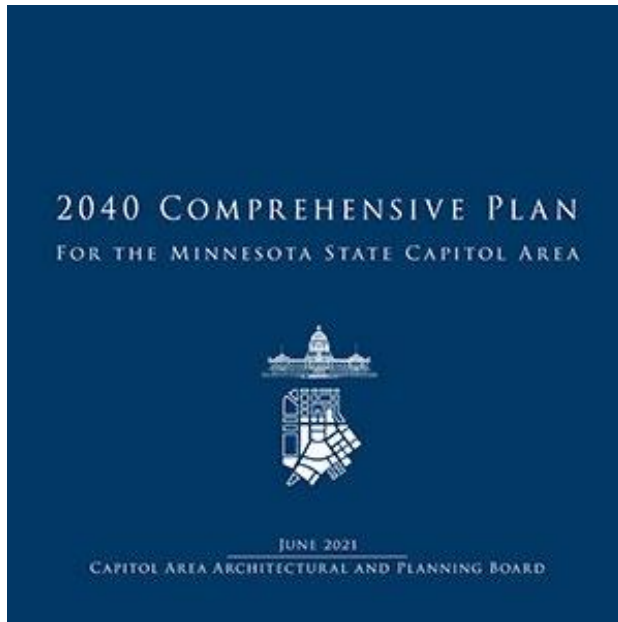




The 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area

The **2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area** was approved and adopted by the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board on June 3, 2021.

Similar to a Minnesota municipality, MN Chapter 15B.06 requires that the CAAPB maintain and update comprehensive land use plan , and directs that the Board develop Rules to implement the plan. See *Rules Governing Zoning and Design in the Minnesota State Capitol Area*. 15B also directs that all public and private projects in the Capitol Area must comply with the comprehensive plan and receive written approval from the Board before construction.

The Capitol Area Principles

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area is organized by a set of aspirational outcomes called **[The Capitol Area Principles](#)**. Each Principle is a chapter in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan ([see Table of Contents here](#)), developed through extensive review of existing policy, various planning tracks and studies, and interaction with stakeholder groups.

The Capitol Area Principles anchor the policy that serves to guide the CAAPB in transforming the Capitol Area into a complete and healthy community with vibrant public spaces, a range of movement options, a diverse mix of land uses, and attractive buildings framing lively, pedestrian-friendly streets. They are designed to reinforce the visual pre-eminence of the Capitol Building, maintain the Capitol Campus as a visitor destination, preserve its component neighborhoods as vibrant urban villages, acknowledge the inherently productive nature of community building and neighborhood interdependence, and produce a clear direction for a future in tune with Saint Paul's aspirations.

THE CAPITOL AREA PRINCIPLES

AS THE SYMBOLIC HEART OF THE STATE,
THE VISION FOR THE CAPITOL AREA IS
TO BE A UNIFYING FACTOR FOR ALL WHO
COME TO VISIT, LIVE, WORK, LEARN AND PLAY.

PRINCIPLE 1: AS MINNESOTA'S SEAT OF GOVERNMENT AND DESTINATION FOR THOUSANDS EACH YEAR, THE CAPITOL AREA OFFERS THE HIGHEST QUALITY EXPERIENCE TO VISITORS.

This chapter describes civic role of Capitol Area in Minnesota, Minnesota's Front Yard, The Capitol as a heart and identity of the Capital City, and ensuring the highest quality visitor experience.

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.

This chapter covers the preeminence of the Capitol Building in the Capital City, the Campus Plan, and the intentional relationships from the Campus to the city fabric and the Mississippi River.

PRINCIPLE 3: THE CAPITOL AREA IS A MODEL FOR MINNESOTA, WHERE BEST PRACTICES ARE EXPECTED IN THE PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROJECTS.

This chapter addresses how the Capitol Area can serve as a model in sustainability. The chapter introduces the following four chapters covering the public realm, transportation, land use and community.

PRINCIPLE 4: THE ENTIRE CAPITOL AREA PROVIDES AN INTEGRATED, HIGH-QUALITY, HUMAN-SCALE PUBLIC REALM EXPERIENCE.

This chapter outlines four key elements of the public realm, followed by policies that will enable those patterns: A Linked System of Parks and Open Spaces, The Public Right of Way, Building Frontages and Street-Level Activation, and Art in the Public Realm.

PRINCIPLE 5: THE CAPITOL AREA IS AN URBAN MULTI-MODAL DISTRICT, SEAMLESSLY CONNECTED TO DESTINATIONS.

This chapter outlines key strategies to restore the nature of multi-modal transportation in the Capitol Area: a complete streets framework, multiple modes of transportation co-located around integrated mobility hubs, and Capitol Area mode shift district strategies, including travel demand management and district and shared parking strategies.

PRINCIPLE 6: LAND USE DIVERSITY IS ENCOURAGED THROUGHOUT THE CAPITOL AREA.

This chapter outlines four land use patterns relevant to diversity in the Capitol Area, followed by policies that will enable those patterns: Urban Campus, Transit-Oriented Development, Urban Village, and Missing Middle Housing.

PRINCIPLE 7: IN ALL PARTS OF THE CAPITOL AREA, NEW DEVELOPMENT RESPECTS COMMUNITY, ASSETS AND CONTEXT.

This chapter outlines our approach to planning, including topics covering: How is Planning Done in the Capitol Area? How is Project Design Reviewed in the Capitol Area? and Embracing Change in the Capitol Area. This chapter also introduces Development Frameworks for the three districts bordering the Capitol Campus:

7A - THE CAPITOL RICE DISTRICT IS AN URBAN VILLAGE WITH LEIF ERICKSON PARK AT ITS CENTER.

The most significant potential for development in the Capitol Area in the next 10 years is within the Capitol Rice District. At the center is the Capitol Rice LRT station and Leif Erickson Park, with a growing vibrancy and unique sense of place integrated with a mobility hub for workers and community members.

7B - NEW DEVELOPMENT IN CAPITOL HEIGHTS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO THE EXISTING SCALE AND CHARACTER.

Capitol Heights has an intimate neighborhood scale that is attractive to residents and visitors. Its historic role as a strong residential neighborhood should be protected as new investment occurs.

7C - THE FIVE-BLOCKS OF THE CAPITOL AREA THAT EXTEND INTO THE FITZGERALD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD FORM IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS TO THE DOWNTOWN CORE AND RIVER BEYOND.

Development and public realm investments should be sensitive to context; reflecting both the civic qualities of the Capitol Campus as well as urban qualities of “a diverse, mixed-use, human-scaled neighborhood that celebrates culture, education and the arts, while providing for the needs of a growing residential population during all hours of every day and evening.” ~Land Use Vision for Fitzgerald Park, from the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan (2010), pg 15.

Capitol Area projects flow through Statute and the Comprehensive Plan.

CAAPB guidance and decision making on planning, architecture and development projects through the Comprehensive Plan – which is administered by Staff, Advisors and Board Members that utilize the CAAPB enabling statute, plan, policy and regulatory documents. They include:

Enabling Statute

[MN Chapter 15B CAPITOL AREA PLANNING AND PRESERVATION](#)

Comprehensive Plan

[2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area](#) (2021)

Foreword by Board Chair (Lt Governor Flanagan) [Link to Pages](#)

Engagement & Background [Link to Chapter](#)

The Capitol Area Principles [Link to Chapter](#)

Capitol Area in Minnesota [Link to Chapter](#)

Capitol Area in Saint Paul [Link to Chapter](#)

Holistic Lens [Link to Chapter](#)

Visitor Experience [Link to Chapter](#)

Mobility, Streets, Canopy and Comfort [Link to Chapter](#)

Land Use Patterns [Link to Chapter](#)

Preservation, Engagement, Reviews [Link to Chapter](#)

District Frameworks [Link to Chapters](#)

[Appendices](#)

District Frameworks

Capitol Rice District

Capitol Rice Development Framework (CRDF) (2021)

Capitol Mall

[Capitol Mall Design Framework](#) (CMDf) (2025)

East Campus

East Campus Design Framework (ECDF) (in development (2025-27)

Capitol Heights

Capitol Heights Development Framework (CHDF) (planned)

Project Review and Approval

Public Buildings, Lands

[MN Chapter 15B CAPITOL AREA PLANNING AND PRESERVATION](#)

Zoning & Design Rules

[MN Rules Chapter 2400](#) – (Rules Governing Zoning and Design in the Minnesota State Capitol Area) (2010, update by 2027)

Advisory Committee

[MN Chapter 15B CAPITOL AREA PLANNING AND PRESERVATION](#)

Works of Art (Building)

[Policy for Works of Art at the Minnesota State Capitol \(Building\)](#) (2015)

Commemorative Works

[MN Rules Chapter 2400.2703](#) STANDARDS FOR COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORK (2022)