




# PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGIES

- Represent Minnesota's Cultural Diversity and Ecological Variety
- Democracy Stage
- Cultural Platform
- History and Relevance
- Commemorative Artwork
- Community Shared Street
- Establish a Cultural Walk



Introduce new public space strategies to include and celebrate more of Minnesota and introduce new strategies to represent Minnesota's cultural diversity.

# INTRODUCE NEW STRATEGIES TO REPRESENT MINNESOTA'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND ECOLOGICAL VARIETY

Much of the Capitol Mall open space is lawn with no specific programming. While the Upper and Lower Malls operate like distinct spaces, they lack differentiation other than the density of commemorative works. Furthermore, the Capitol Campus does not have a collective open space narrative that ties everything together. To remedy this, the Design Framework introduces new strategies to represent Minnesota's cultural diversity and ecological variety by reimagining the roles of various open spaces and proposing a Cultural Walk along Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

The Upper Mall operates as the Democracy Stage—an area free of future commemorative works that provides a neutral space for free speech and large events. The Lower Mall is a space for History and Reverence, where new strategically located commemorative works highlight those not currently represented on the Capitol Mall. Additionally, various different landscape typologies spotlight the ecological story of the Capitol Mall and frame the many commemorative spaces throughout; see a Gradient of Planting Strategies for more information. The Cultural Platform facilitates gatherings and events while forming the Commemorative Loop—a pedestrian path that links all of the commemorative works together. Lastly, the Cultural Walk creates a collective historical narrative that not only links all of Minnesota's seats of government, but various other community points of interest.

## TAKEAWAYS

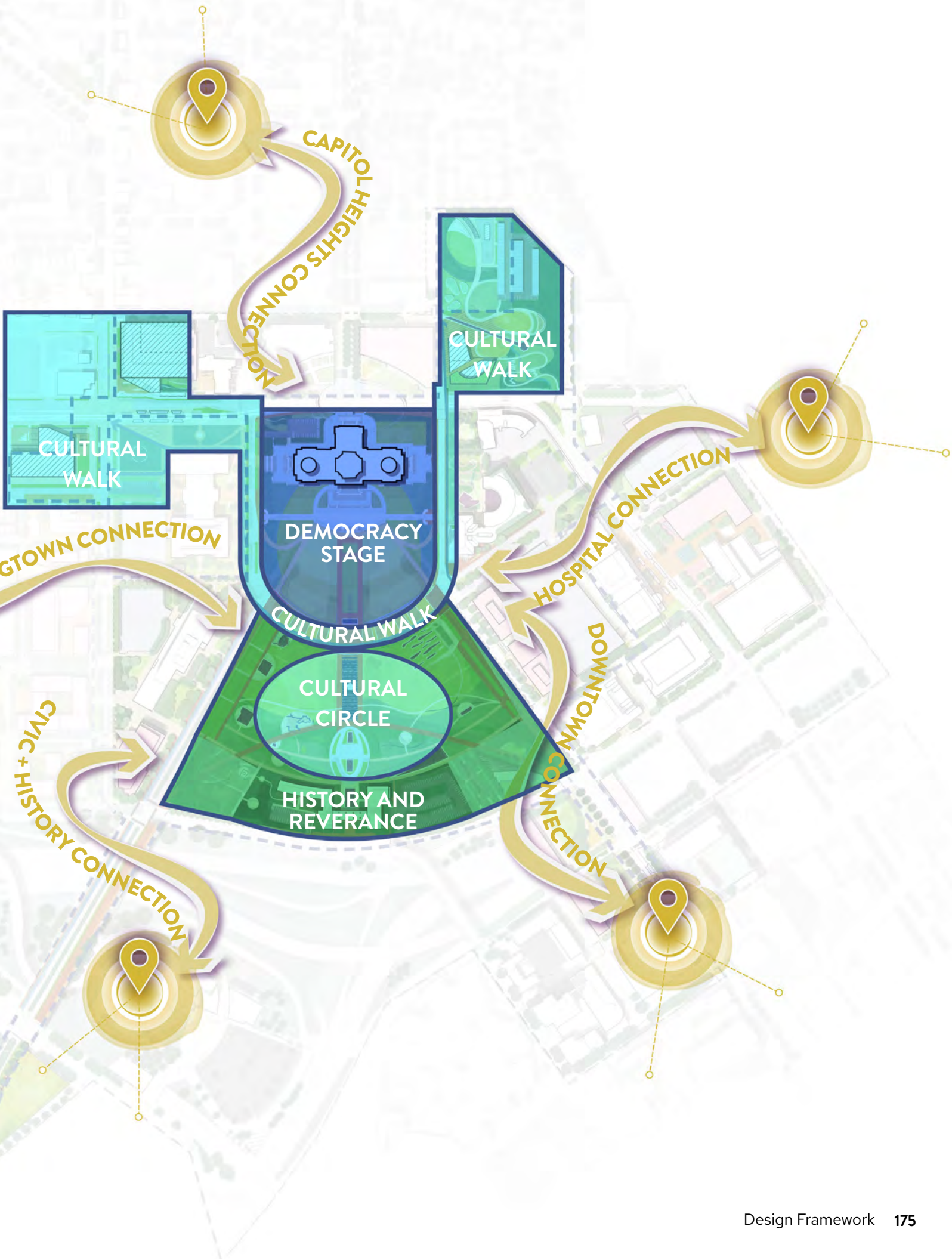
- The Upper Mall and Capitol Building are the Democracy Stage—a space for all people to come and exercise their First Amendment rights.
- The Lower Mall is a space for History and Reverence, with commemorative works highlighting those not currently represented on the Capitol Mall.
- The Cultural Walk ties together various community points of interest.



Figure 122: Minnesota's Cultural Diversity and Ecological Variety







# DEMOCRACY STAGE

## FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

**THE DEMOCRACY STAGE WILL BE FREE OF FUTURE COMMEMORATIVE WORKS AND PROVIDE A NEUTRAL SPACE FOR DEMONSTRATING FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS AND HOSTING LARGE, MULTI-CULTURAL COMMUNITY EVENTS.**

The Upper Mall and Capitol Building form the Democracy Stage. The Design Framework recommends not locating any new commemorative works in this space. Instead, the Democracy Stage operates as a blank canvas for those who want to come and protest or share their ideas. Furthermore, the Democracy Stage offers some of the larger gathering spaces or event lawns on the Capitol Campus—the perfect place to gather and celebrate at the steps of the Capitol Building. See a Gradient of Planting Strategies for planting strategies related to the Democracy Stage.



Figure 124. Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park, TN

Source: <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/spaces/2011/bicentennial.htm>



Figure 123. Rose Kennedy Greenway, MA

Source: <https://www.rosekennedygreenway.org/resonance/>





Figure 125. U.S. Capitol Visitor Center Landscape, Washington, DC

Source: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center Landscape, Sasaki, <https://www.sasaki.com/projects/u-s-capitol-visitor-center/>



Figure 126. Schenley Plaza, PA

Source: Schenley Plaza, Sasaki, <https://www.sasaki.com/projects/schenley-plaza/>



Figure 129. Moore Square, NC

Source: Moore Square, Sasaki, <https://www.tclf.org/landscapes/moore-square>



Figure 127. Texas Capitol Complex, TX

Source: <https://business.mansfieldchamber.org>

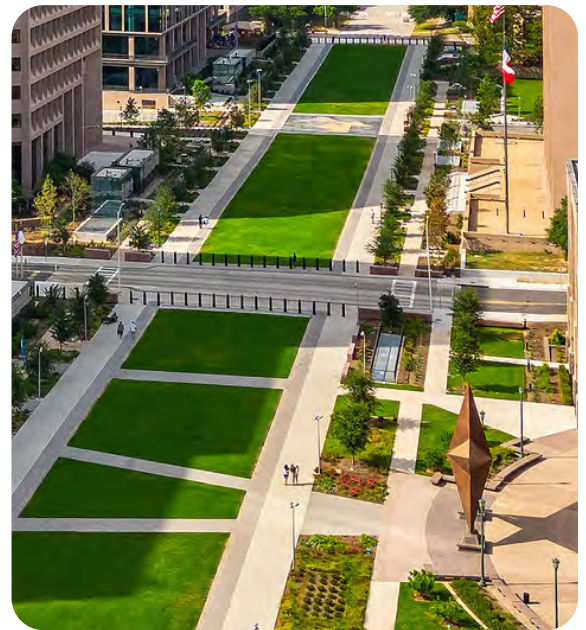


Figure 128. Texas Capitol Complex, TX

Source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2024/04/11/texas-capitol-complex-green-mall-glass-offices-page/>



Figure 130. U.S. Capitol Building, D.C.

Source: Pixabay, <https://idahocapitalsun.com/2022/01/04>



# CULTURAL PLATFORM

COMMEMORATION  
AND CELEBRATION

**THE CULTURAL PLATFORM FACILITATES SMALLER GATHERINGS AND EVENTS WHILE FORMING THE COMMEMORATIVE LOOP—A PEDESTRIAN PATH THAT LINKS ALL COMMEMORATIVE WORKS TOGETHER.**

The inner portion of the Lower Mall forms the Cultural Platform. Similar to the Democracy Stage, the Cultural Platform provides ample lawn space for gathering and events. It also contains commemorative works like the Minnesota World War II Veterans Memorial and Court of Honor. More importantly, the boundaries of the Cultural Platform form the Commemorative Circle, which is a proposed pedestrian path that links many of the commemorative works, both existing and proposed, together. It should be noted that most of the proposed sites for new commemorative works are not located in the Cultural Platform, but instead sited in History and Reverence. See a Gradient of Planting Strategies for planting strategies related to the Cultural Platform.



Figure 132. Moore Square, NC

Source: Moore Square, Sasaki, <https://www.tclf.org/landscapes/moore-square>



Figure 131. Ithaca Commons Redesign, NY

Source: Ithaca Commons Redesign, Sasaki, <https://www.sasaki.com/projects/ithaca-commons-redesign/>





Figure 133. Indianapolis Cultural Trail , IN  
Source: <https://indyculturaltrail.org/calendar/aarp-in-on-the-trail/>



Figure 135. UBC University Boulevard, Vancouver  
Source: <https://ccie.educ.ubc.ca/indigenous-knowledges-and-the-environment-symposium/>



Figure 134. The Path to Reconciliation, Regina  
Source: <https://hyperallergic.com/829787/indigenous-artists-paint-300-foot-path-to-reconciliation-in-canada/>



Figure 136. New Indigenous Mural, Vancouver  
Source: <https://www.straight.com/arts>

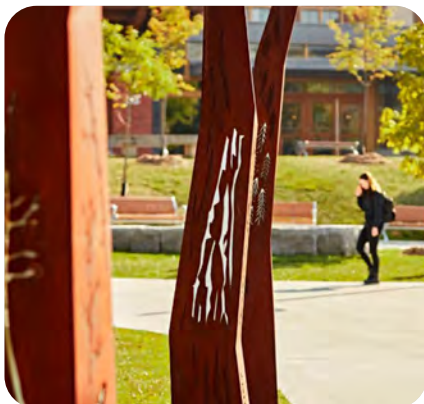


Figure 137. Humber Unveils Indigenous Cultural Markers  
Source: <https://www.canadianarchitect.com/humber-unveils-indigenous-cultural-markers>



Figure 138. Indigenous, Integrated Mural, Vancouver  
Source: Nelson-Moody, Arron & George, Angela, <https://www.nvrc.ca/arts-culture/public-art/art-collection/nchemus>



# HISTORY AND REVERENCE

HONORING PEOPLE AND THE LAND

**HISTORY AND REVERENCE HONORS EXISTING COMMEMORATIVE WORKS AND NEW STRATEGICALLY LOCATED WORKS ON THE CAPITOL MALL. ADDITIONALLY, VARIOUS DIFFERENT LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGIES SPOTLIGHT THE CAPITOL MALL'S ECOLOGY.**

History and Reverence forms the outer edges of the Lower Mall and is also the most densely populated in terms of commemorative works and vegetation. This space is more contemplative and is not meant to host large events or gatherings. As a person meanders among the various commemorative works, they are immersed in native Minnesota plants and shaded by extensive tree canopy. There are moments of rest and reflection, as well as cultural and ecological education. Most of the proposed sites for new commemorative works are located in History and Reverence, with special attention paid to ensure symmetry and equitable historic storytelling. See a Gradient of Planting Strategies for planting strategies related to History and Reverence.



Figure 140. The Clearing, CT

Source: <https://worldlandscapearchitect.com/the-clearing-sandy-hook-usa-swa/?v=3a1ed7090bfa>



Figure 139. Wall of Discovery, MN

Source: Sydney CBD and South East Light Rail, Aspect Studios, [www.aspect-studios.com](http://www.aspect-studios.com)





Figure 141. The Memorial to Enslaved Laborers, VA

Source: <https://www.architecturalrecord.com/articles/14725-the-memorial-to-enslaved-laborers-at-the-university-of-virginia>



Figure 142. Einstein's Table, NJ

Source: <https://www.mayalinstudio.com/art/princeton-table>



Figure 144. Wharf District Parks, MA

Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/5c/ed/3b/5ced3bc14b42ce12fc8d43581bcff311.jpg>



Figure 145. Overland Park, KS

Source: <https://www.visitoverlandpark.com/about/>



Figure 143. Coldwater Spring National Park oak savanna/prairie restoration

Source: <https://southviewdesign.com/blog/minnesota-native-prairie>

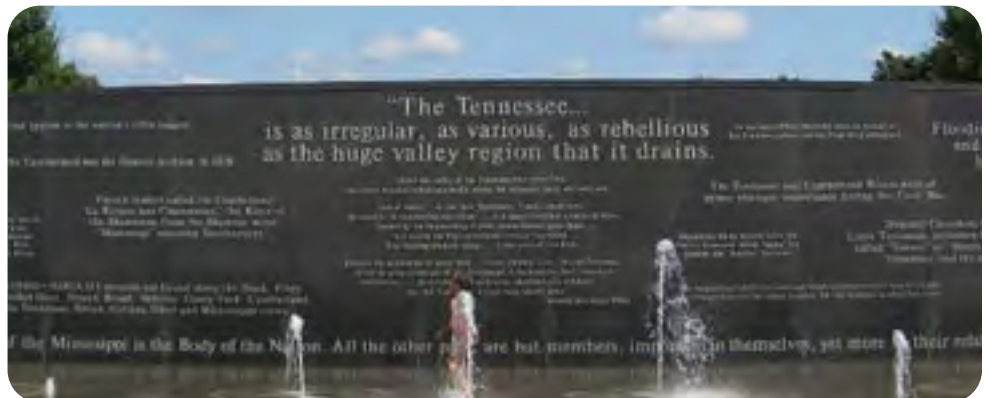


Figure 146. The Rivers of Tennessee fountain, TN

Source: <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/spaces/2011/bicentennial.htm>



# COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORK






## PROPOSED ORGANIZATION

The proposed organization and guiding principles for commemorative artwork in and around the Capitol Mall draw upon the Minnesota Rules Governing Commemorative Works on the Minnesota Capitol Grounds (CAAPB 2022), 2040 Comprehensive Plan (CAAPB 2021), Cultural Landscape Report (Damon Farber 2024), and public engagement to date. It also references recent work by the National Park Service, National Capital Planning Commission, and Van Alen Institute (Van Alen 2024).

Fundamental to the Design Framework is the notion that the Upper Mall remain free of any new commemorative artwork and the Lower Mall become the focus for artwork moving forward. The Design Framework enhances existing commemorative artwork through re-envisioned circulation that makes it easier to access and experience these pieces. Future artwork is sited to create physical symmetry across the Lower Mall, support Gilbert's original notion of a "memorial approach," maintain existing thematic groupings, and provide space for more inclusive Minnesota stories.

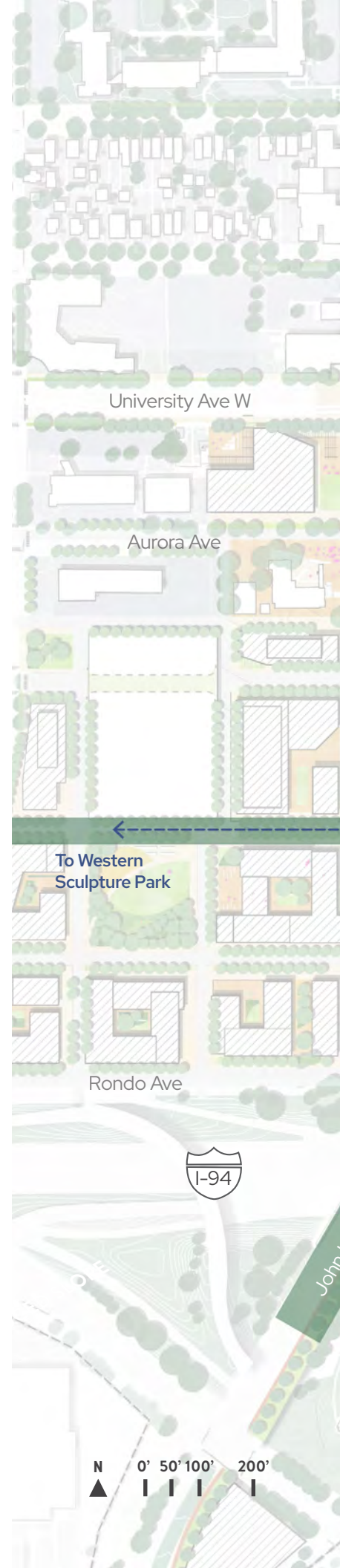
Additional commemorative opportunities exist that connect the Capitol Mall to Minnesota History Center, the Old State Capitol Site, Western Sculpture Garden, Cass Gilbert Memorial Park, and proposed mobility hub. These opportunities are also located near all major thresholds to the Capitol Campus, which means visitors can begin experiencing the many stories of Minnesota from the moment they arrive at the State Capitol.

### LEGEND

-  Existing Commemorative Artworks
-  Revised / Relocated Commemorative Artwork
-  Proposed Zone for Future Commemorative Artwork
-  Commemorative Loop
-  Primary Commemorative Walks
-  Capitol Campus Thresholds

Note: Not all proposed locations for future commemorative artwork need to be built out. Additionally, they do not need to occupy the entire zone outlined on the map. See *Commemorative Artwork: Opportunities and Guiding Principles* for more information.

Figure 147. Commemorative Artwork







Cass Gilbert  
Memorial Park

CAAPB Boundary

Proposed  
Mobility Hub

MN State  
Capitol

The Upper Mall remains free of  
future commemorative artwork.

The Lower Mall becomes the  
focus for future commemorative  
artwork that is inclusive and  
representative of All Minnesotans.

Commemorative Circle

open lawn, no  
works here

open lawn, no  
works here

Gardens

Welcome  
Center

Public Service

Veterans Service  
Building

Old State  
Capitol Site

DOWNTOWN  
SAINT PAUL



# COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORK

## OPPORTUNITIES



### MOVING TOWARDS MORE BALANCED COMMEMORATION

The CMDF public engagement process generated many ideas from many people for Making the Mall More Welcoming for More Minnesotans. However, the CMDF as an official policy document does not suggest explicit topics for commemoration. Specific proposals for new works, modifications or removals are left to individuals and groups in Minnesotans to propose through a process outlined by the new Commemorative Works Rules adopted by CAAPB in 2022. (See MN Rules Chapter 2400.)



## THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF IDEAS VOICED DURING THE CMDF THAT INCLUDE IDEAS FOR INTRODUCING STORIES OF MINNESOTA THAT ARE CURRENTLY MISSING ON THE CAPITOL MALL:

1. Public art or commemorative installation(s) commemorating the historic loss of Black neighborhoods during urban renewal era in Saint Paul.
2. Installations celebrating contributions from individuals from historically underrepresented communities. Specifically, sites currently honoring Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color (BIPOC), women and LGBTQIA2S+ communities.
3. Installations honoring the identity of indigenous communities of Minnesota including the federally recognized eleven Tribal Nations and Urban Indian communities.
4. Installation(s) that acknowledge and celebrate the history of the many communities that have made the Capitol Area home, with broad focus that includes immigrant communities during settlement, and development of Saint Paul, but also the many centuries before settlement and creation of statehood.
5. Emphasize Minnesota's ecology at important points throughout the Capitol Campus so that the visitor experience includes celebrations of the unique lands, lakes, and rivers of Minnesota. This could include a water feature that celebrates our identity as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes."
6. During statutorily required review of monuments, reconsider the settings and locations of several works to help organize and better balance thematic groupings to be reflective of BOTH historical and modern Minnesota communities.  
  
Example:
  - Clear some spaces, such as the steps, Aurora Promenade, Democracy Stage, and MLK Commons to be free of commemorative works, so that free speech can be staged by all groups.
7. Extend the programming of Minnesota History Center and Capitol tours to include visits to shaded and accessible comfortable spaces outside the Capitol and on the Mall.  
  
Examples:
  - Utilize the existing amphitheater and new shaded spaces as places for live commemorative storytelling: comfortable gathering spaces designed so that anyone can come and reflect on their own unique Minnesota history.
  - Enhance the comfort of pedestrian walking routes, and coordinate creation of self-guided walking tours using combination of virtual technologies and wayfinding to teach visitors about government and Minnesota.
  - Utilize the newly planted and accessible Upper Mall for outdoor teaching, meetings, and tours.
8. Celebrate Indigenous history and culture given the historic prevalence of this location.

# COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORK

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### THE SITING AND SELECTION OF COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORK IS CRUCIAL IN ESTABLISHING A LARGER VISION AND CIRCULATION EXPERIENCE THAT IS INCLUSIVE OF ALL MINNESOTAN'S STORIES.

#### SITING OF WORKS:

The Siting Plan for Commemorative Works in this CMDF (currently previous pages) will guide the location of new works and relocated works subject to review of proposals under MN Rules Chapter 2400. The proposed organization of works may be adjusted over time through Board action enabling updates to the Siting Plan.

#### CREATING STAGES FOR DEMOCRACY

Over time, there shall be spaces on the Mall made largely or completely free of commemorative works in order to establish spaces that are not dominated by messages from any one group or point of view. These spaces outlined in the 2024 Siting Plan of the CMDF include the Capitol Steps, Aurora Promenade, Upper Mall's Democracy Stage, and the Commons spaces between John Ireland and Cedar along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. With exception of the Cultural Walk identified on the Commemorative Works Siting Plan, this guideline extends to include public thoroughfares and right-of ways throughout the Capitol Area, with specific exceptions may be made in some cases such as interpretive markers or in other special circumstances. This guideline applies only to permanent installations.

#### FULL REPRESENTATION OF MINNESOTA COMMUNITIES

Over time, there shall be efforts made through CAAPB's review and decision making process for commemorative works to introduce a more balanced representation of the

many communities of Minnesota to make those groups feel more explicitly welcome to the Capitol Area and as a place where all individuals, families, and groups will feel comfortable to visit and fully exercise their rights to free speech and democracy. This will be done incrementally through review of proposed works and through statutorily required review of existing works.

#### FACILITATION OF TEMPORARY WORKS

Though the Capitol Mall Design Framework guides the creation and placement of spaces for gathering, free speech, and celebration, the guidelines do not generally extend to the regulation of temporary works. Temporary works include installations that are designed and funded for removal after a pre-defined period. They do not result in permanent changes to other works, their settings, or other features of the Capitol Area. However, temporary works may or may not trigger review under MN Rules 2400 based on interpretation by Executive Secretary of CAAPB or the Board itself.

#### CAAPB PARTNERS

These guidelines assist CAAPB in their decision-making responsibilities and do not replace, change or cancel the statutory authorities and responsibilities defined by MN Statutes granted to partners such as the City of Saint Paul, Department of Administration nor Minnesota Historical Society."



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*Memorials for the Future* by the National Park Service, National Capitol Planning Commission, and Van Alen Institute outline a series of recommendations for future memorials on public lands. They include:

- **ENGAGE THE PRESENT AND FUTURE AS MUCH AS THE PAST:** “Events that unfold around us every day can be as compelling and culturally important [as the past]. The tools of memorialization can help people learn about and appreciate recent events, important issues, and on-going trends and experiences that impact their lives directly.”
- **ALLOW FOR CHANGING NARRATIVES:** “As time passes, new information is exposed and cultural values shift, sometimes creating disconnects between a memorial’s original message and representation and modern day perceptions. There will always be a need to incorporate perspectives that were either recently developed or previously marginalized. Future memorials need to address this challenge and represent diverse narratives.”
- **UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCES IN ADDITION TO PLACES, PEOPLE, AND EVENTS:** “Often memorials commemorate subjects of significant events, important places, or individuals of great accomplishment. While these subjects can yield powerful, enduring memorials... this leaves opportunity to commemorate more universal experiences shared by many people over time.”
- **USE LOCAL SETTINGS FOR NATIONAL ISSUES:** “Some issues like climate change and immigration may feel abstracted in national debate, but smart design can create real opportunities to engage with and understand these issues in a personal way... [There is an] opportunity for memorials that resonate at the local level, making abstract issues immediate for those who encounter these memorials on a daily basis.”
- **CREATE MEMORIALS WITH THE PUBLIC AS WELL AS FOR THE PUBLIC:** “Inviting the public to shape memorials, either during the initial planning process or after construction, can help ensure that they are valued by communities in which they reside and that the many perspectives of those communities are well reflected.”
- **CONSIDER EPHEMERAL, MOBILE, AND TEMPORARY FORMS:** “Typically, existing memorials are permanent, requiring visitors to be physically present to experience a memorial. Future memorials could be temporary or mobile.”
- **MEMORIALS BEYOND PHYSICAL SPACE:** “... [Using clever applications of technology...[enable memorials to] transcend the need for physical spaces altogether. Technology allows people to connect around subject matter in ways that don’t require central squares or physical infrastructure,” (National Park Service, National Capitol Planning Commission, Van Alen Institute).

## CAAPB GUIDELINES

The CAAPB’s *Rulemaking: Commemorative Works on the Minnesota Capitol Grounds* outlines guidelines for future commemorative works within the Capitol Campus. A high level summary of these guidelines includes:

### SITING

- The site of the proposed location must be visible to people nearby and immediately accessible via pathway.
- The scale of the artwork must fit the artwork’s location, providing familiarity to the viewer while not being overpowering. Any element of the artwork other than trees must not exceed 20 feet in height.
- The use of the site must maintain and protect existing open space and the space’s public use; it should not interfere with existing works.

### DESIGN

- The artwork must encourage engagement with the public and provide amenities such as seating.
- The design and setting of an artwork must consider climatic elements like sunlight, shade, wind, and the varied Minnesota seasons.
- An artwork’s illumination must not compete with or distract from the sight of the Capitol.
- The intended message of the artwork must be clear and understandable. The artwork must convey a meaning of enduring value for future generations.
- Materials for the artwork must be visible to people nearby, durable, and compatible with the artwork’s setting.
- The artwork’s design, construction, materials sourcing, and maintenance must conserve energy and water resources.

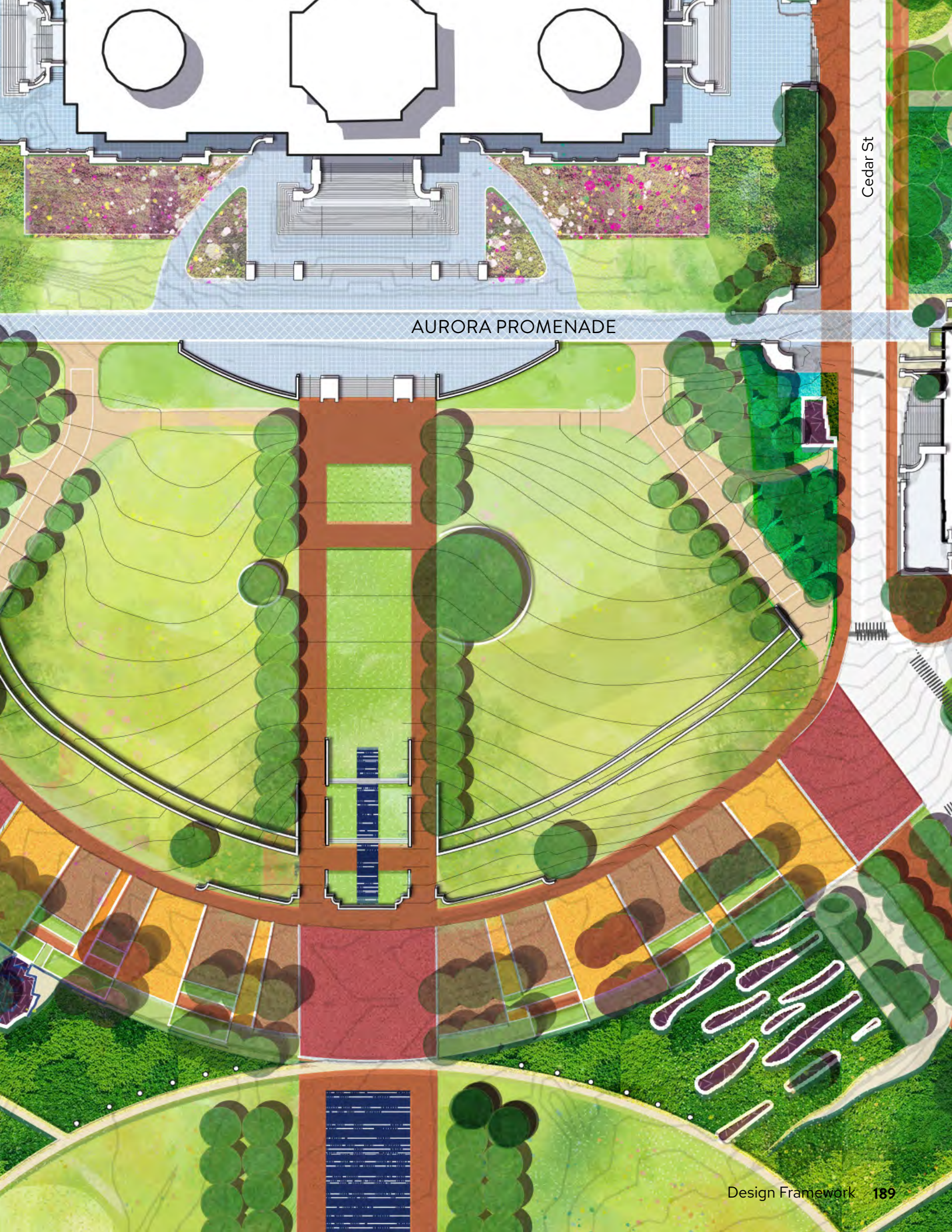
# **CONVERT REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BOULEVARD INTO A COMMUNITY COMMONS (SHARED STREET)**

Community and stakeholder engagement throughout the Design Framework process highlighted Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a priority to create a shared community space. More specifically, every focus group within the design charrette similarly noted the boulevard as a special space that not only linked the Upper and Lower Malls together but had so much more potential than just a four-lane vehicular road. In response to this, the Design Framework preserves the form or bend of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a historically significant feature while re-envisioning the boulevard to be more in line with the ideals of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. himself—a shared community space that stitches the Capitol Mall together and creates a central heart to the Capitol Campus. As a part of this new vision, opportunities for equitable commemoration and ecological education take precedence. Rather than prioritizing cars through the boulevard, the shared street reallocates ROW to pedestrians, cyclists, and planting. Collectively, the various landscape features create a strong east-west promenade and lively transition between the Upper and Lower Malls.



Figure 148. xxx





AURORA PROMENADE

Cedar St



# MLK JR BLVD SHARED STREET

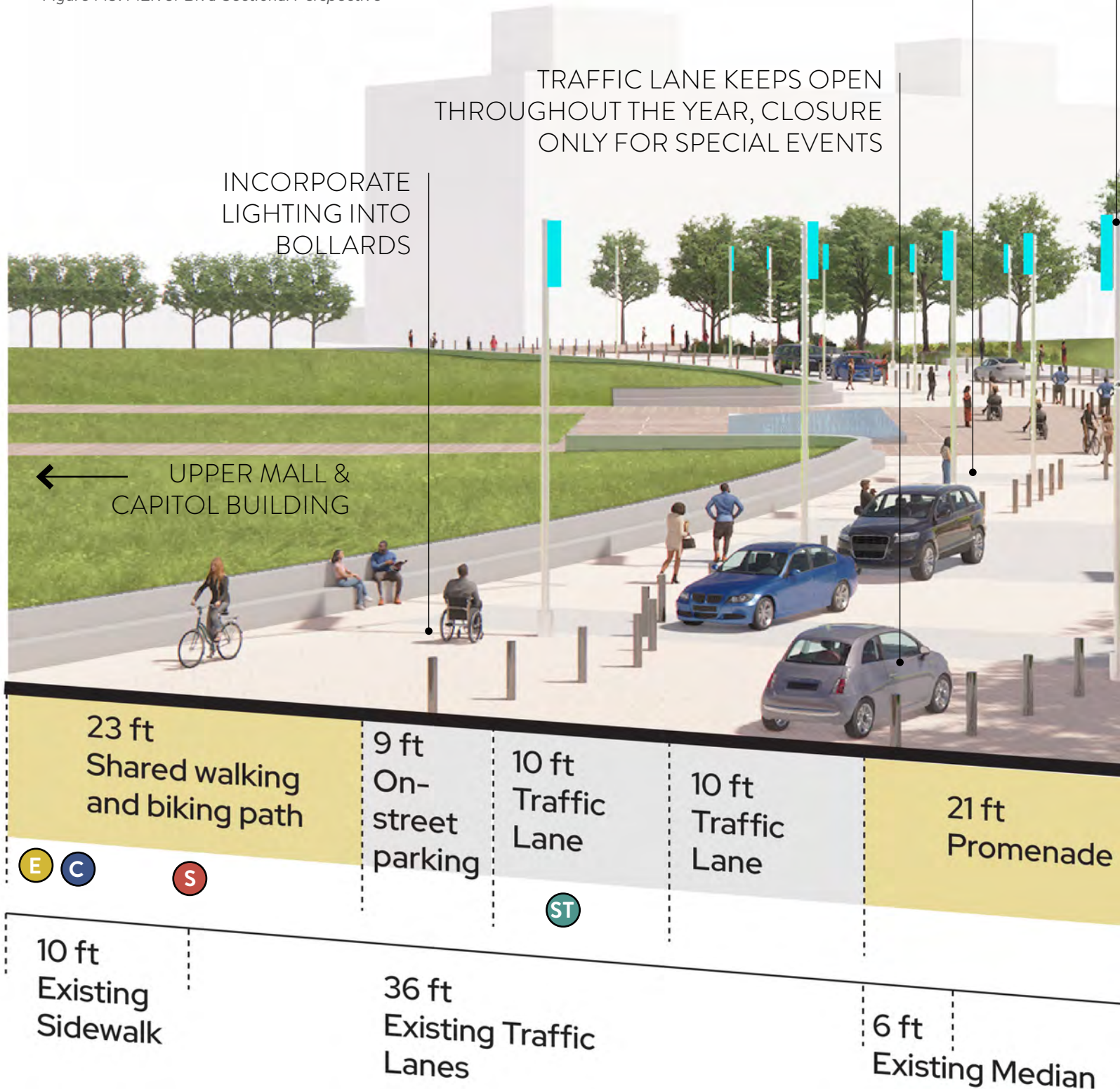
Figure 149. MLK Jr Blvd Sectional Perspective

GATHERING SPACE,  
SPECIAL PAVEMENT  
DESIGNED WITH  
COMMUNITY

INCORPORATE  
LIGHTING INTO  
BOLLARDS

TRAFFIC LANE KEEPS OPEN  
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, CLOSURE  
ONLY FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

← UPPER MALL &  
CAPITOL BUILDING



**LEGEND**



Water



Stormwater



Electrical



Underground Communication



Sewer



NATIVE CANOPY  
TREES

UNDERSTORY PLANTS  
INSPIRED BY DAKOTA  
ETHNOBOTANY

FLAGS OF THE  
TRIBAL NATIONS



LOWER  
MALL  
→

8 ft  
Landscape  
zone

12 ft  
Walking path

9 ft  
Landscape zone  
connect to the lawn



36 ft  
Existing Traffic Lanes

10 ft  
Existing Sidewalk



# MLK JR BLVD SHARED STREET

RENDERING









# CULTURAL WALK

## PRECEDENTS



Figure 150. Commemorative Artwork



