of movement is made easier, leading to decreased climate-changing emissions.

**Land use diversity supports a diverse population.** The Capitol Area has always been, and must continue to be, a place that welcomes everyone. A variety of commercial amenities better serves residents and workers from diverse ages and economic or cultural backgrounds. A mix of housing size and affordability allows many types of households to live in the same neighborhood.

**Land use diversity creates long range economic stability.** Diversity leads to stability in many systems, from nature to investing. Neighborhoods with a diverse land use mix can protect families and communities from the worst effects of economic swings. A range of housing choices can ensure that a decline in one type of housing does not bring down the livability of an entire district. A wide variety of businesses allows the market to more gradually adapt to shifting trends; and allows community members to meet more of their needs within the neighborhood, keeping spending power and investment in the community. A healthy mix of housing and business can also help provide people more ways to remain in their community when big changes occur due to development, public projects or the economy.

**Land use diversity can help maintain housing affordability and social cohesion.** A range of housing options with different styles, types, and sizes helps increase the number of choices and offers varying levels of affordability, giving individuals and families the ability to remain with their community as their life circumstances change, supporting long-term community cohesion and social health. At the same time, greater housing choices can attract new residents to the Capitol Area by offering options that fit their needs. ~





*View of the Sears site, the largest opportunity for development in the Capitol Area.*



*In this chapter...*

This chapter outlines future land use mix and patterns relevant to diversity in the Capitol Area, followed by policies that will enable those patterns:

- Urban Campus Set Between Neighborhoods and Downtown
- Transit-Oriented Development
- A City of Urban Villages
- Residential Choices: The Missing Middle



# URBAN CAMPUS SET BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS AND DOWNTOWN

The Capitol Campus of the State of Minnesota aims to be an integrated part of the City of Saint Paul. Twenty years ago, the CAAPB adopted its “good neighbor” vision. The 1998 Comprehensive Plan stated:

“The Vision is for a Capitol Area that is memorable as the symbolic heart of the state, and as a good and responsive neighbor to those who live and work nearby. In recent decades, a physical separation and a cultural distance have grown between the Capitol Area and the capital city. As the centenary of the Capitol Building approaches, a

clear consensus is emerging to reunite these two entities, so that they may enter the next millennium with a shared sense of pride and purpose.”

This plan moves this vision forward and calls for the Capitol Area to be a unifying factor for all who come to visit, live, work, learn and play.

On the ground, this means a Capitol Campus that fully integrates with the city around it, with well-designed transitions between private and public land uses allowing for expanded activity, be it Capitol visitors visiting area shops, local residents enjoying the Mall, state workers taking a lunch break at a local restaurant, or community members making use of one of the new public spaces in the Capitol Building over the weekend.

From a competitiveness perspective, large companies and public institutions with urban campuses are increasingly realizing the importance of a vibrant nearby public realm with an array of housing and commercial amenities serving their workers. Many workers are making decisions about where to work based in part on the richness of urban neighborhoods near the workplace. Over the next 10 to 15 years, the State of Minnesota will experience a significant shift in its workforce, as 60% of state employees will reach retirement. An urban campus set between vibrant and diverse neighborhoods and Downtown Saint Paul, with options for dining, housing, retail, and entertainment, along with state-of-the-art transportation options, will have a significant impact on the State’s ability to fill the coming vacancies. Cooperating in building up the surrounding urban fabric benefits both the community and the State. ≈



Figure 6.1: Map of Capitol Area showing State Buildings highlighted in blue. In addition to the state workspaces being integrated with the urban fabric, the Capitol Area connects neighborhoods to the north and west to downtown.



### What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

The City of Saint Paul’s Future Land Use Plan shows a diverse mix in the Capitol Area. Future land use is a mix of Civic and Institutional, Mixed Use, Urban Neighborhood and Downtown. Low density residential dominates the land use to the northwest of the Capitol Area in the Frogtown neighborhood, with low-moderate density housing to the southwest and northeast neighborhoods of Summit-University and Mount Airy. The Capitol Campus is flanked by Downtown Saint Paul to the southeast, and a mixed-use commercial district to the west/northwest. Three Neighborhood Nodes fall within or on the border of the Capitol Area.

“Neighborhood Nodes are compact, mixed-use areas that provide shops, services, neighborhood-scale civic and institutional uses, recreational facilities and employment close to residences. They may be neighborhood centers, transit station areas or urban villages, and have often developed adjacent to major intersections or at former street car stops.” (SAINT PAUL FOR ALL, pg. 34).

Neighborhood Nodes serve a neighborhood’s daily needs. The intent is for Neighborhood Nodes to be denser concentrations of development relative to the adjacent future land uses, fostering an equitable system of compact, mixed-use and commercial centers across the city to increase access to community services and businesses, and support pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods.

The three Neighborhood Nodes within or on the border of the Capitol Area are:

- A. Rice Station Area (Rice Street and University Avenue)
- B. Intersection of Mount Airy and Jackson Street
- C. Fitzgerald Park Urban Village (Cedar Street and Exchange Street)

(See Chapters 7A, 7B and 7C for detailed information about future development goals in each of these Neighborhood Nodes.)

Figure 6.2: Map of 2040 Land Use. SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, page 45.

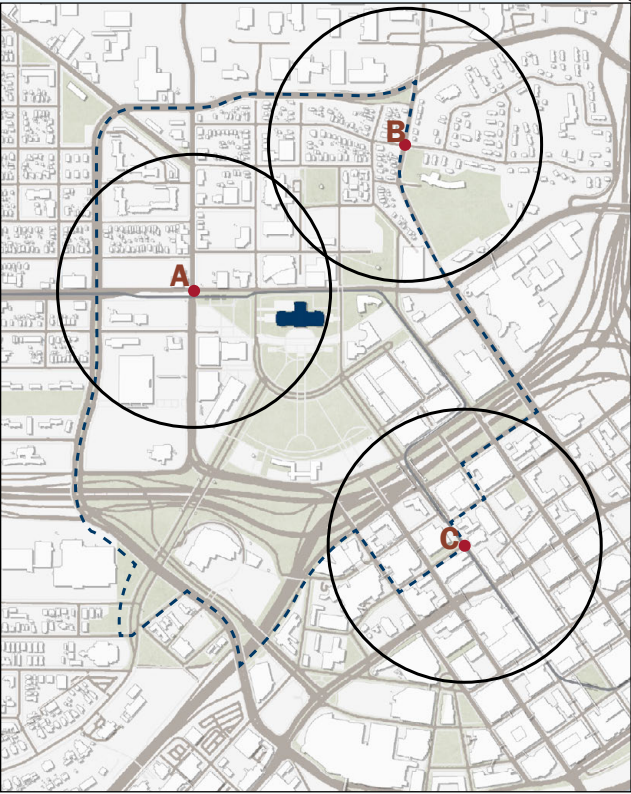
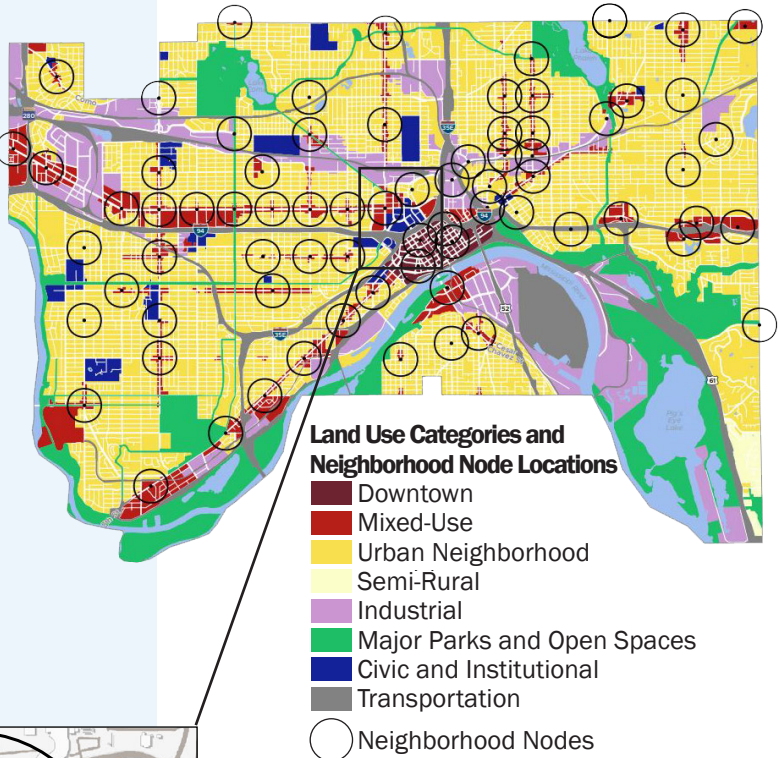
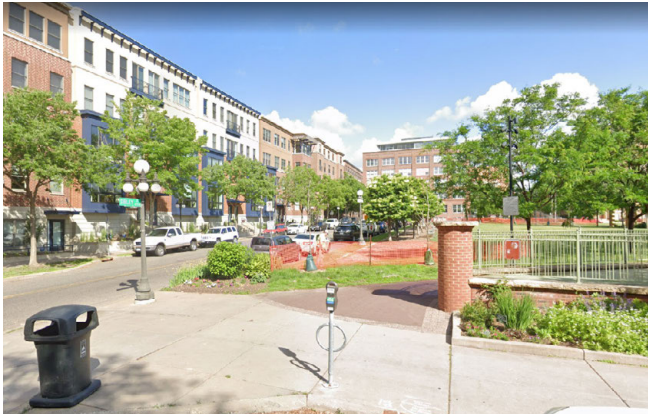


Figure 6.3: Neighborhood Nodes in the Capitol Area with 1/4-mile radius shown



# A CITY OF URBAN VILLAGES



Wacouta Commons Urban Village, Saint Paul, MN at 8th and Sibley Streets. Housing alongside a mix of goods and services in a high-quality public realm encourages people to walk and meet neighbors, bringing more eyes on the street and contributing to a healthy, active lifestyle and overall neighborhood safety. (Image: Google Maps)

## How Did the Term “Urban Village” Originate?

The term “urban village” was borrowed from sociologist Herbert Gans. In his 1962 book, *The Urban Villagers*, Gans described the people of the American Italian communities of north Boston, whose neighborhoods resembled an urban version of their homeland, with a vibrant mix of uses and active street life.

*“Lowly, un-purposeful, and random as they appear, sidewalk contacts are the small change from which a city’s wealth of public life must grow.”*

~Jane Jacobs; *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961

The Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework (1997) first called for a downtown framework of urban villages centered on green public squares, such as Rice Park and Mears Park, in the 1990s. Urban villages are compact, dense, and pedestrian-oriented areas that contain an overlap of uses within easy walking distance and provide opportunities for residents to shop, work and recreate within their immediate community. Urban villages are not isolated enclaves; they are anchored by a successful public space – a square, park, boulevard or street – that provides a focus for community life.

The work of urban activist and journalist Jane Jacobs was a major influence on Saint Paul’s decision to adopt the term “urban village” as a vision of the city. Jacobs believed in the value of mixed-use neighborhoods and the benefits they bring to cities and the people who live in them, in contrast to the planning trend of the time of single-use zoning neighborhoods.. Mixed-use neighborhoods bring more people to the street at more hours of the day, increasing community cohesion, neighborhood safety, and supporting business vitality by deterring behaviors that cause negative perceptions among customers. The popular term “eyes on the street” was coined by Jacobs as she described how people create neighborhood safety by simply being present in the public realm. Successful urban villages require a range of essential goods and services within a short walk or commute. Land use diversity helps create walkable neighborhoods and gives people a reason to be on the street.

**Within the Capitol Area, the Capitol Rice District is designated a future urban village, with Leif Erickson Park at its center. See Chapter 7a and the Capitol Rice Development Framework.**

**The City of Saint Paul also identifies Fitzgerald Park as an urban village, a portion of which falls within the Capitol Area. See Chapter 7c.**

Today, the Capitol Area contains a variety of essential goods and services, but key land uses are missing. Greater land use diversity over time will help in achieving a greater mix of essential goods and services. This can be done gradually by,

- increasing the variety and supply of housing types , key to sustaining a vibrant growing customer base;
- identifying key opportunity sites for larger new ‘anchors’ such as a full-service grocery store, and;
- encouraging the real estate market to introduce a range of commercial uses that are both complementary and compatible with existing offerings. ∞



# TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

In 2014, the Green Line LRT opened between Minneapolis and Downtown Saint Paul, with three stations located in the Capitol Area. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is sustainable urban growth that creates compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities centered around high-quality transit systems. The TOD pattern works to maximize the diversity of residential, business and leisure space within walking distance of public transit. The TOD pattern emphasizes higher development intensity around the stations and mobility hubs, with well-designed building frontages lining walkable transitions into surrounding neighborhoods of lower intensity. TOD increases investment in walking and biking which in turn increases public transit ridership and reduces both the number of those driving alone and the demand for costly parking infrastructure. TOD can also create conditions that allow for more affordable living, giving people the opportunity live without the needed cost of car ownership.

Components of Transit-Oriented Development include:

(adapted from Transit-Oriented Development Institute, [www.TOD.org](http://www.TOD.org))

- Walkable design with the pedestrian as the highest priority
- Transit station as prominent feature of community center
- Public square fronting train station
- Higher-intensity, walkable district within a ¼-mile radius surrounding LRT station
- A mixture of uses in proximity (office, residential, retail, civic)
- Supportive transit systems, including light rail, buses, and other more local options
- Designed to include sheltered bike amenities, bike parking, and access to an affordable bikeshare rental system
- Reduced and managed district parking approaches
- Specialized retail at stations serving commuters and locals, including cafes, grocery, dry cleaners
- A strong sense of personal safety

Today, there is a large amount of land dedicated to surface parking lots in the Capitol Area<sup>1</sup>, especially around the Capitol Rice transit station. This low-intensity land use, remaining from before LRT, presents an opportunity to restore higher intensity of diverse development with an increased array of commercial goods and services on the ground floor. ~

<sup>1</sup> See Baseline 6, page 18



*Capitol Rice LRT Station. The opening of the LRT Green Line in 2014 has had a dramatic effect on mobility in the Capitol Area.*



*Rice and University, 1916. Transit-Oriented Development will modernize the Capitol Area as it restores an original city pattern that once relied on a diversity of mobility options. (Image courtesy of MNHS)*

---

*“Walkable communities help to promote physically, mentally and economically healthy neighborhoods, with studies consistently finding benefits to increasing walkability in all types and sizes of cities.”*

~America Walks <http://americawalks.org/a-walkable-america/>

---



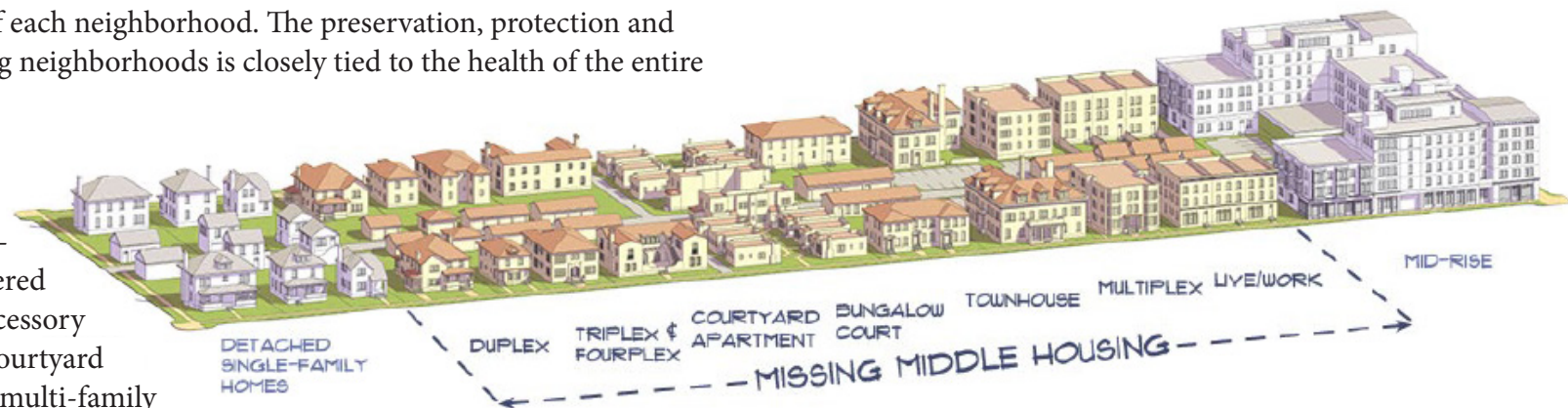
## RESIDENTIAL CHOICES: THE MISSING MIDDLE

Housing remains a key component of neighborhoods close to the Capitol. Diversity in housing types, both affordable and market rate as well as both owned and rental, will enrich the character of each neighborhood. The preservation, protection and ongoing stability of existing neighborhoods is closely tied to the health of the entire Capitol Area.

The “missing middle”<sup>1</sup> is a segment of the housing market that includes small-scale multi-family or clustered housing types—such as accessory dwelling units, duplexes, courtyard apartments, mansion-style multi-family units and multiplexes—that are compatible with both single-family homes and mid-rise buildings. It is a development and urban design strategy that supports walkable neighborhoods capable of supporting a variety of services, while protecting the character of predominantly residential neighborhoods. Adding “missing middle” housing provides a variety of housing choices catering to diverse family needs, including life-cycle housing options, thus enabling residents to remain in their neighborhoods as their housing needs change over time.

The overall mix of housing options available in the Capitol Area should respond to the diversity of housing needs - in terms of income, unit type and household size for both renters and owners. Recognizing that home equity is a large source of household long-term wealth, a range of housing affordability increases the opportunity for home ownership for residents of all economic backgrounds.<sup>2</sup> While many existing residential units in the Capitol Area would qualify as affordable, the age of the housing stock will continue to burden homeowners with excessive maintenance costs.<sup>3</sup>

The CAAPB will continue to administer planning and zoning that guides the design and location of residential development to enable housing choices that are diverse and equitable.<sup>4</sup> And, the CAAPB will continue to support reinvestment by existing home owners and residential building owners in the Capitol Area. Furthermore, acknowledging the rising costs of new housing construction, the CAAPB invites (and will rely on) creative partnerships with City of Saint Paul and the private sector, utilizing financial assistance tools such as those administered through City Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), to introduce new housing choices that are truly affordable to the widest range of households.<sup>5</sup>



Examples of Missing Middle housing types.  
MissingMiddleHousing.com. ©2015 Opticos Design, Inc.

*“Housing meets a fundamental human need and, as such, is a critical infrastructure system of a city. Unlike other infrastructure systems, such as roads or water, a City does not have full control of housing development, maintenance, replacement or cost, as housing is generally provided through the private market. What cities can do is administer planning, zoning and building codes to guide the location of residential development and ensure that housing is healthy and safe. Cities also have responsibilities to manage a complex set of issues around housing fairness, choice, health, stability and affordability, all of which are tied to a City’s core values.”*

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan,  
pg. 110

<sup>1</sup> The Missing Middle is a term coined by Dan and Karen Parolek of Opticos Design in Berkeley, CA.

<sup>2</sup> See Baseline 5, Affordability and Ownership.

<sup>3</sup> See Baseline 5, Age of Residential Structures.

<sup>4</sup> See Baseline 5 (page 15), which outlines the existing housing choices in the Capitol Area.

<sup>5</sup> See following page: “City of Saint Paul policy related to affordability in City/HRA-assisted projects”



## What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

### City of Saint Paul policy related to the “Missing Middle”:

“Policy LU-34. Provide for medium-density housing that diversifies housing options, such as townhouses, courtyard apartments and smaller multi-family developments, compatible with the general scale of Urban Neighborhoods.”

“Policy H-16. Increase housing choice across the city to support economically diverse neighborhoods by pursuing policies and practices that maximize housing and locational choices for residents of all income levels.”

“Policy H-46. Support the development of new housing, particularly in areas identified as Mixed Use, Urban Neighborhoods, and/or in areas with the highest existing or planned transit service, to meet market demand for living in walkable, transit-accessible, urban neighborhoods.”

“Policy H-48. Expand permitted housing types in Urban Neighborhoods (as defined in the Land Use Chapter) to include duplexes, triplexes, town homes, small-scale multi-family and accessory dwelling units to allow for neighborhood-scale density increases, broadened housing choices and intergenerational living.”

“Policy H-49. Consider amendments to the zoning code to permit smaller single-family houses and duplexes to facilitate the creation of small-home development types, such as pocket neighborhoods and cottage communities.”

### City of Saint Paul policy related to affordability in City/HRA-assisted projects:

“Policy H-32. Continue to use City/HRA resources to support affordable rental housing citywide with at least 30 percent of the total rental units (both market-rate and affordable) financially assisted by the City/HRA being affordable to households earning 60 percent or less of AMI with at least:

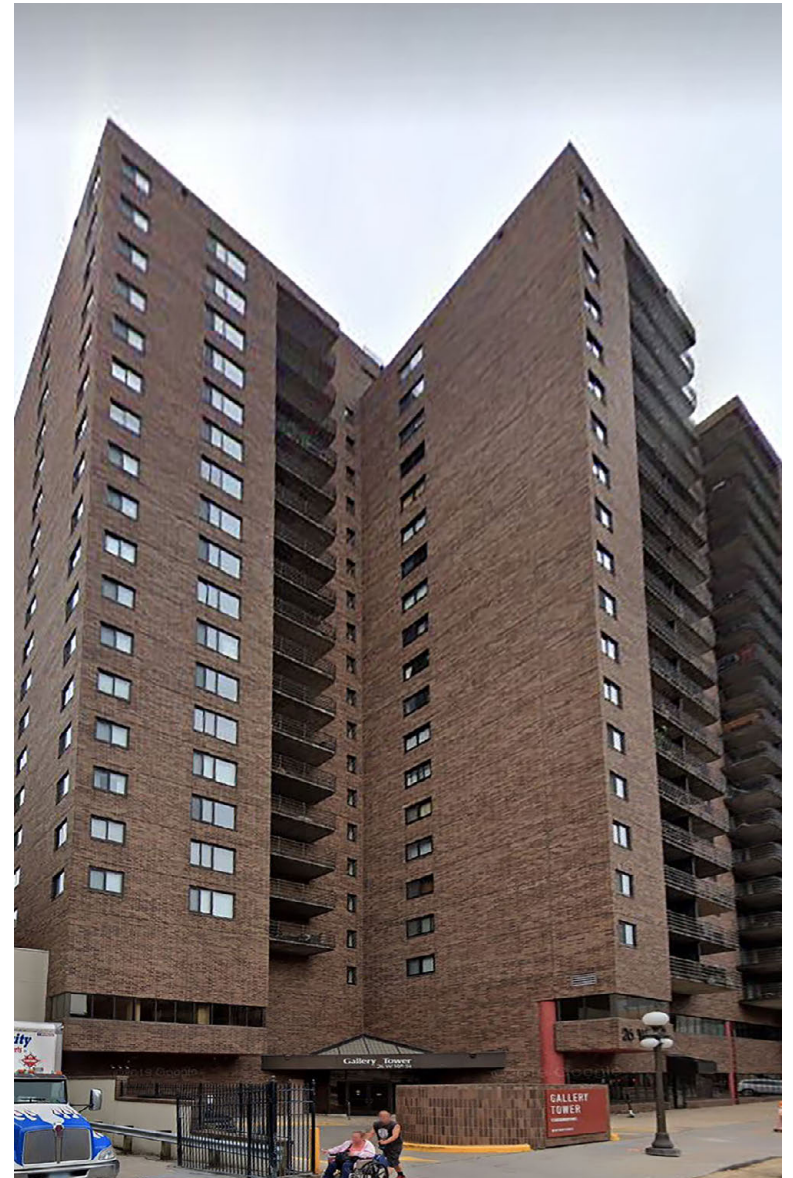
- 10 percent of all units being affordable to households earning 30 percent of AMI;
- 10 percent of all units being affordable to households earning 50 percent of AMI; and
- 10 percent of all units being affordable to households earning 60 percent of AMI.”

“Policy H-33. Further affordable ownership housing goals in HRA/City-financially-assisted projects by working toward 10 percent of all ownership units being affordable to residents earning 60 percent of AMI and 20 percent of all ownership units being affordable to residents earning 80 percent of AMI.”





*Housing diversity in the Capitol Area. Images from top left: Single family home on Como Avenue; 4-plex on Park Street; Townhome on Cedar Street; 4-story apartment building on Rice Street; Gallery Tower on St. Peter Street*





Baseline 6.1: The Current Mix in the Capitol Area

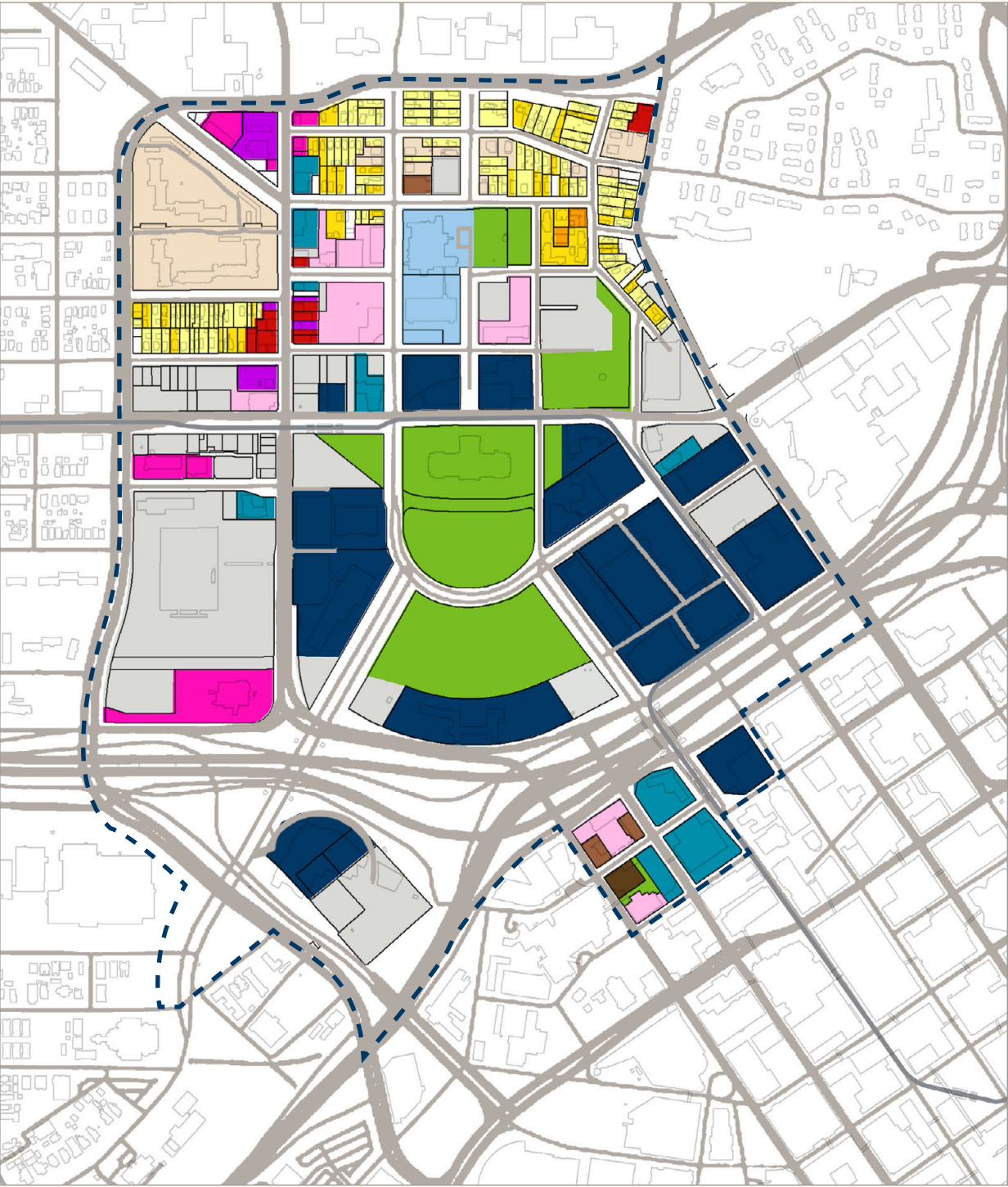


Figure 6.4: Current Land Use in the Capitol Area

- Current Mix of Land Uses**
- Detached Residential
  - Duplex or townhouse
  - Live-work Space
  - Multi-unit bldg w/ no elevator
  - Multi-unit bldg. w/ elevator 4 stories or less
  - Multi-unit bldg w/ elevator 5 to 8 stories
  - Multi-unit bldg w/ elevator 9 stories or more
  - Mixed Use (residential above commercial)
  - Food retail \*
  - Community-serving retail \*
  - Services \*
  - Civic and community facilities \*
  - Office
  - Hospital
  - State of Minnesota
  - Green/Open Space
  - Parking: Surface Lot
  - Parking: Ramp

\*See Appendix A: Figures and Tables, Table 1: Categories and Use Types in the Capitol Area.



## Baseline 6.2: Available Mix of Goods and Services in the Capitol Area

To increase walkability, a mix of commercial goods and services should be located near residences and work places. To evaluate this in the Capitol Area, the CAAPB is referencing LEED ND (LEED for Neighborhood Development), which outlines key community goods and services, grouped in four categories. A minimum goal is for new developments to be located within a ¼-mile walking distance of at least five uses.

Figure 6.5: Table of Land Use Categories and Use Types in the Capitol Area (2020)

Category	Use Type	# Businesses	# Businesses that Own Building	Approx. Sq. Ft.
Food Retail	Supermarket (full-service)			
	Grocery with produce section	1	0	3,000
	Small grocery with limited produce	3	0	7,000
Community-serving retail	Convenience store	2	1	10,800
	Farmers market	1*		
	Hardware store			
	Pharmacy (full-service)			
	Pharmacy (small prescription-only associated with clinic)	2	1	1000
	Other Retail	4	0	8300
Services	Bank (or Credit Union)	2	1	26,000
	Family entertainment venue (e.g., theater, sports)			0
	Gym, health club, exercise studio			0
	Hair care	2	0	1,800
	Laundry, dry cleaner			0
	Restaurant, café, diner (includes public cafes in state bldgs)	11	3	31,300
	Hotel	1	0	100,000
	Auto Repair	2	2	4,800
	Other Services	3	0	3,000
Civic and community facilities	Adult or senior care (licensed)			
	Child care (licensed)			
	Community or recreation center	1	1	10,000
	Cultural arts facility (e.g., museum, performing arts)	2	1	117,300
	Education facility	1	1	50,000
	Government office that serves public onsite	**		
	Medical clinic or office that treats patients	6	3	68,200
	Hospital	1	1	52,000
	Place of worship	4	2	44,300
	Police or fire station			
	Post office			
	Public library			
	Public Park	5	5	1,017,800
	Social services center	2	2	13,700
	Other Institutional	3	1	50,200

\*Saturday morning Farmers Market on the south side of the Sears parking lot. Redevelopment of this site will require relocation of this Farmers Market.

\*\*All State Buildings, with the exception of the Ag Lab, are open to and serve the public. In addition to state buildings, MN License Services and the Ramsey County Building serve the public.



## Going forward...

Today, the Capitol Area contains a variety of essential goods and services, but key use types are missing. For example, the Capitol Area does not have a full-service grocery store, full-service pharmacy, hardware store, wellness center (i.e., health club, fitness center, etc.), or library. Therefore, existing residents in need of healthy food offerings, medicine, free internet, healthy activities, and materials to help fix or maintain their household must travel outside the Capitol Area to access these goods and services. Increasing quality and variety of goods and services offered in the Capitol Area will benefit the neighborhoods and area employees, as well as local businesses that would benefit from a larger customer base.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 32 businesses identified in the Food, Retail and Services sections, 8 (25%) are occupied by businesses that are building owners. Building ownership, especially among smaller commercial properties, can help strengthen the urban village quality of the Capitol Area. Ownership can also be a protection for long-standing businesses that have had a positive impact on the neighborhood from being removed due to changes in building ownership and/or rapidly rising rents.

## Understanding the Capitol Area's evolving Trade Area

It is important to consider from where Capitol Area businesses draw most of their customers. In an idealized urban village, many businesses would survive based solely on customers living and/or working in the Capitol Area. A small number of businesses, though, would also draw significant numbers of people from outside the Capitol Area who would, in turn, help support the smaller businesses largely dependent on local customers.

The geographic extent from which a store or commercial district attracts its customers is known as a trade (or draw) area. Important characteristics and/or influences affecting the size and shape of a trade area include the type of stores at the center of trade area, the density and affluence of the area's residents or workforce, major physical or psychological barriers, the presence of other complementary uses, the quality and condition of the public realm, and the proximity of similar competitive districts.

Except for the Hmongtown Marketplace, which draws customers from throughout the Twin Cities, most businesses in the Capitol Area draw customers from the Capitol Area as well as the southern part of the North End and eastern part of Frogtown. Their draw area does not extend east of I-35E or south of I-94 because these highways are too significant of a barrier. In addition, there are several storefront spaces in or near the Capitol Area that are vacant or underutilized. This trade area can only support a small number of businesses; however, factors that can change the shape and size of a trade area include a substantial increase in the number of households or workers near the business district, better connections to anchors, a change in transportation patterns, or an improved public realm.

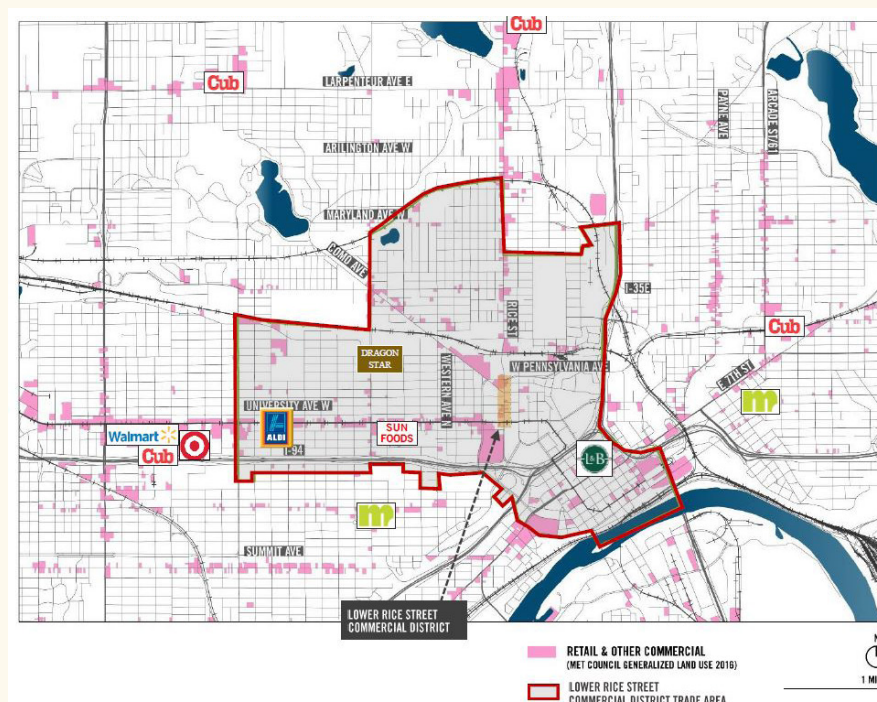


Figure 6.6: Lower Rice Street Commercial District Trade Area and Prominent Full Service Grocery Stores. Courtesy of Perkins+Will.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 7a and the Capitol Rice Development Framework and chapter 7c Fitzgerald Park.



## Baseline 6.3: Office Space in the Capitol Area

The overall office market has been impacted by broader trends affecting the long-term demand for office space. Two factors include both the trend toward less square feet per worker, which has a direct impact on the need for space, and the impact of office demand concentrating around transit nodes with a vibrant mix of supportive uses, such as coffee shops, restaurants, attractive public space, and residences. These areas are proving to be important for organizations looking to attract and retain employees.

In 2020, the Capitol Area has a significant amount of office space for both State and non-State users. Office buildings with non-State users comprise about 200,000 square feet of space and are primarily occupied by organizations that have a need to be close to the Capitol complex. These buildings tend to be concentrated in a 2-3 block area northwest of the State Capitol building. In recent years, some of the space in this area has experienced low tenancy, which has resulted in at least one building owner to consider other uses or redeveloping their property altogether.

### Going forward...

It will be important to consider how firms that cater primarily to residents and area workers integrate with the types of office uses that currently dominate the Capitol Area. Many existing tenants tend to value proximity to the Capitol Campus and are sensitive to changes at the State of Minnesota.

An important component of an urban village is the presence of smaller office spaces for professional firms that provide services to the local neighborhood, such as attorneys, financial planners, insurance agents, real estate agents, and healthcare practitioners, to name a few. Many of these types of businesses not only provide critical services, but they are often independently owned. Therefore, it is important that enough space exists within the Capitol Area to accommodate these types of activities in a range of settings, from small storefronts to larger spaces in new or existing office buildings.

## Baseline 6.4: Community Anchors and Opportunity Sites

In addition to a variety of use types, communities benefit from an anchor use – a large store or place of work that increases traffic in the area. Traditional retail anchors, especially department stores, are rapidly declining and being replaced by new types of anchor uses, such as grocery stores, education institutions, recreation or entertainment centers, fitness/wellness centers and popular restaurants. Large employers that bring people to an area are also considered anchors, increasing foot traffic and potential customers for local businesses.

**Employment Anchors:** In the Capitol Area, the State of Minnesota campus and the five nearby hospitals are employment anchors. These institutions bring approximately 12,000 workers to the district daily, many of whom have the potential to patronize local businesses. The Capitol Campus also draws hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

**Commercial Anchors:** With the recent closure of the Sears store in 2018, the Hmongtown Marketplace, located just outside the Capitol Area along Como Avenue, is the only sizable commercial destination in or near the Capitol Area. The large facility serves the local neighborhood and people throughout the region. It boasts an indoor-outdoor, year-round market that consists of over 200 individually rented stalls where vendors sell a wide range of food and goods that cater to the Hmong community and other southeast Asian communities. The success of the market has begun attracting a sizable tourist trade as well, especially on weekends. Connecting the Hmongtown Marketplace to other commercial enterprises within the Capitol Area would help leverage the value of this important anchor and improve overall vitality of Rice Street one block away.

**Grocery Store:** Several very small groceries currently provide specific goods to local customers with only one or two offering an array of fresh foods for specific markets. Hmongtown Marketplace north of the Capitol Area aims at a regional market. There is no full-service grocery store in the Capitol Area offering a full complement of fresh produce along with a wider range of pre-packaged and convenience items. Such stores are an important amenity for neighborhoods as they not only provide essential goods to residents, but also a sense of community as visits become part of residents' lifestyles and routines. Large grocery stores are anchors of neighborhood vitality by supporting smaller retailers who benefit from the customer traffic generated.

During the Capitol Rice Planning Process in 2017-18, there was strong support for a broader array of food choice; however, an analysis found that the current household base in the Capitol Area would not be able to support a full-service grocery store without significant public or philanthropic support. This situation is also due to the presence of several competitive full-service grocery stores located not far from the Capitol Area along the Green Line light rail transit.



Going Forward... Opportunity Sites

In 2020, several large sites in the Capitol Area are ripe for redevelopment including the largest, the Sears site, identified by the City of Saint Paul and this plan as an “Opportunity Site.”<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Sears site, there are several key sites within the Capitol Area with potential to change. These are sites that are currently vacant or underused (such as a vacant building or a surface parking lot), where redevelopment may improve the district.

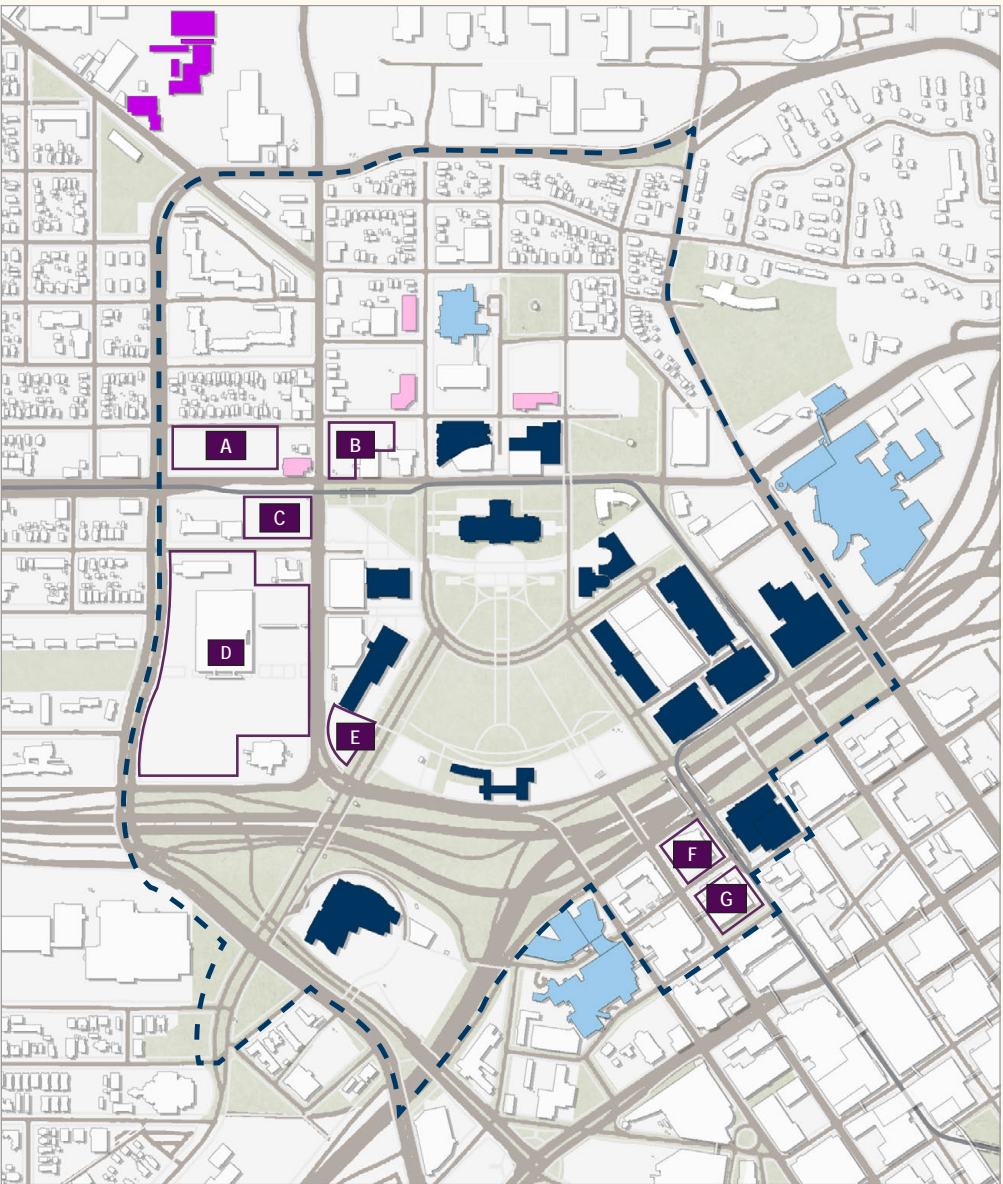
Through new housing development, there is significant potential to eventually support a new medium to large full-service grocery store or co-op. Such stores rely on good locations. So with limited opportunity sites, it is important to plan for where a future grocery store could be located in the Capitol Area – and to set in place guidelines to conform to the urban patterns outlined in this chapter (i.e. that any such store in the Capitol Area would be an urban-format grocery built into a larger commercial or residential building, preferably with parking built into the structure or shared on another structured site.)<sup>2</sup>

1 The City of Saint Paul identifies “Opportunity Sites” as generally larger than one acre and having potential for redevelopment as higher-density mixed-use development or employment center with increased full-time living wage job intensity, and the appropriate location for community services that are completely absent in the surrounding area. See SAINT PAUL FOR ALL, pg. 33.

2 A preliminary study has been conducted to examine the feasibility and possible location for an urban format store in the Capitol Area. See Appendix I: Lower Rice Street Commercial Vitality Strategies for the report.

3 Sites A through E are addressed in Chapter 7A and the Capitol Rice Development Framework. Sites F and G: As of 2019, future planning for Fitzgerald Park is being led by the City of Saint Paul. See Chapter 7c for more information on these opportunity sites.

Figure 6.7: Map of Community Anchors and Opportunity Sites in the Capitol Area



Community Anchors in the Capitol Area

- Community Serving Retail
  - Hmongtown Marketplace
- Offices
  - League of Minnesota Cities
  - 555 Park Street Office Building
  - Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
  - Education Minnesota
- Hospitals
  - (former) Bethesda Hospital
  - Regions Hospital and Gillette Children’s Hospital
  - St. Joseph’s Hospital
- State of Minnesota

Opportunity Sites in the Capitol Area<sup>3</sup>

- A Future site of Saint Paul City School
- B State Lot C and the Ford Building
- C State Lot AA
- D Sears Site
- E State Lot G-with cont’d access to underground parking
- F County Building
- G McNally Smith Building



## Baseline 6.5: Residential Choices in The Capitol Area

### Types and Sizes:

There are nearly 1,000 housing units in the Capitol Area serving a wide variety of individuals and families. 82% of the housing structures in the Capitol Area are single-family, duplex or triplex, representing 18% of the total living units in the area. We expect the greatest housing growth in the Capitol Rice District with the redevelopment of the Sears site.

Figure 6.8: Table of Residential Choices in the Capitol Area: Type, Size and Ownership

Building Type	# Buildings	# Living Units	Household Size				Estimate Owner Occupied
			Studio/Micro	1BR	2BR	3+BR	
Detached Residential	91	91	1	4	24	62	57 (63%)
Duplex or townhouse	34	85	0	17	47	21	13 (38%)
Live-work Space	1	5	0	0	5	0	unknown
Multi-unit bldg. w/ no elevator	16	473	53	221	197	2	2 (13%)
Multi-unit bldg. w/ elevator 4 stories or less	0						
Multi-unit bldg. w/ elevator 5 to 8 stories	1	92	87	5	0	0	unknown
Multi-unit bldg. w/ elevator 9 stories or more	1	194	0	126	50	18	unknown
Mixed Use (residential above commercial)	8	28	4	13	11	0	unknown
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>72 (47%)*</b>

Data gathered from Ramsey County parcel data, 2017 Census data (compiled by Perkins+Will), building plans, and site-based visual observation by CAAPB staff. Detail on number of bedrooms is a best estimate based on available data. Owner occupancy is a best estimate based on parcel data from Ramsey County. Percentage of owner occupancy is based on the number of Residential Buildings.

\* 47% is a minimum estimate, given that ownership of the multi-unit buildings is unknown. If each of the 11 unknown buildings has owner occupancy, the percentage would be 54.6%.

### Affordability and Ownership:

According to the Metropolitan Council’s definition of “affordable” housing, almost all the housing, both rented and owned, in the Capitol Area would qualify as affordable. For example, average asking rents in the Capitol Area, regardless of the size of the unit, are 30-40% below the city-wide average asking rent. The median home price in the Capitol Area is roughly 30% below the city-wide median price.

Residential owner-occupancy (by residential unit) in the Capitol Area is 22%, well below the Saint Paul rate of owner-occupancy of 50% (see table 3 below); however, ownership by buildings shows a more positive number (see table 2 above). It is estimated that a minimum of 47% of residential buildings are owner-occupied and 63% of single-family homes are owner-occupied. Still, single-family owner-occupancy is under the Saint Paul average of 81%. Increasing residential owner-occupancy in the Capitol Area will help retain and improve the diversity of housing options.

Figure 6.9: Table of Residential Choices in the Capitol Area: Affordability and Ownership

	Unit	Studio/Micro	1BR	2BR	3+BR
2019 Avg. Market Rent – Capitol Area	--	\$627	\$775	\$1,010	\$1,007
2019 Avg. Market Rent – Saint Paul	--	\$910	\$1,044	\$1,318	\$1,909
2019 Med. Home Price – Capitol Area	\$182,000	--	--	--	--
2019 Med. Home Price – Saint Paul	\$239,500	--	--	--	--
Pct. Owner-Occupied Units – Capitol Area	22%	14%	26%	15%	55%
Pct. Owner-Occupied Units – Saint Paul	50%	6%	10%	43%	78%

Data gathered from Ramsey County parcel data and 2017 Census data (compiled by Perkins+Will).



**Age of Residential Structures:**

As in all of Saint Paul, housing in the Capitol Area is aging. 74% of housing units in the Capitol Area are 100 years or older. The median construction year for all housing structures is 1909. This presents challenges for homeowners, as the cost to maintain a property becomes increasingly burdensome.

**Going forward...**

Supporting current owners to stay in the neighborhood is a priority. Although land use diversity is an important strategy for achieving a healthy mix of housing options, other partnership-based strategies will also need to occur, such as working with the City of Saint Paul and others on strategies to preserve affordable housing, stimulate new housing construction, and homeowner assistance. Where demolition is the only option, there may be opportunity for new “missing middle” housing choices to fill in while maintaining affordability and neighborhood character. The existing low-rise range of housing types in Capitol Heights and along Sherburne and Charles Avenues should be preserved and enhanced over time by the sensitive addition of new single-family homes and “missing middle” types. As most of the structures in these areas are over 100 years old, a careful balance between redevelopment and restoration, renovation and rehabilitation will be required. (Also see Chapter 7b Capitol Heights)

*“While older housing may initially be more affordable, the extraordinary maintenance costs could lead to neglect and loss of the stock over time. This adds to the challenge of maintaining diverse and affordable housing options in Saint Paul.”*

~SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan pg. 7

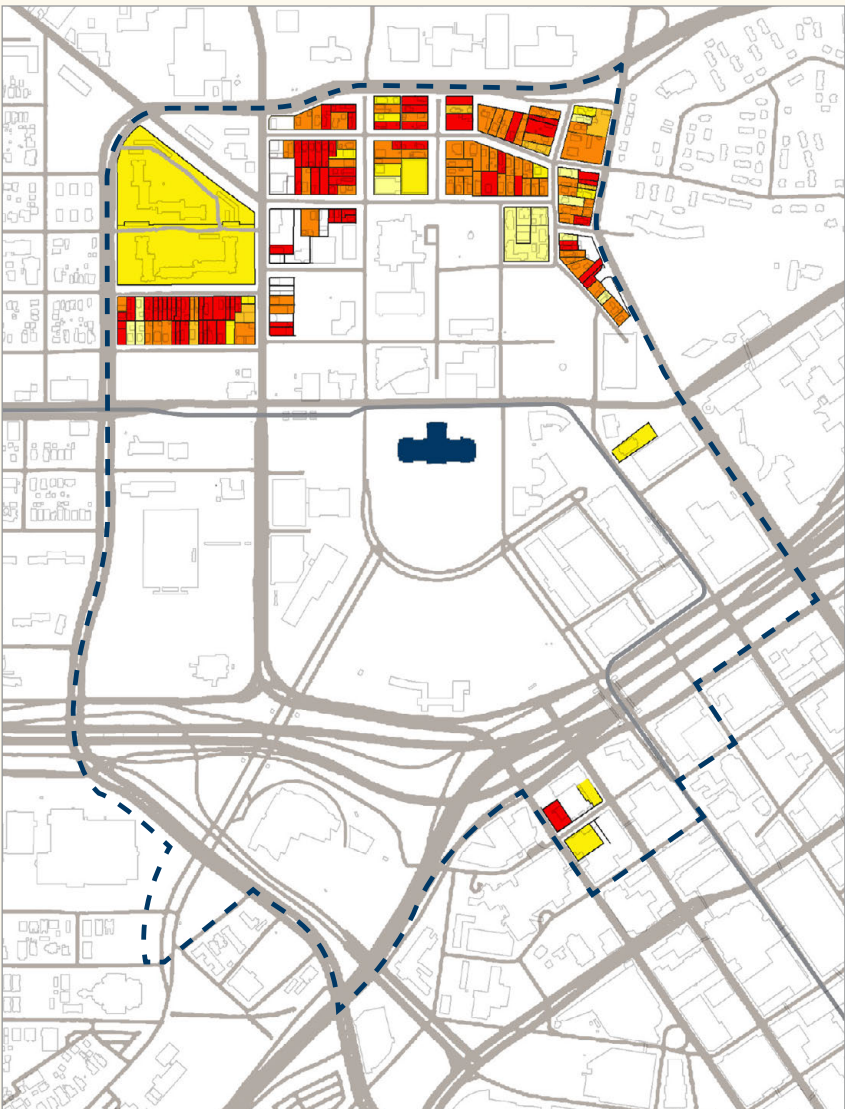


Figure 6.10: Map of Residential Structures in the Capitol Area by Year Built

**Year Principal Residential Structure on Parcel was Built**

- Prior to 1900
- 1901-1930
- 1931-1960
- 1961-1990
- 1991-2020

Data gathered from Ramsey County parcel data.



## Baseline 6.6: The Large Footprint of Parking

Land use efficiency is a concern where too much surface parking is present. Analysis of the Capitol Area parking shows that surface parking takes approximately five times as much land to accommodate the same number of cars over structured parking. Today, approximately 45 of the 330 acres of the Capitol Area are devoted to surface parking. The map below shows commercial and civic/institutional parking lots and ramps within the Capitol Area. Both Transit Oriented Development and Urban Village development patterns encourage a reduction of surface parking and an increase in land use diversity.

### Going forward...

Surface parking, especially around the transit station and within the G2 (Open Space) Zoning District, should be reduced over time. This could be achieved through replacement of parking with more efficient structured parking or a decrease in parking in general through a shift to alternative transportation modes (also see chapter 5). An increase of land use diversity in place of surface parking will have a positive effect on the commercial vibrancy of the Capitol Rice District and the Capitol Area as a whole.

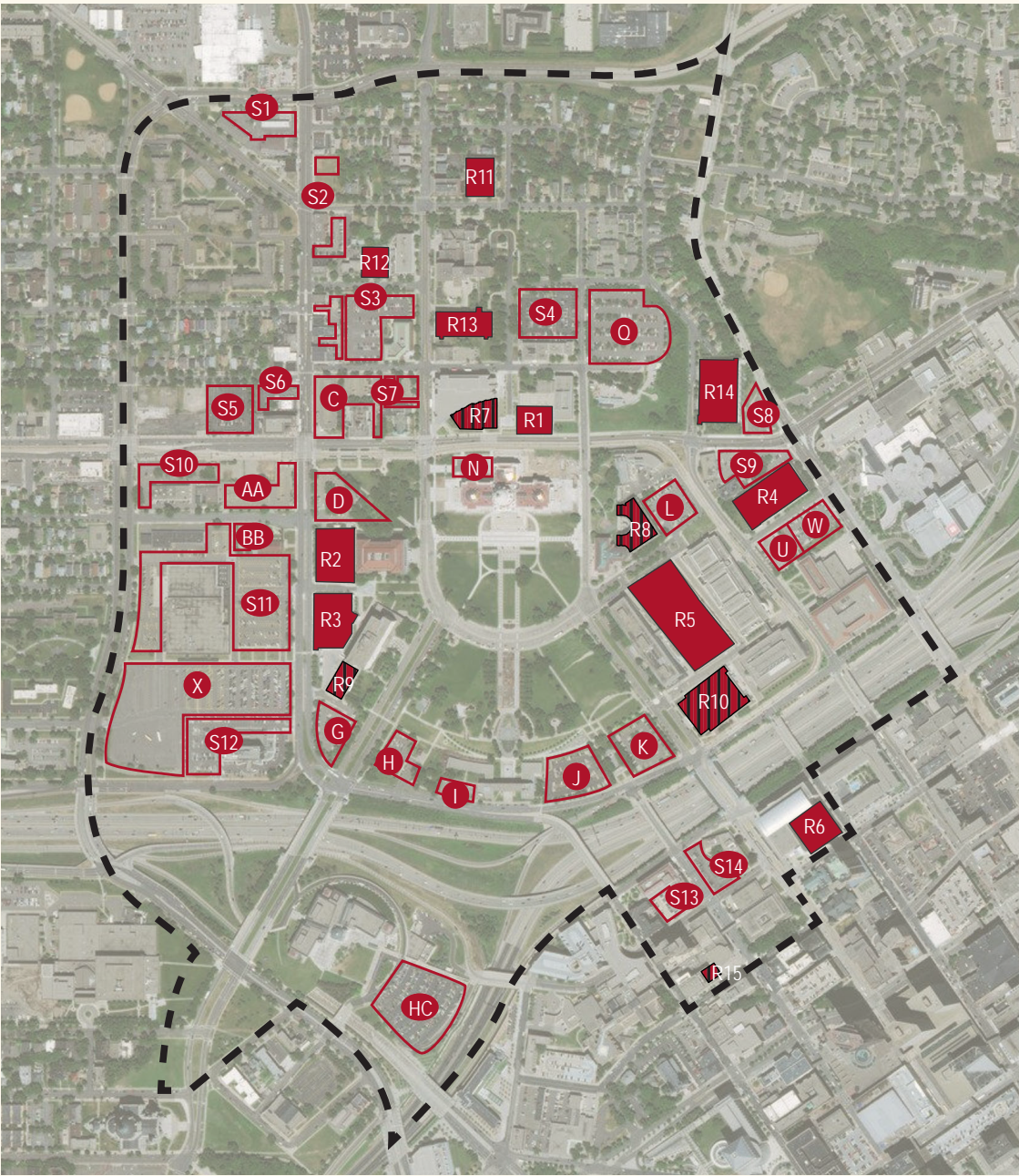


Figure 6.11: Map of Parking in the Capitol Area showing surface lots, parking ramps, and underground parking ramps

- Surface Parking Lots
- Parking Ramps
- Underground Parking Ramps



Figure 6.12: Table of Parking in the Capitol Area

Surface Parking (Off-Street)		# Stalls	Lot Footprint (Sq. Ft)	Structured Parking		# Stalls	Building Footprint (Sq. Ft)
State of Minnesota Lots				State Ramps			
AA	Lot AA	132	48,300	R1	Administration Building	249	22,200
BB	Lot BB	32	11,000	R2	State Office Building	398	41,600
C	Lot C (includes Park Street Lot)	237	86,000	R3	Ramp F (Transportation Bldg.)	530	46,600
D	Lot D	97	82,300	R4	14th Street Ramp	898	53,300
G	Lot G	83	45,200	R5	Centennial Building	1465	118,100
H	Lot H	66	49,600	R6	Andersen Building	477	32,800
I	Lot I	36	16,100	Sub Total		4017	314,600
J	Lot J	147	52,600	Acres: 7.2			
K	Lot K	83	61,000	State Underground Ramps			
L	Lot L	92	57,100	R7	Senate (Underground)	261	23,700
N	Lot N	26	16,000	R8	Judicial (Underground)	128	24,600
Q	Lot Q	336	117,000	R9	Transportation (Underground)	34	11,300
U	Lot U	44	46,100	R10	Armory (underground)	*150	56,000
W	Lot W	99	46,100	Sub Total		573	115,600
X	Lot X	448	311,600	*estimate		Acres: 2.7	
HC	Minnesota History Center	402	138,600				
Total		2360	1,184,600	Total		4590	430,200
			Acres: 27.2				Acres: 9.9
Private Lots				Private Ramps			
S1	Como & Pennsylvania Commercial Parking	69	45,800	R11	75 Como Ave.	170	24,400
S2	Rice Street Small Lots	128	52,100	R12	Office Building (Charles & Park)	106	18,400
S3	Office Building (Sherburne & Park)	214	76,300	R13	Bethesda	519	32,500
S4	Education Minnesota	216	57,600	R14	Regions (Robert & University)	1000	54,800
S5	League of Minnesota Cities	158	52,600	R15	Municipal Ramp 7a	660	5,500
S6	White Castle	30	15,500	Total		2455	135,600
S7	Christ on Capitol Hill Lutheran Church	54	9,900	Acres: 3.1			
S8	Regions (Jackson & University)	45	20,800				
S9	Regions Hospital & Emma Norton Residence	104	54,800				
S10	St Paul License Bureau/Sunrise Bank/AFL-CIO	95	49,700				
S11	Sears	445	256,200				
S12	Best Western	242	61,800				
S13	545 Wabasha St. Lot	79	21,000				
S14	Ramsey County Building Lot	80	24,200				
Total		1959	798,300				
			Acres: 18.3				
Total Parking Stalls (Non-Residential)		4319		Total Parking Stalls (Non-Residential)		7045	
Total Land Used (Acres)		45.5		Total Land Used (Acres)		13	
Efficiency (stalls per acre)		95		Efficiency (stalls per acre)		542	



## GUIDANCE FOR REGULATION

*\* Specific objectives identified with an asterisk (\*) below are objectives that will guide decision making and reviews by CAAPB Board members, Staff and Advisors, but will not be integrated directly into zoning or design regulatory tools, unless the Board deems necessary later through resolution.*

### **Ensure an appropriate mix of commercial, institutional, residential and open space land uses throughout the Capitol Area.**

6.1. Ensure that the land use patterns and related best practices (including Urban Campus, Transit-Oriented Development, Urban Village and Missing Middle Housing) are:

- encouraged, where appropriate, and prescribed through the district-by-district Development Framework Plans (attached to Chapter 7 of this document or updated in the future);
- reflected, as well as possible, in updated zoning and design regulatory tools; and
- considered by Board members, staff and advisors when reviewing and approving the details of public and private projects in the Capitol Area.

6.2. Support a broad mix of integrated land uses in the Capitol Area, including:

- Community-serving commercial uses that are user-friendly and easy to access, such as urban scaled supermarkets or grocery stores with fresh foods/produce; hardware stores; pharmacy; banks; fitness centers; hair care; laundry and dry cleaners; restaurants and cafés, (excluding those with drive-thru service); and other retail.

- Institutional and civic uses such as licensed adult or senior care; licensed child care; community or recreation centers (such as the newly established Frogtown Community Center); cultural arts facilities (e.g., museum, performing arts); education facilities; medical clinics or offices; places of worship; police or fire station; post office, public library and social services center; public parks.
- Residential uses which allow for single- and multiple-unit building types (such as carriage houses or accessory dwelling units; townhomes; micro units; live-work units; mixed commercial-residential buildings) as well as congregate living choices (such as foster, shelter and transitional housing, boarding houses, assisted living and housing for the elderly).
- Open space types such as plazas, lawns, gardens, play areas, green infrastructure (e.g. rain gardens), parklets, pocket parks, and green boulevards.
- Land to provide for the orderly growth of state government and the preservation and enhancement of existing state government structures within the Capitol Area.
- Land to provide for the preservation and enhancement of the State Capitol, and the creation and preservation of open space within the Capitol Area.

### **Support the redevelopment of Opportunity Sites, and work toward the reduction of surface parking.**

- 6.3. Encourage transition of current surface parking lots toward better land uses. Work to immediately decrease the overall amount of land dedicated solely to on-site surface parking.
- 6.4. Prohibit the development of new permanent stand-alone surface parking lots.
- 6.5. Work to improve, site-by-site, convenient and safe access to all buildings and land uses.



- 6.6. Encourage structured parking through the practice of incorporating parking into the rear of, underground, or inside building envelopes. Encourage parking structures that are flexibly designed for re-use over time.
- 6.7. Encourage vertical mixed-use, mixing housing and office or commercial to enliven buildings for more hours of the day.
- 6.8. \* Encourage the construction of new residential options on infill lots throughout existing neighborhoods.
- 6.9. \* Encourage property owners to make improvements and to keep property well-maintained.

**Encourage commercial vitality that serves visitors, residents and workers.**

- 6.10. Ensure new and active uses for ground floor spaces that contribute to the overall vitality of the street and serve the community, as well as adjoining neighborhoods, especially in buildings fronting Rice Street and University Avenue.
- 6.11. Prohibit in certain locations land uses that are incompatible with their context, including, but not limited to new warehouses, unenclosed auto sales, and exterior storage areas.
- 6.12. Support home occupations, livework units, artist studios, and other home-based, commercial enterprises throughout the district, provided they can be integrated into the community without a negative impact.
- 6.13. Work to expand more retail food choices, such as an urban-format grocery store, to serve the area.
- 6.14. Preserve and strengthen existing locally-based stores and services.
- 6.15. Continue to use the zoning code to enforce standards for the number, location, size and design of signage, eliminating billboards where possible.

- 6.16. Promote energy efficient signs that use lighting only when necessary.
- 6.17. \* Encourage the re-establishment of a day care center to serve residents and local workers. The center should be located in a non-government building, but convenient for families of state workers.

**Encourage the preservation and development of a diversity of residential choices throughout the Capitol Area neighborhoods that will cater to both new and existing members of the community.**

- 6.18. Support the diversification of unit type and size choices within new multiple-block developments.
- 6.19. Support the diversification of unit type and size choices within both new buildings and in renovation of existing buildings.
- 6.20. Ensure the retention and development of “Missing Middle” housing types, both owner-occupied and rental, in the Capitol Area.
- 6.21. As appropriate, support the development of multiple-unit dwellings up to, but not exceeding height limitations in the Capitol Area. *See chapter 2 for regulations regarding building height.*
- 6.22. Support the development of life-cycle housing choices that enable residents to remain in their neighborhoods as their housing needs change over time.
- 6.23. Support the use of city resources for residents to reinvest in and stay in their homes as they age, or to find new life-cycle choices nearby.
- 6.24. Encourage new multi-family housing developments to incorporate features in their designs that foster social interaction.



- 6.25. Encourage efforts by existing and prospective property and homeowners to preserve, rehabilitate, and modernize existing viable housing stock; specifically, encourage the rehabilitation of vacant houses, duplexes and triplexes and multi-family residential structures in the Capitol Area.
- 6.26. Add extended-stay facilities (for families of hospital patients, legislators, contractors, etc.) as a permitted use and building type in the zoning code.
- 6.27. \* Support the City of Saint Paul's housing goals by encouraging a diversity of housing affordability, both ownership and rental, throughout the Capitol Area neighborhoods by enabling the provision and preservation of a balanced stock of lower, moderate and upper-income residential choices that serve a diverse mix of incomes and families.
- 6.28. \* Follow State, County and City guidelines to support well-designed, energy-efficient buildings and sites constructed with quality materials. *See chapter 3 for information on policies and guidelines related to energy and the environment.*
- 6.29. \* Facilitate an increase in the availability of homes that serve Capitol Area workers.

NOTE: In addition to the above objectives, the CAAPB supports housing policy that is applicable to the Capitol Area from the City of Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

**Ensure that the design of all new development and property improvements respects neighborhood context, and that existing properties are well-maintained.**

- 6.30. Enable a transition in the intensity of commercial uses and in housing type and size as one moves from the active areas near the core of the Urban Village/Neighborhood Node outward into quieter neighborhood streets.

- 6.31. Support the incorporation of publicly-accessible open space into new multi-family residential or mixed use developments.
- 6.32. With limited exceptions, ensure that storage uses of all kinds, including parking, are placed below or behind other residential or commercial square footage and out of sight from the street.
- 6.33. Ensure parking structures are built with liner buildings and/or active ground-level uses that make structured parking invisible or completely enclosed within.
- 6.34. \* Encourage owner-occupancy where possible, especially in single-family houses and mansion-style multi-family structures, where there are enhanced ongoing structural and site maintenance needs.
- 6.35. \* Encourage private sector, public sector and non-profit organizations (and the partnerships among them) to provide maintenance and home improvement assistance programs, and create programs to help property and rental property owners make improvements to their homes.











PRINCIPLE 7

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





# INTRODUCTION



The Capitol Campus and its neighborhoods comprise a cohesive and interactive set of adjacent urban districts. The distinct character of each neighborhood is, in part, a response to particular topographies and developmental histories that have created the existing patterns of use, and, in part, a response to influences from surrounding communities. Each neighborhood can enhance its unique identity as well as create observable continuities between areas. Comprehensive and neighborhood planning guides future development decisions and should be done with community involvement.

In the past, however, planning has not always included the community. Even in what is today known as the Capitol Area, there were, prior to creation of the Board, many large changes and developments—the siting and building of the Capitol itself, clearing land for the Mall, widening of Rice Street, development of the Interstate through the Rondo neighborhood, the vast majority of which lies to the west, development of Sears as a superblock—some of which contributed to the displacement of people, homes, businesses, and streets. In the past, some decisions were made with little or no input from those affected as the area changed for what was meant to be the greater good of the city. The impact of some planning decisions can still be felt today in many communities.

The seventh principle of this Comprehensive Plan directly addresses this:

*In all parts of the Capitol Area, new development respects community, assets and context.*

**Good planning and design respects communities.** New projects should reflect existing community values and be designed with a deep understanding of the potential direct and indirect impacts on the individuals and groups affected. Public participation is integral to any good planning. The aim of the public participation process is to enable the public to have meaningful input during the planning process. Area residents, business owners, employees, and visitors can be an important source of knowledge for what is working and what needs to be improved. Public participation can take many forms, and community members should have effective ways to give feedback. It is especially important to reach out to people who have historically be overlooked, whether inadvertently or intentionally. One of the goals of the CAAPB is to ensure all are treated with dignity and respect, and that all voices have the opportunity to be heard.

**Good planning and design respects physical assets.** Reaching out and listening to the community helps planners understand the important key physical assets. Sometimes, these are obvious based on the history of the area, such as an historic building or a major employer. Some assets are known only to community members, and these are also important to understand and protect—key gathering places, long-term businesses that serve as an anchor to the neighborhood, public art that tells a story—these assets shape the community and make it home. Planning to improve a neighborhood should always work to include these key assets.

**Good planning and design respects context.** New projects can better serve the public when planned with sensitivity to context. Planning must consider community history, important aspects of the community today, and projections for the future. All three lenses are needed to put community input into context and make good planning decisions. Research-based knowledge helps planners in understanding perspectives from individuals and businesses alongside the goals of the larger community. Planning decisions should balance the good of the individual with the good of the community, including residents, businesses, institutions and visitors.



The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board is committed to community involvement and collaboration in the planning process. This Comprehensive Plan is a step in the ongoing planning process for the next 10-to-20 years; it is an expression of the values of the CAAPB, guided by input from the State, the City of Saint Paul, and the people throughout the Capitol Area. ∞



**Community engagement and involvement will continue to be a key to revitalization in the Capitol Area.**

In 2019, a long-vacant triangular plot at the intersection of Como and Rice got a makeover, with help from the City of Saint Paul Commercial Vitality Zone funding. Community members and local businesses came out on planting day to help bring the site to life. The raised planters were made by Clear Channel Outdoor, the media company that owns the land. The Minnesota Horticultural Society donated the plants. The Little Free Library at the site is sponsored by the Junior League of St. Paul, a volunteer organization involved in the project. Clear Channel Outdoor also donated billboard time to support the community. Community member Brandon Yang is pictured on the billboard.



**Historic resources will continue to be respected in the Capitol Area through earlier integration in the planning, design and maintenance of our built environment.**

The success of the Capitol Restoration Project completed in 2018 is inspirational as a testament to effective collaboration and adherence to historic standards. The preservation approach resulted in the project receiving significant recognition for historic preservation, while also providing a modern building and life-safety systems and functional space for state government and the people of Minnesota.

In combination with community engagement, this sensitive but rigorous approach could become part of a model for the greater Capitol Area.



*In this chapter...*

This chapter outlines our approach to planning, including topics covering:

- How is Planning Done in the Capitol Area?
- How is Project Design Reviewed in the Capitol Area?
- Embracing Change in the Capitol Area

*Images on title page by (bottom left) M Health Fairview and (bottom right) Kraus-Anderson.*



## HOW IS PLANNING DONE IN THE CAPITOL AREA?

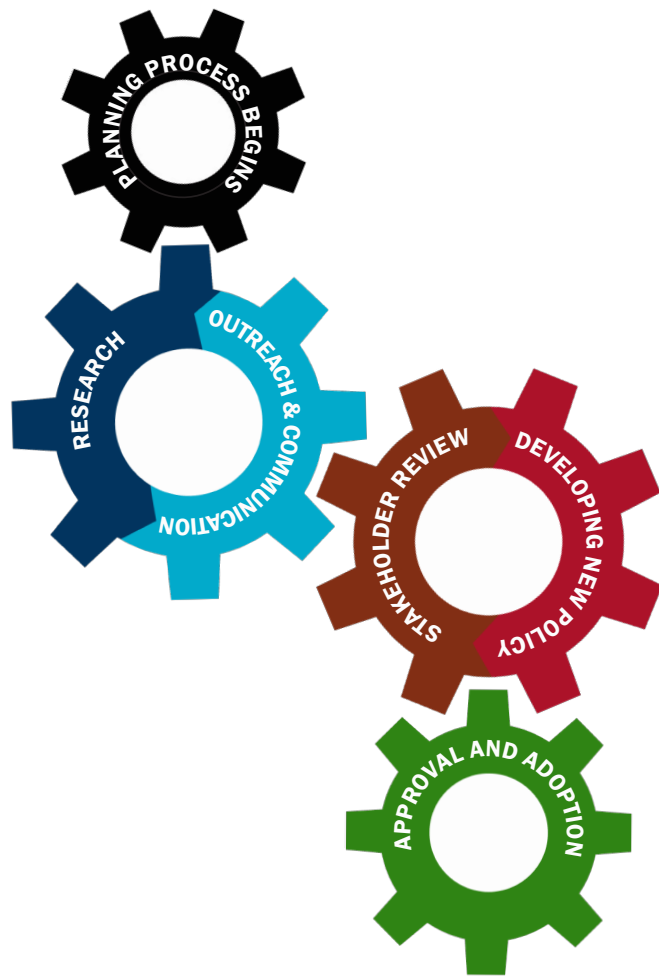


Figure 7.1: Diagram: CAAPB Planning process

**Planning that involves stakeholders sets the stage for development of CAAPB's adopted design guidelines, zoning regulations and board decision-making.**

All above ground improvements in the Capitol Area must comply with this comprehensive plan, and are also subject to the rules, regulations and design standards set forth in The Rules Governing Zoning and Design in the Minnesota State Capitol Area. CAAPB review and approval for both zoning and design is the first part of the permitting process, replacing City of Saint Paul's zoning and design regulation. Projects on private properties along the boundary of the Capitol Area are required to consult CAAPB for comment during the permitting process.

Proactive planning in the Capitol Area is conducted periodically at multiple scales: comprehensive planning, neighborhood or district planning, and issue-based studies. Policy developed in plan documents and approved by the board are the foundation of board approvals and staff permitting for new projects throughout the Capitol Area (outlined in the next section). Regardless of scale, the CAAPB is committed to planning with respect for the community, assets and context, using the following approach:

**Research.** CAAPB staff will often conduct or participate in studies (or longer 'planning tracks') to examine important issues. This work can include extensive review of existing policy including CAAPB plans and reports, neighborhood, city, county, or regional documents, best practices from other areas, and documentation of existing conditions, current issues, trends and opportunities across multiple topics.

**Outreach and Communication.** Interaction with various stakeholder groups is critical to ensure community voices are heard regarding shared values and goals, or specific challenges. Comparing research with feedback provides the basis for brainstorming solutions. Implementers and/or responsible parties may be identified and brought to the table.

**Development of New Policy.** Stakeholder input and information are combined to create new policy.

**Stakeholder Review.** Drafts of new policy can be reviewed with stakeholder groups during development. The nature of the policy revision will often define the type of stakeholder interaction sought. Generally, a mix of stakeholder groups will be involved, including institutions, businesses and property owners, residents, neighborhood resident groups, public bodies, and CAAPB Board members.

**Board Approval and Adoption.** The CAAPB adopts new policy during their Board meetings, which are open to the public.

### BOARD-APPROVED PLANS

**Comprehensive Plan.** A Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area is required by Minnesota Statute 15B. All projects approved by the CAAPB Zoning Administrator or CAAPB members must align with the last adopted plan or its amendments. The Comprehensive Plan is the enabling document for all zoning regulations administered by CAAPB, and explains the organizing principles behind those regulations.

**Development Frameworks (for Neighborhoods and Districts).** Smaller scale Development Frameworks provide more location specific development guidelines than the Comprehensive Plan. They calibrate the comprehensive plans' larger organizing principles to a specific area, detailing specific goals for stability, change and growth. When adopted by the Board as a Comprehensive Plan Amendment, they carry the weight of the Comprehensive Plan, similar to municipal 'small area' plans. ~



# HOW ARE PROJECTS REVIEWED IN THE CAPITOL AREA?

When new projects and improvements are proposed in the Capitol Area, the CAAPB is required by statute to review and approve those projects according to fidelity to both the comprehensive plan and zoning and design regulations. The CAAPB Board members have the power to make decisions on zoning and design issues during their meetings. Changes to the Comprehensive Plan must follow the approaches identified on the previous page. Otherwise, the Comprehensive Plan will continue to be enacted through use of regulatory tools and design guidance mechanisms defined by statute:

## THE ZONING AND DESIGN RULES

### The Rules for Zoning and Design in the Minnesota State Capitol Area (“The Rules”)

– The CAAPB regulates zoning and design in the Capitol Area through Chapter 2400, Minnesota Administrative Rules - as required by Minnesota Statute 15B. All projects approved by the CAAPB Zoning Administrator or CAAPB members must comply with the rules in this document unless applicants obtain a variance, conditional use permit, or other approval granted by the board itself. CAAPB zoning and design rules replace City of Saint Paul zoning ordinance. The city issues building permits and licenses certain land uses. Since the comprehensive plan, as outlined above, is the enabling policy document for zoning and design regulations, The Rules are typically modified following comprehensive plan approval.

**Pre-Application and Inter-Agency Reviews** – Before formal submittals, private and public designers and project managers will continue to vet projects, in confidence, for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Design Rules with CAAPB staff. Staff routinely collaborates with Advisors and other agencies.

**Advisory Committee** (aka “Architectural Advisors”) – Statute also requires that three advisors are consulted regularly to advise staff and board members on the merits of improvements in relation to design matters. Advisors are appointed for time-limited terms by the American Institute of Architects, Minnesota State Arts Board, and CAAPB.

**Zoning Administrator Review** - Upon formal submittal of proposed projects, new public infrastructure and private development proposals are first measured for compliance with the comprehensive plan and the zoning and design rules. If within the rules, and the intent of the comprehensive plan, the zoning administrator is empowered to grant permits administratively, without board review.

**Neighborhood Input** – For large or sensitive developments or development projects that are not in compliance with current comp plan or zoning, a public participation process may be necessary during the design phase prior to Board reviews and approval.

**Board Approved Design Guidelines and Design Competitions** – Periodically, CAAPB has and will (often collaboratively with stakeholders) continue to develop guidelines for specific projects or project types. Recent examples address art in the Capitol Building (2019), street design, campus signage, lighting, commemorative works on the Capitol Mall, and solar installations throughout the capitol complex (2017). By statute, certain projects (such as public buildings) beyond a certain cost may be required to be developed through design competition. ~

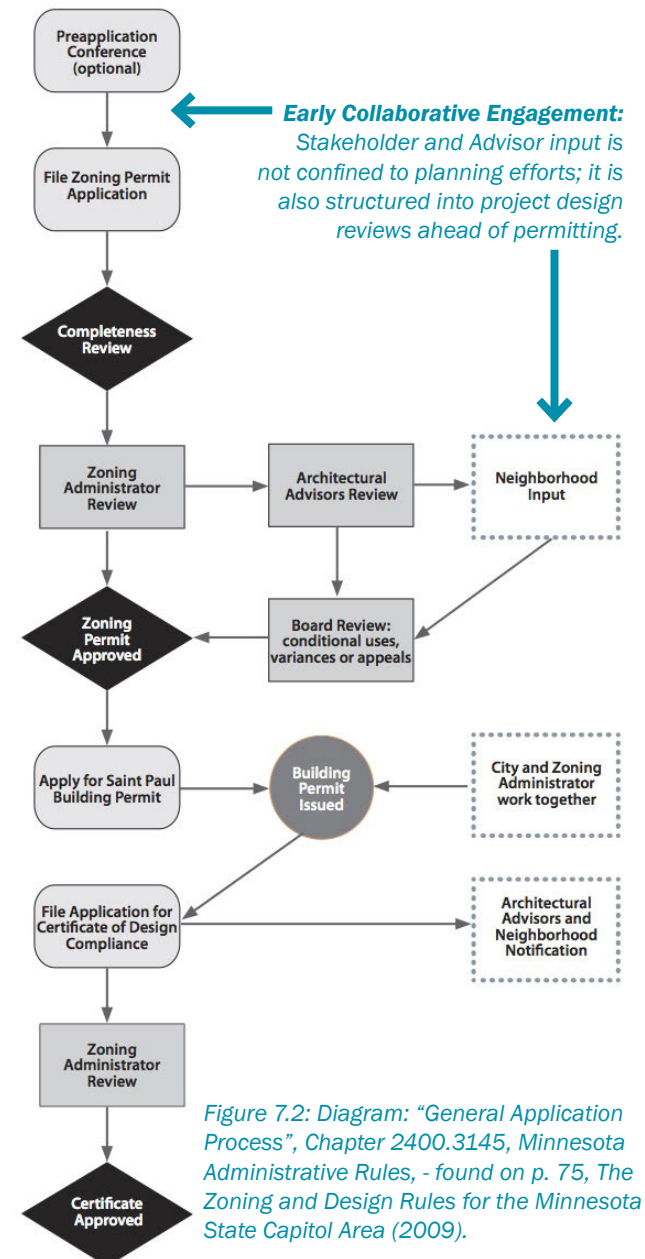


Figure 7.2: Diagram: “General Application Process”, Chapter 2400.3145, Minnesota Administrative Rules, - found on p. 75, The Zoning and Design Rules for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (2009).



Community input is not only part of the planning process. The Bethesda Good Neighbor Group was formed as a condition for the Conditional Use Permit to open a shelter for people experiencing homelessness in the former Bethesda Hospital. The group met monthly to discuss issues with the transition, including neighborhood safety and shelter effectiveness.



## EMBRACING CHANGE IN THE CAPITOL AREA

Cities go through natural cycles of investment and dis-investment, through cycles of growth and cycles of recession. As described previously in this plan, ongoing investments in new and existing buildings, new streets and transportation technologies can impact communities in both positive and negative ways. Without careful planning and civic engagement, our history shows that we can lose track of the well-being of communities, to look past resources or take them for granted – leading to investments in the name of progress that fail to protect valuable resources and assets. The Board wishes to address this, with focus on the following:

### Managing the Effects of Rapid Growth in Communities

Growth and investment are necessary in every community. Ideally, it happens in a form, scale and pace that creates nothing but positive impacts in communities. This plan calls for continued dialogue about the impacts that new growth and redevelopment can have in communities. Typical discussions may need to be convened surrounding the issues of housing, traffic impacts, safety, etc. The Board, along with City, County and State partners, should continue these dialogues with the community and/or key stakeholder during both the planning and review of new projects. The Board will remain open to new practices that seek to ensure that communities are fairly represented early in all Board processes.

### Communicating with Diverse Audiences

It will be important to continue to communicate effectively with neighborhood groups and established businesses, as well as under-represented new American and immigrant communities as to the impacts of planning, regulations and new projects. In the past three decades, funding has often been provided to address community outreach communication for public buildings, with an average of one building constructed every four years. During the same period, new private development, proceeding at a similar rate, has allowed for Board staff to accommodate outreach without additional resources. It is anticipated that the pace of new private growth and development will increase in the Capitol Area. This may necessitate new resources to continue to accommodate a high standard of community access to the Board's planning and design procedures.

### Integrating Historic Assets into Projects

As stated earlier in this chapter, it will be important to continue informing projects by establishing greater knowledge about the presence of historic resources and by presenting those resources in many stages of the community development process. The following may become necessary to develop in the Capitol Area:

- Establish (and conduct updates as necessary) an historic resources survey for archaeology, buildings, and cultural/social assets in the Capitol Area.
- Revisit the CAAPB regulatory review process of projects, with a goal of meeting or exceeding standards set by the City of Saint Paul regarding historic resources. ∞



October 3, 2017 Capitol Rice district planning event at League of Minnesota Cities

**CAPITOL RICE**  
< LOWER RICE STREET >

**INPUT IS NEEDED**  
from **SMALL BUSINESSES** and  
**COMMUNITY MEMBERS**  
on **COMMERCIAL VITALITY,**  
**SAFETY, PARKING** and  
**STREET DESIGN**

**Informational Gathering**  
Noon (Tuesday)  
**Sept 12**  
at the Capitol's NEW  
L'Etoile du Nord Vault.  
RSVP (for lunch count) :

**Bring Placemaking & Street Design Ideas**  
**Oct 3** (Thursday)  
Come Anytime: 4:00—7:00 pm  
to **League of Minnesota Cities**

These gatherings are sponsored and hosted through a City-County-State long-range planning collaboration. Ahead of private sector, public sector and capital investments in the corridor over the next 10 years, the [Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board](#), the City of Saint Paul, and Ramsey County Planners would like to gather ideas and input from community members. **TRACK the PROJECT** and **SIGN UP for EMAIL UPDATES** at [www.mn.gov/CAAPB](http://www.mn.gov/CAAPB)

Questions: contact CAAPB's Pete Musty 651-757-1501 [peter.musty@state.mn.us](mailto:peter.musty@state.mn.us)





## What Does the City of Saint Paul Say?

Heritage and Cultural Preservation is covered in the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan on page 226:

Goal 1: A leader in the use of best practices towards an equitable and sustainable approach to the preservation, conservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of publicly-owned historic and cultural resources (includes Policy HP 1-5)

Goal 2: The preservation of built, cultural and natural environments that express the identity and sense of place of Saint Paul (includes Policy HP 6-9)

Goal 3: The consideration of heritage and cultural preservation goals and priorities in all City departments, initiatives, policies, practices and processes (includes Policy HP 10-11)

Goal 4: City investments in built, cultural and natural environments and in cultural and historic resources that reflect broader City priorities (includes Policy HP 12-16)

Goal 5: Broad stakeholder understanding and application of heritage and cultural preservation planning tools and resources (includes Policy HP 17-19)



Christ Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill and the Ford Building (in the block immediately northwest of the Capitol Building) were built in the decade following the Minnesota State Capitol. Both buildings provide architectural interest along University Avenue across from Leif Erickson Park and the Capitol Rice LRT station. Both remain historic buildings on a block that could see development by the State in the coming years.



The church (originally Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church) houses an original congregation dating to 1868 and continues to serve a diversity of immigrant communities. The firm of Buechner and Orth designed the Renaissance Revival building. With a beautiful sanctuary, the exterior is yellow brick with white stone trim, featuring two towers and Ionic columns at its front door. Its basement columns are considered structural innovations of their era. The Board's position is that this vital community institution and building will be preserved.

The Ford Building was one of twenty-three similar buildings built by the Ford Motor Company, originally serving as an assembly plant for the Model-T. It was considered important because of its position on University Avenue relative to transportation, a strategic placement to its counterpart in Minneapolis. The building is structurally sound and has a modular, open plan with massive columns and great natural light that has allowed for a variety of different uses over time. Much of its beautiful dismantled brick cornice has been removed and stored within. It was bought by the State in the 1950's and used until 2006 - since then vacant. The CAAPB position on the Ford Building is that the Board, while open to demolition, supports a full analysis (prior to any demolition) of the potential for reuse of all or part of the building (adaptive reuse) as part of a larger redevelopment of the State-owned property on the block.



## IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLE

**To implement the principle: *In all parts of the Capitol Area, new development respects community, assets and context, the CAAPB will:***

- 7.1. Continue to evaluate the impacts of rapid change on the community during both the planning and review of new projects.
- 7.2. Continue to communicate with neighborhood groups and established businesses, as well as under-represented new American and immigrant communities as to the impacts of planning, regulations and new projects. In some cases, this may necessitate new resources to continue to accommodate a high standard of community access to the Board's planning and design procedures.
- 7.3. Continue to evaluate the historic significance of resources in the Capitol Area, working closely with SHPO and the City of Saint Paul to evaluate impacts of new development on archaeology, buildings, and cultural/social assets in the Capitol Area.
  - a. Establish (and conduct updates as necessary) an historic resources survey for archaeology, buildings, and cultural/social assets in the Capitol Area.
  - b. Revisit the CAAPB regulatory review process of projects, with a goal of meeting or exceeding standards set by the City of Saint Paul regarding historic resources.
- 7.4. Plan for specific districts/neighborhoods of the Capitol Area through the development of location-specific Development Frameworks.
  - a. Continue to implement the Capitol Rice Development Framework, approved January 2019 and referenced in Chapter 7A.
  - b. Working closely with the Capitol Heights neighborhood and surrounding stakeholders, write the Capitol Heights Development Framework, as called for in Chapter 7B.

- c. Working closely with the City of Saint Paul, adopt the City's updated plan for Fitzgerald Park, or write a Fitzgerald Park Development Framework, as called for in Chapter 7C.
- d. Update the CAAPB Mall Design Framework, as called for in Chapter 2.
- e. Allow for additional Development Frameworks to be developed and considered by the Board as either approved CAAPB planning or if necessary, new or updated guidelines to be adopted as an amendment to this Comprehensive Plan.

*Note on 7.4.e:*

The Minnesota History Center is a major civic and cultural foundation for all of the people of Minnesota. It is a gateway between Saint Paul's downtown and Cathedral Hill areas to the Capitol Campus. Future consideration should be given to improving connections between the MN History Center and the Capitol, both in physical infrastructure and attention to human scale connections. The MN History Center is now nearly 30 years old. Many of its physical features, both in public and non-public areas, were designed in an era in which modern features were not contemplated. Examples include: rapid increase in technology; the implementation of a fee for the museum portion of the building; modern security concerns. As a result, by 2021, MNHS will conduct planning to envision the next 30-50 years for the MN History Center and the MN Historical Society overall.



# DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS: GUIDING INCREMENTAL RE-INVESTMENT IN DISTRICTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

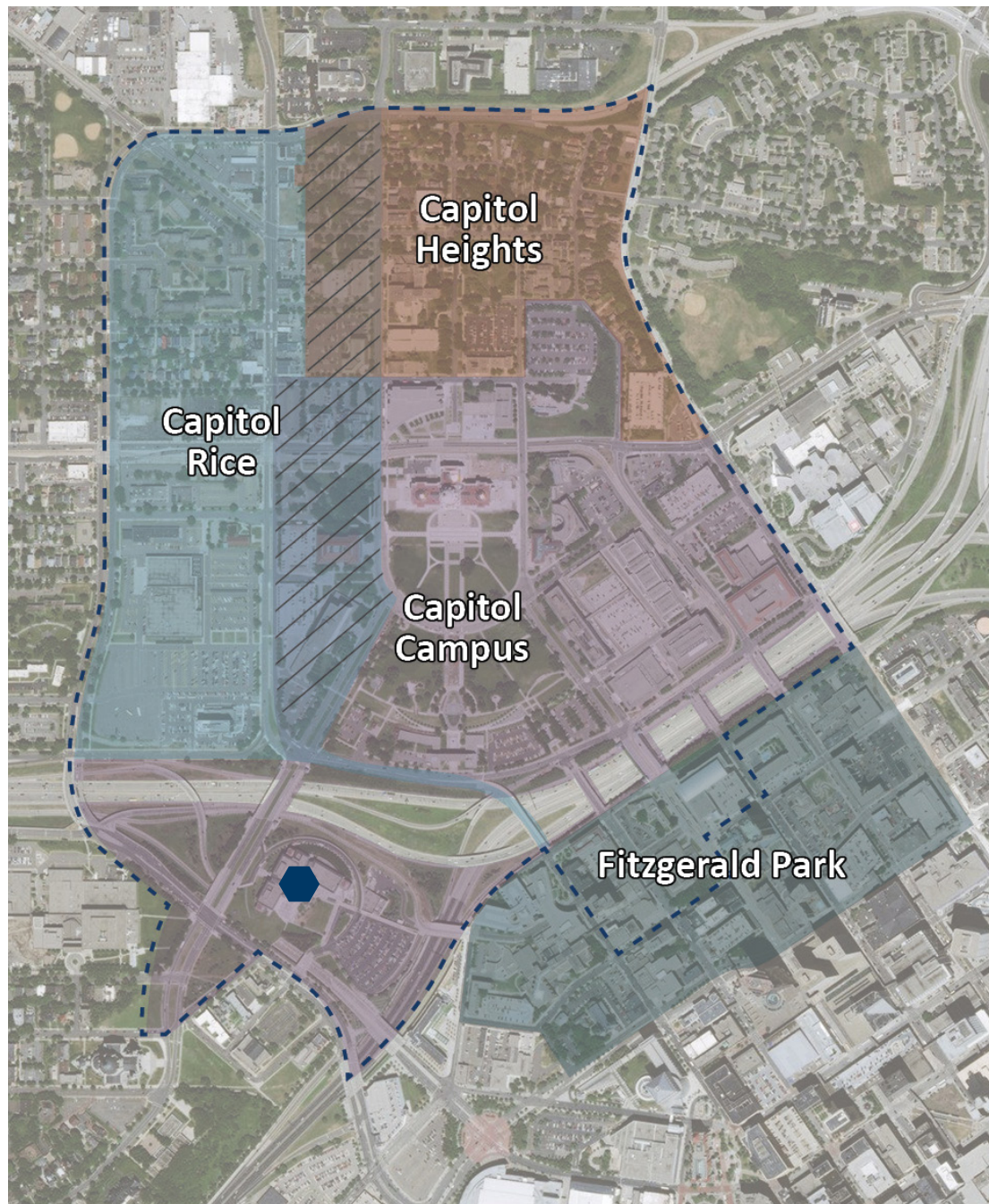


Figure 7.3: Map of the Capitol Area Neighborhoods/Districts. The Capitol Rice District, a newly defined district centered on the Capitol Rice LRT station, overlaps Capitol Heights and the Capitol Campus. The overlap is shown with diagonal lines.

● MN History Center

Following the Comprehensive Plan, district and neighborhood planning may occur. In addition to the Capitol Campus, the Capitol Area has three district/neighborhood planning areas:

- **Capitol Rice (covered in Chapter 7A)**
- **Capitol Heights (covered in Chapter 7B)**
- **Fitzgerald Park (covered in Chapter 7C)**

While Comprehensive Planning looks at the entire Capitol Area and writes policy to guide future development decisions, district Development Frameworks outline detailed goals for stability, change and growth in a community.







PRINCIPLE 7A

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





# INTRODUCTION

*“The public realm within the Rice Station Area is not currently living up to the stature of its Capitol surroundings, nor to the needs of the surrounding communities. Existing green spaces within the State Capitol grounds, including Leif Erikson Park and the Capitol Mall, are attractive yet formal spaces that, in some cases, are encumbered by infrastructure and parking and do not function for local neighborhoods as park space. The streetscapes of Rice and University, though important corridors with significant relationships to both the State Capitol and to neighborhoods of Frogtown and Capitol Heights, lack structure and identity, and are geared primarily to parking and moving vehicles.”*

~Rice Station Area Plan (2008)



Rice and Marion Streets, built for vehicular travel only, are wide for current traffic counts and difficult for pedestrians to cross. (Image: Google Maps)



The Sears site superblock replaced neighborhood streets present in the 1950s, reducing walkability in the area.

The most significant potential for development in the Capitol Area in the next 10 years is within the Capitol Rice District. At the center is the Capitol Rice LRT station and Leif Erickson Park, with a growing vibrancy and unique sense of place integrated with a Mobility Hub for workers, community members and Capitol visitors.

## COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CONTEXT OF THE CAPITOL RICE DISTRICT

The Capitol Rice District is the area west of the Capitol and centered on the Capitol Rice LRT station at Leif Erickson Park. While there are not formal boundaries, the area is roughly defined by Marion Street to the west, Park Street to the east, Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, and I-94 to the south. The eastern portion of Frogtown and western portions of Capitol Heights and the Capitol Campus fall within the Capitol Rice District. The recognition of this area as a unique district began with station area planning in the early 2000s and was confirmed by the community during the Capitol Rice Strategy planning process in 2017-2018.

East-west connectivity is encumbered by superblocks, especially south of University Avenue. The major North-south blocks of Rice Street and Marion Street are wide – well overbuilt for current vehicle counts. This further reduces walkability in the district and creates barriers to connectivity. There is great opportunity to re-envision these streets and others in the district as truly multi-modal, walkable corridors built for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as motorists.

Rice Street was once the commercial heart of the neighborhood. Today it retains a mix of modest, main-street type, mixed-use buildings; though the commercial uses are intermixed with non-commercial uses and vacant buildings, disrupting the walkability and vibrancy of the street. In an effort to boost vitality of this historic corridor, in 2018 the City of Saint Paul designated Rice Street between University Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue a Commercial Vitality Zone eligible for public funding for business and streetscape enhancements. In early 2019 many businesses along the corridor have applied for business improvement funding. ∞





Figure 7A.1: Key locations and opportunity sites in the Capitol Rice District.

## The Capitol Rice District

### Key Opportunity Sites

1. Future site of Saint Paul City School
2. State Lot C and Ford Building
3. State Lot AA
4. Sears Site (includes State Lot X)

### Key Landmarks

- A. Hmongtown Marketplace
- B. Frogtown Community Ctr. & Park
- C. Rice Triangle Park
- D. Como Place Apts.
- E. Rivertown Commons
- F. Bethesda Hospital
- G. Senate Building
- H. Christ on Capitol Hill Lutheran Church
- I. Ford Building
- J. League of Minnesota Cities
- K. State Office Building
- L. Transportation Building
- M. Capitol Mall
- N. Veteran Services Building
- O. Capitol Ridge (Best Western)
- P. Western Park
- Q. Ravoux Hi-Rise
- R. Saint Paul College
- S. Minnesota History Center

★ Capitol Rice LRT Station



# MAJOR INFLUENCES ON THE FUTURE OF THE CAPITOL RICE DISTRICT

## OPPORTUNITY SITES



Four key opportunity sites surround the University-Rice intersection, which is now dominated by surface parking lots. Removing surface parking in favor of active street frontages would increase walkability along University Avenue and Rice Street within the station area. Three of the four opportunity sites are west of Rice Street and fall within a federally designated qualified Opportunity Zone.

Figure 7A.2: Top opportunity sites in the Capitol Rice District.

**1-Future site of Saint Paul City School:** The surface parking lot to the west of the League of MN Cities building on the northwest corner provides exceptional development opportunity along University Avenue. In early 2021 the CAAPB approved an application from Saint Paul City School to open a new K-12 school on the site.

**2-State Lot C and the Ford Building:** The State of Minnesota owns the Ford Building and adjacent surface parking lot on the northeast corner. The Ford Building, built as a sub-assembly plant by the Ford Motor Company in 1914, was one of 24 similar buildings built by the Ford Company in the early 1900s. The building was designed with ornate architectural details in deference to its location near the State Capitol and provides architectural interest along the University Avenue.

**3-State Lot AA:** The State of Minnesota owns the lot on the southwest corner, currently surface parking Lot AA. The southern alignment of the LRT tracks along this block requires special pedestrian treatments on the sidewalk to ensure safety. The Capitol Rice LRT station right across the street would make this location an ideal work destination for transit commuters. The large development potential of the Sears site just to the south could positively impact the nearby amenities this site has to offer workers.

**4-Sears Site (includes State Lot X):** The Sears building and parking

lots occupy a level area west of Rice Street, sloping down gently toward the freeway to the south. Its major arterial streets afford clear views of the Capitol, the Minnesota History Center and the Saint Paul Cathedral. The Sears site has been the focus of many master plan studies, including the Rice Station Area Plan of 2008. Past planning documents call for a connection from the Capitol Mall to Western Park and surrounding neighborhoods through the site, and the addition of a community park.

## FUTURE MOBILITY HUB NEAR LEIF ERICKSON PARK

In 2017, the Shared Use Mobility Center identified the Capitol Rice Station area as one of two Saint Paul locations for a future mobility hub. Leif Erickson Park is home to the Capitol Rice LRT station. This is the only station along the Central Corridor that is embedded in a park and the only station with the “Capitol” designation (though three LRT stations fall with the Capitol Area boundary). This station, adjacent to the Capitol building, is a natural entry point to the Capitol Area for visitors. Also see Chapters 4 and 5.



Leif Erickson Park sits to the west of the Capitol Building, north of the State Office Building.

The southern portion of the park is a surface parking lot, though the entirety of the space is zoned for preservation of Open Space (G-2). The parking in this area is meant to be temporary<sup>1</sup>; the long-term vision is for the site to be redesigned as open space. ≈

<sup>1</sup> Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area: “Surface parking within the G-2 District is considered an interim use, with the intent that it will ultimately be replaced with underground parking or structured parking in another zoning district” (pg 25).



## On the unique and critical role of the State of Minnesota

The State of Minnesota is by far the largest landowner and employer in the Capitol Area. The number of state employees on the Capitol campus outnumbers the residents in the Capitol Area. The State also generates the most visitors to the area. Therefore, it has an outsized role in the future character and condition of the neighborhoods in and surrounding the Capitol Area.

The following are considerations for the State of Minnesota's role in the on-going revitalization of the Lower Rice CVZ and other nearby neighborhoods and districts surrounding the State Capitol Complex.

**Attraction and retention of young, talented workers.** The State of Minnesota will experience a significant shift in its workforce over the next 10 to 15 years. It is estimated that 60% of State employees will reach retirement during this timeframe. In order to replace these workers, the State will need to rely on hiring significant numbers of talented, young workers. One of the more important characteristics influencing where younger workers choose to work is the neighborhood of their place of employment. For the State Capitol complex, a revitalized Capitol Rice District with more options for dining, housing, retail, and entertainment along with state-of-the-art transportation options would have a significant impact on the State's ability to fill all the imminent job openings due to retirement with high quality workers.

**New private and public investment can provide important amenities for visitors to the State Capitol.** The State Capitol complex has many different types of visitors including, school groups, tourists, constituents, and other members of the public that simply want to engage with state government. In order to enhance the visitor experience, safe and inviting amenities and an active, lively commercial district near the State Capitol complex are essential.

**The State can be a significant catalyst for private investment.** Private investment often follows public investment because it signals to the private sector the commitment on the part of the public sector for substantive change. Two significant

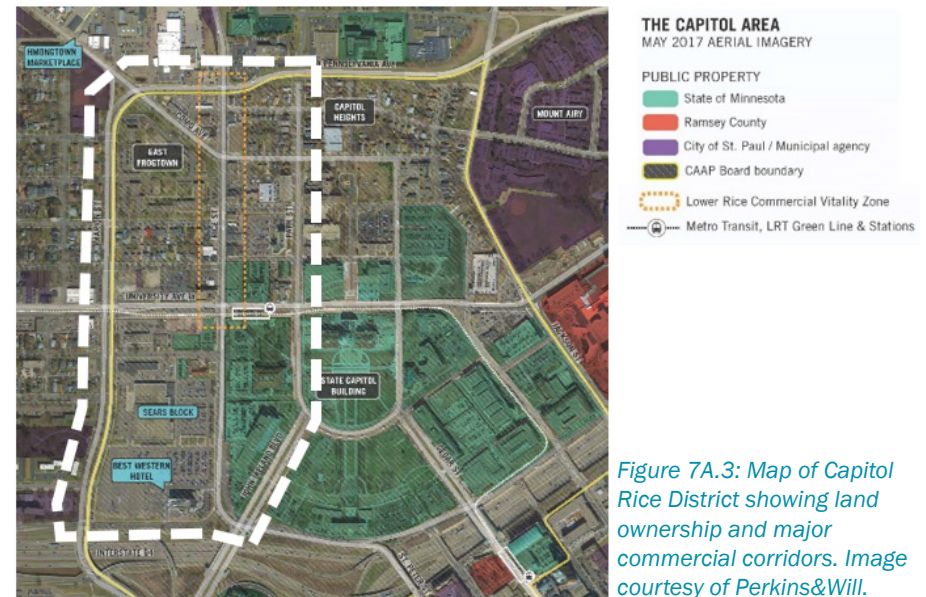


Figure 7A.3: Map of Capitol Rice District showing land ownership and major commercial corridors. Image courtesy of Perkins&Will.

development opportunities at the Rice-University intersection are state-owned.

**Revitalization will leverage and protect other State investments.** The State of Minnesota has and will continue to make major investments in and near the State Capitol area. In order to leverage and protect these investments, it will be important to encourage, promote, and support the continued revitalization of the Capitol Rice District and other nearby areas.

**State employees use a significant amount of parking in the area.** State government is the dominant factor impacting parking and mobility in the area, given the nearly 8,000 employees on or near the campus and the roughly 600,000 visitors annually. It is essential that the State take the lead on scoping and planning for changing transportation needs over time. For over 25 years the State has had a goal of reducing single-occupancy-vehicle (SOV) commuting among its employees to 50%, first stated in the 1993 Strategic Plan for Locating State Agencies. The goal is yet unachieved, but still in effect today and not diminished in importance. As the City of Saint Paul makes multi-modal transportation alternatives a priority, so too should the State of Minnesota look for any opportunity to make more headway in reduction of SOV parking.



# THE BASIS FOR THE CAPITOL RICE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The ***Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework*** (1997) first called for a downtown framework of urban villages centered on green public squares such as Rice Park and Mears Park in the 1990's. Urban villages are compact, dense, and pedestrian-oriented areas that contain an overlap of uses within easy walking distance and provide opportunities for residents to shop, work and recreate within their immediate community. Urban Villages are anchored by a successful public space – a square, park, boulevard or street – that provides a focus for community life.

*“The vision for Saint Paul articulated in the [Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development] Framework is of a system of interconnected urban villages nestled in the lush green of a reforested river valley. People live and work in these villages, each of which is designed around a high-quality public park or other gathering place.”*

~ Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, 5

Saint Paul's urban village vision extended into the Capitol Area and was affirmed in the ***Rice Street Station Area Plan*** in 2008. *The Rice Station Area Plan* (incorporated in whole to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Minnesota State Capitol Area) set out a comprehensive and specific urban design vision for the Capitol Rice District, including an urban village on the Sears site, transit-oriented development around the LRT station, and a “Main Street” revitalization of Rice Street. The Rice Station Area Plan was one of many created during the City's Central Corridor planning in advance of the opening of Green Line LRT in 2014.

*Rice Station Area Plan Vision: “The creation of a highly-desirable urban neighborhood at an important gateway in the Central Corridor. A place recognized for its access to the LRT, [University] Avenue, the State Capitol and downtown Saint Paul. A place where future development leverages this attractive and competitive location to: provide more opportunities to live within walking distance of work and recreation; reinforce connections to adjacent neighborhoods; introduce a greater diversity of destinations; and promote an active street life and public spaces that invite residents and visitors to explore and linger.”*

~ Rice Station Area Plan, 14

The spirit of the Rice Station Area Plan is alive and affirmed in *The Capitol Rice Development Framework*, though it is no longer binding as a document referenced by this Comprehensive Plan. *The Capitol Rice Development Framework* succeeds the *Rice Station Area Plan* in whole; however, it does not change the basic spirit of the *Rice Station Area Plan* vision.

In 2010 ***The Zoning and Design Rules for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*** encoded the urban village vision into regulation through the Mixed Use (MX) district zoning, Central Corridor Overlay, Height Map, Frontage Map and Standards, and various other supplementary built form regulations.

Further planning expanded the vision of transit-oriented urban villages along the University Avenue / Green Line light rail corridor in the ***Frogtown Small Area Plan*** in 2017 (adopted by the City Council in December 2019) Most recently, during community-based planning in Capitol Rice led by the CAAPB and City of Saint Paul, community members voiced desire for a strengthened mix of local urban services, as articulated in the ***Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy*** (2017 2018).

In 2020 the ***SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan*** established the Capitol Rice Station Area as a Neighborhood Node. Policy related to Neighborhood Nodes calls for increasing density; pedestrian-friendly urban design; infrastructure that emphasizes pedestrian safety; and clustering of neighborhood amenities to create a vibrant critical mass, enabling people to meet their daily needs within walking distance and improving equitable access to amenities. The *SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan* also calls for investment in Neighborhood Nodes that improves access to jobs, provides frequent transit service, vibrant business districts, a range of housing choices, and neighborhood-scale civic and institutional uses.

***The Capitol Rice Development Framework*** (January 2019) affirms and updates the vision and policy set forth in these plans. The following page outlines how *The Capitol Rice Development Framework* updates the vision and existing policy. ~



# THE CAPITOL RICE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Capitol Rice Development Framework was written in 2018, following an extensive community engagement process. The process began with the Capitol Rice Planning process, which was born out of a combined effort of three public sector initiatives:

- Ramsey County: Rice Street Transportation Safety Study

Ramsey County conducted a 2-year study of Rice Street from University Avenue to the city's edge at Larpenteur Avenue. The goal for Rice Street, as stated on the Ramsey County web site, is for improved access for multiple transportation modes, economic growth, safer intersections and transit accessibility.

- City of St. Paul: Commercial Vitality Zone

In 2016, St. Paul designated Rice Street from University to Pennsylvania as a Commercial Vitality Zone (CVZ). The CVZ program invests in Saint Paul neighborhood commercial districts to promote city-wide vitality, growth and equity. The Capitol Rice Planning process preceded distribution of \$350,000 of funds to Capitol Rice businesses.

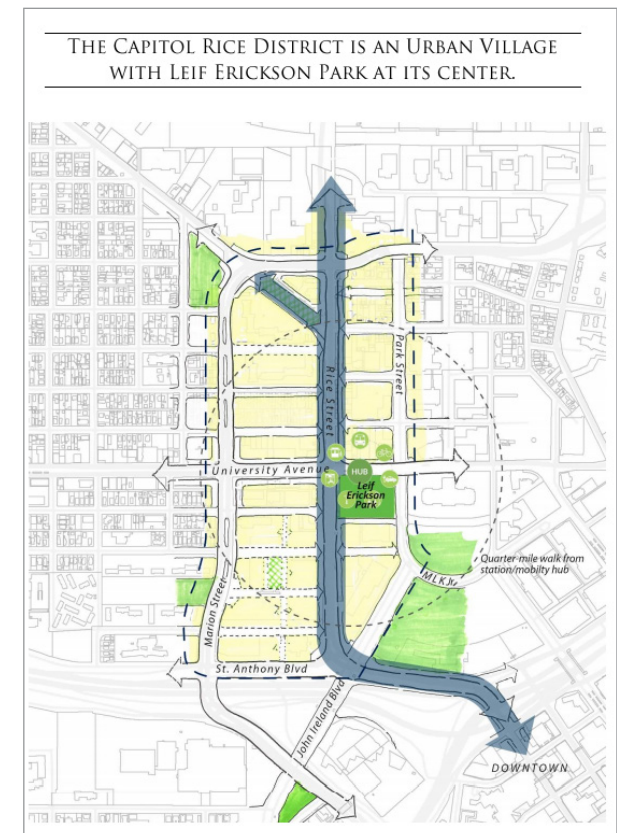
- CAAPB: 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The Ramsey County and City of Saint Paul work coincided with the onset of writing to update to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area. Rice Street redevelopment from I-94 to Pennsylvania Avenue is expected to have the most significant growth and change in the Capitol Area over next 20 years. The Capitol Rice planning documented in this report (powered by Lower Rice Street Predevelopment funding) is a culmination of one of three primary planning tracks of the comprehensive planning process underway from 2017-2019.

The resulting document, *The Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy*, was written by the CAAPB and submitted to the City of Saint Paul in October 2018. CVZ funds were awarded in January 2019.

Immediately following *The Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy*, *The Capitol Rice Development Framework* was written and vetted with a wide stakeholder group within and around the Capitol Rice District. This Framework was written and approved by the Board ahead of the full 2040 Comprehensive Plan in anticipation of large development projects beginning before the completion of the full 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Both *The Capitol Rice Commercial Vitality Zone Strategy* and *The Capitol Rice Development Framework* are available on the CAAPB website.



*The Capitol Rice Development Framework was written in 2018 and approved and adopted by the Board in January 2019.*



SUMMARY OF POLICY

Existing Policy affirmed in the Capitol Rice Development Framework	Updates to the existing policy introduced in the Capitol Rice Development Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Defines the Sears site as a future urban village with a new community park at the center of the urban village.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduces the greater Capitol Rice District as an urban village – one integrated district, including areas to the north and south of University Avenue.</li><li>• Establishes Leif Erickson Park as the center of the urban village and an enhanced arrival/entry point for visitors to the Capitol Area. This update moves the center of the urban village north from the Sears site to the Capitol Rice Station.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Names the Rice Station Area as a Neighborhood Node.</li><li>• Establishes a Mixed Use (MX) Zoning District in the Capitol Area.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides flexibility on preferred uses identified on each site. Reflective of the flexibility embodied in the Mixed Use zoning - there is less specificity (greater flexibility) in the direction that this plan gives regarding preferred land uses for specific parcels or opportunity sites.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Calls for Rice Street to be restored to its historic character as a neighborhood Main Street.</li><li>• Promotes a grid of small blocks with range of building types.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stresses the importance of Rice Street as a neighborhood Main Street connector, functioning as a seam rather than a barrier between institutional and office uses to the east with residential uses to the west.</li><li>• Extends and amplifies the role of Rice Street as an active corridor farther south and farther north - connecting the northern reaches of our district and neighborhoods to the north through the Capitol Rice District to the Capitol Campus and Downtown.</li><li>• Stresses east-west connections from Marion Street to Rice Street to increase walkability in the district.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stresses transit-oriented development and multi-modal, pedestrian friendly streets.</li><li>• Calls for reduction of SOV to 50%.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stresses the increased role of University/Rice and the Capitol Rice LRT Station Area as an Integrated Mobility Hub, emphasizing truly multi-modal movement options.</li><li>• Addresses the interrelated challenges of mobility and parking together by stressing district-wide and site-by-site innovations in travel demand management practice and structured parking.</li><li>• Stresses the importance of transforming all surface parking lots into higher and better land uses and, where part of a ‘land-banking practice’, moving toward final build-out.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Calls for equity in housing choices throughout the city and diversifying housing type and affordability within every neighborhood.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stresses increased diversity of housing choices within the neighborhood and within newly proposed multi-family buildings.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotes ground level activation of streets.</li><li>• Sets standards for height limits, excellence in building design and protection of view-sheds in the Capitol Area.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Affirms standards and stresses strengthening and adherence to current regulations set forth for frontages, extending current policy to new blocks.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stresses participation in energy and water standards in new construction.</li><li>• Stresses role of the State of Minnesota’s land in forming a strong core through great urban buildings.</li></ul>











PRINCIPLE 7B

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





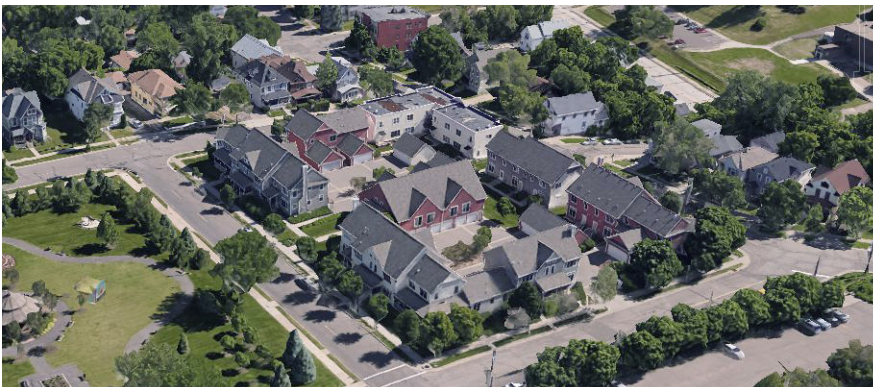
# INTRODUCTION



*Housing in Capitol Heights, Park Street (Image: Google Maps)*



*Former M Health Fairview Bethesda Hospital (Image: M Health Fairview)*



*Townhomes and Livework built in 2002 (Image: Google Maps)*



*Office buildings in Capitol Heights (Image: Google Maps)*

Capitol Heights has an intimate neighborhood scale that is attractive to residents and visitors. Its historic role as a strong residential neighborhood should be protected as new investment occurs.

## COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CONTEXT OF CAPITOL HEIGHTS

Capitol Heights is a well-established neighborhood with an intimate neighborhood scale that is attractive to residents and visitors. Capitol Heights lies directly north of the Capitol Campus and is entirely within the boundaries of the Capitol Area. With M Health Fairview former Bethesda Hospital and Healing Gardens at its center, the area is bounded Sherburne Avenue to the south, Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, Jackson Street to the east, and the residential area just east of Rice Street to the west. While the area is officially the eastern portion of the Frogtown Neighborhood (District 7: Thomas Dale), it functions like an independent neighborhood due to the strength of the Capitol Heights block club.

Capitol Heights has a history prior to the building of the State Capitol. By 1889 the hilltop along Sherburne Avenue had become home to many of Saint Paul's most prominent citizens. The opulent mansions shared an expansive view of Saint Paul as it grew along the Mississippi River. The neighborhood also contained modest, working class housing which made up the bulk of the housing stock then, as it does today. All of the mansions are gone now, as are some of the other homes; State office and Bethesda Hospital expansion, as well as street projects, took out parts of the neighborhood.

Capitol Heights today is a mixed-use neighborhood. Much of the residential make-up is single-family homes dating from the early 1900s. Dotted among the single-family homes are a mix of small multi-family buildings which also date to the early-to-mid 1900s. In the early 2000s, a block of townhomes and live-work units were added to the neighborhood, replacing a surface parking lot. In 2020, a 92-unit apartment building, predominantly microunits, was constructed on Park Avenue.

The proximity of the neighborhood to the Minnesota State Capitol Campus, as well as a mix of land uses including large hospitals makes it a desirable neighborhood that could provide housing alternatives for many area employees. South and west of the residential neighborhood is a mix of commercial, office and institutional land uses. ∞





Figure 7B.1: Key locations and opportunity sites in Capitol Heights

### Key Locations

- A. 555 Park, Office Building
- B. Association of Minnesota Counties
- C. 525 Park, Affinity Bank Building and Offices
- D. Former Bethesda Hospital and parking ramp
- E. Healing Garden (former Bethesda Hospital)
- F. Education Minnesota
- G. Frogtown Community Center and Park
- H. Valley Park and Mt Airy Boys & Girls Club
- I. Cass Gilbert Park

★ Capitol Rice LRT Station

### Residential Makeup (reflected in map below)

- 1. Predominantly single-family, duplex, tri-plex
- 2. Predominantly townhomes (completed 2002)
- 3. Multi-unit housing & public/private parking ramp (completed 2020)

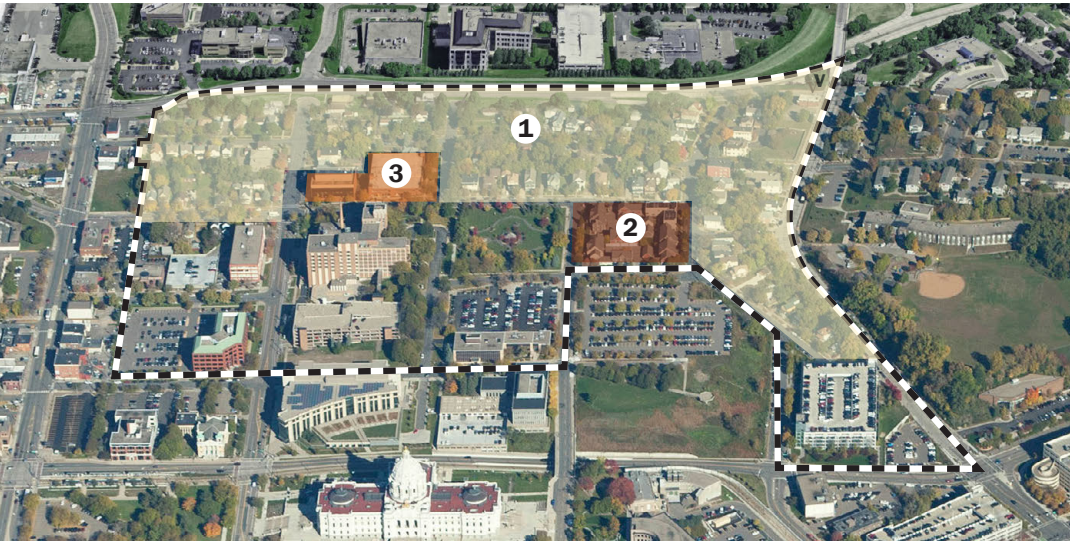


Figure 7B.2: Major residential typologies in Capitol Heights



# MAJOR INFLUENCES ON THE FUTURE OF CAPITOL HEIGHTS



*Housing in Capitol Heights*

## HOUSING TRENDS

Capitol Heights has a diversity of aging housing types, from free-standing homes and attached rowhouses to small apartment buildings. As shown in the maps and diagrams, the array of living choices enjoy the context of the Capitol views and good access to downtown, mass transit and freeways. The neighborhood is nestled on high ground ‘up behind’ the Capitol campus bordering corridors to the east, north and west, and the state campus beginning at Sherburne. The broader trends for housing in Saint Paul and the Capitol Area outlined in Chapter 6 will play out over time (incrementally) in Capitol Heights – with some demand for new and smaller units, and some limited, incremental redevelopment of parcels to serve those leading trends toward both an aging market and the demand for lower maintenance housing near downtown Saint Paul and Capitol Area workplaces. The diversity of types has allowed some affordable housing to naturally occur; in addition there is gradual pressure on traditional owner-occupied homes to transition to rental. There are currently no larger site redevelopment opportunities on the horizon within the neighborhood; therefore, overall, the rate and type of change in housing in Capitol Heights will likely be focused to reinvestments on a property by property basis, which will only continue to support and strengthen the current mix of choices.

## HOSPITAL COMPLEX

M Health Fairview Bethesda Hospital has been an important part of the Capitol Heights neighborhood. Situated roughly at the center of the neighborhood, the beautiful building and art-filled healing gardens have provided a beautiful addition to the surrounding homes. The parking garage to the south of the main building is also owned by M Health Fairview; some parking stalls are leased to surrounding offices/institutions. While the healing gardens are private and meant for patients, Bethesda has welcomed neighborhood residents, even hosting a block party on the site.

In early October 2020 M Health Fairview announced the closure of Bethesda Hospital. The long-term future of the site is unknown. A short-term lease was recently approved for use of the site as temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness. The stability and use of this significant building at the center of the neighborhood, and beauty, safety and accessibility of the neighboring park, will continue to be an important factor influencing the neighborhood.



*Bethesda Healing Garden in the fall.*



# FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

## To the West: Future Development in the Capitol Rice District

The most significant potential for development in the Capitol Area in the next 10 years is within the Capitol Rice District. (See Chapter 7a and the Capitol Rice Development Framework.) Four significant opportunity sites have the potential to bring new businesses and residences to the area, potentially impacting surrounding traffic patterns and land uses.

## To the East: Future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Service: The Rush Line

The future Rush Line BRT (a high-speed, limited stop bus route) will connect White Bear Lake to downtown Saint Paul, running along the eastern border of Capitol Heights on Jackson Street, with a station at Winter Street. (The intersection of Jackson and Winter Streets is designated as a Neighborhood Node in the SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan.)

According to the Rush Line BRT Project website, the bus will run seven days a week from early in the morning to late at night, every 10 minutes during rush hours and every 15 minutes at other times. The bus stations will have amenities like shelter, light, heat, fare payment machines and real-time departure signs. Based on the project’s current timeline, it is anticipated that construction of the Rush Line BRT will begin in 2025 and the Rush Line BRT will open in 2027.

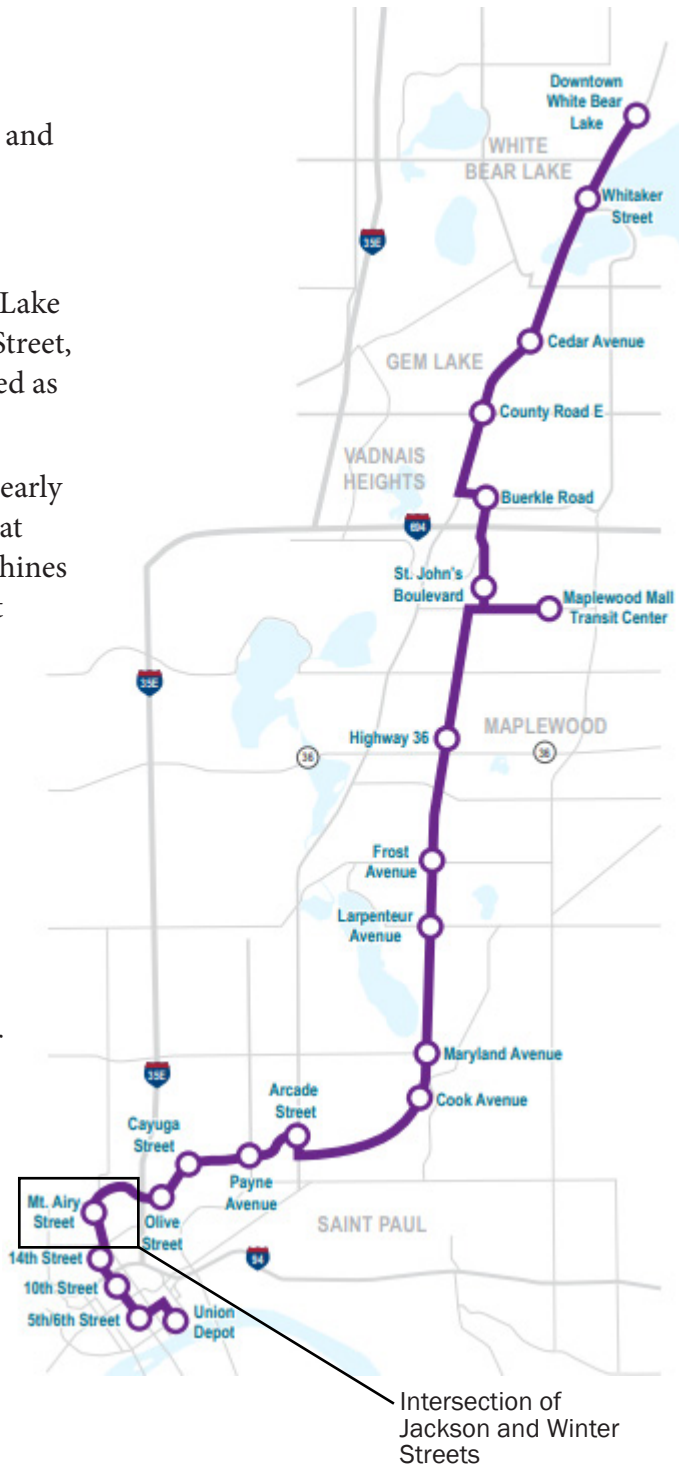
While new development adjacent to the station at Winter and Jackson is not planned, it is reasonable to expect increased pedestrian traffic around this intersection and potential for future development interest. The parcels on the west side of Jackson Street have low development. The vacant lot on the southwest corner, currently a surface parking pad, may become a property of interest for those wishing to invest in the area.

## To the North: Future Extension of Pierce Butler Route

Empire Drive, just north of Pennsylvania Avenue, has been deemed the desirable route for the expansion of Pierce Butler Route to connect with Phalen Boulevard. This extension may provide an opportunity to re-envision the eastern half of Pennsylvania Avenue as a slower, pedestrian and bike, green boulevard. This enhancement to Pennsylvania Avenue would be a welcome change for the neighborhood, especially for residences bordering the busy street.

NOTE confirmed with City: As of 2016, City of Saint Paul plans for expansion of the Pierce Butler route to the east are on hold. This change may be phased over the next 20-30 years depending on land acquisition and funding. ~

Figure 7B.3: Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit





# THE BASIS FOR CAPITOL HEIGHTS PLANNING

**A Plan for Capitol Heights**, written in 1999 and adopted by the City Council on January 26, 2000, laid out a vision and key strategies for the revitalization of the mixed-use neighborhood. The plan was updated in 2014 and recommended by the City of Saint Paul Planning Commission.

The plan laid out 8 key recommendations:

- the stabilization of bluffs and slopes throughout the area
- the development of new housing on vacant and underutilized sites
- the rehabilitation of existing rental and owner-occupied housing
- the revitalization of Rice Street as a neighborhood “Mainstreet”
- the expansion of Pierce Butler Route down Empire Drive
- the transformation of Pennsylvania Avenue to green space and new route for the Gateway trail
- the connection of the neighborhood with surrounding natural and cultural amenities
- calming of traffic through the neighborhood

While Capitol Heights falls under the zoning jurisdiction of the CAAPB, it falls fully within the Frogtown neighborhood (see map at right). The western portion of Capitol Heights also overlaps with the Capitol Rice District (see Chapter 7a). From about 2015-2018 community engagement and planning was being done in the Frogtown Neighborhood and the Capitol Rice District.

The **Frogtown Small Area Plan (SmAPI)** was written and illustrated in 2017-2018 after community engagement and adopted by the City of Saint Paul Council in December 2019 as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The plan includes policy for land use; housing; transportation; arts and education; health and wellness; economic vitality; and resource allocation. The plan calls for retention and development of new missing middle housing types that are compatible with the scale of existing development, and strong support for efforts to minimize the potential displacement of existing residents and businesses, especially near transit lines where new development is likely to occur. The plan also calls for traffic-calming, increase in biking, and art and recreation opportunities that reflect the cultures of the residents.

**The Capitol Rice Development Framework** was written in 2018 and approved by the CAAPB Board in January 2019. It directly addresses several of Capitol Heights key strategies from the 2014 plan: the revitalization of Rice Street, the importance of connection of the neighborhood with surrounding natural and cultural amenities, and traffic concerns in Capitol Heights.

The **SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan**, adopted in 2020, designates a neighborhood node on the eastern border of Capitol Heights at Jackson and Winter Streets. This intersection is to be a stop on a new bus rapid transit line, the Rush Line, which will connect White Bear Lake to downtown Saint Paul. While the Neighborhood Node designation does not specify future development requirements, it is an indicator of areas that could see changes to help serve a neighborhood’s daily needs, creating a more pedestrian-oriented community. ∞

*Area Plan for Capitol Heights (2014) Vision: “Capitol Heights will be a mixed-use, mixed-income, medium density residential community with a balance between rental and owner-occupied housing, served by a neighborhood-scale commercial center on Rice Street. Located on the edge of the Capitol grounds and adjacent to four major medical facilities and the Empire Builder Industrial Park, the neighborhood will provide housing for employees, office space for related businesses and restaurants, and convenience retail serving its residents as well as the thousands of people who come to the area each day. It will draw strength from attractive foot path connections to amenities such as the Capitol grounds, Cass Gilbert Park, downtown Saint Paul, the Mississippi River and the Minnesota Transportation Museum as well as bike trails linking the neighborhood to parks and scenic areas throughout the region and state.”*

~ Vision statement from Area Plan for Capitol Heights (2014)





# CALL FOR THE CAPITOL HEIGHTS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

---

This Comprehensive Plan suggests planning and development of the Capitol Heights Development Framework at some point in the future. A community engagement process, including residents, businesses and institutions within and bordering the neighborhood, will precede writing of the Framework. The Framework development effort will be led by the CAAPB staff with close cooperation with the area stakeholders and others including but not limited to, the Capitol Heights Block Club, the City of Saint Paul, the Frogtown Neighborhood Association, and the State of Minnesota.

## SUMMARY OF POLICY

The policy on the following page is summarized from the following sources:

1. 1998 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area and 2009 Amendment (CAAPB)
2. Area Plan for Capitol Heights, 2014 (Capitol Heights Block Club)
3. Frogtown Small Area Plan (SmAPI), 2019 (City of Saint Paul and Frogtown Neighborhood Association)
4. Capitol Rice Development Framework, 2019 (CAAPB)
5. SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 2020 (City of Saint Paul)



Summary of Existing Policy applicable to Capitol Heights	Status/Comments for Future Planning
<b>Residential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with community partners to help building owners improve the existing housing stock through loans and grants. <sup>1,2</sup></li><li>• Develop New Uses for Vacant and Underutilized Land: Recommendation to add single-family owner-occupied housing to balance high percentage of rental units already in the area. <sup>2</sup></li><li>• Work to increase the number of owner-occupied single-family houses and multifamily family structures. <sup>3</sup></li><li>• Support the retention of existing (and sensitive introduction of new) missing middle housing types, such as duplexes, townhomes, and medium density residential apartments that are compatible with the scale of existing development. <sup>1,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Support other housing types, such as livework units, accessory dwelling units and micro units. <sup>1,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Encourage new multifamily housing developments to incorporate publicly accessible open space to encourage community. <sup>1,3,4</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Area Plan for Capitol Heights emphasized only single-family homes, while later plans emphasize diversifying the housing stock while respecting the scale of the surrounding area. Improvement of the existing housing stock and addition of new missing middle types has been affirmed in Chapter 6. Chapter 6 baselines the housing mix in the Capitol Area, including rental.</li></ul>
<b>Development of Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redevelopment of the Ford site and Lot C (corner of University and Rice) by the State. <sup>1,2,3,4</sup></li><li>• Redevelopment of properties along University from Rice to Marion St. <sup>2,4</sup></li><li>• Redevelopment of the area south of Sears to Highway 94. <sup>1,2,3,4</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redevelopment of underutilized land has been affirmed in Chapters 3 and 6.</li></ul>
<b>State Campus Growth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State will not acquire existing residential areas for expansion. <sup>1</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This policy is affirmed.</li></ul>
<b>Building Heights</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy is for no change in height limits.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is affirmed in Chapter 2.</li></ul>
<b>Vision for a New Neighborhood Node</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The intersection of Jackson St. and Mt. Airy (Winter St.) is a future neighborhood node. <sup>5</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The type of development appropriate at this site will be evaluated during a future planning process.</li></ul>
<b>Vision for Rice Street</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revitalize Rice Street as Neighborhood “Mainstreet” <sup>2,4</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This vision for the revitalization of Rice Street has been affirmed in Chapter 4.</li></ul>



Summary of Existing Policy applicable to Capitol Heights	Status/Comments for Future Planning
<b>Connections and Walkability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link the Neighborhood with its amenities, identifying the most important connections and treating them with landscaping, lighting, traffic controls and building design in ways that entice the pedestrian or cyclist to make the trip. <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Prioritize pedestrian elements to increase safety and walkability, as well as opportunities for community members to meet with one another. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup></li> <li>• Integrate complete streets techniques into the design and use of streets. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup></li> <li>• Request for expansion of Pierce Butler Route down Empire Drive. <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Request for transformation of Pennsylvania Avenue to greenway with connection to the Gateway Trail. <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing walkability and linking residents and workers to nearby amenities has been affirmed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.</li> <li>• Specific traffic signage and parking requirements should be studied in a future planning process. As of 2016, City of Saint Paul plans for expansion of the Pierce Butler route to the east are on hold.</li> </ul>
<b>Traffic and Parking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement traffic-calming measures. <sup>1,2,3,4</sup></li> <li>• Consider establishing a residential parking zone in Capitol Heights. <sup>1,2,4</sup></li> <li>• For new large developments a traffic impact study is required and must include impacts to surrounding neighborhoods, including Capitol Heights. <sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic-calming measures are affirmed in Chapters 3 and 4.</li> <li>• Further changes to parking restrictions or to streets will be studied in future planning and in response to new developments.</li> </ul>
<b>Bluff Stabilization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the City and others to stabilize critical hillsides along Jackson Street and north of Como Avenue that have threatened current and future housing stock. <sup>1,3</sup></li> </ul>	







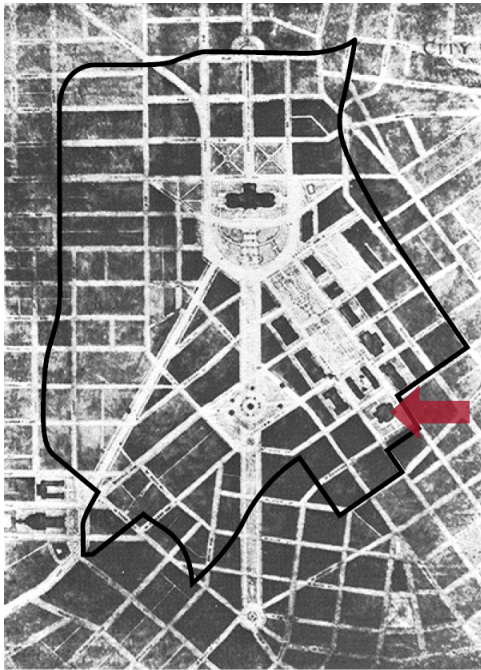
PRINCIPLE 7C

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





# INTRODUCTION



Fitzgerald Park has a rich civic history and was home to the first two Minnesota State Capitols at Exchange and Cedar Streets (indicated by the red arrow in each image). After the Capitol was moved to its current location, the Science Museum and later the Science Museum Omni Theater Building occupied the blocks between Cedar and Saint Peter on Exchange Streets. (Images: top, Cass Gilbert's 1903 Plan, courtesy of MNHS; bottom, Google Maps)

As the transition between the Central Business District and the Capitol Campus, Fitzgerald Park is an important connection. Its development must be compatible with these two districts. Development and public realm investments should be sensitive to context; reflecting both the civic qualities of the Capitol Campus as well as urban qualities of *“a diverse, mixed-use, human-scaled neighborhood that celebrates culture, education and the arts, while providing for the needs of a growing residential population during all hours of every day and evening.”* ~Land Use Vision for Fitzgerald Park, Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan (2010), pg 15.

## COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CONTEXT OF FITZGERALD PARK

Fitzgerald Park is a neighborhood in downtown Saint Paul, directly across I-94 from the Capitol Campus. The area, as defined in the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan, is bounded by I-94 on the north, Seventh Street on the south, Main Street on the west and Jackson Street on the east. Five blocks of Fitzgerald Park fall within the Capitol Area bounded by I-94, Minnesota Street, 10th Street, Cedar Street, Exchange Street and St. Peter Street.

Fitzgerald Park is an important gateway between the central business district and the Capitol Campus. Fitzgerald Park constitutes the surviving green space reminiscent of Gilbert's design for a public garden to span between Wabasha and Cedar streets, strengthening the connection between the Capitol Building and the river. As the transition between the Central Business District and the Capitol Campus, development in Fitzgerald Park must be compatible with these two districts: consistent with Cass Gilbert's vision for the area as well as the vision of the area as a high quality downtown residential and cultural district centered on an urban park.

Today, Fitzgerald Park has a strong mix of residential, commercial, cultural, governmental, religious and institutional uses, both within and adjacent to the neighborhood. Among these are the Fitzgerald Theater, the History Theater, the Upper Mississippi Academy (a grade 6-12 school), the Church of Scientology, the Saint Louis Catholic Church, the Central Presbyterian Church, the Minnesota Public Radio Building, Saint Joseph's Hospital and the new Celeste of Saint Paul Hotel + Bar.

Over the past decade, Fitzgerald Park has been a neighborhood in transition. While the neighborhood still boasts an impressive mix of cultural, civic, governmental and health institutions, it is now increasingly also a place of residence. Gallery Towers, built in 1980, is a large middle-income housing complex with 195 condominiums. The Penfield, reusing a portion of the historic Saint Paul Public Safety headquarters, opened in 2014. It offers a variety of rental housing with high-end amenities, including underground parking with a private courtyard and outdoor pool above. The Lunds and Byerlys Grocery Store is at street level in this building. Other housing in the area includes low income and specialized senior units in the Saint Paul Public Housing Authority (PHA) senior building on Wabasha next to the PHA headquarters.

Given the growing interest in Fitzgerald Park as a place to live, work and play, the quality of its public realm is increasingly important. The long-term vision of Fitzgerald Park as an urban village centered on a park is still the goal. Pedro Park is the neighborhood park, which is expected to be redeveloped in the future. Lawns exist on the St. Joseph's campus and next to Assumption Church. Pocket parks include the rain garden next to the PHA offices at the intersection of St. Peter and 11th streets, the triangular green across Cedar Street from MPR, the open space between MPR and Central Presbyterian Church, and the small park in front of the Upper Mississippi Academy (called Fitzgerald Park). While these spaces are accessible to the public, they are privately-owned. ~





### Fitzgerald Park

Five blocks of Fitzgerald Park fall in the Capitol Area. These blocks are, by statute, subject to the plan policy in this Comprehensive Plan and to the Rules Governing Zoning and Design in the Minnesota State Capitol Area (2009).

*Figure 7C.1: Fitzgerald Park showing the five blocks that fall within the Capitol Area*

- ■ ■ ■ ■ Fitzgerald Park
- — — — — Capitol Area
- ★ 10th Street LRT Station



The Penfield Apartments and Lunds & Byerlys Grocery Store represent the changing makeup of Fitzgerald Park. Completed in 2014, this development provided much-needed grocery service for downtown Saint Paul, and new residential units for the growing population. The north and west facades of this building (not shown) are along the boundary of the Capitol Area, and therefore no CAAPB permitting was required, CAAPB was consulted (as required by State statute, during the design and entitlement process).

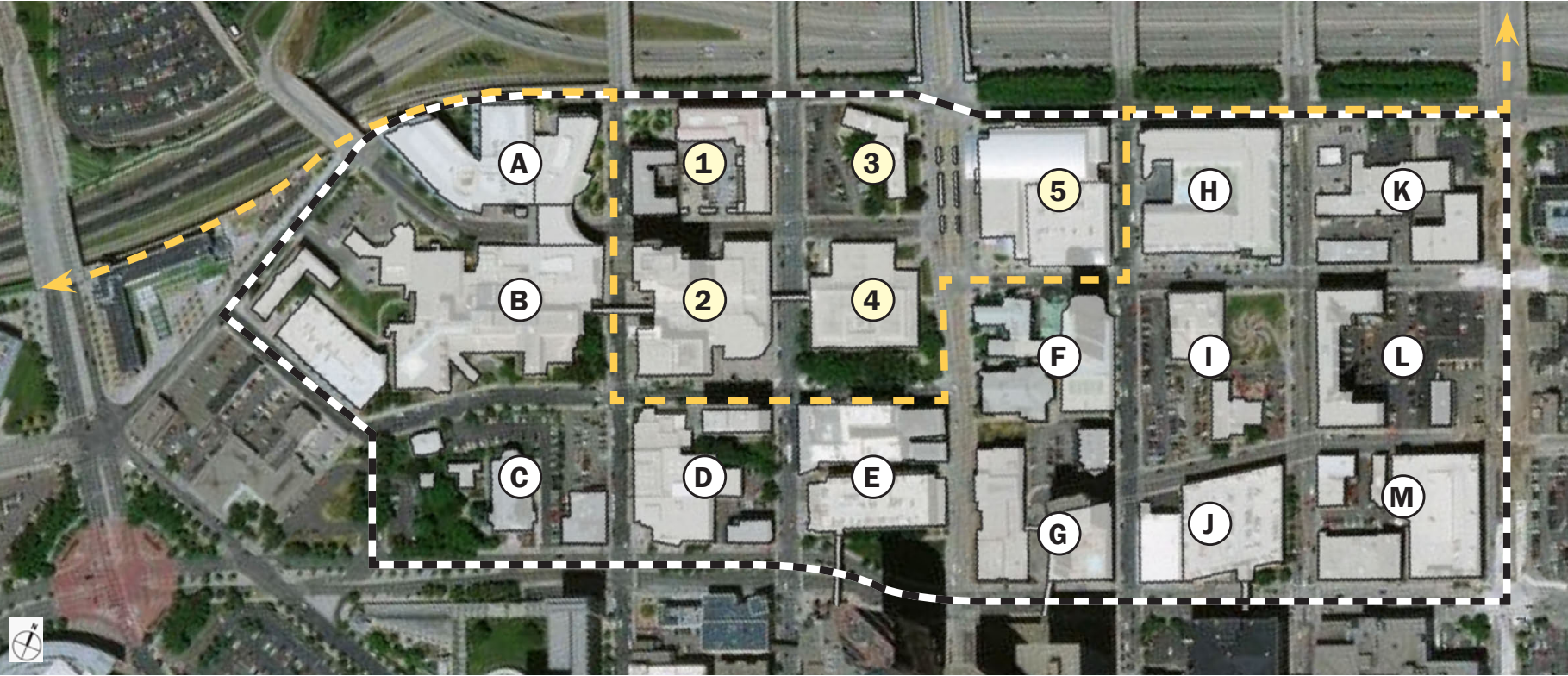


Urban Flower Field was completed in 2014 as a low-cost, short-term project that combines art and science to convert a lot into a vibrant public space. The project won a Great Places Award from the Sensible Land Use Coalition and a Blooming St. Paul award from Saint Paul Parks and Recreation. This is the location of the future Pedro Park.



- Fitzgerald Park
- Capitol Area
- ★ 10th Street LRT Station

Figure 7C.2: Land uses within Fitzgerald Park



Block A St. Joseph's Hospital Parking Ramp	Block 1 PHA Offices PHA Seniors Housing 545 Wabasha St Parking	Block 3 Ramsey County Public Health Building and surface parking	Block 5 Dept. Human Services Fire Station State Employee Parking Ramp	Block H Penfield Apartments Lunds & Byerlys Grocery	Block K Credit Union Residential, Retail, Office
Block B St. Joseph's Hospital	Block 2 Gallery Tower Church of Scientology Office Building 7a Municipal Parking Ramp	Block 4 (see Figure 4) Upper Mississippi Academy History Theatre Mix of smaller tenants	Block F St. Louis Church Central Presbyterian Church The Point Condominium Naomi Family Center	Block I Pedro Park Public Safety Annex Bldg Union Gospel Child Care Center Surface Parking	Block L Residential, Retail, Restaurants, Office Surface Parking
Block C Assumption Church and Retail, surface parking	Block D Juvenile Detention Juvenile Courts Residential, Retail	Block E Fitzgerald Theater Seniors Residence World Trade Ctr. Parking Ramp	Block G MPR Citywalk Condos	Block J Office Building Robert St Municipal Parking Ramp	Block M Residential, Retail, Office Blk 19 Municipal Parking Ramp



# MAJOR INFLUENCES ON THE FUTURE OF FITZGERALD PARK

## OPPORTUNITY SITES

Three opportunity sites within or along the five blocks of the CAAPB boundary have been identified in Fitzgerald Park:

- Saint Joseph's Hospital Complex: The hospital has closed and a study is planned to evaluate reuse and redevelopment of the site.
- Ramsey County Health Building: while there are no immediate plans to redevelop this building, the two-story structure and half-block of surface parking makes the site well below the development potential for its downtown location.
- Upper Mississippi Academy and History Theater: this two-story building is also below the development potential for its downtown location, but the Upper Mississippi Academy is a new long-term lease, making this a very long-term opportunity site beyond the scope of this Comprehensive Plan.
- Annex of Public Safety Building: This building is along the boundary of the Capitol Area and is the block that includes Pedro Park. *See information for Pedro Park, below.*

## REDESIGN AND EXPANSION OF PEDRO PARK

Pedro Park is located at the corner of 10th St. E and Robert St. N, the heart of Fitzgerald Park neighborhood. This block was identified in the 2010 Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan as the location of the future "park at the heart" of the neighborhood. Currently, the .45-acre site is home to Urban Flower Field, a short-term park project that has converted the lot into a community gathering space. The neighborhood, working with the City, developed and approved a long-term plan for a full-block park. Addition of a city park with more amenities for residents would have a positive impact on the livability of this downtown neighborhood. *For more information on Pedro Park, see the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation website.*

## EVOLUTION OF DOWNTOWN'S REAL ESTATE MARKET

This part of downtown is a transition area, and truly a mix of uses – with no single land use claiming dominance. Greater trends favoring urban and downtown housing close to transit should help the district continue to attract a strong market for apartment living. Longer range trends toward conversion of offices to living spaces will likely continue. The renewal of a greater downtown plan will be helpful to

ensure that a balanced mix is supported and so that needed daily services are able to be introduced that help this mixed district thrive as both a workplace and as a place to live.

## SEARS REDEVELOPMENT AND THE CAPITOL RICE CORRIDOR

Possibly one of the largest impacts to this district in land use and traffic dynamics will be the redevelopment of the Sears site just to the northwest, across the interstate. Full site redevelopment of the Sears seventeen acres, along with improvements to Rice Street, 12th and Saint Peter (The Capitol Rice Corridor), could positively impact vitality in this part of downtown Saint Paul. *See Chapter 4, Chapter 7A and the Capitol Rice Development Framework in the Appendix.*

## CAPITAL CITY BIKEWAY

The Capital City Bikeway is a planned network of bicycle facilities throughout downtown Saint Paul. The bikeway network will connect to existing trails, effectively placing a majority of downtown within a few blocks of a bike and pedestrian trail. The first segments of the Capital City Bikeway were completed along Jackson Street from University Avenue to Kellogg Boulevard in 2017 and along 10th from Saint Peter to Jackson Street in 2020. Planning for future segments of the Capital City Bikeway is underway. Wabasha Street has been approved as the north/south connection on the east side of downtown, to mirror Jackson Street. *For more information on the Capital City Bikeway, see the City of Saint Paul Public Works website.*

## I-94 LID INQUIRY

The feasibility of land bridging over I-94 somewhere between the Capitol and downtown Saint Paul has survived as an idea over the decades. Cass Gilbert's original 1903 vision included an open space between Cedar and Wabasha, connecting the Capitol Area to downtown Saint Paul. (See image on page 170.) Development of the freeway in the 1950s altered that vision.

Today, the concept of such a land bridge connecting the two areas is still considered relevant as a possible open space, civic or enhanced visitor amenity, even after the award-winning redesign of the bridges spanning the freeway. During inter-agency planning in 2017 that studied the interstate corridor conditions, it was noted that introduction of land bridges over the interstate would be difficult to implement west of Wabasha Bridge, barring a significant re-design and complete re-building of the freeway itself; while east to Jackson was seen as more feasible. ~



# THE BASIS FOR FITZGERALD PARK PLANNING

In 1997, the ***Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework*** recognized this area of downtown as a new neighborhood. The vision in the Framework was to create a new mixed-use urban village<sup>1</sup> between the downtown core and I-94. The urban village was to have a broad mix of uses, new residential infill development, better pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods (such as Rice Park, North Quadrant and Lowertown) and a more vibrant street life. The revitalization of the Fitzgerald Park neighborhood was seen as vital to reconnecting the downtown core with the Capital Area. A central park, originally envisioned at Exchange Street, was seen as an important central gathering place for this emerging neighborhood.

In 1998, the ***Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*** stated the vision for Fitzgerald Park is “a high quality residential and cultural district centered on an urban park and convenient to downtown amenities and major employers.” The plan contained several strategies to improve the connection between the Capitol and downtown through Fitzgerald Park, including pedestrian-oriented streetscape improvements along Cedar, Wabasha and Jackson streets; new housing development just south of the freeway; a new park as a focus for the emerging urban village; and preservation of historic building stock.

The ***Saint Paul Downtown Development Strategy*** (2003) carried on the vision of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework and envisioned a growing residential population in downtown Saint Paul. The plan called for increased residential units downtown, a mix of uses within buildings (vertical mixed-use), a green network of downtown streets and a strengthened connection from downtown to the Capitol Campus.

The *Downtown Development Strategy* called for a Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan to be prepared to address new development, housing opportunities and public realm infrastructure and contained several strategies to guide the content of the plan.

The ***Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan*** was prepared by a task force at the request of CapitolRiver Council (District 17) and a coalition of neighborhood institutions. The task force was made up of residents, developers, key property owners, and representatives from neighborhood businesses, institutions, downtown-wide organizations, and the Capital Area Architectural and Planning Board. The task force was co-chaired by a Planning Commissioner and a community representative designated by CapitolRiver Council.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 6 for a description of the origin of the Urban Village vision.

---

*“Downtown Saint Paul will continue to grow as a residential neighborhood, adding a mix of housing types and price ranges in linked urban villages.” (pg 9)*

*“A green network of downtown streets will connect urban villages, parks, plazas and the riverfront, providing for a walkable downtown that is rich in experience.” (pg 29)*

*Strategy 5.7: “Prepare a Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan to address new development, housing opportunities and public realm infrastructure in the area roughly bounded by 7th, St. Peter, 11th and Minnesota streets.” (pg 17)*

~ Saint Paul Downtown Development Strategy, 2003

---



Planning began in 2004 with visioning workshops which engaged the larger community and resulted in vision statements and goals for six areas: land use; public realm/public safety; movement; design and appearance; natural environment; and neighborhood identity/communication. The *Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan* was adopted as an amendment to the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* in August 2006 and updated and adopted August 2010.

In 2007 the City of Saint Paul wrote the ***Central Corridor Development Strategy***, which outlined the vision for implementation of the Green Line Light Rail Transit line to connect downtown Minneapolis to downtown Saint Paul. The line runs through Fitzgerald Park with a stop at 10th and Cedar Streets.

During 2009 the CAAPB developed an ***Amendment to the 1998 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*** and subsequently updated the ***Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area***. The five blocks of Fitzgerald Park that fall within the Capitol Area are presently zoned MXD for Mixed-Use Downtown with a maximum allowable height of 145' and floor area ratio of 5.0 on the three blocks north of 10th Street, and a maximum allowable floor area ratio of 5.0 (with no height limit) on the two blocks south of 10th Street. All of the zones allow for a flexible mix of uses at urban densities appropriate to a downtown. Active first-floor use is encouraged throughout the Capitol Area. See *Chapter 6 and the Zoning and Design Rules*.

In 2010, CapitolRiver Council convened its Long Range Planning Task Force to work with staff from the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Design Center and Department of Planning and Economic Development to review the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan in light of LRT coming through the neighborhood. The committee recommended amendments to the plan to the CapitolRiver Council board in April 2010. The City Council adopted the amendments in August 2010. The addition of a “park at the heart” on the block bounded by Minnesota, Robert, 9th and 10th was included in the 2010 version of the plan. ≈

---

*The vision for Fitzgerald Park, as stated in the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan (2010):*

***Land Use Vision:*** “Fitzgerald Park is a diverse, mixed-use, human-scaled neighborhood that celebrates culture, education and the arts, while providing for the needs of a growing residential population during all hours of every day and evening. First-floor uses activate the street. New retail and service businesses utilize small storefronts so that streets and sidewalks are pedestrian-friendly.”

***Design and Appearance Vision:*** “Fitzgerald Park is a human-scaled neighborhood that is clean, beautiful and well-maintained, where historic buildings are preserved and new buildings are designed to be compatible with them.”

***Movement Vision:*** “Fitzgerald Park is a neighborhood with a pedestrian-friendly street character and block pattern that also has safe and convenient connections to the skyway system. The needs of pedestrians, bikes, cars, transit and those of limited physical mobility are balanced and met.”

***Public Realm/Public Safety Vision:*** “Fitzgerald Park is a neighborhood that has a central green or park where residents and visitors alike can meet and share the common experience of being a part of the neighborhood. Streets, sidewalks, plazas and parks are visible, well-maintained, safe and welcoming.”

***Natural Environment Vision:*** “Fitzgerald Park is a “green” neighborhood that manages the visual, noise and air quality impacts of its location overlooking a major freeway and connected to the Mississippi River.”

***Neighborhood Identity Vision:*** “Fitzgerald Park is a neighborhood that has a strong sense of place and identity, with numerous opportunities for communicating, marketing and publicizing neighborhood news. Public places to gather and share information are abundant.”

---



# UPDATES TO THE FITZGERALD PARK PRECINCT PLAN OR A DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## (COVERING THE FIVE BLOCKS OF THE CAPITOL AREA)

---

At the time of the writing of this chapter 7C, further planning for the entire downtown area in the form of the *Downtown Development Strategy*, is expected to move forward in the early 2020s, led by the City of Saint Paul with input from the CAAPB, among others. This Comprehensive Plan calls for an update to the *2010 Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan*, which is an addendum to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and followed the CAAPB Comprehensive Plan.

In early discussions with some parties in the area, there appears to be an interest in expanding the scope of such a plan. There is some sentiment to consider renaming the district after the more public Pedro Park on Tenth and Jackson, especially now that Fitzgerald Park has become more of a semi-public space.

If the city plan is in compliance with the CAAPB Comprehensive Plan and the existing zoning and design regulation, no further action from the CAAPB Board would be required.

However, in order for new policy to propose changes to the CAAPB zoning and design regulation, the policy language must be brought forward to the CAAPB Board as a possible amendment to this Comprehensive Plan.

It is possible that CAAPB may choose, at the completion of the city plan, that new language covering only five blocks of the Capitol Area be introduced for adoption to serve as the Fitzgerald Park Development Framework. Should the city not choose to update the *Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan*, the CAAPB may choose to develop a *Fitzgerald Park Development Framework* to outline development objectives for the five blocks of the Capitol Area.

### SUMMARY OF POLICY

The policy on the following pages is summarized from the following sources:

1. 1998 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area, 1998 with 2009 amendment (CAAPB)
2. Saint Paul Downtown Development Strategy, 2003 (City of Saint Paul and CapitolRiver Council)
3. Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan, 2006 with 2010 amendment (City of Saint Paul and CapitolRiver Council)
4. Central Corridor Development Strategy, 2007 (City of Saint Paul)
5. SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 2020 (City of Saint Paul)



Summary of Existing Policy applicable to Fitzgerald Park in the Capitol Area	Status/Comments for Future Planning
<p><b>Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse, mixed-use, human-scaled urban village centered on a park; a neighborhood that celebrates culture, education. <sup>1,3,5</sup></li> <li>• Encourage development as a “Neighborhood Node”. <sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Encourage a mix of uses in a single building, to encourage vertical mixed-use, enliven office buildings for more hours of the day, and strengthen the sense of downtown as a “24-hour” neighborhood. <sup>2,3,5</sup></li> <li>• First-floor uses activate pedestrian-friendly streets. <sup>2,3,5</sup></li> <li>• Parking provided underground to allow for maximum densities appropriate in a downtown. <sup>2,3,5</sup></li> <li>• Enclose the gulf created by Interstate 94 between the Capitol campus and downtown by encouraging mixed-use redevelopment facing the freeway at a scale and height consistent with the Capitol Area Comprehensive Plan. <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Pursue mixed-use development of underutilized parcels along the frontage roads on both sides of Interstate 94 and along Wabasha, Cedar and Minnesota streets. <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies affirmed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State Buildings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If further State expansion into Fitzgerald Park, target block 3 (currently, Ramsey County Public Health Building). See image on page 4. <sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Encourage new State office growth to locate in areas well-served by transit, such as the downtown core south of Interstate 94. <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no existing plan for the State to purchase or lease space on block 5, and there is no existing plan for redevelopment of block 5, though it is listed as an opportunity site. (See Chapter 2 and the Department of Administration’s Strategic Plan).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connection to the Capitol Campus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the physical connections between the Capitol Campus and downtown Saint Paul. <sup>1,2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy affirmed in Chapters 2, 4 and 5.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Height</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy is for no change in height limits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height is affirmed in Chapter 2.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Capitol Area Boundary</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no plan to change the boundary of the Capitol Area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Design and Appearance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human-scaled neighborhood <sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Clean, beautiful, well-maintained <sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Preserved historic buildings, with new buildings designed to be compatible with them. <sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Key views to the Capitol along public rights-of-ways should be preserved, especially along Wabasha and Cedar Streets. <sup>1,2,3</sup></li> <li>• Evaluate the necessity for the skyway across Wabasha north of Exchange Street, which obstructs the view corridor between those driving north through the downtown’s major thru street and the Capitol <sup>1</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies affirmed in Chapters 2, 4 and 7.</li> </ul>



Summary of Existing Policy applicable to Fitzgerald Park in the Capitol Area	Status/Comments for Future Planning
<b>Movement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pedestrian-friendly street character, block pattern. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Balanced system for pedestrians, bikes, cars, transit, those of limited physical mobility. <sup>2,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Prioritize the movement of pedestrians and cyclists to and from LRT and facilitate transfers between different transport modes. <sup>3,4,5</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policies affirmed in Chapters 4 and 5.</li></ul>
<b>Public Realm/Public Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Central green/park for gathering <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Visible, safe, well-maintained, welcoming streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Increase a sense of personal safety <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Mobility Enhancement Area around LRT station <sup>3,4</sup></li><li>• Park Street connections to LRT station <sup>3,4</sup></li><li>• Ensure that downtown’s parks, trails and open space system serve the needs of downtown’s growing and diversifying population. <sup>2,3,4,5</sup></li><li>• Designate and implement “park street” improvements on 5th, Wacouta, 9th, Exchange and St. Peter streets to connect Rice and Mears parks, Wacouta Commons and a future Fitzgerald Park. <sup>2,3,4</sup></li><li>• The walk from St Joseph’s Hospital to the 10th Street Station should be easy to understand, safe and comfortable. <sup>4</sup></li><li>• Create an “urban room” at the 10th/Cedar LRT station capable of integrating the needs of a wide range of users and accommodating pedestrians, cyclists, transit and cars. <sup>3</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many of these policies are affirmed in Chapters 4 and 5. Mobility Hubs are encouraged in Chapter 5, which is compatible with the “urban room” called for in the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan.</li><li>• Development proposals for specific locations will be studied further in the planning process.</li></ul>
<b>Neighborhood Identity/Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong sense of place and identity <sup>3</sup></li><li>• Public places to gather, share information <sup>3</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policies affirmed in Chapter 7.</li></ul>











# APPENDICES



June 3, 2021



## APPENDIX A - ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan, Chair  
Dr. Kate Beane  
Alicia Belton\*  
M. Ann Buck\* (term completed 2020)  
Rep. Matt Dean (term completed 2018)  
Rep. Raymond Dehn (term completed 2020)  
James Garrett  
Donald Grundhauser  
Elaine Fink\*  
Rep. Mike Freiberg  
Rep. Jerry Hertaus  
David Lanegran\* (term completed 2020)  
Ted Lentz (term completed 2021)  
Greg Mathis\* (term completed 2019)  
James McClean\*  
Senator Carla Nelson  
Senator Sandra Pappas  
Daniel Yang

### CAAPB ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORS

Michael Bjornberg\*  
Bryan Carlson\* (term completed 2019)  
Tony Chevlaier\*  
Denita Lemmon\*

\*Comprehensive Plan Committee

### CAAPB STAFF

Paul Mandell, Executive Secretary  
Peter Musty, Principal Planner  
Linda Spohr, Senior Planner  
Kimmy Tanaka, 2017-2018 Planning Fellow

### STATE OF MINNESOTA

#### Department of Administration

Commissioner's Office: Alice Roberts-Davis, Commissioner; Erin Campbell, Assistant Commissioner  
Real Estate and Construction Services: Wayne Waslaski, Planning Director  
Facilities Management: Chris Guevin, Director; Anne Johnson, Sr. State Program Administrator; Kari Suchy, Business Operations Manager  
Office of Enterprise Sustainability: Anne Hunt, Director; Marcus Grubbs, Enterprise Sustainability Planner  
State Historic Preservation Office: Amy Spong, Denis Gardner, David Mather

#### Department of Transportation

Rethinking I-94 Office: William Goff, Cyrus Knutson, Gloria Jeff  
Planning: Melissa Barnes, David Kratz

#### Department of Veterans Affairs: Larry Herke, Commissioner

#### Minnesota Senate: Sven Lindquist

#### Minnesota House of Representatives: Gail Romanowski

#### Department of Human Services: Charlene Briner, Deputy Commissioner

Governor's Office: Dr. Mattie DeCarlo, Assistant Director of Tribal State Relations Systems Implementation

### CITY OF SAINT PAUL

#### Planning and Economic Development: Nicolle Goodman, Director;

Luis Pereira, Director of Planning; Lucy Thompson and Kady Dadlez (Downtown); Tony Johnson (Frogtown, Summit-University); Bill Dermody

#### Parks and Recreation: Alice Messer, Director and Paul Sawyer

#### Public Works: Kathy Lantry, Director

#### Housing: Kayla Schuchman, Director and Sarah Zorn

#### Mayor Melvin Carter's Office: Russ Stark and Noel Nix

Ward 1 Council Office: Councilmember Dai Thao and Mai Chong Xiong, Legislative Aide

Ward 2 Council Office: Councilmember Rebecca Noecker and Taina Maki, Legislative Aide



## PUBLIC PARTNERS

Minnesota Historical Society: Diane Adams-Graf, Brian Pease, David Kelliher, Sheila Brommel  
District 3 County Commissioner Trista Matas Castillo's Office: Ethan Osten, Commissioner Assistant  
District 4 County Commissioner Toni Carter's Office: Matt Hill, Commissioner Assistant  
District 5 County Commissioner Rafael Ortega's Office: Ken Iosso, Commissioner Assistant  
Ramsey County Engineering: Nick Fischer, Engineer, Rice Street Project  
Capitol River Council: Jon Fure  
Frogtown Neighborhood Association: Caty Royce and Tia Anderson, Co-Directors  
Summit University Planning Council: Jens Werner, Executive Director  
Capitol Heights Block Club: Michael Strom with review team Bob Arvold, Christine Khang, Don Grundhauser  
Saint Paul Public Housing Authority: Jon Gutzman; Tim Angaran

## CAPITOL AREA BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS

AFL/CIO: Brad Lehto  
Association of Minnesota Counties: Julie Ring, Executive Director  
Bethesda Family Medicine / University of MN Physicians: Jennifer Ellison, Facility Director  
Capitol Ridge: Mike Berkopec and Andy Schweizer, Wheelhouse Capital  
Christ on Capitol Hill Lutheran: Pastor Joy McDonald-Coltvet  
FOCUS Minnesota: Vera Proctor, Director  
Good Neighbor Center: Amanda Jacobson, Site Manager  
History Theatre: Ron Peluso, Artistic Director and Karen Mueller, Managing Director  
Hmongtown Marketplace and Gilbert Square: Toua Xiong, Owner  
League of Minnesota Cities: Luke Fischer, Deputy Director  
League of Women Voters: Amy Perna and Heidi Kloempken  
M Health Fairview / Bethesda Hospital  
Minnesota Environmental Partnership: Steve Morse, Executive Director and Sarah Wolff, Advocacy Director  
Ravoux Hi-Rise & Residents: Betsy Christensen, Saint Paul Housing Authority Rep  
Saint Paul City School: Meg Cavalier, Executive Director  
Saint Paul College: Benjamin Martinson, Director of Facilities  
Seritage Development Team: Paul D'Arelli, Senior Vice President, Development  
Sunrise Bank: Melodie Carlson  
Upper Mississippi Academy: Amy Erickson, Executive Director

## OTHER PARTNERS AND CONSULTANTS

Metro Transit Commuter Programs: Kelly Morrell, Commuter Programs Specialist  
Move MN: Becky Alper, Erik Thompson, Theresa Nelson  
TKDA: Merritt Clapp-Smith, Planning Market Manager, Senior Planner  
Perkins and Will: Jay Demma, Senior Planner  
Minnesota GreenCorps (MPCA): Will Feeney



## APPENDIX B - LIST OF FIGURES

### Introduction

Figure 1: Boundary of the Capitol Area.....	4
Figure 2: Cass Gilbert Vision of the Capitol Mall, 1903 .....	10
Figure 3: Capitol Approaches, 1954.....	10
Figure 4: Capitol Approaches, 2020 .....	10
Figure 5: The Capitol Area neighborhoods and surrounding area .....	13
Figure 6: Saint Paul ACP50 Area, and Opportunity Zone within the Capitol Area.....	15
Figure 7: G-1 Zoning District.....	21
Figure 8: G-2 Zoning District.....	21

### Principle 1

Figure 1.1: Map of Memorials and Commemorative Works, as of December 2020 .....	35
---	----

### Principle 2

Figure 2.1: The Capitol Approaches, Cass Gilbert 1931.....	48
Figure 2.2: Diagram of Height Districts in the Capitol Area.....	49
Figure 2.3: Capitol Views .....	50
Figure 2.4: Distant Views and Vistas .....	53
Figure 2.5: Floor Plan of the Capitol Building.....	55
Figure 2.6: Map of Campus.....	55
Figures 2.7 and 2.8: The Capitol Approaches, Cass Gilbert 1931 .....	56

### Principle 3

Figure 3.1: Top Opportunities for Improvement and Top Opportunities Sites in the Capitol Area.....	77
Figure 3.2: Capitol Area Neighborhoods/Districts.....	77

### Principle 4

Figure 4.1: The Capitol/Rice Corridor.....	82
Figure 4.2: Public Realm Top Opportunities for Improvement .....	83
Figure 4.3: Sidewalk Zones showing Pedestrian Zone and Boulevard and Furnishings Zone .....	86
Figure 4.4: High Priority Area for Walking Investments are shown in green.....	87
Figure 4.5: Building Frontage relationship to street .....	88
Figure 4.6: Examples of Frontage Styles .....	89
Figure 4.7: Map of Capitol Area Parks and Open Spaces .....	92
Figure 4.8: Table of Capitol Area Park Ownership, Typology and Amenities .....	93
Figure 4.9: Current Frontage Compliance in the Capitol Area .....	98
Figure 4.10: Frontage non-compliance linked to the year the structure was built .....	99
Figure 4.11: Frontage non-compliance linked to vacancy.....	99
Figure 4.12: Frontage non-compliance linked to a parcel in use as a surface parking lot .....	99
Figure 4.13: Art in the Capitol Area.....	100

### Principle 5

Figure 5.1: Multi-Modal Transportation Top Opportunities for Improvement .....	111
Figures 5.2 and 5.3: Rice Street as multi-modal, complete street - sample designs.....	113
Figure 5.4: Integrated Mobility Hub Diagram .....	114



Figure 5.5: Saint Paul Corridor Classification Types .....	118
Figure 5.6: Street Functional Classification .....	119
Figure 5.7: Street Ownership .....	119
Figure 5.8: Street Right-of-way Available and Annual Average Daily Traffic .....	120
Figure 5.9: Future Street Types .....	120
Figure 5.10: Pedestrian Network .....	124
Figure 5.11: Bicycle Network .....	125
Figure 5.12: Bus and LRT Network .....	126
Figure 5.13: Future Mass Transit Corridors .....	127

## **Principle 6**

Figure 6.1: Map of Capitol Area (State Buildings highlighted in blue) .....	138
Figure 6.2: Saint Paul 2040 Land Use .....	139
Figure 6.3: Neighborhood Nodes in the Capitol Area .....	139
Figure 6.4: Current Land Use in the Capitol Area .....	145
Figure 6.5: Table of Land Use Categories and Types in the Capitol Area .....	146
Figure 6.6: Lower Rice Street Commercial District Trade Area .....	147
Figure 6.7: Map of Community Anchors and Opportunity Sites in the Capitol Area .....	149
Figure 6.8: Table of Residential Choices in the Capitol Area: Type, Size and Ownership .....	150
Figure 6.9: Table of Residential Choices in the Capitol Area: Affordability and Ownership .....	150
Figure 6.10: Map of Residential Structures in the Capitol Area by Year Built .....	151
Figure 6.11: Map of Parking in the Capitol Area .....	152
Figure 6.12: Table of Parking in the Capitol Area .....	153

## **Principle 7**

Figure 7.1: Diagram: CAAPB Planning Process .....	162
Figure 7.2: Diagram: CAAPB Zoning Application Process .....	163
Figure 7.3: Map of the Capitol Area Neighborhoods/Districts .....	167

## **Principle 7A**

Figure 7A.1: Key locations and opportunity sites in the Capitol Rice District .....	171
Figure 7A.2: Top opportunity sites in the Capitol Rice District .....	172
Figure 7A.3: Map of Capitol Rice District showing land ownership, major commercial corridors .....	173

## **Principle 7B**

Figure 7B.1: Key locations and opportunity sites in Capitol Heights .....	181
Figure 7B.2: Major residential typologies in Capitol Heights .....	181
Figure 7B.3: Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit .....	183

## **Principle 7C**

Figure 7C.1: Fitzgerald Park, showing the five blocks that fall within the Capitol Area .....	191
Figure 7C.2: Land uses within Fitzgerald Park .....	192



# APPENDIX C - LIST OF CAPITOL AREA BASELINES

Baseline 4.1: Parks and Open Spaces in and around the Capitol Area.....92

Baseline 4.2: Public Right-of-Way Conditions .....96

Baseline 4.3: Frontages.....98

Baseline 4.4: Public Art..... 100

Baseline 5.1: Capitol Area Mode Split ..... 118

Baseline 5.2: Street Framework..... 118

Baseline 5.3: Vehicular Parking Network ..... 123

Baseline 5.4: Pedestrian Network..... 124

Baseline 5.5: Bicycle Network..... 125

Baseline 5.6: Bus, BRT and LRT Network..... 126

Baseline 6.1: The Current Mix in the Capitol Area ..... 145

Baseline 6.2: Available Mix of Goods and Services in the Capitol Area..... 146

Baseline 6.3: Office Space in the Capitol Area..... 148

Baseline 6.4: Community Anchors and Opportunity Sites..... 148

Baseline 6.5: Residential Choices in The Capitol Area..... 150

Baseline 6.6: The Large Footprint of Parking ..... 152



# APPENDIX D - LIST OF REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

## SECONDARY REFERENCES

Secondary references are those containing binding policy for the Capitol Area. The updated Comprehensive Plan must comply with these documents unless CAAPB Board approval is granted for specific deviations.

### **1967 – MN Statute 15.50, State of Minnesota**

Statute 15.50 established the CAAPC (as a Commission) in 1967 and defines the requirement for a Comprehensive Plan. In 1974 the State changed the Commission to a Board, with full authority for zoning. In 2003 the Statute was changed to MN Statute 15B. The statute is reviewed and updated, as needed.

### **1991 – Lighting Design Framework: Guideline for Exterior Lighting in the Minnesota State Capitol Area, CAAPB**

Published in 1991 by the CAAPB in order to guide future lighting in the Capitol Area. This documents sets standards for light quality and illumination, as well as pole and fixture type.

### **1993/1995 – Strategic Plan for Locating State Agencies (1993) and Supplement to Strategic Plan for Locating State Agencies (1995), Department of Administration**

The Strategic Plan for Locating State Agencies, published in 1993 and updated in 1995, is the most recent major binding policy document that comprehensively addresses growth of Capitol Complex facilities in the Capitol Area. The report was developed by a consultant team working closely with a Steering Committee of members from the Department of Administration, Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, (Department of) Finance, and staff from State of Minnesota Senate and House. The document lays out a plan for growth of State facilities over the following two decades. Recommendations for the siting of new buildings in this Comprehensive Plan are tied to the Strategic Plan.

### **1994 – Minnesota State Capitol Area Schematic Sign Design Manual, CAAPB**

Published in 1994 by the CAAPB in order to regulate guide future signage in the Capitol Area.

### **1997 – Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, City of St. Paul**

St. Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, published in 1997 by the City of St. Paul, envisions a city of urban villages. The early history of Saint Paul is, to a large extent, written through the

history of the self-contained character of its neighborhoods. Current initiatives would build upon the growing sense of community among those who occupy existing and emerging urban villages.

While the Framework is 20 years old, it is still active. It was updated in 2007 with a new chapter: National Great River Park Framework Chapter. The framework references the Capitol Area and the four neighborhoods that fall within its boundary. Each neighborhood possesses unique characteristics and activities that bolster the viability of the Capitol Area; in reciprocity, the Capitol Campus provides civic spaces, along with the attendant public amenities, that are needed to anchor these neighborhoods. The resulting interdependence will enrich the living and working environments in each constituent urban village.

The Framework Plan also emphasizes Cass Gilbert’s vision, recognizing the importance of a strong link between the Capitol, downtown St. Paul and the Mississippi River. The Ten Principles of the Framework Plan closely align with the vision for the Capitol Area:

- Evoke a sense of place
- Restore and establish the unique urban ecology
- Invest in the public realm
- Broaden the mix of uses
- Improve connectivity
- Ensure that buildings support broader city-building goals
- Build on existing strengths
- Preserve and enhance heritage resources
- Provide a balanced network for movement
- Foster public safety

### **2002 – Criteria for Locating State Offices and Agencies, Department of Administration**

Establishing the proper location of a state agency or part of a state agency requires a shared approach between the state agency and a potential host community. To that end, this report describes six criteria for locating state offices or agencies along with accompanying questionnaires to assist agencies and host communities in assessing the appropriateness of a proposed site. This report was created in response to the legislative directive, Laws of Minnesota, 2001 First Special Session, Chapter 10, Article 2, Section 94 by Minnesota Planning, the Department of Administration and the Department of Finance, following consultation with all Minnesota cabinet level agencies.



### **2003 – St. Paul Comprehensive Plan Downtown Development Strategy, City of St. Paul**

The St. Paul Downtown Development Strategy was written as a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. It was approved in by the St. Paul Planning Commission in February 2003 and amended by the St. Paul City Council in September 2005. Each chapter identifies trends, issues, vision and strategies for downtown St. Paul. The CAAPB is named as the Implementor in nine strategies.

### **2006 - Summit University Comprehensive Plan, City of St. Paul**

The far eastern portion of Summit University falls within the Capitol Area. The redevelopment of the Sears site should look to both Summit University and Frogtown plans, as the site borders both of these neighborhoods. Connection to Western Sculpture Park is called for in many plans. Development at the Sears site should look to the Summit University District Council for input on long-term goals of Western Sculpture Park.

### **2007 – Central Corridor Development Strategy, City of St. Paul**

The Central Corridor Development Strategy, published by the City of St. Paul in October 2007, was written to guide public decisions about land use and zoning, capital investments and the delivery of city services; and private decisions relative to buying homes, and locating and expanding businesses. It created a framework for more detailed work to be done in the future on regulatory changes and station area planning, special studies and initiatives related to inclusionary housing, parking management, strengthening local businesses, public art, bicycle-pedestrian connections and more. Individual Station Area Plans follow this document.

### **2008 – Rice Station Area Plan, City of St. Paul**

The Rice Station Area Plan, published by the City of St. Paul in October 2008, defines development goals for the Capitol/Rice LRT Station Area. Much of the station area falls within the Capitol Area boundary. The plan was developed through a series of community-based roundtables, workshops and open houses, guided by a steering committee of community representatives. Property owners, residents, business owners, and institutional and organizational representatives participated in this grass-roots process and the development goals signify the desires of area stakeholders. Many of the design and policy recommendations are incorporated into this 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Most of the development recommendations for the Rice Station Area fall within the Capitol Area boundary, making this document very relevant to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

### **2009 – Minnesota State Capitol Complex Capacity and Access Study, Department of Administration**

Prepared in 2009 by the Department of Administration, the Minnesota State Capitol Complex Capacity and Access Study identifies current and potential future development in the Capitol Campus. The study also identifies existing and potential future access to and through the Capitol Campus. In coordination with this 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and other pertinent plans including the Rice Station Area Plan, this study will help guide future development in the Capitol Area.

### **2009 – Rules Governing Zoning and Design for the Minnesota State Capitol Area, CAAPB**

Updated in 2009, this document contains zoning and building policy for the Minnesota State Capitol Area.

### **2010 – Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan, City of St. Paul**

The Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan was originally written in 2006 and amended by the City of Saint Paul in 2010. A public workshop was held in 2003 and a planning task force formed in 2004 for the development of the plan. Drawing from the St. Paul Downtown Development Strategy as well as planning document for the future LRT, the plan addresses land use; public realm/public safety; movement; design and appearance; natural environment; and neighborhood identity/communication. Five blocks of Fitzgerald Park fall within the Capitol Area.

### **2011 – Strengthening State Agency Environmental, Energy and Transportation Sustainability - Executive Order 11-13, State of Minnesota**

The 2013 Executive Order from Governor Mark Dayton calls for the State to establish sustainability goals implement sustainability programs and policies. Each State Department and Agency must prepare an annual sustainability plan and report on its progress and implementation. Specific directives are included for reduction of waste, air pollution, energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and fuel consumption.

### **2012 – Metro Transit Arterial Transitway Corridors Study, Metropolitan Council**

In 2011-2012, Metro Transit studied 11 urban corridors with high-ridership bus routes that connect major destinations for implementation of enhanced bus service. Planners measured each of the corridors against 17 criteria supporting 5 project goals.



MetroTransit has identified Robert Street as a potential BRT line. The northern portion of the line falls within the Capitol Area. While the Robert Street BRT is not yet slated for development, all of the lines, especially Snelling, West 7th and East 7th, affect overall transit connectivity for residents, workers and visitors to the Capitol Area.

### **2013 – Buildings, Benchmarks, & Beyond – The State of Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines Version 2.12 (version 2.1 referenced), State of Minnesota Multiple Agencies**

The development of the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines was a multi-year process in collaboration with many people and departments in the state. The primary authors included the Department of Commerce, Real Estate and Construction Services and the Department of Administration. The document covers sustainable building guidelines mandatory for all new buildings and major renovations receiving funding from the bond proceeds fund after January 1, 2009. The document covers performance management; site and water; energy and atmosphere; indoor environmental quality; and materials and waste.

### **2014 – A Plan for Capitol Heights, Capitol Heights Neighborhood**

The Area Plan, written as an addendum to the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, sets a vision for Capitol Heights as a “mixed-use, mixed-income, medium density residential community with a balance between rental and owner occupied housing, served by a neighborhood-scale commercial center on Rice Street.” The plan calls for several strategies to improve housing, transportation and commercial functions in the neighborhood. As the entirety of Capitol Heights falls within the Capitol Area boundary, all of the strategies are relevant to the Comprehensive Plan.

### **2015 – Policy for Commemorative Works in the Minnesota State Capitol Area, CAAPB**

Published in 2012 by the CAAPB the policy outlines the principles, standards, design guidelines and process for works of art in the Capitol Area.

### **2015 – St. Paul Bicycle Plan, City of St. Paul**

The Saint Paul Bicycle Plan was written in 2015 as an Addendum to the 2010 St. Paul Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations of this plan should be incorporated into the next update of the Comprehensive Plan, and should serve as the starting point for other planning efforts that reference bicycling.

The document provides an overview of the benefits of bicycling, as

well as a detailed policy basis for the bicycle plan. The plan outlines existing and proposed bike routes. There are also chapters devoted to “End of Trip Facilities” and “Bicycle Programs” to enhance ridership. The chapter devoted to End of Trip Facilities is particularly relevant as the planning of these spaces in and out of State buildings can be influenced by the CAAPB.

### **2016 – St. Paul Street Design Manual, City of St. Paul**

The 198-page Saint Paul Street Design Manual outlines specific guidelines for all St. Paul streets, building upon policy documented in the 2010 St. Paul Comprehensive Plan. The manual provides specific guidance for multiple transportation modes and neighborhood settings, covering design treatments for public realm, including behind the curb, between the curbs, and intersections. The manual also highlights opportunities for public art integration and green infrastructure for each design treatment. Specific guidance is applied to downtown streets, mixed use streets, residential corridor streets, established neighborhood streets, and industrial streets. The last two chapters of the manual address maintenance and implementation. In addition to the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, the Manual references multiple national, state and county transportation guides. The manual was published by the City of St. Paul in October 2016, with support from Toole Design Group, SRF Consulting, Team Better Block, Foster Willey Sculptor, LLC, St. Paul Riverfront Corporation, and St. Paul Smart Trips.

The document is relevant for street design and improvement within the Capitol Area. Details of the document provide guiding principles applicable to the comprehensive plan, as well as detailed design guidelines to be incorporated in updated zoning rules, public realm improvement plan and built form plan.

### **2017 – Capitol Area Parking Study, Capitol Area Commutes**

The parking study evaluated all parking in the Capitol Area, including street parking, lots and ramps.

### **2017 - Frogtown Small Area Plan, Frogtown Neighborhood Association and City of St. Paul**

In 2017 the Frogtown Neighborhood Association, working with the City’s Planning and Economic Development staff and Councilperson’s office, created a Small Area Plan (SMAPL) for the Frogtown Neighborhood. The document is a long range vision for the district as an urban village that will attract new investment while serving the people that live there now and are investing every day in



the success of their community. This document sets the new standard for community engagement and equity in neighborhood planning. The SmAPI is formatted as a graphic novel, drawn by local artist Mychal Batson.

### **2018 - Rethinking I-94 Phase 1 Report, MnDOT**

“Phase 1 of Rethinking I-94 — conducted between January 2016 and August 2018 — focused on understanding the I-94 corridor and the communities along the interstate between St. Paul and Minneapolis. The Rethinking I-94 Phase 1 report details two years of technical research and engagement activity centered on the I-94 corridor. This activity included a wide range of engagement and technical tasks aimed at establishing a foundation for future planning and project work on I-94.” ~ <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/I-94minneapolis-stpaul/vision.html>

### **2018 - Capitol City Bikeway: Network Study and Design Guide**

“The Capital City Bikeway is part of the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan, a blueprint for doubling the number of bikeways in Saint Paul over the next several decades. The plan is designed to create outdoor vibrancy and enhance the economic vitality of Saint Paul, making it more accessible and attractive for people riding bikes, walking, running, driving, or using transit.” ~ [https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Public%20Works/Capital%20City%20Bikeway%20Network%20Study%20and%20Design%20Guide\\_LR.pdf](https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Public%20Works/Capital%20City%20Bikeway%20Network%20Study%20and%20Design%20Guide_LR.pdf)

### **2020 - SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan, City of St. Paul**

The SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 Comprehensive Plan will guide development in the City of Saint Paul for the next 20 years, 2020-2040. The plan—with chapters covering Land Use; Transportation; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Housing; Heritage and Cultural Preservation; and Water Resources— addresses several focus areas including racial and social equity, aging in community, community/public health, economic development, sustainability/resiliency and urban design. The plan is heavily referenced and quoted throughout this 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area.

### **2020 - Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan, City of St. Paul**

“The Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan addresses citywide walking needs such as connecting the sidewalk system, providing safer ways to cross streets and education and enforcement programs to support safe walking. It includes recommendations to achieve the plan’s vision: *Saint Paul is a walking city—we are more healthy, resilient and connected when walking is safe and appealing for all.*”

## **TERTIARY REFERENCES**

Tertiary references contain guidelines and standards that are relevant to the Capitol Area, but are not binding. The Comprehensive Plan should look to these documents for guidance and adopt recommendations where appropriate, but deviation from these documents requires no approval from the CAAPB Board Members.

- Rice University Design Framework. CAAPB, 1990.
- Parking Area Design Framework – Guidelines for Planning Parking Areas in the Minnesota State Capitol Area. CAAPB, 1991.
- On Grade Parking in the Capitol Area: Parking Area Design Framework. CAAPB, 1993.
- Mississippi River Corridor Plan. City of St. Paul, 2002.
- Capitol Complex Commuter Policy. Department of Administration, 2005.
- Inventory of Mall Memorials, Statuary, Paintings and Governor’s Portraits. CAAPB and The Minnesota Historical Society, 2008.
- Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, Biennial Report. CAAPB, 2012-2013.
- Great River Passage Plan. City of St. Paul, 2013.
- St. Paul Streetcar Study. City of St. Paul, 2014.
- Five-Year Consolidated Plan for Saint Paul, 2015-2019. City of St. Paul, 2015.
- Ramsey County Corridor Transit Studies (Riverview Corridor, Rush Line Corridor, Gateway/Gold Corridor, Red Rock Southeast Corridor, TCMC Passenger Rail, Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Corridor, Twin Cities-Rochester Corridor. Ramsey County, dates vary by project.
- Minnesota State Capitol Restoration Project. HGA, Department of Administration, 2015.
- Twin Cities Shared Mobility Action Plan. Shared-Use Mobility Center, 2017.
- Thrive MSP. Metropolitan Council, 2014.



## BEST PRACTICE REFERENCES

Including historic and context documents as well as the latest trends in practices from development, street design, housing, sustainability and mobility, best practice and context references are relevant for policy guidance in the Capitol Area.

- History of the Minnesota State Capitol Area. Blatti , 1985.
- Political History. Grenfenberg.
- The Minnesota State Capitol Historic Structures Report. 2014.
- St. Paul Historic, various articles. Historic St. Paul.
- Getting Ready for Shared Autonomous Vehicles. Fisher.
- Shared, Autonomous Vehicles and Their Effect on Land Use and the Public Realm. Fisher, 2016.
- Minnesota planners begin to envision driverless future. Roper, 2017.
- Autonomous driving is here, and it's going to change everything. Hyatt, 2017.
- Center for Sustainable Building Research. Overview flyer.
- Healthy Communities Initiative - ULI TAP Report. ULI, 2016.
- St. Paul Sustainability: Minnesota GreenStep Cities. MPCA.
- Comprehensive Planning for a Healthy Community: A Checklist Hennepin County, 2017.
- Community Pages: St. Paul Local Planning Handbook Online Metropolitan Council, 2017.