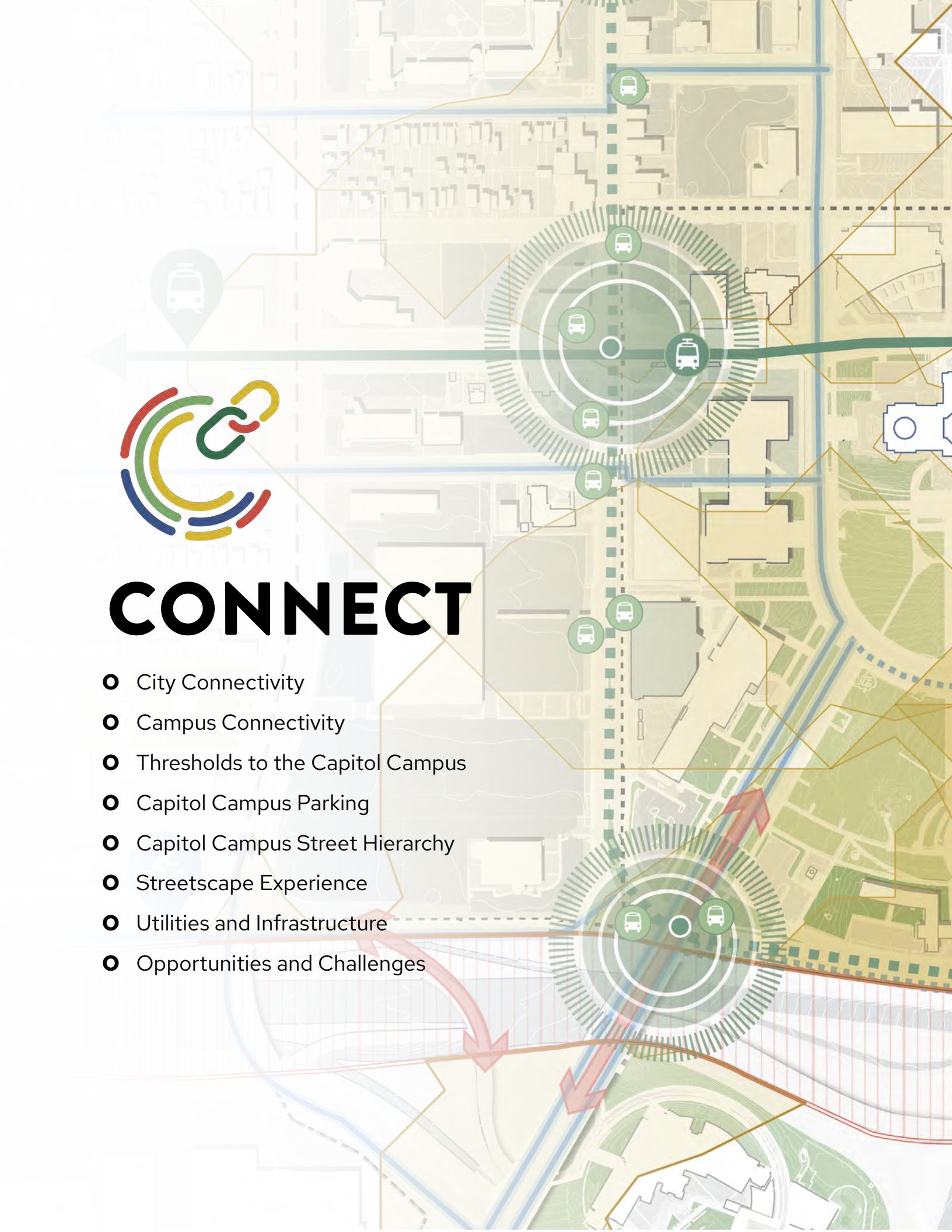


CONNECT

- City Connectivity
- Campus Connectivity
- Thresholds to the Capitol Campus
- Capitol Campus Parking
- Capitol Campus Street Hierarchy
- Streetscape Experience
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Opportunities and Challenges

The Capitol Mall will forge connections between Minnesotans and their democratic institutions through shared experiences, heritage and physical connections that link the Capitol to the surrounding city and state.

CITY CONNECTIVITY

CAPITOL DISTRICT AND CITY-WIDE TRANSIT

The Capitol Campus sits at the confluence of several regional transit lines and interstates. The existing LRT Green Line (light rail) connects Downtown Saint Paul to Minneapolis via the Capitol Campus, with the most immediate stops located at Rice Street and University Avenue as well as Robert Street and E 14th Street. Interstates 94 and 35E reinforce the southern edge of the Capitol Campus. Downtown Minneapolis is accessible in about a 25-minute car ride while the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Airport is accessible in about 15 minutes. Additionally, various other cities and regional hubs can be easily reached from the Capitol Campus, including Little Canada, Woodbury, West Saint Paul, and the Mall of America. Cyclists can travel from the Capitol Campus to Downtown Saint Paul and the Mississippi River (Haháwakpa) within ten minutes. Metro Transit has various planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes coming online in the next three or so years that either travel through the Capitol Campus or have stops within walking distance. These include the BRT G-Line and BRT Purple Line. The G-Line will travel down Rice Street, with several stops located mere steps from the Capitol Mall. It should be noted that while the Capitol Campus benefits from its proximity to various transit modes, some (like the Interstates, current design of key arterial streets, and even Light Rail corridors), create barriers to adjacent neighborhoods and communities. This will be discussed in more detail later on in the chapter.

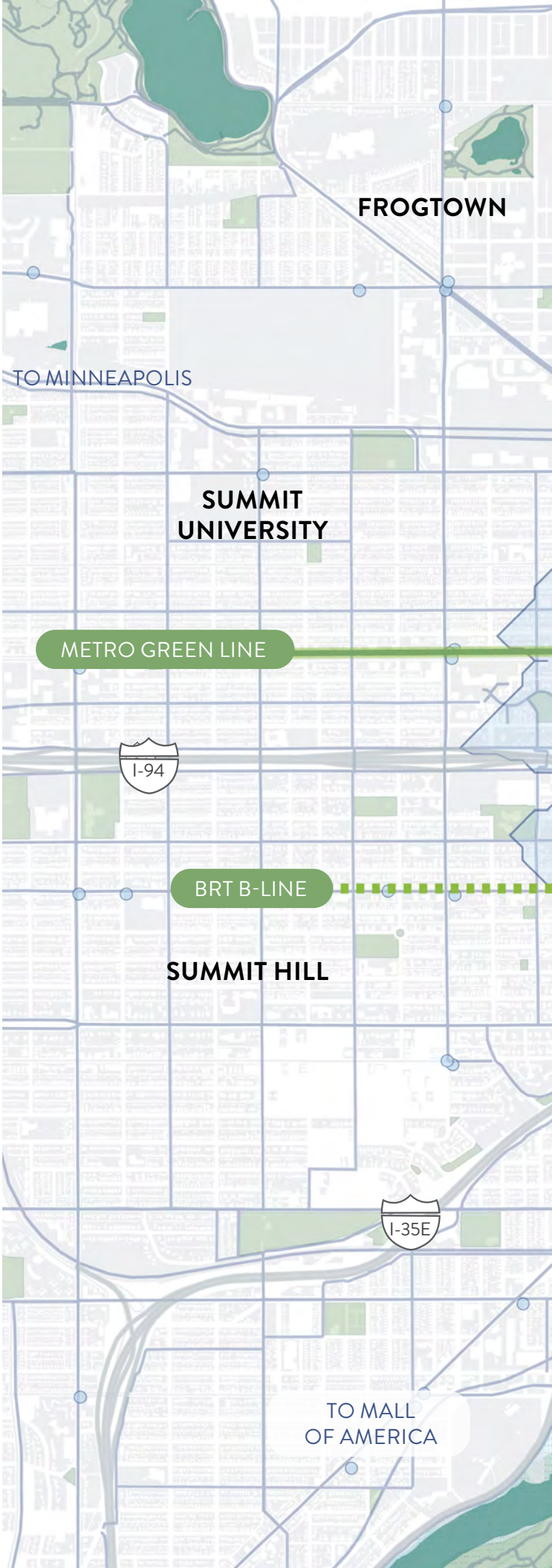


Figure 225: City Connectivity

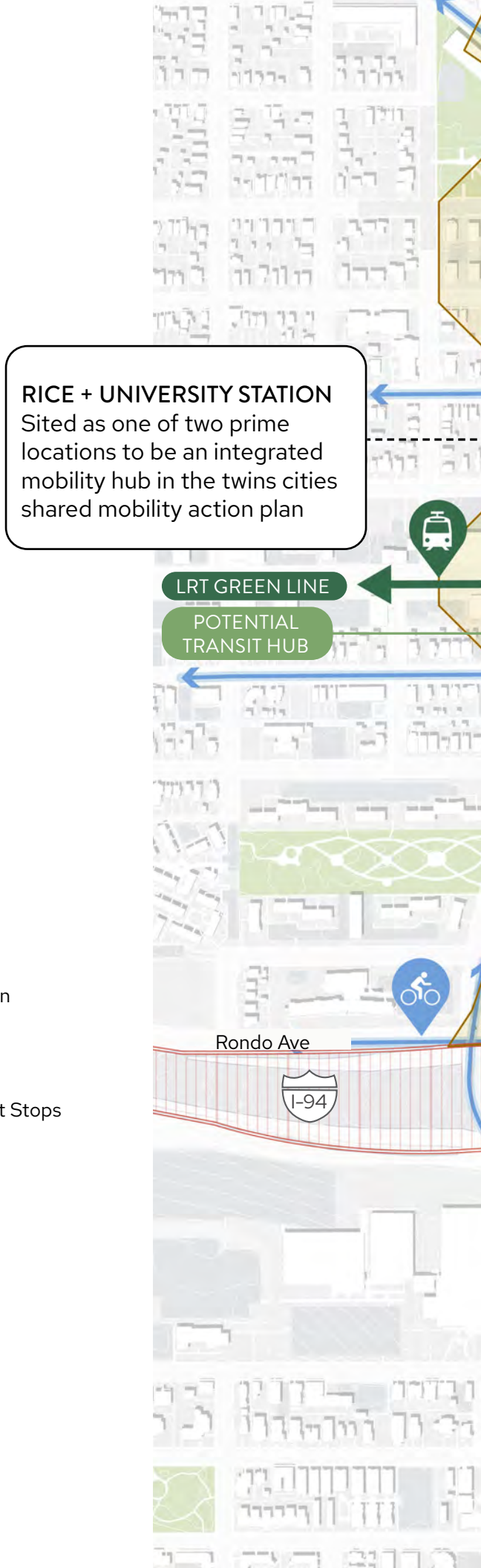
Source: *2040 Comp Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area*. CAAPB, June 2021.


TO LITTLE CANADA
I-35E
PAYNE - PHALEN
PLANNED BRT G-LINE
PLANNED BRT PURPLE-LINE
CAPITOL
10-MINUTE
PLANNED BRT GOLD LINE
DAYTON'S BLUFF
TO WOODBURY
TO HASTINGS
15-MINUTE
10-MINUTE
10
DOWNTOWN SAINT PAUL
Mississippi River
AIRPORT
PLANNED BRT G-LINE
52
TO WEST SAINT PAUL
Mississippi River
N
0'
500'
1000'
2000'

CAMPUS CONNECTIVITY

TRANSPORTATION, ACCESS AND ARRIVAL POINTS

The Capitol Mall is accessible via multiple modes of transportation. Much of the Capitol Mall is accessible within a five-minute walk of various Capitol Campus thresholds. Visitors and workers can take the LRT Green Line, which has three stations within a five-minute walk of the Capitol Mall. Metro Transit operates various bus routes with numerous stops throughout the Capitol Campus. Additionally, Groome Transportation operates an airport shuttle that drops off at Cedar Street in front of the Centennial Office Building. As previously discussed, the planned BRT Green Line and Purple Line will pass through the Capitol Campus, with the corner of Rice Street and University Avenue slated to become an integrated mobility hub. The Saint Paul Bicycle Plan outlines various existing bikeways as well as numerous planned bikeways. Some of these planned bike lanes are improvements to existing routes, from upgrading shared conditions to creating separated and protected bikeways. Lastly, Interstates 94 and 35E, while making vehicular travel easier, create a substantial barrier to Downtown Saint Paul and other southern neighborhoods. These places are only accessible by bridge or interstate crossing.



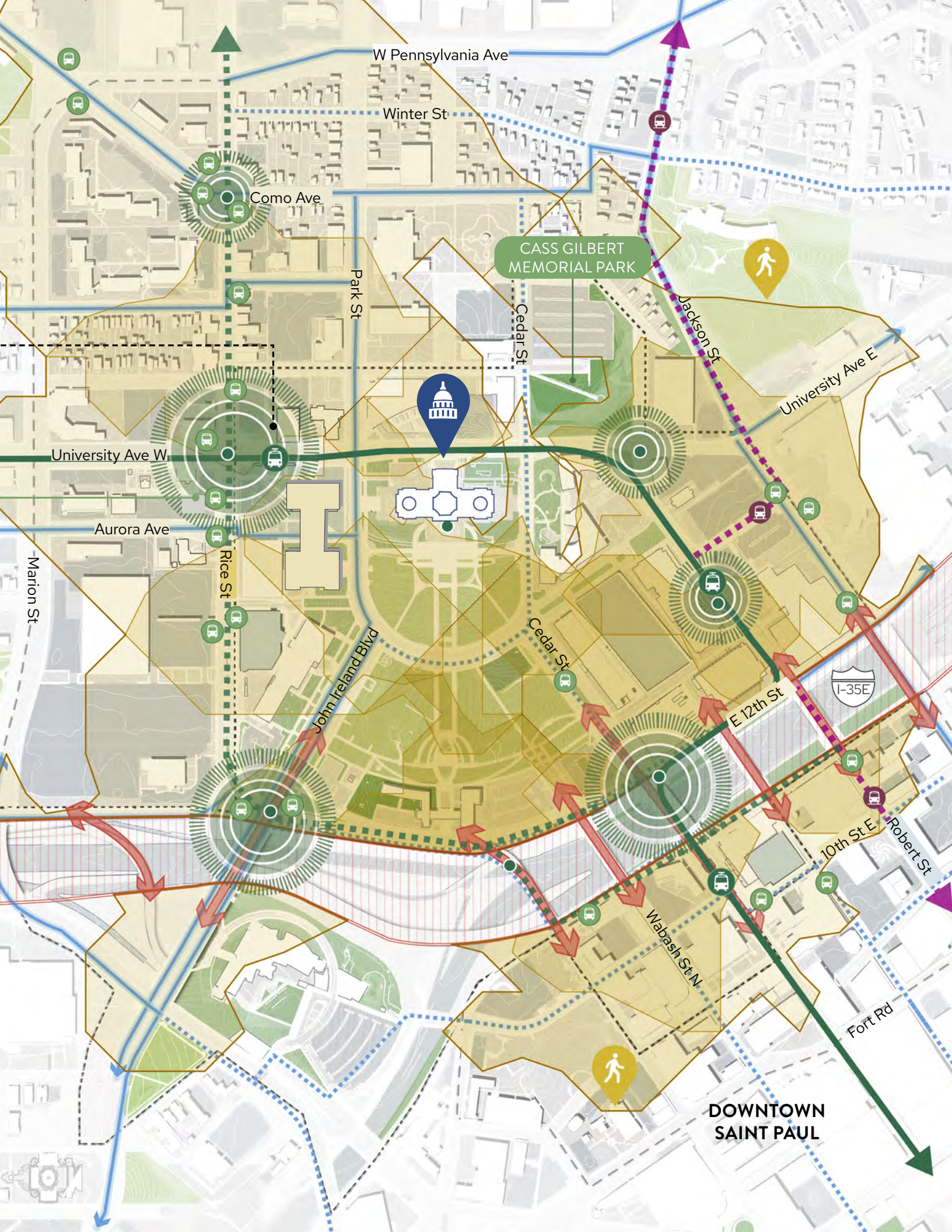
LEGEND

- CAAPB Boundary
- Metro Green Line
- BRT Green Line - Planned
- BRT Purple Line - Planned
- Bikeways
- Bikeways - Planned
- Interstate Crossing
- LRT Green Line - Transit Station
- BRT Purple Line - Transit Stop
- Bus Stop
- 5-Minute Walkshed from Transit Stops
- Interstate Barrier
- Arrival Points
- 5-Minute Walkshed Base Point

N 0' 125' 250' 500'

Figure 226: Campus Connectivity

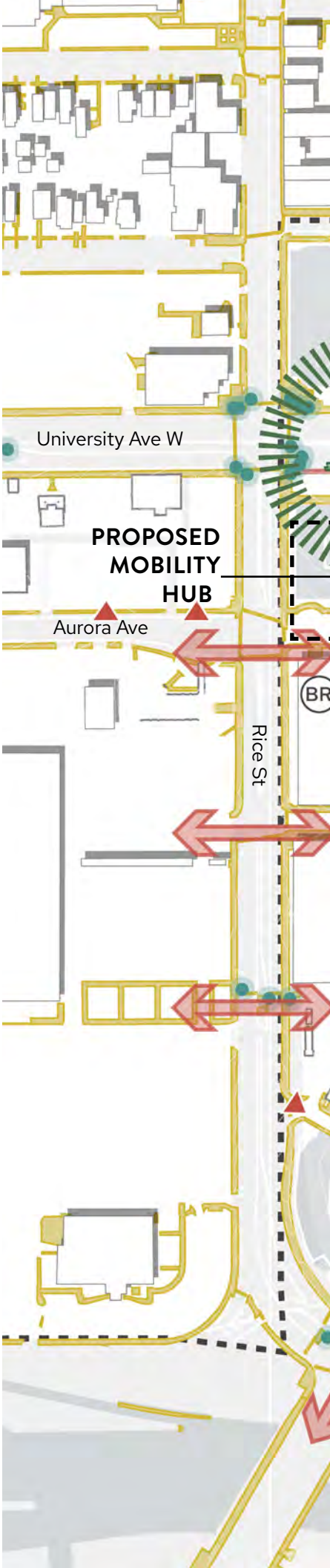
Source: *Saint Paul for All 2040 Comprehensive Plan*. City of Saint Paul, Nov 2020.
Source:chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/ https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2024-03/Feb%202023%20Bike%20Plan%20for%20webapge.pdf


W Pennsylvania Ave
Winter St
Como Ave
CASS GILBERT MEMORIAL PARK
Park St
Cedar St
Jackson St
University Ave E
University Ave W
Aurora Ave
Rice St
Marion St
John Ireland Blvd
Cedar St
I-35E
E 12th St
10th St E
Robert St
Wabash St N
Fort Rd
DOWNTOWN SAINT PAUL

THRESHOLDS TO THE CAPITOL CAMPUS

ON-SITE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Pedestrian circulation within and around the Capitol Mall includes an existing sidewalk network and an underground tunnel system that can be used to travel between various buildings. Much of the sidewalk network is limited to edges of major public spaces with a few opportunities to travel inward, including the significant north-south axis that runs from the Capitol Building to the Veterans Service Building. Crosswalk and/or sidewalk improvements are needed in multiple locations, including along Rice Street, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and the interstates. Campus buildings include ADA entrance ramps; however, it should be noted that they are often separated from primary entrances given the steep grades along major circulation routes. A more recent effort along Aurora Promenade added scissor ramps to improve ADA accessibility to the Capitol Building.



LEGEND

- Crosswalk Improvement Needed
- Gaps in sidewalk
- Underground Tunnel
- Keycard Access
- Public Access
- ADA Ramp to Building
- Parking Entrance
- Bike Rack
- Transit Station
- Pedestrian Crossing Signal

N 0' 125' 250' 500'

Figure 227: Campus Thresholds

Source: *Saint Paul for All 2040 Comprehensive Plan*. City of Saint Paul, Nov 2020.
Source: Minnesota Department of Administration. mn.gov/admin/citizen/buildings-grounds/maps/.


KEY CARD ACCESS TO CAAPB BUILDING
PUBLIC ACCESS TO CAPITOL BUILDING
NEW STATE BUILDING
Park St
Cedar St
Robert St
Aurora Promenade
Rev Dr MLK Jr Blvd
John Ireland Blvd
Cedar St
E 12th St
I-35E
Wabasha St N
BR

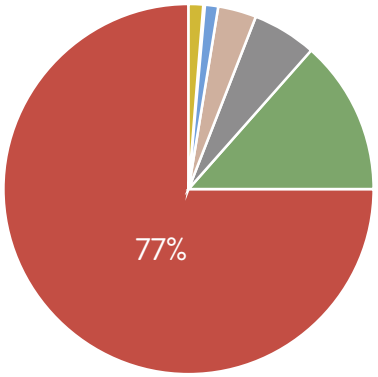
CAPITOL CAMPUS PARKING

PARKING SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION

Several parking options in and around the Capitol Mall support the high percentage of commuters who choose single-occupancy vehicles when traveling to and and from the Capitol Campus. Over 45 acres of land is dedicated to parking in the Capitol Campus, with 11,000+ parking stalls available in public and private lots or ramps (2040 Comprehensive Plan) throughout the campus. Private and public parking ramps (garages) and surface parking lots are located along the perimeter of the Capitol Mall in addition to metered street parking. Recommended disability parking for visitors is located in the Minnesota Senate Building Parking Garage just north of the Capitol Building. Existing parking supply meets 85% occupancy rate threshold during legislative session, while other times it sees high rates of parking vacancy. Two lots have been rezoned as potential open space adjacent to the Veterans Service Building.

MODE OF COMMUTE

Source: *Capitol Complex Commuter Survey*. MN GreenCorps, May 2019.



77%	Car
11.5%	Transit
5.23%	Carpool
1.38%	Bike
1.61%	Walk
3.15%	Other

LEGEND

- Private Parking Lot
- Public Parking Lot
- Private Parking Ramp
- Public Parking Ramp
- ADA Parking
- Parking Entrances
- ADA Ramp Entrances
- EV Parking
- 3-Minute Walkshed from Parking Lots
- Pedestrian Crossing Signals

Figure 228: Capitol Campus Parking

Source: *Saint Paul for All 2040 Comprehensive Plan*. City of Saint Paul, Nov 2020.

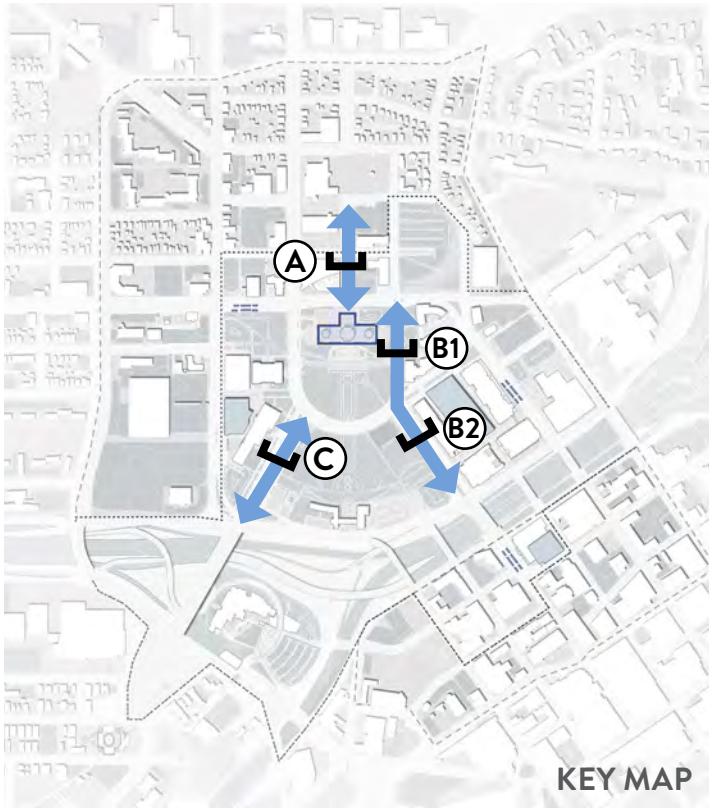
Source: *Minnesota Department of Administration*. https://mn.gov/admin/citizen/buildings-grounds/maps/.


W Pennsylvania Ave
Winter St
RECOMMENDED DISABILITY PARKING FOR VISITING THE STATE CAPITOL OR MN SENATE BUILDING
MEETS 85% OCCUPANCY RATE THRESHOLD DURING LEGISLATIVE SESSION
LOT TEMPORARILY CLOSED
Park St
Jackson St
Cedar St
353 STALLS
260 STALLS
20 STALLS
205 STALLS
250 STALLS
University Ave E
University Ave W
92 STALLS
92 STALLS
887 STALLS
132 STALLS
Aurora Ave
99 STALLS
404 STALLS
41 STALLS
Robert St
Marion St
Rice St
1,481 STALLS
EV
514 STALLS
John Ireland Blvd
Cedar St
I-35E
34 STALLS
E 12th St
86 STALLS
83 STALLS
65 STALLS
478 STALLS
Rondo Ave
10th St E
Robert St
I-94
34 STALLS
147 STALLS
ZONED AS POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE
ZONED AS POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE
Fort Rd
DOWNTOWN SAINT PAUL

CAPITOL CAMPUS STREET HIERARCHY

STREET TYPOLOGIES

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan categorizes streets based on ownership and future streetscape experience. Ownership includes either Municipal (City of Saint Paul), County, or State/Federal. Coordination with multiple organizations and governmental agencies is required to encourage and implement improvements to the street network in the Capitol Area. Future streetscape experience includes Civic Streets (primary view corridors and pedestrian ways), Mixed-use Corridors (high-quality transit service while fostering a pedestrian scale), and Institutional Streets (access to state and office buildings and an exceptional pedestrian experience with high-quality street furnishings). See the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for more details.



A. NORTH CAPITOL BOULEVARD

Located north of University Avenue and terminating at the Capitol Building, North Capitol Boulevard is a municipal 80-foot right-of-way (ROW) and proposed civic street. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

- Isolated sidewalks with minimal pedestrian amenities
- Minimal street lighting with primary views reserved for vehicles, not pedestrians

B1. CEDAR STREET AT AURORA PROMENADE

Located just east of the Capitol Building, Cedar Street at Aurora Promenade is a municipal 76-foot ROW and proposed civic street. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

- Oversized drive lanes
- Unprotected sidewalk conditions (no street buffer) with minimal pedestrian amenities
- Steep slopes that occasionally exceed ADA compliance

B2. CEDAR STREET AT LOWER MALL

Located along the eastern edge of the Lower Capitol Mall, Cedar Street at the Lower Mall is a municipal 100-foot ROW and proposed civic street. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

- No protected and separated bike lanes, which are recommended by the Saint Paul Bike Plan
- Primary Capitol Views reserved for vehicles, not pedestrians
- Narrow sidewalks despite primary pedestrian circulation path

C. JOHN IRELAND BOULEVARD

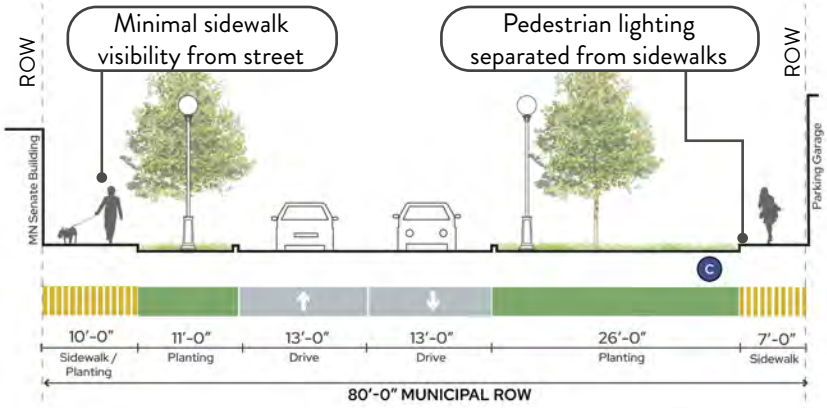
Located along the western edge of the Lower Capitol Mall, John Ireland Boulevardis a municipal 174-foot ROW and proposed civic street. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

- Unprotected bike lanes, as opposed to separated and protected bike lanes recommended by the Saint Paul Bike Plan
- Primary Capitol Views reserved for vehicles, not pedestrians

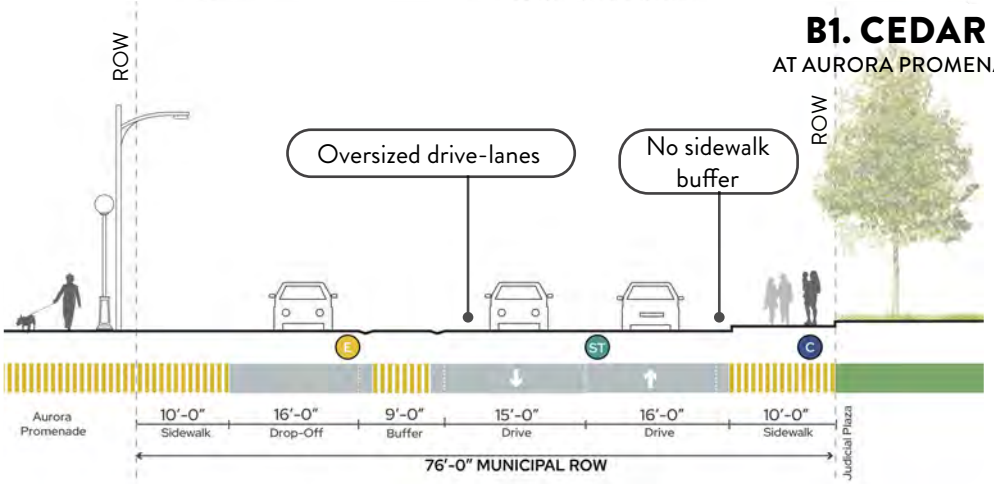
LEGEND

- W — Water
- ST — Stormwater
- E — Electrical
- C — Underground Communication
- S — Sewer

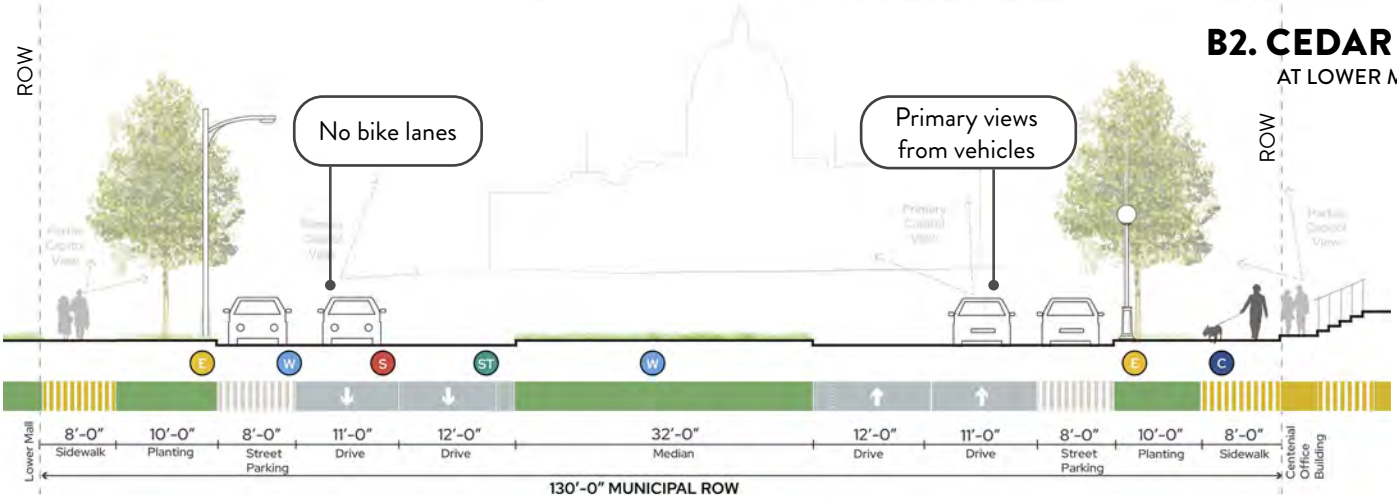
A. N CAPITOL BLVD



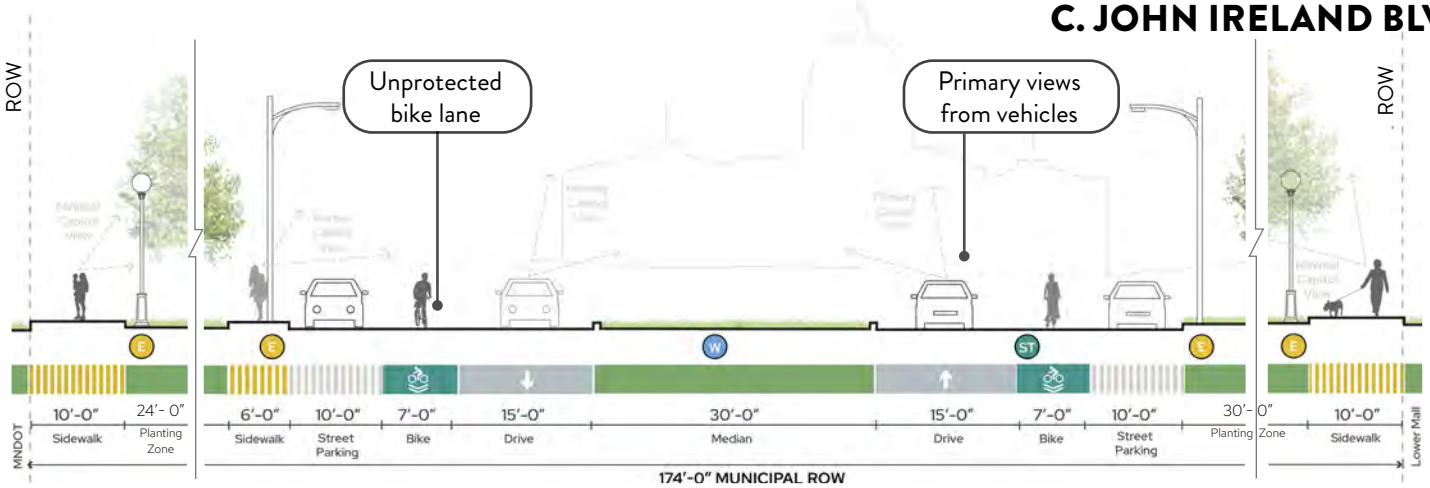
B1. CEDAR ST
AT AURORA PROMENADE



B2. CEDAR ST
AT LOWER MALL

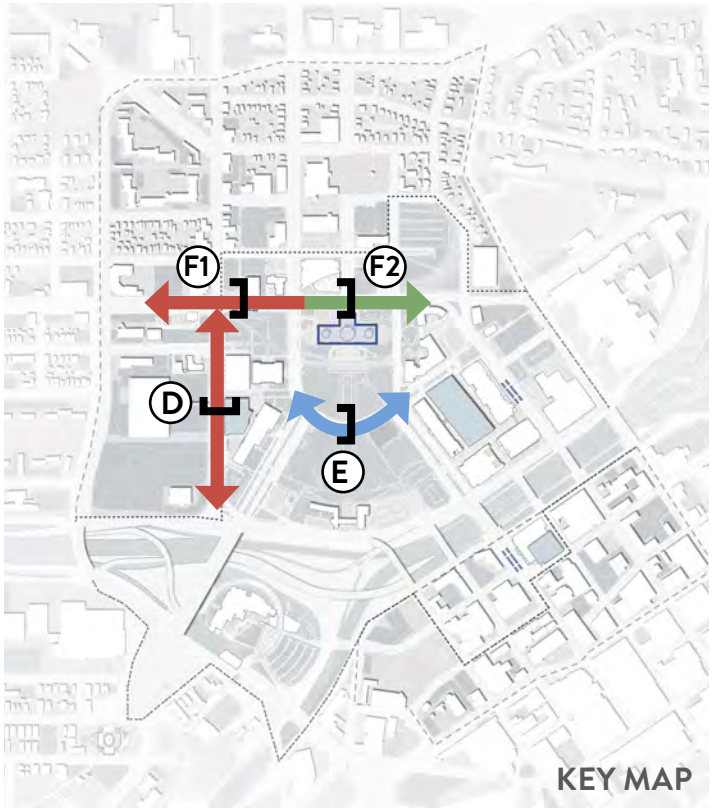


C. JOHN IRELAND BLVD



CAPITOL CAMPUS STREET HIERARCHY

STREET TYPOLOGIES



D. RICE STREET

Located adjacent to the vacant Sears Lot, Rice Street is a municipal ROW and proposed mixed-use street that fluctuates in width from 89 to 105 feet. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

- No dedicated BRT lanes, which are specified by the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Metro Transit
- Minimal sidewalk amenities
- No protected and separated bike lanes, which are recommended by the Saint Paul Bike Plan

E. REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BOULEVARD

Located between the Upper and Lower Capitol Malls, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard is a municipal 110-foot ROW and proposed civic street. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

- Minimal sidewalk amenities
- No protected and separated bike lanes, which are recommended by the Saint Paul Bike Plan
- Too many lanes for not enough traffic
- Minimal security barriers

F1. UNIVERSITY AVENUE AT NORTH CAPITOL BOULEVARD

Located just north of the Capitol Building, University Avenue at North Capitol Boulevard is a county 60-foot ROW and proposed institutional street that hosts the LRT Green Line. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

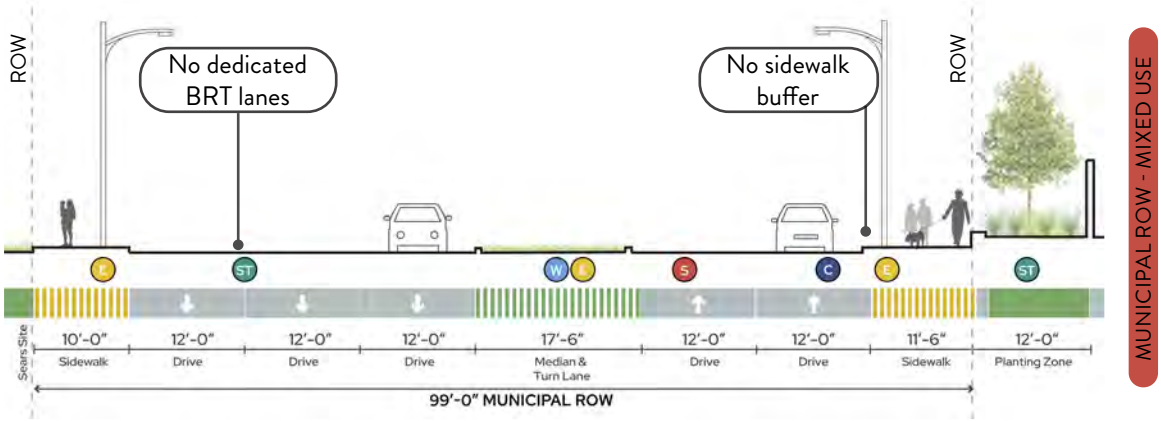
- Oversized drive lanes and sidewalk gaps
- Minimal sidewalk amenities
- LRT Green Line creates a barrier to northern neighborhoods

F2. UNIVERSITY AVE W AT RICE ST

Located northwest of the Capitol Building, University Avenue at Rice Street is a county 110-footROW and proposed institutional street that hosts the LRT Green Line. Existing street conditions include the following (most of which do not support civic street recommendations):

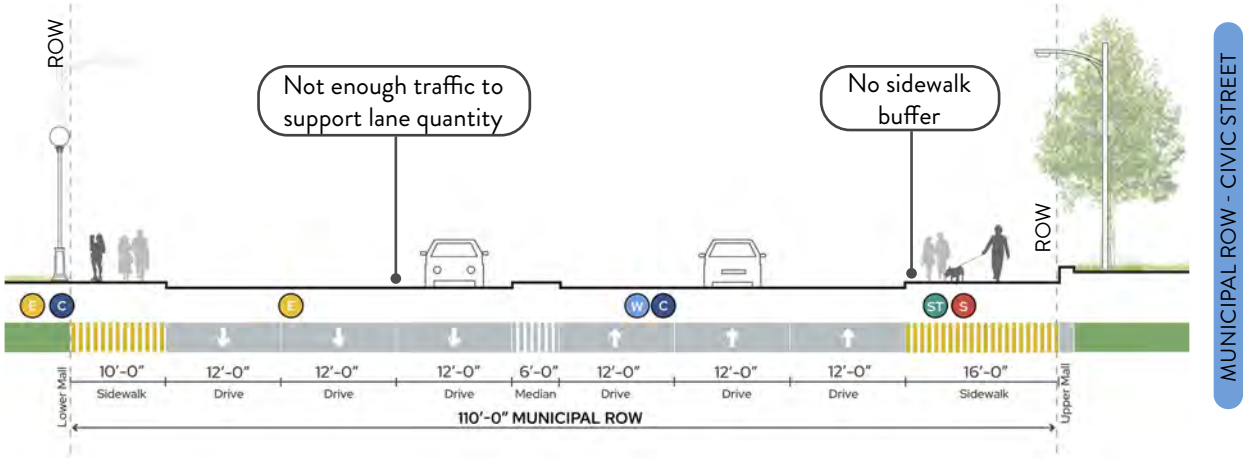
- Oversized drive lanes
- Minimal sidewalk amenities
- Unresolved pavement (sidewalk) that could be re-allocated

D. RICE ST



MUNICIPAL ROW - MIXED USE

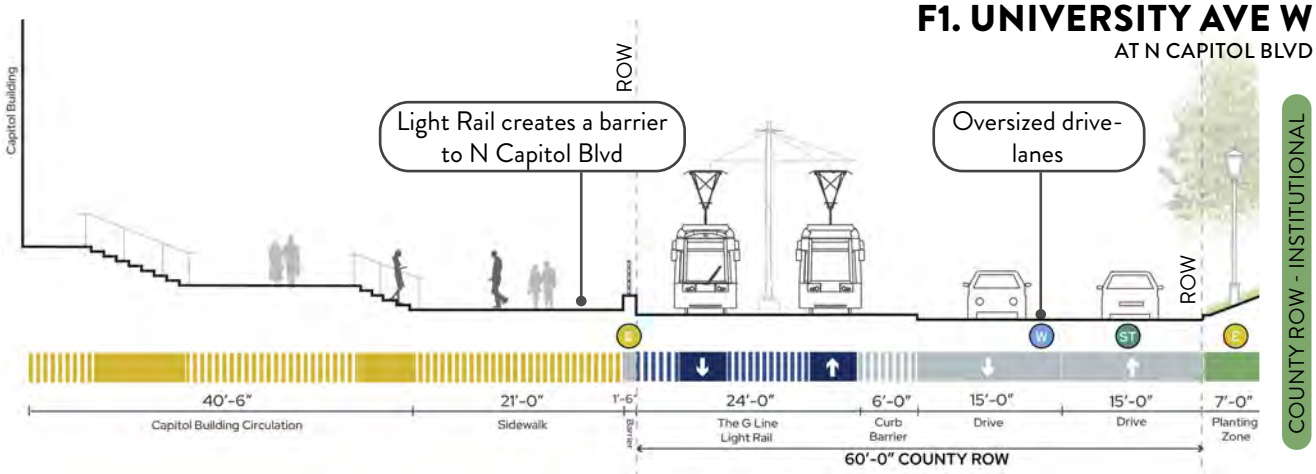
E. REV DR MLK JR BLVD



MUNICIPAL ROW - CIVIC STREET

F1. UNIVERSITY AVE W

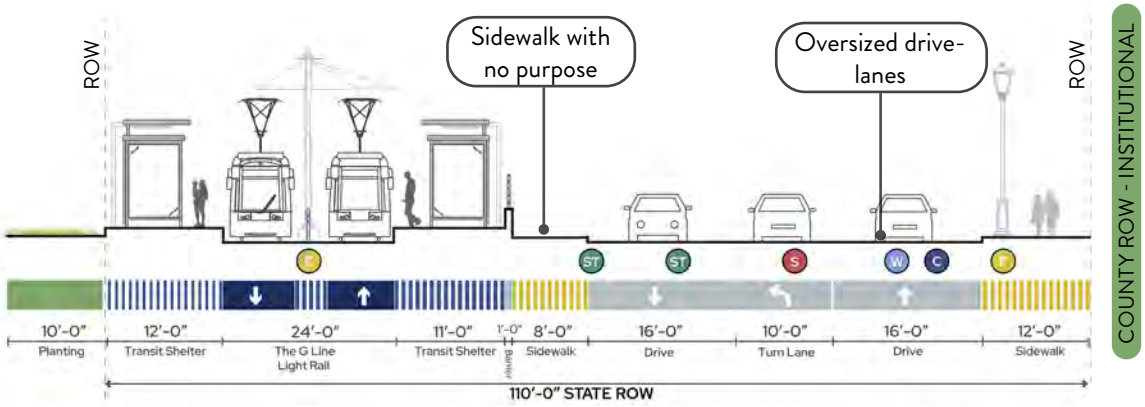
AT N CAPITOL BLVD



COUNTY ROW - INSTITUTIONAL

F2. UNIVERSITY AVE W

AT RICE ST



COUNTY ROW - INSTITUTIONAL

LEGEND

- W — Water
- ST — Stormwater
- E — Electrical
- C — Underground Communication
- S — Sewer

STREETSCAPE EXPERIENCE

JOHN IRELAND BOULEVARD

John Ireland Boulevard is not only a significant pedestrian route, connecting the Minnesota History Center and the Capitol Campus, but also a historic viewshed corridor. That said, the street contains very few pedestrian amenities and lacks any kind of tree canopy until West 12th Street. These conditions, in addition to a loud interstate, create a pedestrian experience that is noisy, exposed, and generally uncomfortable. Lastly, cars have a primary view of the Capitol Building while pedestrians often have a partial or obstructed view. This does not support the boulevard as a historic viewshed.

SAINT PETER'S BRIDGE

Saint Peter's Bridge is both loud from nearby Interstate traffic and isolating for pedestrians as they traverse the narrow sidewalk. There are no pedestrian amenities.

LRT STATIONS

Community engagement throughout the Design Framework process identified LRT stations within the Capitol Campus as the spaces people feel most unsafe. The streetscape environments around the LRT stations are obviously infrastructure-heavy and uncomfortable to pedestrians, lacking tree canopy and other welcoming amenities.

UNIVERSITY AVENUR AND ROBERT STREET

University Avenue and Robert Street is a streetscape mostly dedicated to hard infrastructure. The LRT Green Line runs along the southern edge of the ROW with security barriers, solid walls, and no sidewalk access. The northern edge of the street does contain a sidewalk but has no amenities or tree canopy. Furthermore, the sidewalk is walled on both sides and creates an isolated and uncomfortable pedestrian experience.

COMO AVENUE AND RICE STREET

Como Avenue and Rice Street is a streetscape experience mostly dominated by vehicles with very little space for pedestrians. The sidewalks are narrow with no buffer or protection from the street, and include no pedestrian amenities or street trees. Light poles, traffic signals and cracked pavement create accessibility challenges.

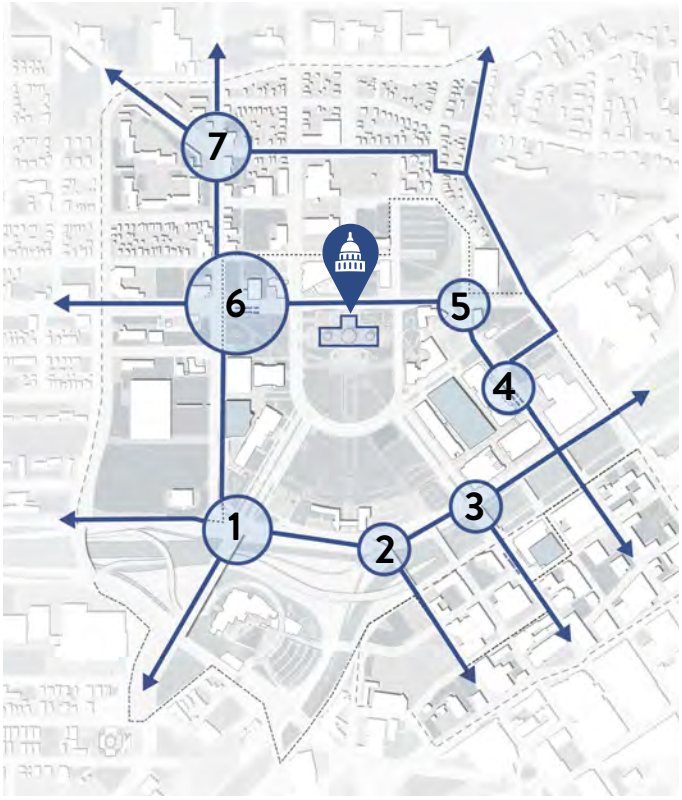


Figure 229: John Ireland Blvd

Source: Damon Farber. *John Ireland Blvd.* Jan 2024.

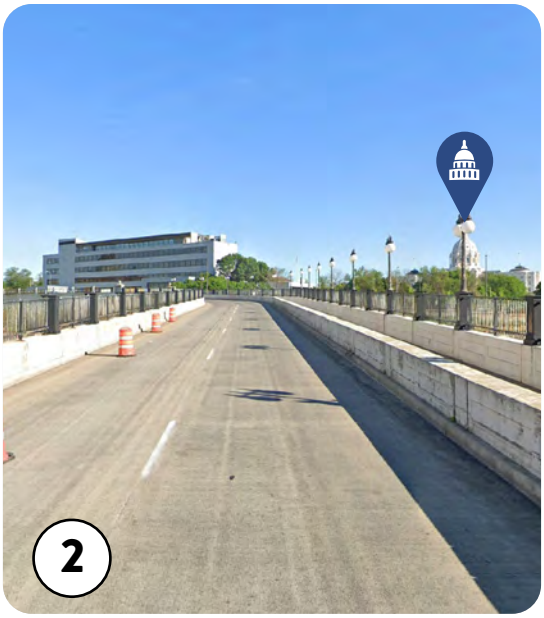


Figure 230: Saint Peter's Bridge

Source: *Google Maps*, www.google.com/maps/.

Figure 231: LRT Station at Cedar St and 10th St

Source: Damon Farber. *Cedar St.* Jan 2024.

Figure 233: LRT Station at Robert St and 14th St

Source: *Google Maps*, www.google.com/maps/. Accessed Jan. 2024.

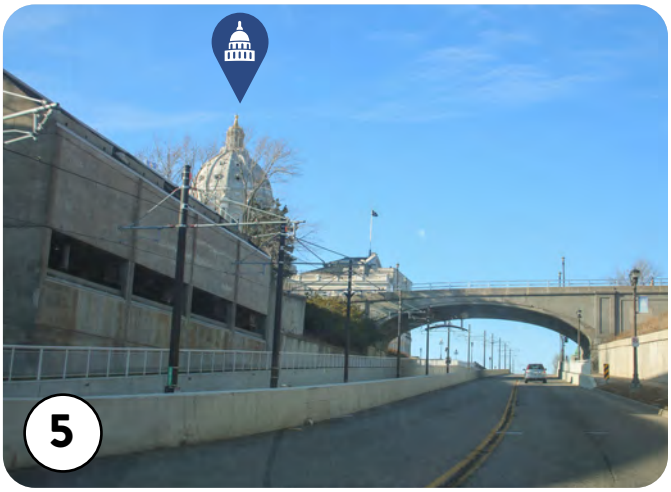


Figure 234: University Ave W and Robert St

Source: Damon Farber. *University Ave W.* Jan 2024.

Figure 232: LRT Station at Rice St and University Ave

Source: Damon Farber. *LRT Station.* Jan 2024.

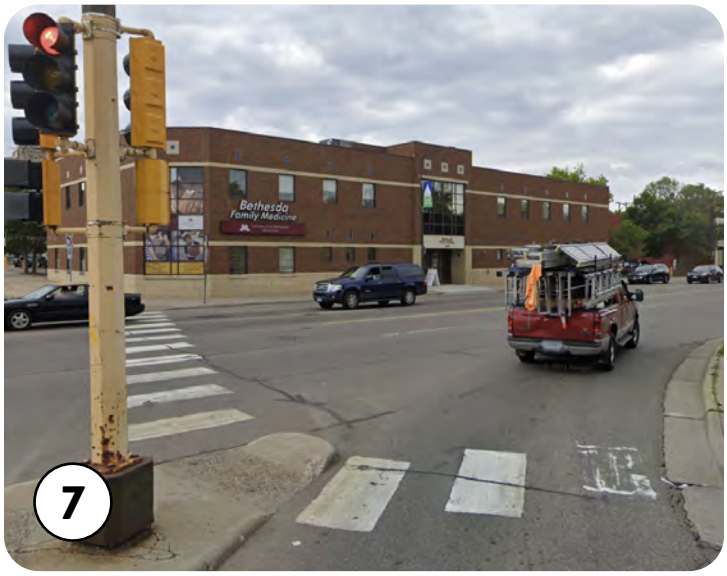


Figure 235: Como Ave and Rice St

Source: *Google Maps*, www.google.com/maps/. Accessed Apr. 2024.

UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

UNDERGROUND CONSTRAINTS

Figure 236: Capitol Area Utilities and Infrastructure

Source: *Movement through Capitol Complex Tunnel System.* https://mn.gov/admin/assets/COMPLEX.12_tcm36-206202.pdf.

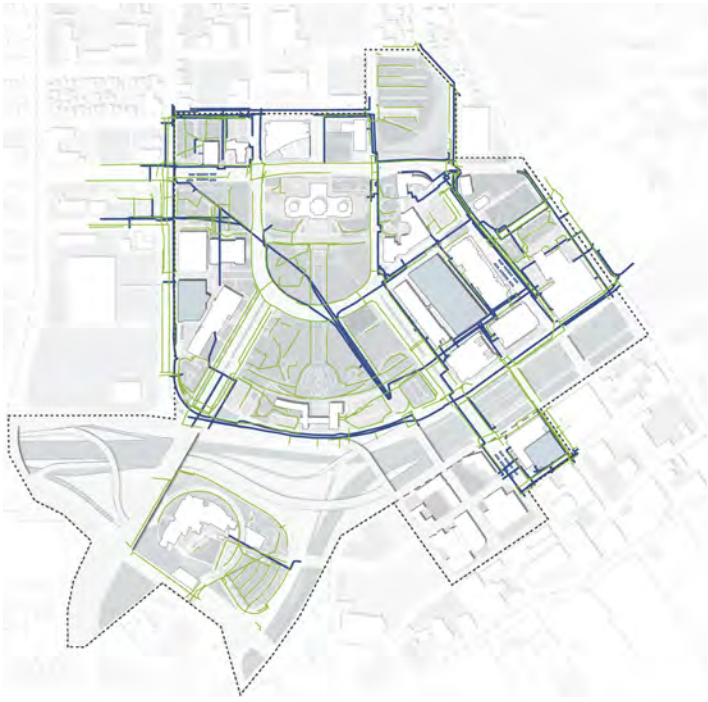
Source: *Minnesota Department of Administration*. https://mn.gov/admin/citizen/buildings-grounds/maps/.

WATER + STORMWATER

- Water
- Stormwater

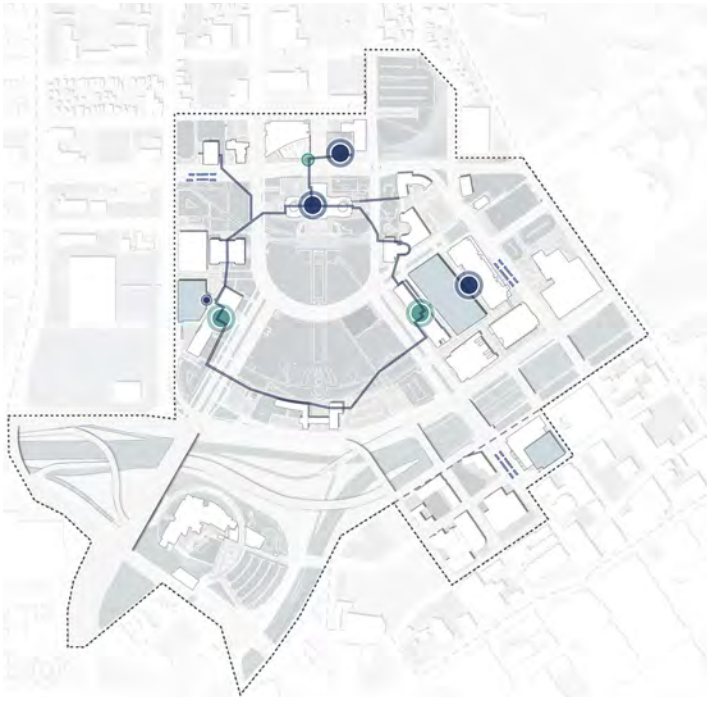
SEWER

ELECTRICAL + COMMICATION



- Underground Communication
- Electrical

TUNNEL SYSTEM



- 10-Foot Underground Tunnel
- Keycard Access
- Public Access

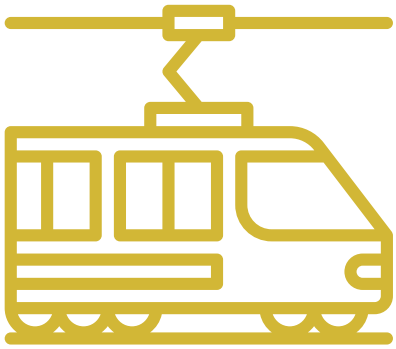
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OVERARCHING OPPORTUNITIES AND/OR CHALLENGES TO GUIDE PRINCIPLE DESIGN FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES MOVING FORWARD ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Transit **accessibility**
- Built and perceived **barriers** exist around the Capitol Campus
- **Arrival points** to the Capitol Area are **uncomfortable** and **infrastructure-heavy**
- **Pedestrian circulation is incomplete** on the Capitol Campus
- **Roads are oversized** for current traffic demands and do not prioritize the pedestrian

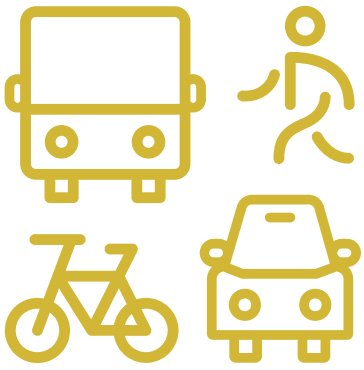
PRINCIPLE STRATEGIES

Moving forward from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan



ESTABLISH MULTI-MODAL ARRIVAL POINTS TO CONNECT LOCAL AND REGIONAL CORRIDORS

PRESERVE AND INTEGRATE HISTORICAL RELEVANCE WITH GREEN CORRIDORS ALONG RICE STREET AND MAJOR AXES



ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION HIERARCHY WITH COMPLETE STREET FRAMEWORK AND WELL-DEFINED OPEN SPACES

ENHANCE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE CAPITOL CAMPUS AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS BY TRANSFORMING PARKING SPACES

CONNECT PRINCIPLE STRATEGY

ESTABLISH MULTI-MODAL ARRIVAL POINTS TO CONNECT LOCAL AND REGIONAL CORRIDORS

STRATEGIES

- Transform Rice Station into a mobility hub that draws regional attention. It should be treated with a clear sense of arrival and indicate a clear route to the campus.
- Provide a welcoming pedestrian experience at multi-modal arrival points using active landscape and building frontages.
- Create nodes of activity by promoting green corridors along transit lines and major axes within a 5- to 10-minute walk.
- Expand axes to the north and east neighborhoods by integrating sidewalks and bikeways to connect to major trails and corridors outside of the Capitol Campus.
- Design for growth by having efficient and accessible stops and coordinated signals, and integrate smart technology with dedicated parking spaces.
- Facilitate movement for all visitors with dedicated bike lanes and separation from fast-moving vehicles along all vehicular lanes
- Encourage green transportation by providing infrastructure like charging stations, dedicated parking and drop offs for rideshare.

Figure 237: Dilworth Park

Source: Ewing, James. *Dilworth Park, Kieran Timberlake,* https://kierantimberlake.com/page/dilworth-park

CONNECT PRINCIPLE STRATEGY

PRESERVE AND INTEGRATE HISTORICAL RELEVANCE WITH GREEN CORRIDORS ALONG RICE STREET AND MAJOR AXES

STRATEGIES

- Utilize tree allees to draw pedestrians into the central mall axis to reinforce the historic viewshed corridor.
- Integrate Rice Street as a green corridor by promoting pedestrian-friendly crosswalks and landscape buffers with areas of respite through a complete street framework.
- Develop human-scaled green corridors that have a welcoming streetscape, share similar visual cues with the campus, and integrate to the whole park system.
- Establish arrival points as visual entrances to the Capitol Campus with strategic placement of landscape buffers and urban street trees to frame views.
- Promote sustainable stormwater management with green infrastructure, such as healthy trees, bioswales and permeable surfaces that are efficient to maintain.
- Incorporate smart technology to improve efficiency and accommodate changes in traffic volume on streets.

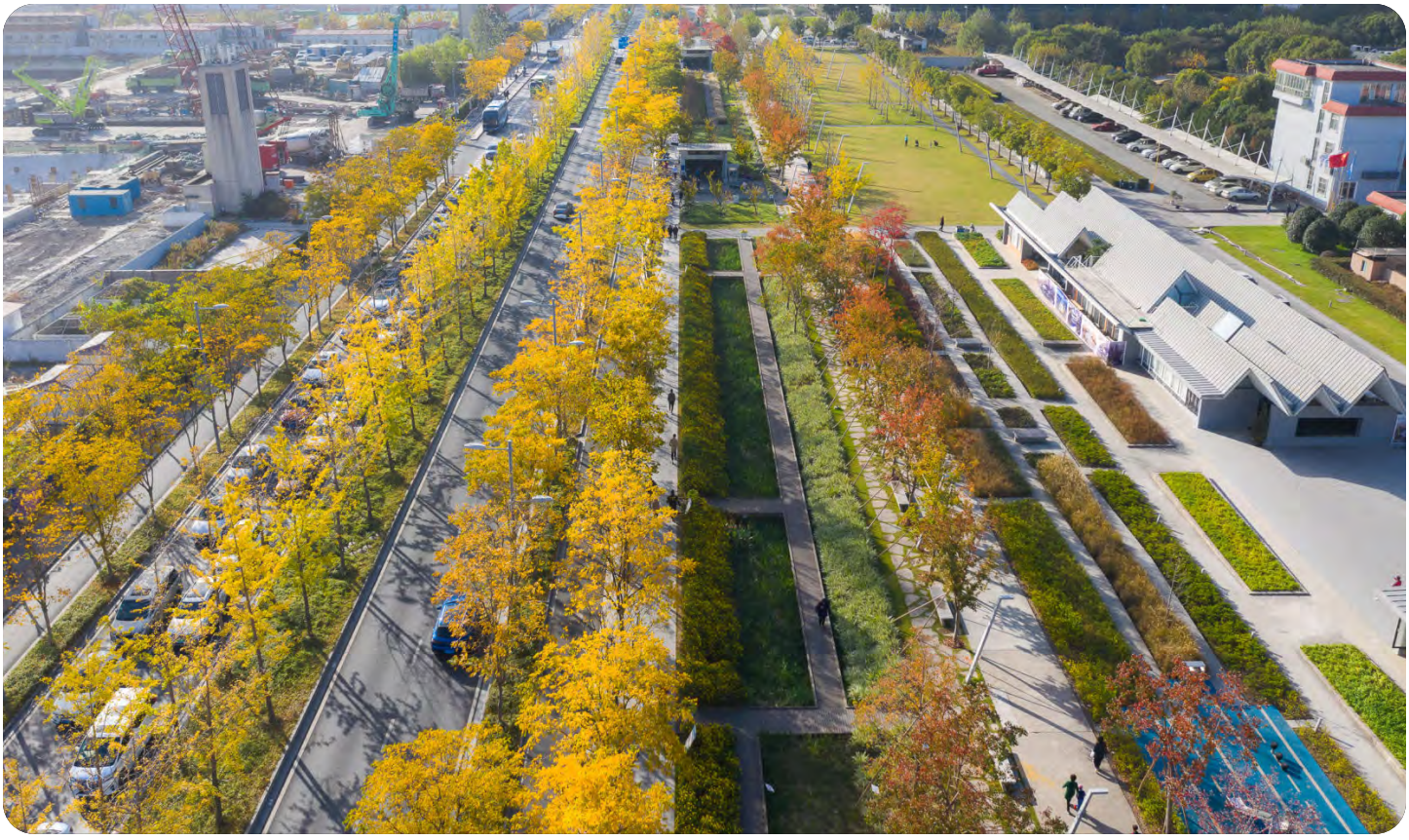


Figure 238: Xuhui Runway Park

Source: Sasaki. *Xuhui Runway Park*, *Sasaki,* https://www.sasaki.com/projects/xuhui-runway-park/

CONNECT PRINCIPLE STRATEGY

ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION HIERARCHY WITH COMPLETE STREET FRAMEWORK AND WELL-DEFINED OPEN SPACES

STRATEGIES

- Create sidewalks that are accessible for all ages, abilities and weather conditions. The campus should promote a vibrant walking environment through comfortable and human-scaled design with inviting building frontages.
- Establish Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a shared street with removable bollards, drop offs, etc.
- Provide bike racks and bike lockers that are accessible from each building entrance (within 300 feet) to encourage alternative modes of micro-mobility.
- Ensure crosswalks are at each major intersection, with traffic signals and stop signs. Crosswalks should be placed every 200 to 300 feet to encourage pedestrian movement across areas.

Figure 239: Boston Convention Center Street Corridor

Source: *Boston Convention Center Street Corridor.* Sept. 2016. *Sasaki, https://www.sasaki.com/projects/boston-convention-and-exhibition-center-d-street-corridor/*

CONNECT PRINCIPLE STRATEGY

ENHANCE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE CAPITOL CAMPUS AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS BY TRANSFORMING PARKING SPACES

STRATEGIES

- Comprehensively analyze the parking demand for the campus and identify the barriers for pedestrian circulation.
- Increase pervious surfaces in parking areas to reduce stormwater runoff volumes, and increase water quality by utilizing bioswales and rain gardens.
- Incentivize alternative transportation through the reduction of parking to mitigate carbon dioxide.
- Promote collaborative parking by utilizing shared parking strategies, flexible parking plans and smart technologies.
- Provide street parking with curb bulb outs and frontage buffers to calm traffic and act as an alternative to expansive surface parking lots.
- Consolidate and streamline campus-wide parking strategy.

Figure 240: Dutch Kills Green

Source: WRT Design. *Dutch Kills Green*. *WRT Design*, https://www.wrtdesign.com/work/dutch-kills-green