

Chapter 2 is based on 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.

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1 INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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



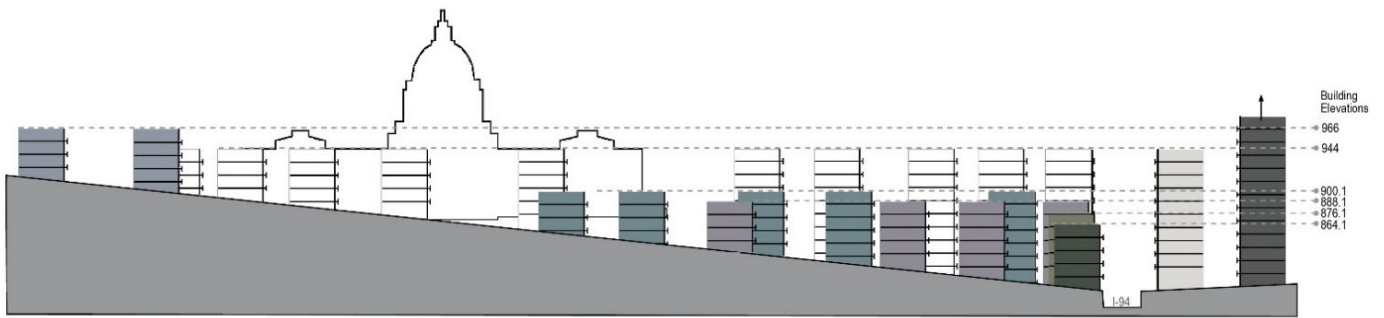
34 THE PREMINENCE OF THE CAPITOL BUILDING

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

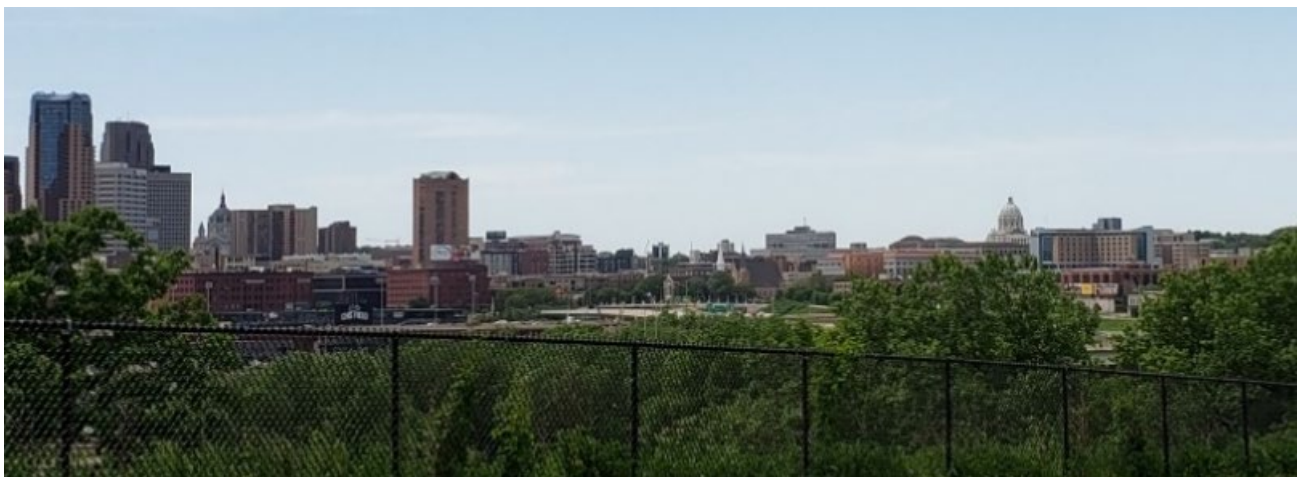
38 BUILDING HEIGHT

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

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



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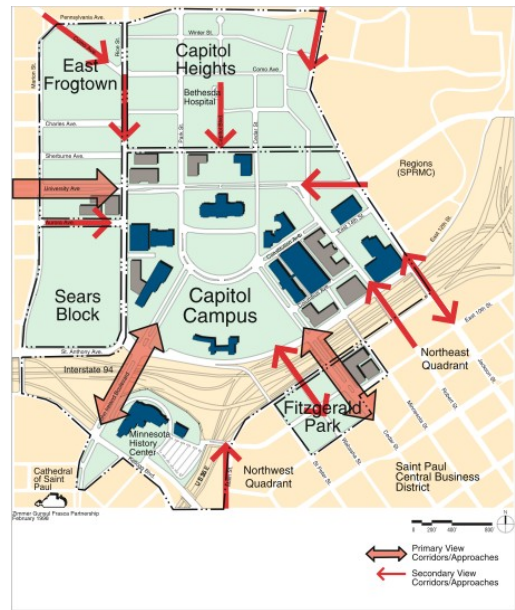
53 **CAPITOL VIEWS**

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

56 **APPROACHES AND VIEW CORRIDORS**

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

64
65 *NOTE: Map at right will be updated.*



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71
72 *The view along Cedar Street is the primary axial view established by Cass Gilbert in his plans for the State Capitol and*
73 *Capitol Mall. In addition to stunning views of the Capitol Building from the south, the historic churches that line the street*
74 *are an important feature of this view corridor and help create a particularly attractive urban village in the area of*
75 *Exchange Street and the old Fitzgerald Park.*
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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.



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

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

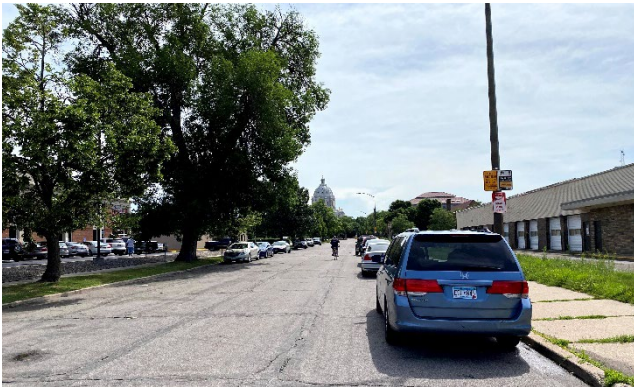


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Looking East from Rice Street: University Avenue, as a major vehicular and transit route, is an important view corridor directing visitors to and from the Capitol. A strong sense of arrival and view of the Capitol at the Capitol Rice LRT Station helps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

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.

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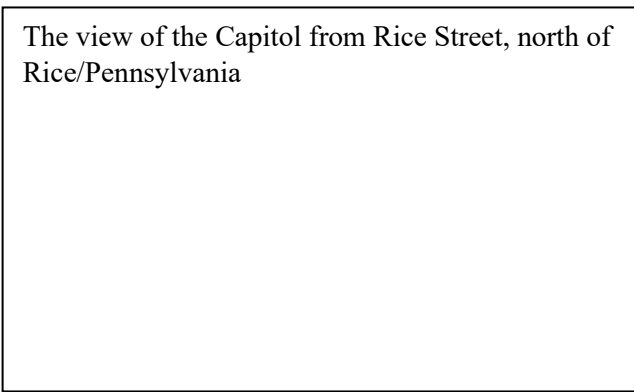
88

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



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. (google image)

89



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Seasonally, views of the Capitol can be seen when driving south along Rice Street.

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The framed view of the Capitol dome from inside the Minnesota History Center shows the architects' attention to the importance of Capitol views. Photo credit: MNHS

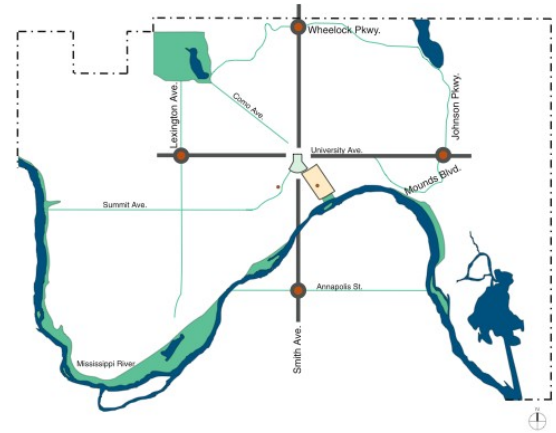


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The RiverCenter and arena at West 7th Street and Kellogg Boulevard, site of the original Seven Corners as envisioned by Cass Gilbert, is a significant public space that could capture an impressive view of the Capitol dome. The new hotel being erected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

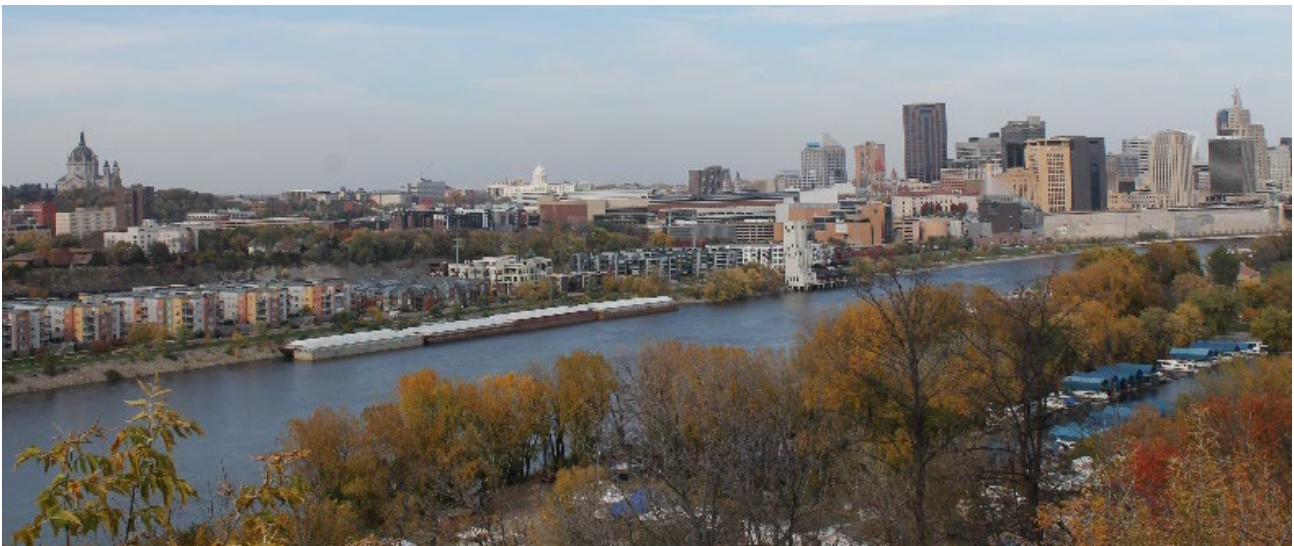
96 **DISTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS**

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



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106

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



110
111 *View from Smith Avenue (from the overlook at the south end of the High Bridge)*



112 *View from Smith Avenue (from George St)*



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

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



118
119 *View from Mounds Bluff*



View from Commercial Street just north of I-94

View from I-94 as driving into Saint Paul from the east.

120
121 *View from I-94 as one drives into Saint Paul from the east.*

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



124
125 *View east along University Avenue from Dale Street.*

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

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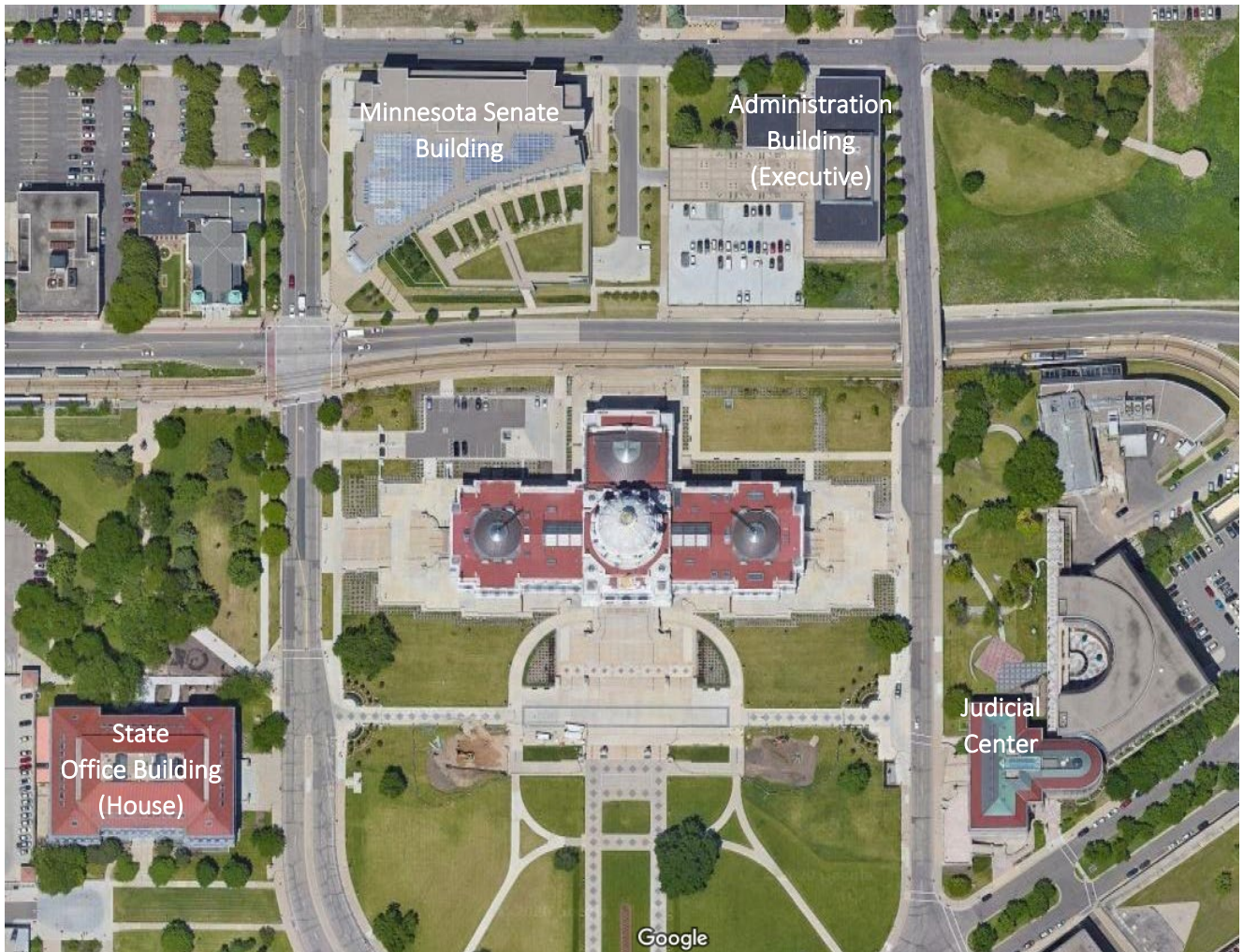
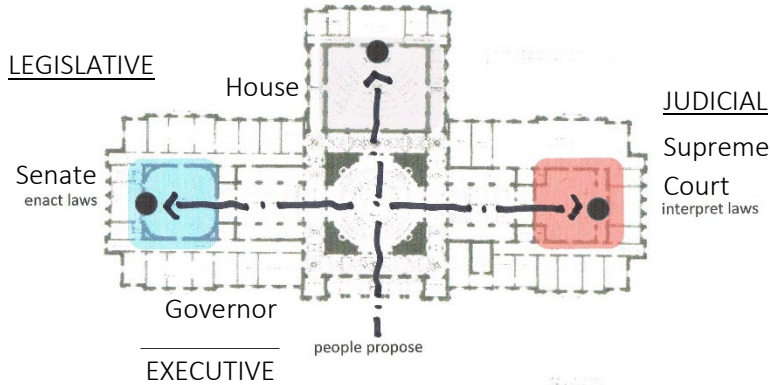
THE CAMPUS PLAN

132

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.

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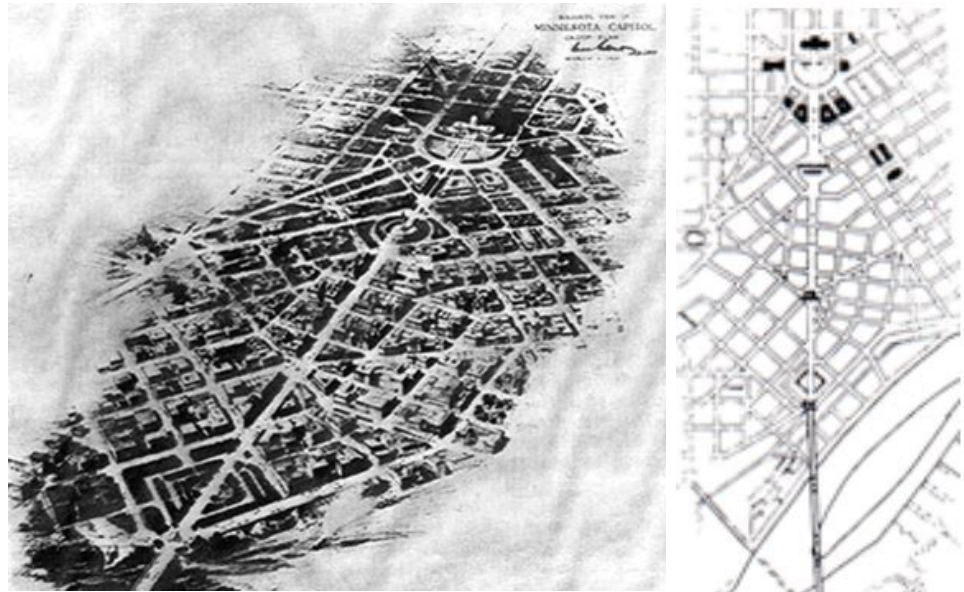


141 INTENTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CAPITOL CAMPUS AND
142 THE CAPITAL CITY

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

Images: Cass Gilbert's 1931 plan 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.

147



148 *NOTE: Images will be updated with subtle highlight to show Cedar, John Ireland, and central axial connection to river and beyond (only*
149 *realized on Smith Avenue across river). Will also add an image or overlay to show how the city has developed and changed this plan.*

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

154 From the beginning, Cass Gilbert recognized the importance of the physical and visual connection between the
155 new location of the Minnesota State Capitol and the future site of the Cathedral of Saint Paul, which was to be
156 built to the southwest on an even higher hill (one of Saint Paul's seven hills¹) starting the year after the new
157 Capitol opened. The grand boulevard connecting the two represents the connection between government and
158 culture – a connection later fortified by the construction of the Minnesota History Center. Likewise, Cedar Street
159 was envisioned as the connection to downtown Saint Paul.

160

¹ 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/>.

161 The Minnesota History Center is a major civic and cultural foundation for all of the people of Minnesota. It is a
162 gateway between St. Paul's downtown and Cathedral Hill areas to the Capitol Campus. Future consideration
163 should be given to improving connections between the MN History Center and the Capitol, both in physical
164 infrastructure and attention to human scale connections. The MN History Center is now nearly 30 years old.

165 Many of its physical features,
166 both in public and non-public
167 areas, were designed in an era in
168 which modern features were not
169 contemplated. Examples
170 include: rapid increase in
171 technology; the implementation
172 of a fee for the museum portion
173 of the building; modern security
174 concerns. As a result, by 2021,
175 MNHS will conduct planning to
176 envision the next 30-50 years for
177 the MN History Center and the
178 MN Historical Society overall.



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180

181 **CONNECTION TO THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER**

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



189
190 *NOTE: photo may change to show High Bridge*

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

197 **INTERSTATES IN THE CAPITOL AREA**

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

203
204 *For more detail on the history of the Capitol Mall, also See: HISTORY OF THE MINNESOTA STATE*
205 *CAPITOL AREA (CAAPB, 2008) https://mn.gov/caapb/assets/Complete%20History%20Document_tcm1087-280136.pdf*
206 *Also see “Approaching the Capitol: The Story of the Minnesota State Capitol Mall”, by Marjorie Pearson,*
207 *Minnesota History, Winter 2016-2017*

208 Face to face informational pages inserted here with several images:

209 The year that the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was created, 1967, was the same year I-
210 94 opened to traffic south of the Capitol. While not involved in the early design, CAAPB staff later found that
211 the I-94 freeway bridges fell under the Board’s purview. Thus, when MnDOT proposed structural improvements
212 to the bridges, necessitated by the newly-approved connection of I-35E through Saint Paul, a nine-year
213 coordinated effort began to assure that the new bridges would be designed to be compatible with the Capitol
214 Area. The CAAPB Board, Advisors and staff set out to be intimately involved in the actual designs for the seven
215 bridges from Jackson Street to John Ireland Boulevard. The bridges were to become extensions of the landscape
216 of the Capitol Campus over I-94 to connect the Campus to the downtown core.

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

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

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

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

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

247
248 *See Guidance 1.0 in this Chapter, as well as Chapters 4 and 5 policies supporting transformation of the north-*
249 *south ‘Capitol Rice corridor’ re-connecting downtown to northern neighborhoods through the Capitol Area.*

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252

Cedar Street gatehouse and covered walkway.



253

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



254

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.

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
- 1951: The curved road in front of the Capitol is paved
- 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 to meet need for hearing rooms and two new floors added for library and office space
- 1989: Development begins on enhanced bridges over I-94 within the Capitol Area
- 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
- 2020: Ash trees 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

256 FUNDAMENTALS: PRESERVING DIGNITY, BEAUTY, AND
257 ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

258 When the CAAPB was formed in 1967, architectural excellence was central to the purpose. The first purpose of
259 the CAAPB is “to preserve and enhance the dignity, beauty, and architectural integrity of the Capitol, the
260 buildings immediately adjacent to it, the Capitol grounds, and the Capitol Area.” (MN Statue 15B.01)

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

265 URBAN DESIGN

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

271 **The layout and trajectory of the street network in and around the Capitol Area is intentional, practical**
272 **and symbolic, prioritizing physical connections to the Capital City and beyond.** The landscape surrounding
273 the Capitol Building is designed to reinforce its connection to Saint Paul as the Capital City, with major
274 thoroughfares providing direct physical connections between the urban campus and the surrounding
275 neighborhoods, the Capital City, Minneapolis (the state’s largest city), and the entire state.

276 BUILDINGS

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

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



289
 290 *Image: The Centennial Building on Cedar Street. The Centennial Building on the eastern Mall was built prior to establishment of the*
 291 *CAAPB. Although the Centennial Building meets height, massing and siting requirements, it does not meet expectations of aesthetics*
 292 *appropriate to the architectural integrity sought in government buildings on the Mall. While the design of the Centennial Building was*
 293 *consistent with standard building practices of the day, it prompted the legislature to evaluate the architectural standards for buildings in*
 294 *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*
 295 *establishment of the CAAPB.*



296
 297 *Images: League of Minnesota Cities Building at Rice and University and the new Senate Building at Park and University are good*
 298 *examples of excellence in design in governmental and non-governmental buildings. Use of high-quality, natural and low maintenance*
 299 *building materials (brick, stucco, or stone) contribute to the overall design framework of the Capitol Area.*

300 **LANDSCAPES**

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

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

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

317 GUIDANCE

- 318 **1. Urban design in and around the Capitol Area should be both practical and symbolic, prioritizing the**
319 **physical connections to the Capital City and beyond, as well as reinforcing the symbolic connections**
320 **envisioned by Cass Gilbert.**
- 321 1.1. Connect the Capitol physically and visually to and from downtown Saint Paul and the Mississippi
322 River.
- 323 1.2. Maintain John Ireland Boulevard between the Capitol, the Minnesota History Center and the
324 Cathedral of Saint Paul as a primary civic boulevard and gathering space in Minnesota.
- 325 1.3. As the Minnesota History Center evolves and changes over time, maintain its importance as a
326 connection between St. Paul's downtown and Cathedral Hill areas to the Capitol, giving special
327 consideration to improving both physical infrastructure and human-scale elements of the street
328 network.
- 329 1.4. Reinforce Cedar Street as a major visual, pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Capitol Area
330 and downtown Saint Paul.
- 331 1.5. Reinforce Wabasha Street as a connection to a river crossing, the Wabasha Street Bridge, and
332 connections to points south of the river.
- 333 1.6. Reinforce Robert Street as a major organizational spine within the Capitol Campus, the visual
334 terminus of Cass Gilbert Park and a primary connector with downtown Saint Paul.
- 335 1.7. Improve the civic connection between the Capitol Area and downtown with an enhanced pedestrian
336 bridge along St. Peter Street.
- 337 1.8. Provide connections to major State buildings, plazas and parking, for vehicles, pedestrians and
338 bicycles.
- 339 1.9. Maintain the highest standard of streetscape elements along all key corridors connecting the Capitol to
340 and from the downtown core and the Mississippi River.
- 341 1.10. Continue to improve connections across I-94 that connect the Capitol Area community to downtown
342 Saint Paul and the Mississippi River.
- 343 1.11. Focus attention on smaller connections and approaches to the west, north and east in neighborhoods -
344 as specified in Chapter 3, 4 and the Development Frameworks in Chapter 7 of this plan.
- 345 **2. Recognizing the Capitol Building as the primary focal point of the Capitol Area and as a landmark**
346 **for orientation within the Capital City, maintain the Capitol Building as the primary standard for**
347 **height in the Capitol Area.**
- 348 2.1. New development in and around the Capitol Area should consider height and location of buildings to
349 maintain and reinforce the preeminence of the Capitol Building when viewed from the campus and the
350 surrounding community.
- 351 2.2. Continue to implement through Capitol Area zoning height limitations to protect the visibility of the
352 Capitol.

- 353 **3. Seeking inspiration from Cass Gilbert’s vision, preserve and enhance distant views and nearby view**
354 **corridors to and from the Capitol Building.**
- 355 3.1. Seek appropriate viewshed protection outside of CAAPB jurisdiction to preserve and enhance Capitol
356 views.
- 357 a) Explore with the city of Saint Paul key locations where height limitations and setbacks can
358 enhance Capitol views.
- 359 b) Encourage or require formal interagency reviews and collaborations to achieve protection of
360 primary view corridors.
- 361 3.2. Within the Capitol Area, refer to location-specific guidance provided in the Comprehensive Plan and
362 attached Development Frameworks which outline specific viewsheds.
- 363 3.3. Encourage removal of billboards, skyways or other built forms that disrupt views of the Capitol.
- 364 3.4. To the extent feasible, encourage elements (such as bus shelters, plazas, and seating) to be designed in
365 a manner that enhances views and connections to the Capitol Campus.
- 366 3.5. Use landscaping and pedestrian connections to enhance the streets in the Capitol Area and emphasize
367 axes and view corridors.
- 368 3.6. Within concept, schematic and design development stages of development projects, encourage
369 preservation and/or creation of views of the Capitol Building from the interior of buildings.
- 370 3.7. Distant views of the Capitol Building from Wheelock Parkway (seasonally available), Dale Street
371 (down University Avenue), Dayton’s Bluff and Smith Avenue should be thoughtfully presented and
372 preserved in order to reinforce the identity of Saint Paul as the Capital City.
- 373 **4. Preserve and enhance the dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the Capitol and other**
374 **governmental buildings in the Capitol Area.**
- 375 4.1. Create civic architecture consistent with the civic qualities of the Capitol Campus.
- 376 4.2. The spatial hierarchy of buildings around the Capitol should support the concept of civic design and a
377 cohesive Capitol Campus.
- 378 4.3. Maintain design quality through continued use of statutorily required design competitions conducted
379 according to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) rules and CAAPB criteria.
- 380 4.4. Building composition and detailing should be compatible with the Capitol through appropriate design,
381 quality materials and creative use of color.
- 382 4.5. Be responsive to the surroundings in the scale and massing of buildings.
- 383 4.6. Encourage the integration of the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines into new state buildings
384 and major renovations of state buildings.
- 385 4.7. Orient entries to public open space and emphasize major pedestrian entrances with ceremonial
386 architectural treatments.
- 387 4.8. Buildings that house governmental agencies with the highest need for public access should be the
388 most prominently placed, with distinct entrances for easy access.
- 389 4.9. Accommodate State agency space needs in the Capitol Area and Capital City for a balanced approach.
- 390 4.10. Redevelop under-utilized surface parking lots on the periphery of the Capitol Campus for new State
391 office buildings and civic spaces, or consolidate when possible into structured parking.

392 4.11. Prioritize new State building growth at Lot C and Lot AA to remove surface parking and contribute to
393 the revitalization of the intersection of University Avenue and Rice Street. *(Also see Chapter 7a and*
394 *the Capitol Rice Development Framework)*

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

397 5.1. Develop architectural design guidelines for Capitol Area buildings and adapt them to the specific
398 circumstances of each Capitol Area neighborhood. Incorporate material, building form and frontage
399 guidelines as zoning regulations where appropriate.

400 5.2. Promote high quality design and materials with longevity in mind, commensurate with the Capitol
401 Building, for all new buildings and major renovations adjacent to the Capitol.

402 5.3. Ensure development proposals are compatible in height, massing and architectural character with
403 existing housing, commercial and residential uses in the neighborhood.

404 5.4. Use materials higher in quality than typical for infill or expansion housing. Favor a mixture of natural
405 and low maintenance building materials (brick, stucco, or stone), and transparent storefront facades.

406 **6. Ensure the highest standards for civic space and landscapes.**

407 6.1. Provide for the protection, development and enhancement of the public open space essential to the
408 beauty of the Capitol Campus.

409 a) Preserve and expanding open spaces on the Capitol Campus that work together to create a
410 network of people-oriented spaces radiating from the Capitol.

411 b) Refine thematic groupings that expand consideration of locations off the Mall as commemorative
412 sites.

413 c) Explore ways to reinforce the human scale of the Capitol Campus, providing enclosure and
414 accessibility.

415 d) Utilize landscaping, such as tree groupings and terraces, as settings for a variety of activities or
416 commemorative art.

417 e) Provide elements that enhance the visitor experience, as outlined in Chapter 1 of this
418 Comprehensive Plan.

419 f) Reinforce the use of the Mall as an urban park (also see chapter 4).

420 g) Continue to require reserves within new projects (or promote endowments) that support the
421 maintenance of open spaces, commemorative art and landscaping.

422 6.2. Design connecting streets and pathways as extensions of open spaces, reflecting a quality appropriate
423 to the public realm at the State Capitol.

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

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

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

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

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

- 434 6.3. Utilize sustainable, human-scale plantings to enhance the landscape.
- 435 a) Encourage landscape elements that allude to Minnesota’s uniqueness, especially symbols of
- 436 Minnesota heritage such as the state tree, flower or grain, where possible and appropriate.
- 437 b) In compliance with MN Statute 15B.05 Subd. 8, give priority to planting native trees and shrubs,
- 438 or native grasses wherever appropriate, within the Capitol Area.
- 439 c) Incorporate principles of sustainable landscape design into the public open space of the Capitol
- 440 Campus, identify potential concerns with existing vegetation (for example, the Emerald Ash
- 441 Borer) and prepare plans to address the concerns in advance.
- 442 d) Promote tree diversity as a risk management technique for limiting the impact of diseases, pests,
- 443 and other problems associated with climate change.
- 444 e) Encourage dense tree planting and continuous tree canopy along sidewalks to visually define
- 445 approaches and to shade pedestrians.
- 446 f) Plantings near building entrances should help transition the monumental nature of governmental
- 447 buildings to the human-scale.
- 448 **7. To ensure implementation of the highest standards for the civic spaces of the Capitol Campus, update**
- 449 **the CAAPB Mall Design Framework (1990) by 2025, addressing the policies of the chapters of this**
- 450 **Comprehensive Plan.**
- 451 7.1. In addition to addressing the policies of this plan, focus effort on updating location-specific planning
- 452 and policy addressing issues including but not limited to: design and architectural of civic spaces and
- 453 streets, memorial and commemorative art siting and programming, safety, wayfinding, sustainable
- 454 landscaping, water, visitor experience and comfort, while ensuring continuity of primary functions
- 455 such as supplying a range of places for speaking out and convening events.
- 456 7.2. Work with a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency team to garner input on the update to the Framework,
- 457 especially regarding changes or upgrades to public or private buildings and the public realm
- 458 surrounding them.
- 459 7.3. Include John Ireland Boulevard from the Cathedral of Saint Paul to the Capitol Building as part of the
- 460 Mall, recognizing the importance of this ceremonial route as an extension of the Mall.
- 461 7.4. Address the site and connectivity issues of the Minnesota History Center.
- 462 7.5. While the focus is the design of the Mall, the Framework should address movement and connectivity
- 463 to locations both within and outside the Mall.
- 464 7.5.1. Address the impact of the addition of the Green Line Light Rail Transit on access to the east
- 465 campus.
- 466 7.5.2. Specifically plan for improved connectivity to ensure maximum access and safety from the
- 467 Capitol Mall to surrounding public spaces, including Leif Erickson Park, the Judicial Plaza,
- 468 Call Gilbert Memorial Park, and to entrances of public buildings.
- 469 7.5.3. Encourage keeping public entrances of buildings on the Mall open to ensure access to public
- 470 lobbies.
- 471 7.5.4. As new development occurs on or around the Capitol Campus (such as future development at
- 472 the Sears site) ensure appropriate connectivity is considered within or as an addendum to, the
- 473 updated Mall Design Framework.