



Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board

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Date: September 17, 2021

To: The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB)

From: Merritt Clapp-Smith, CAAPB Executive Secretary

Subject: **Ford Building Considerations for CAAPB** (*Memo for 09.28.21 CAAPB meeting*)

Background

The Department of Administration and the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB) have a shared interest in the future of the Ford building, the site and adjacent Lot C, which are all owned by the State of MN. Future ideas and plans for the Ford building have been discussed and debated for a couple of decades both publicly and internally.

At the present time, the Department of Administration is undertaking a demolition study for the Ford building, with funding approved by the MN Legislature. Wayne Waslawski will provide information on this study at the September 28th Board meeting, as outlined in his Board packet memo. At the end of his memo, Mr. Waslawski notes that the Department of Administration's 2022 Capital Budget Request will include funding for demolition of the Ford building.

Last CAAPB Statement on the Ford Building and Site

The last time the CAAPB discussed the Ford building was in December 2019, when it reviewed the Department of Administration's planned budget request for FY2022 Capital projects, which included funding to study Ford building demolition.

At the November 2019 CAAPB meeting, Board members discussed the request, but did not come to resolution. A special meeting of the Board was called in December to address the Ford building demolition study item. After much discussion, a resolution was reached. The following is an excerpt from CAAPB's published meeting notes from the December 13, 2019 special meeting:

"9. Ford Building Demolition - While CAAPB policy does not require but supports re-use of the Ford Building, the CAAPB is open to the budget request for demolition of the Ford Building, given the understanding from the Administration Department, that the actual demolition would not occur until such time as they have an actual use for the site in the form of a planned building, the design of which would involve a CAAPB-led design competition. They also agreed that an analysis of the range of options for the site redevelopment, including full or partial building re-use to complete demolition and redevelopment of a cleared site, could be executed."

The full set of meeting notes from the November and December 2019 meetings are available at <https://mn.gov/caapb/about-us/meeting-minutes/>

Upcoming Budget Request for Ford Building Demolition Funding

This Fall 2021, the Department of Administration will ask the CAAPB to review its upcoming budget requests. This process follows MN Statute 15B Capitol Area Planning and Preservation, Section 15B.15, Subd. 3: Capitol Requests, which reads, *“The commissioner of administration must consult with the board [CAAPB] about building sites and design standards for capital budget requests in the Capitol Area”*.

The CAAPB Executive Secretary will bring a recommendation to the Board at its November 2021 meeting, regarding Administration’s Capitol Area funding requests, which will include Ford building demolition. One of the primary criteria that CAAPB uses to review the funding requests is its adopted Comprehensive Plan.

2040 Comprehensive Plan Policy related to the Ford building and site

There are a few references to the Ford building and Lot C in the *2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Capitol Area*, which the Board adopted on June 3rd, 2021. Conformance with these references will be considered in the staff review. They include:

CAAPB Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7, page 165:

“... The CAAPB position on the Ford Building is that the Board, while open to demolition, supports a full analysis (prior to any demolition) of the potential for reuse of all or part of the building (adaptive reuse) as part of a larger redevelopment of the State-owned property on the block.”

Chapter 7A of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the *Capitol Rice Development Framework*:

“D-3. Northeast corner block at University and Rice (includes State Lot C and Ford Building) ...development of this block will improve the vitality of the district. The state has a role in community development at the doorstep of the Capitol.

D-3.1 Complete redevelopment of State parking lot C including reuse/ redevelopment of Ford building.

D-3.2 Develop a state office building to accommodate agencies with a strong tie to the Capitol.

D-3.3 Design and Development Steps (State-led, CAAPB with the Administration Department):

1. Ford Building Reuse Study: *Conduct a reuse study to determine scenarios of redevelopment, including site redevelopment guidelines that supply design parameters for future steps. The reuse study should verify the structural stability of the building and explore a full range of alternatives for building disposition (outlining the full range of possible reuses in each scenario) from full building to partial or complete demolition.*

2. Site Pre-Design Study: *Informed by the Ford Building Reuse Study, conduct a site pre-design study (required by law) to determine need and program for the particular use.*

3. Design Competition: *CAAPB led design competition.*

D-3.4 Strongly encourage full or partial re-use of the Ford Building, recognizing the existing embodied energy and sustainability of re-using a solid structure, the benefit to the urban fabric of a historic building, and to take full advantage of existing tunnel connection.

D-3.5 Establish active ground-level uses facing University and Rice Streets.

D-3.6 Follow best practices for structured parking: Refer to Guidelines for Structured Parking.”

D-7. Ford Building Reuse

D-7.1 Support re-use of the Ford Building within redevelopment of the property to the west on the northeast corner of University and Rice. Encourage an active, pedestrian-friendly first floor uses engaging University Avenue. ...”