





APPENDIX A PROJECT PROCESS

PROCESS OVERVIEW



A COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS FOCUSED ON RIGOROUS SITE ANALYSIS AND ROBUST STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AS WELL AS IDENTIFYING FEASIBLE AND PHASEABLE DESIGN STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STEPS.



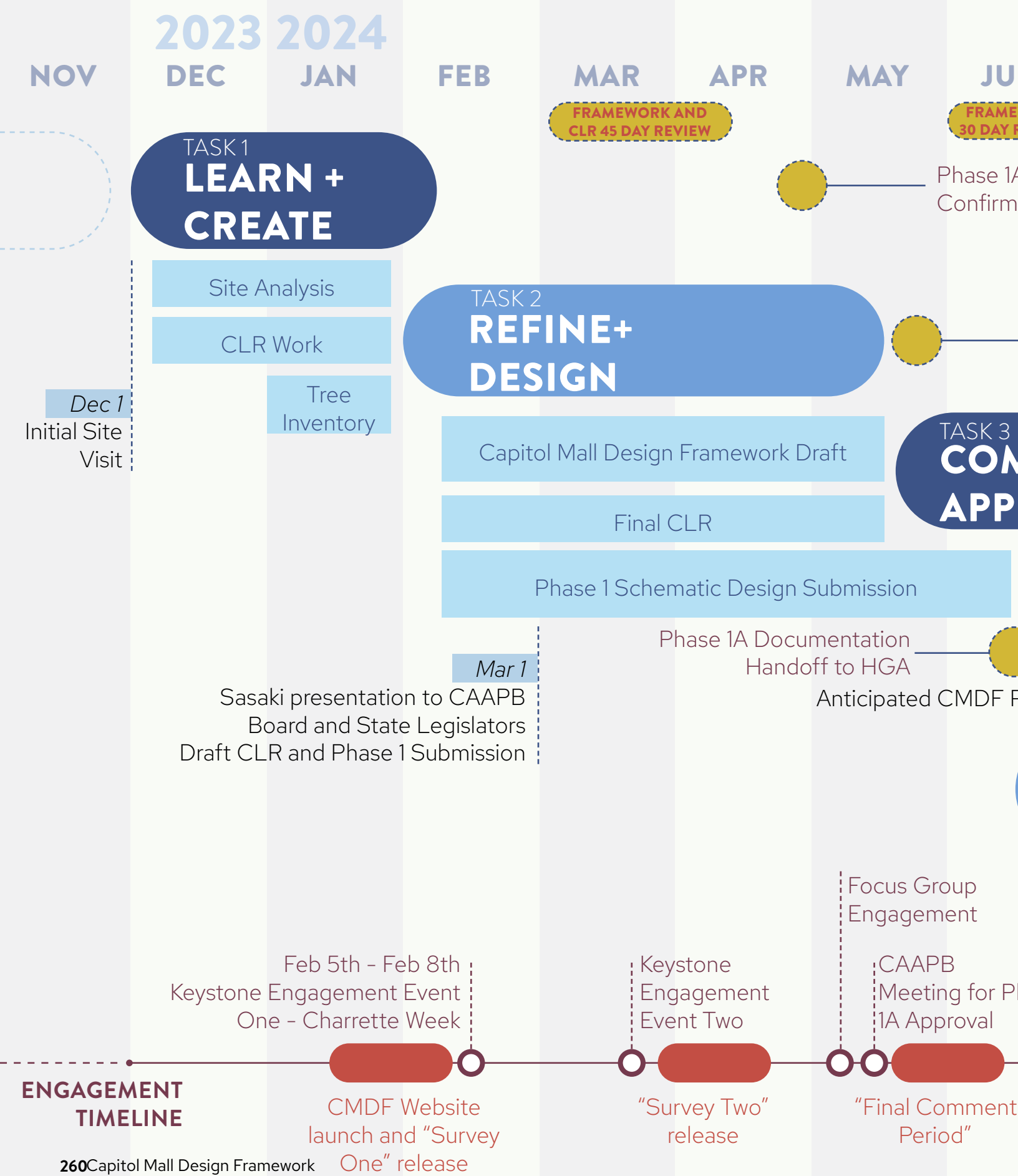
Figure 199: Executive Steering Focus Group, charrette week

The Design Framework process occurred over six months, from December 2023 to May 2024, with Phase 1 Schematic Design extending into the latter half of 2024. The process included three distinct design tasks and windows of engagement. Task 1: Learn and Create focused on rigorous site analysis and development of the draft cultural landscape report (see Chapter 3 for more details), in addition to extensive community and stakeholder engagement to develop a collective vision and foundation for the Capitol Mall Design Framework. Task 2: Refine and Design thoughtfully transformed this analysis and vision into a draft master plan. Community and stakeholder engagement during this task focused on bold supporting design moves to ensure comprehensive alignment with the original vision. Additionally, Task 2 included a final draft of the Minnesota Capitol Mall Cultural Landscape Report and a Phase 1 Schematic Design proposal. Task 3: Celebrate and Launch generated the final Design Framework for submission and approval (see Chapter 4 for more details). Engagement throughout this time included a thorough draft review by various stakeholders and unpacked specific design details with the larger community necessary to inform future work. Lastly, Task 4: Detailed Design and Implementation utilized this information to document Phase 1 Schematic Design, with projected implementation (or completed construction) by the end of the year.

Community and stakeholder engagement was integral to all these tasks. Thousands of diverse and distinct voices shaped the Design Framework and created a plan that is truly authored by the people of Minnesota. To achieve this, a multifaceted and robust engagement approach utilized digital communications, in-person events, surveys, stakeholder interviews and one-on-one conversations both within the Twin Cities and the larger state. This chapter outlines this engagement process in more detail by providing a deeper look into the people engaged as well as how their feedback directly shaped the Design Framework.

The Capitol Mall Design Framework built upon a robust series of previous engagement efforts, including the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Lower Rice Commercial Vitality Strategy, Capitol Rice Development Framework, Visitor Experience Survey, Capitol Connections and the Downtown Commons Study, Capitol Area Commutes, Capitol Area Stormwater Management Study, Public Engagement Task Force on Commemorative Works, and the Capitol Area Community Vitality Task Force.

PROJECT SCHEDULE



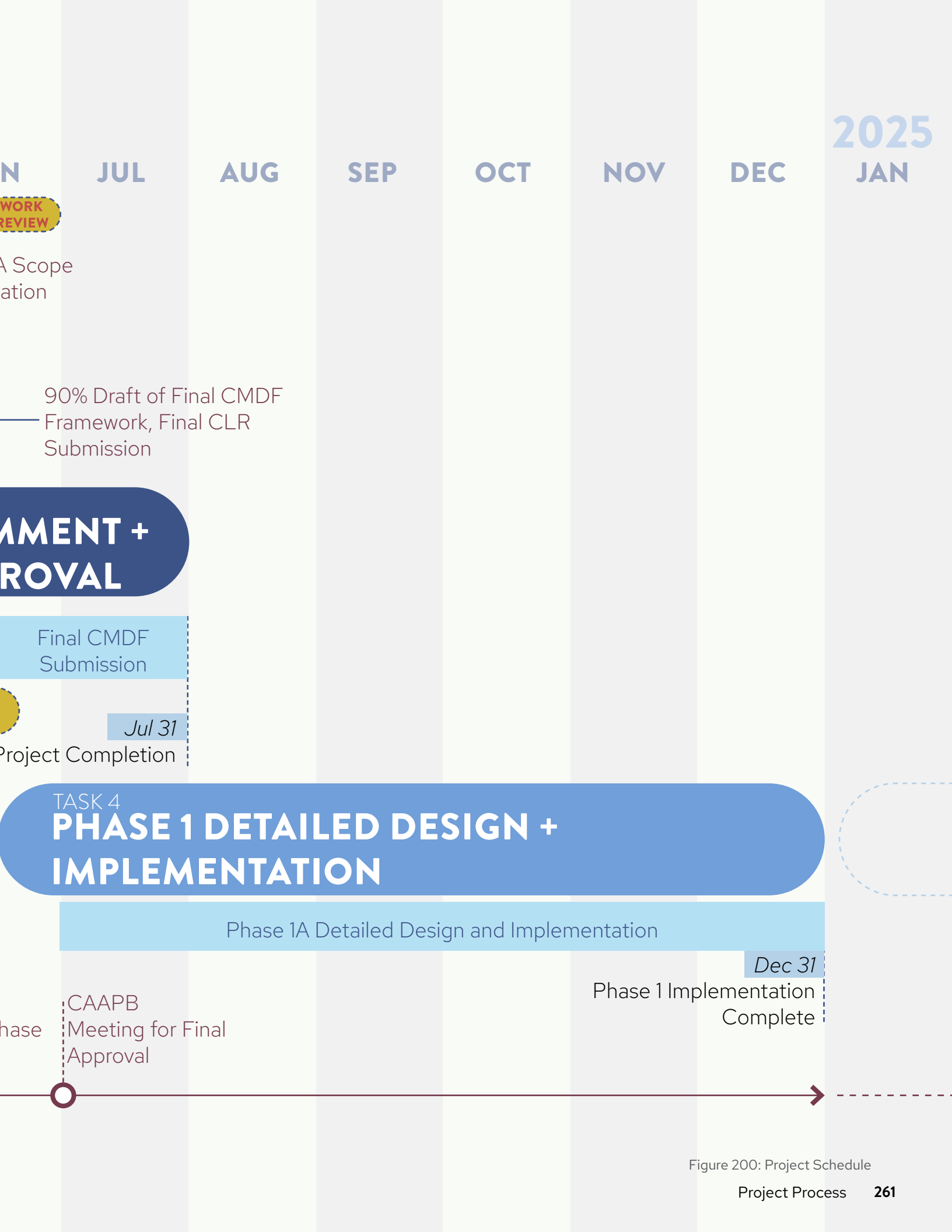


Figure 200: Project Schedule

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH



In-person
Survey

LEVEL 4: STATEWIDE ENGAGEMENT



Youth
Engagement

LEVEL 3: REGIONAL & INFORMAL ENGAGEMENT



Mobile
Engagement



Figure 201: Engagement Approach



Online Survey
& Website



Pop-up
Events



Roadshow

LEVEL 2: CITYWIDE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS



Keystone
Engagement
Event



Design
Charrette

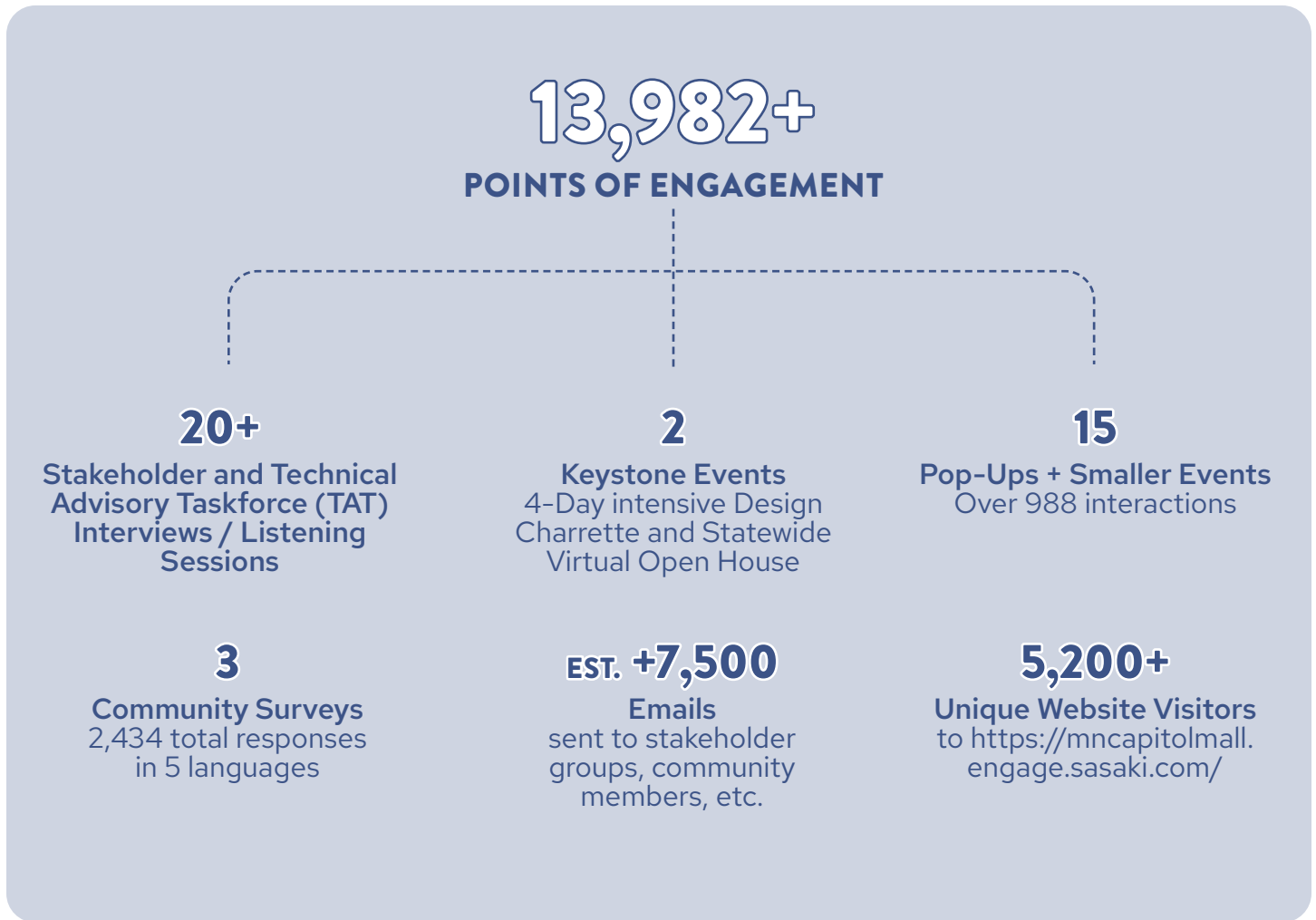
Stakeholder
Meetings



Focus Group

LEVEL 1: DESIGN CHARRETTE + FOCUS GROUPS

ENGAGEMENT + OUTREACH DASHBOARD



ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

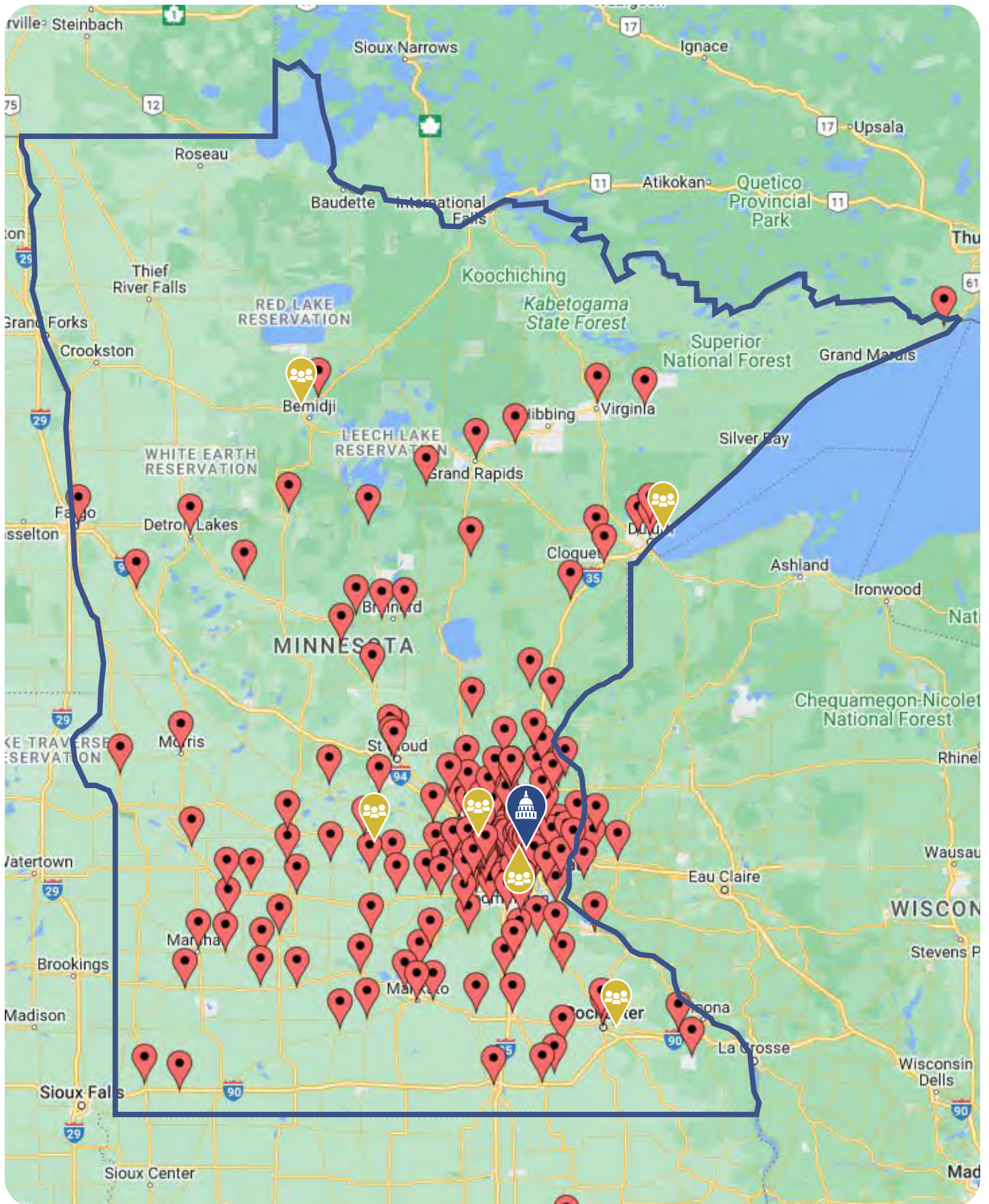
The engagement approach is rooted in four engagement principles:

- 1. Go to where people are.** This approach applies locally (e.g., holding pop-ups in locations where people already are, such as the LRT station and the Capitol) as well as statewide (e.g., communications through press and social media feeds where people are already subscribed).
- 2. Everyone has a right to be involved.** Everyone has a valid opinion, and we respect and actively listen to people. Our approach will take steps to eliminate barriers to engagement, including utilizing a variety of

media, languages, and considerations for access. We communicate technical information in ways that are easy for all people to understand.

Close the feedback loop. If we ask for feedback, we show how it impacts design outcomes. If input is not incorporated, we explain why it is not.

- 3. Partner.** We partner with local community leaders and organizations for knowledge and collaboration. This approach helps to engage with hard-to-reach communities and respects the engagement work already being done.



LEGEND



Minnesota Capitol Mall



Survey Response



In-Person Event

Figure 202: Statewide community engagement

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

VOICES OF MINNESOTA



Figure 203: Design Charrette participants generating framework ideas

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Stakeholders engagement was a critical component of the Design Framework process. Stakeholders include those who either interact with the Capitol Campus on a daily basis or represent a minority community whose voice might get lost in larger outreach efforts and thus require additional care. More specifically, stakeholders work on the Capitol Campus, operate a business or live nearby, lead various community groups or organizations, and/or are members of the African American, Indigenous American, Hmong, Latinx, and/or Somali communities.

Stakeholder engagement took many forms throughout the six-month process. At times, it included virtual meetings with technical experts who are intimately familiar with Capitol Mall operations and maintenance, while other instances explored much larger engagement strategies like a week-long design charrette that gathered all stakeholders in person to collaborate on a shared vision and path forward. Regardless of scale, the team carefully integrated all feedback into the Design Framework to ensure utmost relevancy and representation.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY TASKFORCE (TAT)

The Technical Advisory Taskforce, or TAT, included CAAPB Staff and Advisors; State of Minnesota Government Officials, included the Lieutenant Governor; State of Minnesota Department of Administration Commissioner's Office; Facilities Management; Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office; Office of Enterprise Sustainability; Capitol Security; Council on Disabilities; Ramsey County, Capitol Region Watershed District; and the City of St. Paul.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus Groups included members of the previously discussed TAT (above), as well as many others. More specifically, the Executive Steering Focus Group included elected officials and leaders; the Technical Focus Group included the remaining members of the TAT; the More Minnesota Focus Group included registered neighborhood associations, local community leaders, institutional leaders, and Tribal Nation representatives; and the Saint Paul Community group included local residents and nearby business owners—specifically those in the Indigenous American, African American, Hmong, Latinx, and/or Somali communities.

DESIGN CHARRETTE

The fast-paced Capitol Mall Design Framework process required the identification of organizing principles and a preferred framework for the Capitol Mall design before March 1, 2024. In order to achieve this, a design charrette gathered all stakeholders together in a multi-day process of listening, co-designing, critiquing, iterating, and refining ideas. This allowed the design team to move from baseline analysis to design direction in an abbreviated period of time with the confidence that key stakeholders had buy-in and their voices had been heard.



Figure 204: TAT members discussing initial framework goals



Figure 205: Saint Paul Community Focus Group discussing initial framework goals.



Figure 206: Design Charrette participants presenting framework ideas

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PHASE 1 PROCESS + RESULTS

OVERVIEW

The Phase 1 engagement effort spanned from December 15th to February 8th. Goals for this phase included building awareness for the Capitol Mall Design Framework and all upcoming engagement; gathering impressions of the Capitol Mall through targeted stakeholder outreach, community pop-ups, and a baselining Survey One. Key questions addressed community identity, current uses, and hopes for the future. Phase 1 concluded with a fast-paced Design Charrette week that combined public and invited audience engagement to rapidly ideate and create a preferred framework direction for the Capitol Mall. Specific engagement efforts included:

- HmongTown Marketplace Pop-Up
- Frogtown Community Center Pop-Up
- Saint Paul Winter Carnival - Kids and Family Day Pop-Up
- Midtown Global Market Pop-Up
- Capitol River Council Presentation
- Survey One (1,441 partial and complete responses)
- Keystone Event One: Charrette Week (Four Days)
- 12 Stakeholder and TAT interviews and listening sessions
- Social media toolkit sent to 64 stakeholder groups
- Press release sent from CAAPB to multiple media outlets

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

Major takeaways across all engagement efforts include:

- **MORE THINGS TO DO.** People want more contemporary artwork; picnicking, seating, food, and restaurants; trees, gardens, pollinators, and native plants; social events; and kid and family-friendly programming.
- **MORE KID-FRIENDLY.** People want child-friendly spaces, specifically areas where kids can run, climb, and play.

- **MORE REPRESENTATION.** The Capitol Mall does not reflect an inclusive history or Minnesota's current diversity. People want more inclusive representation.
- **IMPROVE SAFETY.** Safety and connectivity were found to be interwoven topics, with most safety concerns related either to LRT stations or high traffic crossings.
- **IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY.** Parking and handicap accessibility are issues that needs to be improved. The steep slopes, especially around the Upper Mall, are difficult to traverse.
- **REACH MORE BIPOC.** Future engagement efforts need to reach more statewide audiences and BIPOC communities.
- **CULMINATING THEMES OF VITALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSIVITY.** People want a Capitol Mall that is vibrant with many, diverse things to do and see while also representing the broad range of people and communities in Minnesota.
- **BOLD DESIGN MOVES:**
 - Right size the roads and reinforce them with trees.
 - Convert Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard into a community shared street.
 - Reinvigorate nodes which connect the community to the Capitol Mall in each direction.
 - Transform Cass Gilbert Park into a multi-generational space for play, recreation and views.
 - Celebrate Minnesota's connection to water in all seasons.
 - Sculpt topography to improve accessibility, seamlessly integrate security and provide a platform for events.
 - Establish a cultural walk that draws visitors in and provides opportunities for representation.
 - Enhance and streamline the visitor experience.
 - Create a gradient of planting strategies that support cultural programming, sustainable maintenance and human comfort goals
 - Introduce new strategies to represent Minnesota's cultural and ecological diversity.

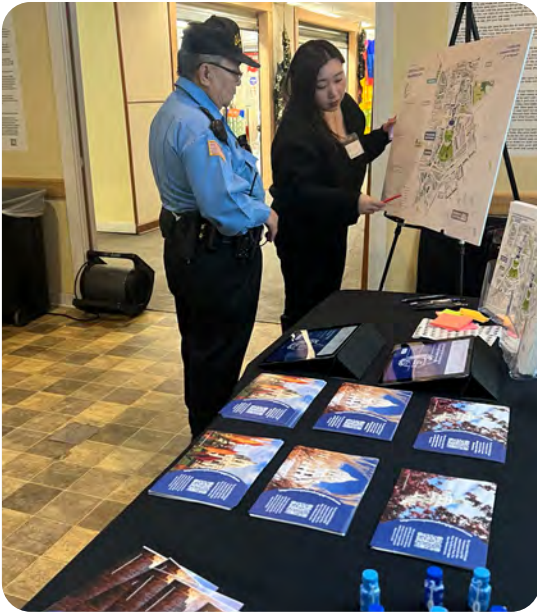


Figure 207: HmongTown Marketplace Pop-Up



Figure 208: Frogtown Community Center Pop-Up



Figure 211: Saint Paul Winter Carnival Pop-Up



Figure 212: Design Charrette participants quickly generating ideas



Figure 209: More Minnesota Focus Group discussing initial framework ideas



Figure 210: Design Team and other stakeholders synthesizing Design Charrette takeaways to present back to participants

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PHASE 2 PROCESS + RESULTS

OVERVIEW

The Phase 2 engagement effort spanned from February 9th to April 15th. Goals for this phase included refining the results of the charrette into a preferred framework direction with CAAPB sign-off before March 1st; expanding upon the Capitol Mall Design Framework with additional visualizations (bold design moves), directing community members to join our mailing list; and building interest in the Capitol Mall through educational materials on the website. Additionally, Phase 2 included advertising the design for a proposed Phase 1 implementation; launching Survey Two to gather targeted feedback about the overall direction; and expanding statewide engagement. Key questions addressed: What resonates and what does not?; What is the overall “character” of the Mall?; Is the Mall Framework doing what it should?; What is missing?; What are the biggest priorities for near term investment? Specific engagement efforts included:

Twin Cities Pop-Ups

- The Black Market, Capitol Rotunda, Capitol Rice LRT Station

Greater Minnesota Pop-Ups

- Duluth: UMD Hockey Pre-Game at Amsoil Arena, Bemidji: The Great Thaw Craft Fest, Willmar: Kids Connection Experience at Uptown Mall, Rochester: The Rochester Thaw Music Festival

Other Efforts

- Survey Two (993 partial and complete responses)
- 7 Stakeholder and TAT Meetings / Interviews (not including Keystone Event Two)
- Keystone Engagement Event Two (Focus Groups and Statewide Virtual Townhall)
- Social media toolkit sent in two rounds to 70 stakeholder groups
- 2+ press releases sent from CAAPB to multiple media outlets. Before each pop-up engagement event, social media content sent to local CBOs and local media outlets

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

Phase 2 engagement had many similar takeaways to Phase 1. Significant takeaways include:

- **SUPPORT FOR ALL BOLD DESIGN MOVES.** 75%+ of people think each Bold Design Moves makes the Capitol Mall more lively, inclusive, and diverse.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE CULTURAL WALK AS A PHASE 1.** People want water features; plantings representing Minnesota’s ecological and agricultural heritage; flags of the eleven Tribal Nations; and educational signage included in the Cultural Walk.
- **INTERSTATE-94 BRIDGES NEED IMPROVEMENT.** Many said the Capitol Mall feels disconnected and isolated from the surrounding city, especially Downtown.
- **SEARS SITE IMPROVEMENTS.** Redeveloping the vacant Sears building and parking lots is a top priority for many. The Rice St and University Ave intersection is called out as feeling unsafe and unwelcoming. People want to see this important entry to the Capitol Campus improved.
- **BETTER INTEGRATED SECURITY FEATURES.** Some suggest the Capitol itself is unwelcoming, with an imposing fence and security that makes it feel closed off to the public.
- **ROAD DIETS.** Streets like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard are too wide and need road diets, traffic calming, safer pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes.
- **NEED BASIC AMENITIES.** Public restrooms, drinking fountains, trash cans, seating, and food options are lacking. People want to see these added throughout to make the space more comfortable to spend time.
- **ADD MORE SHADE TREES.** People want more shaded areas to rest and relax.
- **POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT CASS GILBERT MEMORIAL PARK AND A DESTINATION PLAY AREA**
- **CONCERNS ABOUT COST AND GENTRIFICATION.** While there was overall excitement for the improvements to the area, there was some concern about overall cost to tax-payers and gentrification pushing local communities out.



Figure 213: Capitol Rotunda Pop-Up



Figure 214: The Black Market Pop-Up



Figure 215: Capitol Rice LRT Pop-Up



Figure 218: Duluth UMD Hockey Pre-Game Pop-Up



Figure 217: Bemidji Craft Fair Pop-Up



Figure 216: Willmar Kids Connection Experience Pop-Up

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PHASE 3 PROCESS + RESULTS

OVERVIEW

The Phase 3 engagement effort spanned from April 16th to June 20th. Goals for this phase included communicating what was heard in previous phases; expanding Indigenous Peoples engagement; developing a draft Capitol Mall Design Framework; presenting the draft Capitol Mall Design Framework in a way that connects stakeholder input to outcomes; and launching a final survey. Key questions addressed: Did we miss anything? What resonates and what does not? Do you support this direction? Specific engagement efforts included:

- Tribal Leadership Weekly Meeting Presentation/ Discussion
- Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow – Minneapolis American Indian Center (maicnet.org) Pop-up
- MUID Arts & Culture Committee Meeting Presentation/Discussion
- Division of Indian Work Honoring Our Youth Celebration Pop-up
- Survey Three (TBD partial and complete responses)
- 4 Stakeholder and TAT Meetings / Interviews

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

This phase is still on-going and will be updated as soon as it concludes on June 20th. Current takeaways include:

- **ADDRESS HISTORICAL ERASURE.** Recognize Native American sovereignty and military service; display tribal flags; include Indigenous languages in signage; acknowledgment and/or memorial for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Relatives; • Removing “offensive” statues, etc.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION.** Include Minnesota’s natural history and utilize open space for native plants and wildlife.
- **IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY.** The walk up to the Capitol Building is long and steep and needs benches and natural stopping points.
- **INCORPORATE WATER.** This idea also ties in to Minnesota’s name, Mni Sota Makoce (Dakota) “land where the waters reflect the clouds.”
- **DETER VANDALISM.** Ensure materials are resistant to vandalism
- **BETTER SIGNAGE OVERALL.** Better signage is needed for parking and getting around.

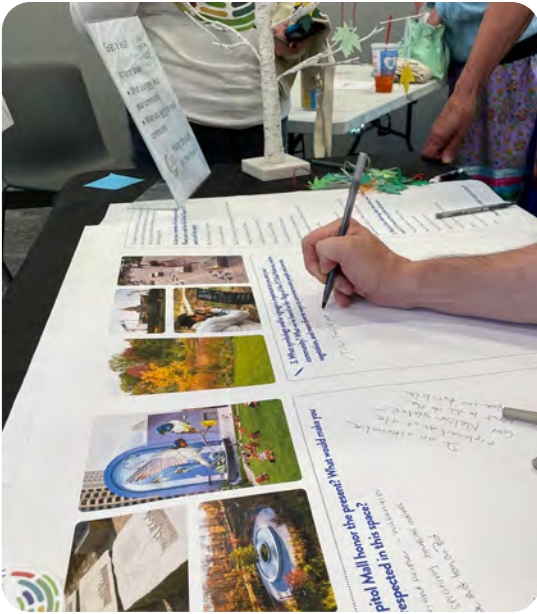


Figure 219: Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow Pop-Up



Figure 220: Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow Pop-Up



Figure 221: Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow Pop-Up

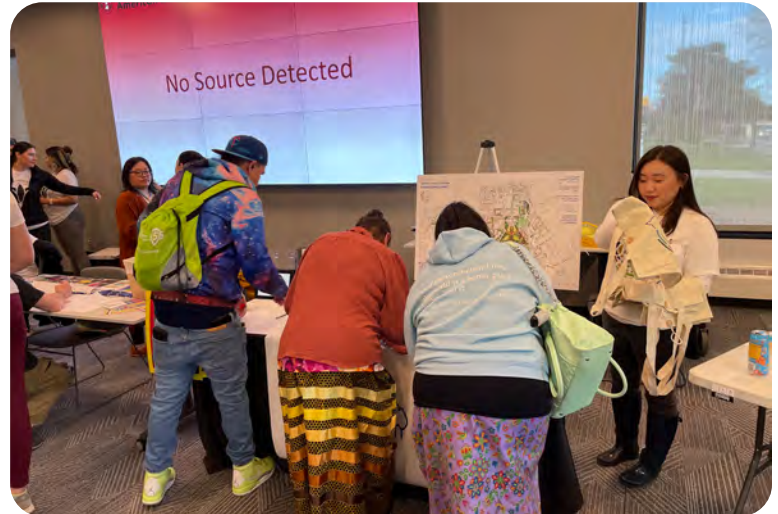


Figure 224: Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow Pop-Up



Figure 223: Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow Pop-Up



Figure 222: Grand Reopening Open House & Powwow Pop-Up