

B. OPEN SPACE AND PUBLIC ART

Open spaces can influence and even shape community identities. They must serve a multicultural society, celebrating the diversity within neighborhoods while providing a measure of meaning for the community. Open spaces can provide a focus and orientation for buildings and other features around them. A series of linked open spaces can integrate neighborhoods to each other and to the Capitol Campus.

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. There may be opportunities for public art that link the Capitol Campus to Capitol Area neighborhoods and vice-versa.

See 2040 Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4 for general policy on Open Space on Public Art.

District-Wide Policy

In the Capitol Rice District, the following policies are ‘best practices’ that will guide decisions by the Board, Staff and the Zoning Administrator when reviewing and approving projects, and will guide revisions to the Zoning and Design Rules:

- a) Balanced Diversity of Public Spaces: Public spaces in the Capitol Area should serve visitors, workers and residents.
- b) Temporary Parklets / Interim Park Space: 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. An interim park could occupy space between buildings or on empty lots to fill in gaps in the urban fabric. These parks provide more space and amenities for people using the street and are encouraged in Capitol Rice to enhance activity, community gathering and support of businesses.
- c) Permanent Public Art Installations: 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 cultural and immigrant history of the district is encouraged.
- d) Creative Placemaking and Temporary Art: Maximum consideration should be given to creating safe and practical settings within the public realm and, if 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 safety, fairness and balance so that both the welfare of the general public and that of individual free speech are protected.

Location-Specific Policy

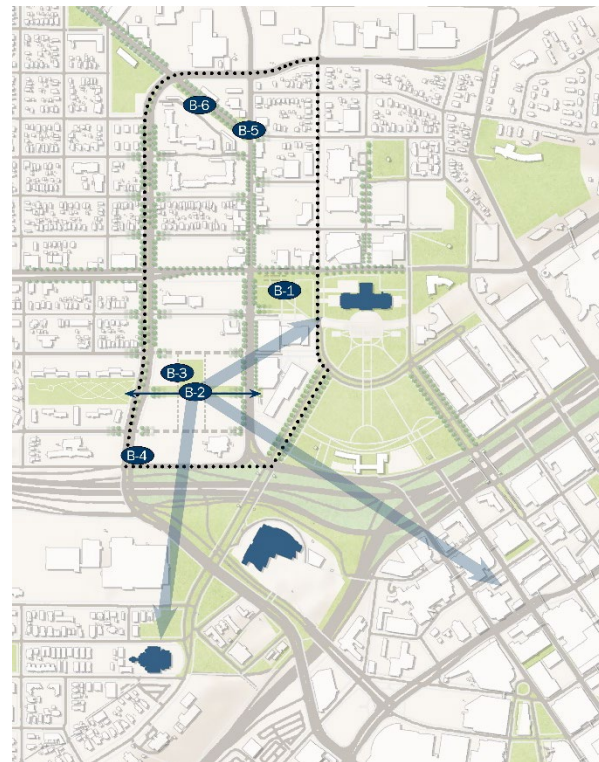
The following are additional *location-specific* guidelines for the Capitol Rice District:

B-1 Leif Erickson Park

Leif Erickson Park is a key arrival point in the Capitol Area. *See policy A-1*. Flanked by the Capitol Building to the east, State Office Building to the south, and new developments to the north and west, it already has many of the necessary components of a landmark urban space, similar to Mears Park and Rice Park downtown.

The primary arrival at Leif Erickson is the Capitol Rice LRT station or the multiple north/south bus routes. Pedestrians and bicycles from the south arrive from the east or west via John Ireland and Rice Street. A state parking structure is just south of the park. Enhancement of these arrival points, inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian amenities, and removal of parking of southern half of the park are the first steps in the improvements to this park.

- B-1.1 Develop the Rice-University area as an Integrated Mobility Hub. Refer to Section G. Mobility and Parking Planning, policy G-4.
- B-1.2 Consistent with G-2 Government (Open Space) District, remove the surface parking lot on the south side of the park as soon as possible, and in its place extend the green space to complete the park. Refer to Section G. Mobility and Parking Planning, policy G-1.
- B-1.3 Improve park lighting to increase safety.
- B-1.4 Add visitor wayfinding and information. This may be in the form of a kiosk (controlled, encased posting area that could highlight Capitol and Capitol Area events; educational information with session information; map with buildings; etc). Encourage visitors to connect to points of interest such as the Capitol, MN History Center, Rice Street and the station area, and others.
- B-1.5 Daylight the pedestrian tunnel, including safe pedestrian accessibility into tunnel system of the Capitol Campus.
- B-1.6 Leif Erickson Park could be considered as one of the prime locations of a future visitor center, designed to extend the current open space nature of the park, the critical views and sense of comfort and safety.



B-2 Greenway Connection from Western Park to Mall

A *Complete Street* connection from the Western Sculpture Park to the Capitol Mall through the Sears site has long been envisioned. This connection provides a two-way support of movement across the Capitol Rice District, providing a pathway for residents to Rice Street and beyond; and for Capitol workers and visitors to access the significant public art amenity in Western Park.

- B-2.1 Support the development of a *Complete Street* greenway connection through the Sears site to connect Western Park to the Mall and to break up the scale of the superblock.
- B-2.2 Create points along the Greenway with views to the three area landmarks: the Capitol Building, the Cathedral of Saint Paul and downtown Saint Paul.

B-3 Community Green Space in Sears Site Redevelopment

A new public community park at the heart of the redevelopment of the Sears site was envisioned in the Central Corridor Development Strategy (2007) and Rice Station Area Plan (2008). This flexible green space will be an active gathering space for the community with a range of activities serving the nearby land uses. The community park could take the form of a large central green, as illustrated in the Rice Station Area Plan *and/or* a linear park connecting Western Sculpture Park to the Capitol Mall, as illustrated in the Central Corridor Development Strategy.

- B-3.1 A minimum of 9% of net developable area should be devoted to the park and other open spaces, to be verified as consistent with City of Saint Paul development standards.

- B-3.2 Include an open, flat, low maintenance programmable space (minimum of .25 acres with a minimum width of 50 ft), to serve a variety of activities.
- B-3.3 Include a range of dedicated active and passive community activities, such as community gathering spaces, places to sit, public art, designated dog park, and artful, attractive stormwater management.
- B-3.4 Provide walkable (well-lit, protected, accessible, safe and interesting with engaging frontages) connections from the park to:
 - 1) Western Sculpture Park,
 - 2) the south end of the Capitol Mall and
 - 3) Leif Erickson Park and the Capitol Rice LRT station.

Refer to Section C. Street Design and Block Pattern, policy C-9.
- B-3.5 Create comfortable sitting points in or at the edge of the park with views to at least one of the three area landmarks: the Capitol Building, the Cathedral of Saint Paul and downtown Saint Paul.
- B-3.6 Public right-of-way along the entire perimeter of the park dominated by pedestrians (allowing vehicular and emergency access to front doors and building facades).

B-4 Passive Open Space Between Ravoux and 12th on the east side of Marion Street

The east side of Marion Street between Ravoux and 12th has potential for improvement to advance social and environmental sustainability. The existing bus shelter is inadequate for the population in Ravoux Hi-Rise, a largely transit-dependent, older population that needs a more dignified bus shelter providing protection from the elements and a place to sit.

- B-4.1 Encourage the city to examine issues regarding safety for pedestrians crossing this street and/or those who use the bus stops in this area.
- B-4.2 If water detention becomes necessary as part of a stormwater management plan with the Sears site redevelopment, this area is a potential location for stormwater management strategies.
- B-4.3 Reclaim, if possible, the west drive connecting Capitol Ridge Best Western Hotel access to Marion Street where the current drive passage to St. Anthony Avenue has been closed.

B-5 Rice Triangle Park (Rice Street and Como Ave)

The triangular shaped parcel created by the intersection of Como Avenue and Rice Street presents an opportunity for a new open space. A park in this location will help deal with the awkward parcel, act as a focus for redevelopment, anchor the retail strip running north up Rice Street, and provide a resting and meeting space for patrons of local shops and businesses. This new park would also create additional space within the pedestrian realm, which is narrow and offers little relief from vehicles on Rice Street.

- B-5.1 Work with the land owner to develop an open space in the East Frogtown neighborhood at the intersection of Rice Street and Como Avenue to serve area residents as a pocket park on Rice Street, and provide visual terminus to Como Avenue.

B-6 Outdoor Market Along Como Avenue

Hmongtown Marketplace, on Como Avenue just northwest of Marion Street, is a vibrant urban market serving thousands of customers locally and from around the region and is a benefit to the area.

- B-6.1 Planning and execution of a temporary market event. Using temporary approaches to 'try out' the street for market use on limited basis; this includes identifying an organization willing and able to run the market, establishing participation and access agreements with surrounding property owners.