



CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD



**CAAPB**

# **Capitol Area Comprehensive Plan & Capitol Mall Design Framework**

September 3, 2026,  
State Park Working Group  
Erik Cedarleaf Dahl, Executive Secretary

# Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB)

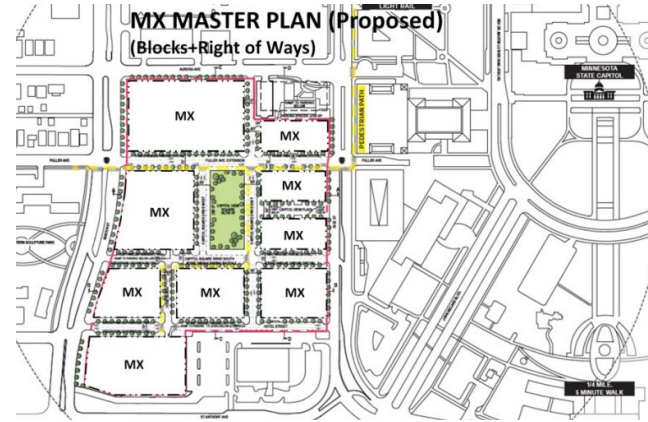


- CAAPB authorized under MN Statute 15B
- Zoning and Regulatory Roles in MN Rules Chapter 2400
- Planning and Zoning Authority for 60-block Capitol Area (instead of St. Paul)
- 12-member Board (Lieutenant Governor is the Board chair, 2 Senators, 2 Representatives, 4 Governor appointees; 3 City of St. Paul appointees)
- 2.5 FTE (Executive Secretary, Principal Planner and Zoning Administrator, part-time Office Assistant)
- 3 Architectural Advisors to the Board

# CAAPB Roles and Responsibilities



Zoning & Permitting for  
public and private land  
uses and development  
in Capitol Area



Planning and Approval for Capitol Mall  
design, landscape and memorials

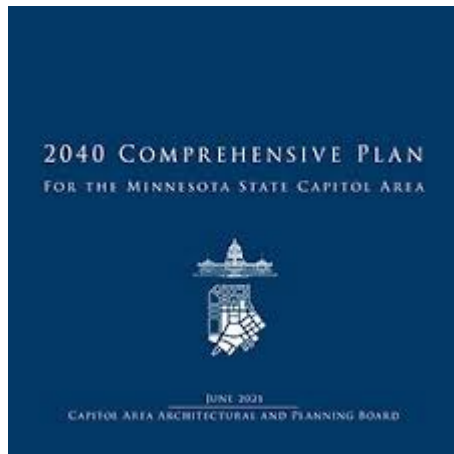


Joint authority with MN  
Historical Society for all  
changes and renovations to  
the Capitol building



Comprehensive Planning for  
60-block Capitol Area

# The 2040 Comprehensive Plan: A Vision for the Capitol Area



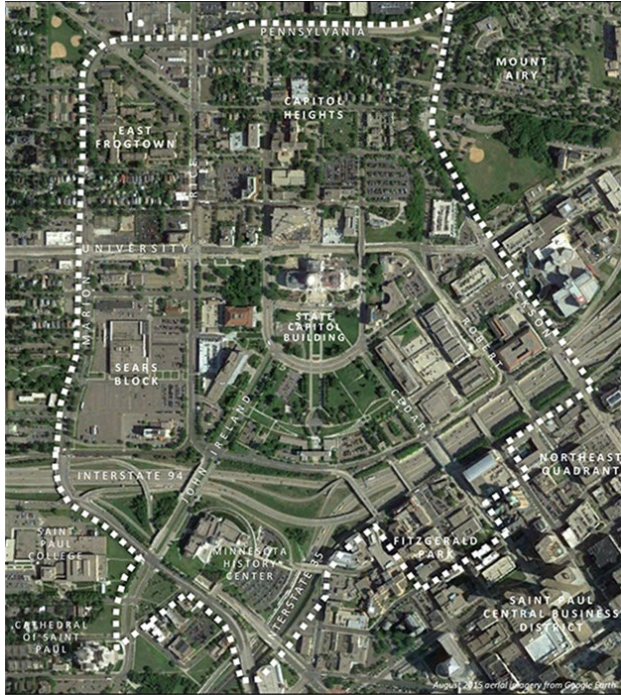
## **2040 Comprehensive Plan adopted: 2021**

- The Plan is the CAAPB's enabling policy document for zoning and design decisions
- Projects in the Capitol Area must align with the adopted Comprehensive Plan or its amendments

## **Implementation underway:**

- Tribal Flag Plaza, 2025
- Rice Street Redesign and Reconstruction: University and Rice Commons (new Public Spaces) 2027
- Tree Canopy Expansion, 2023-2027+
- new School 2023, new Hospital 2025 guided by Board
- Capitol Area Community Vitality Program

# The 2040 Comprehensive Plan: A Vision for the Capitol Area



## From “Good Neighbor” to an Integrated Capitol Area

The 2040 Plan expands the vision beyond the Capitol Campus itself. The Capitol and Mall remain the symbolic heart of Minnesota, but the entire 60-block Capitol Area is understood as an integral part of Saint Paul.

**“As the symbolic heart of the State, the vision for the Capitol Area is to be a unifying factor for all those who come to live, work, learn and play.”**

# The 2040 Comprehensive Plan: A Vision for the Capitol Area



## What the Plan Asks the Capitol Area to Become

### Capitol Area Principles:

- 1 Exceptional visitor experience
- 2 Capitol Building + Mall as a unifying focal point
- 3 Model for Minnesota
- 4 Integrated, high-quality public realm
- 5 Connected, multimodal district
- 6 Diverse mix of land uses
- 7 Development that respects community, assets + context



## PUBLIC REALM

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A high-quality, human-scale public realm throughout the Capitol Area.



Welcoming



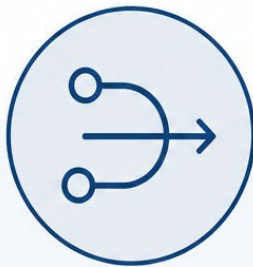
Green & Sustainable



Safe & Comfortable



Places to Gather



## CONNECTION

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The Capitol Area should connect seamlessly to destinations and surrounding neighborhoods.



Walkable



Multimodal



Easy Access



Connected Communities



## CIVIC IDENTITY

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The Capitol Building and Mall remain central to the identity of Saint Paul and Minnesota.



Civic Pride



Inclusive

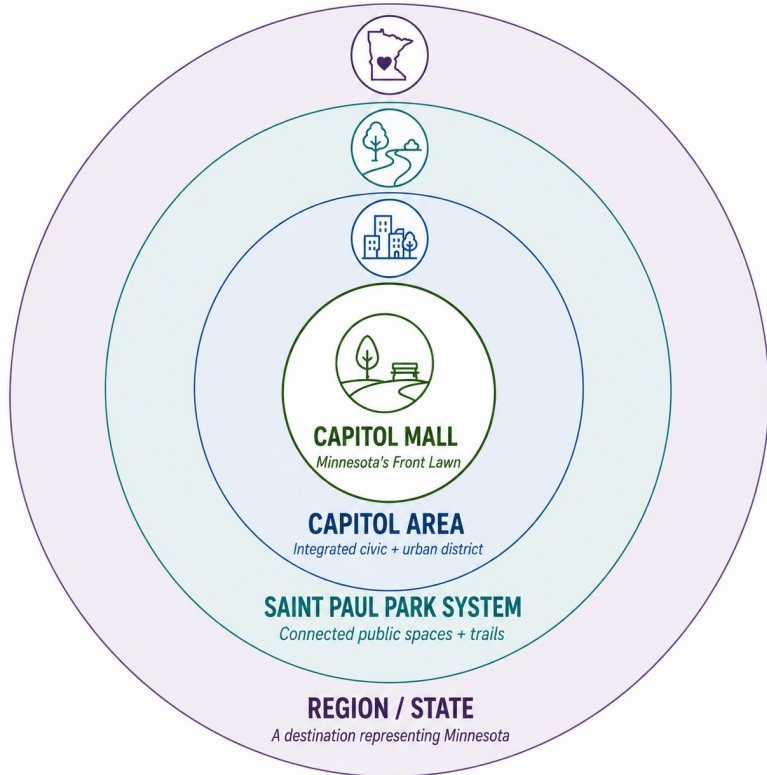


Representative



Unifying

# The 2040 Comprehensive Plan: A Vision for the Capitol Area



“Establish the Capitol Mall, Minnesota's Front Lawn, as a recognized asset complementary and connected to the system of parks in Saint Paul and the region.”

The graphic features a series of concentric, overlapping arcs in various colors (blue, green, yellow, red, orange) that form a circular pattern around the central text. The arcs are of varying lengths and are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement.

  
**CAPITOL MALL**  
**DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

# Legislative Appropriation

2023: HF 1830, 4<sup>th</sup> Engrossment:

- Article 1, Sec. 39. Appropriation; Capitol Area Architectural And Planning Board; Capitol Mall Design Framework.

\$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the general fund to the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board to update the Capitol Mall Design Framework and for initial implementation of the framework. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until December 31, 2024.

- Article 1, Section 11, Capitol Mall Design Framework Implementation.

\$5,000,000 the first year is to implement the updated Capitol Mall Design Framework, prioritizing the framework plans identified in article 2, section 124. This appropriation is available until December 31, 2024.”

# CAPITOL MALL DESIGN FRAMEWORK UPDATE

## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS AT-A-GLANCE

### (a) THE UPDATE MUST INCLUDE:

#### 1 INTEGRATE GREEN SPACE CAMPUSWIDE

Include plans to add green space on the following sites (minimum sizes):

i



Southwest corner of  
Rice Street & University Avenue  
MIN. 20,700 SQ FT

ii



Northeast corner of  
Rice Street & University Avenue  
MIN. 32,000 SQ FT

iii



North side of the State Capitol  
building adjacent to  
University Avenue

#### 2 VISUAL MARKERS & WELCOME INFORMATION

Include plans for visual markers and welcome information at one or more corners of Rice Street and University Avenue, anchoring a pathway to the State Capitol building and Capitol Mall that features interpretive markers honoring the importance and stature of the Capitol campus as both a historic site and as a modern, active public gathering space for all Minnesotans.



VISUAL MARKERS  
& WELCOME  
INFORMATION

....



PATHWAY WITH  
INTERPRETIVE  
MARKERS

....



STATE CAPITOL  
& CAPITOL MALL

#### 3 PLANT TREES & CREATE SHADE

Include plans to plant trees throughout the Capitol campus, prioritizing the creation of a mature tree canopy to provide an area of shade for users of the Capitol Mall between or adjacent to the State Capitol building and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.



### (b) THE BOARD MUST FOLLOW THIS PROCESS TO DEVELOP AND APPROVE THE UPDATE:



#### CONTRACT WITH DESIGN CONSULTANTS

Experts in horticulture,  
landscape architecture,  
civic space design,  
infrastructure assessment,  
and operations &  
maintenance planning



#### CONSULT WITH:

- Commissioners of Administration and Public Safety
- Senate Majority Leader and Speaker of the House or their designees



#### DEVELOP FRAMEWORK UPDATES

Incorporate consultant  
expertise and feedback  
from required  
consultations.



#### BOARD REVIEW & APPROVAL

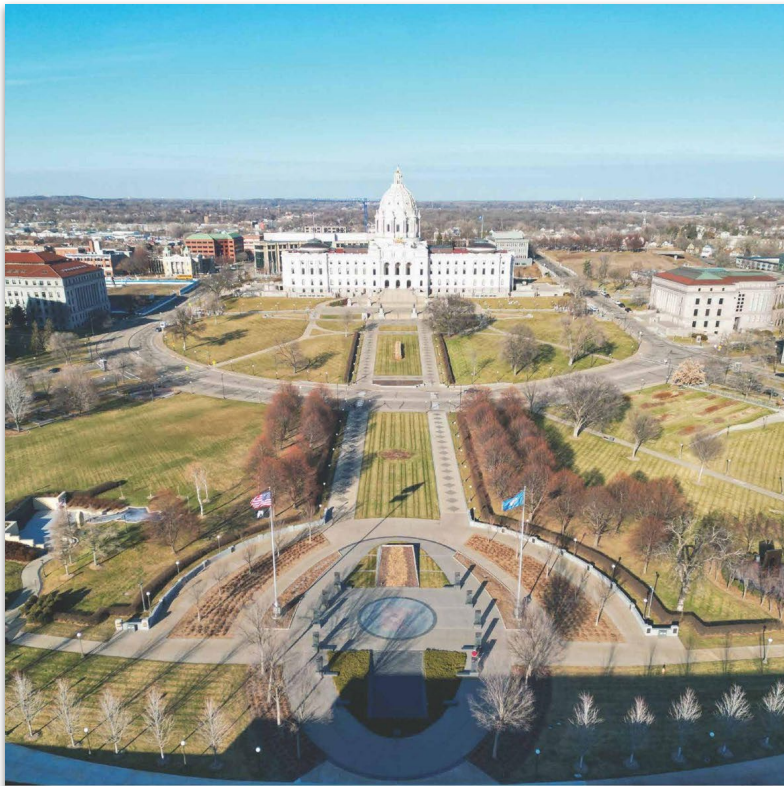
Capitol Area Architectural  
and Planning Board reviews  
and approves the updated  
design framework.



APPROVE UPDATED  
DESIGN FRAMEWORK  
NO LATER THAN

**MARCH 1,  
2024**

# Comprehensive Plan and Capitol Mall Design Framework is the official CAAPB policy for the long term Planning of the Capitol Area



## MINNESOTA CAPITOL MALL DESIGN FRAMEWORK

CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD (CAAPB)  
05.20.2024



# Input from Minnesotans

13,982+

POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT

20+

Stakeholder and Technical  
Advisory Taskforce (TAT)  
Interviews / Listening  
Sessions

2

Keystone Events  
4-Day intensive Design  
Charrette and Statewide  
Virtual Open House

15

Pop-Ups + Smaller Events  
Over 988 interactions

3

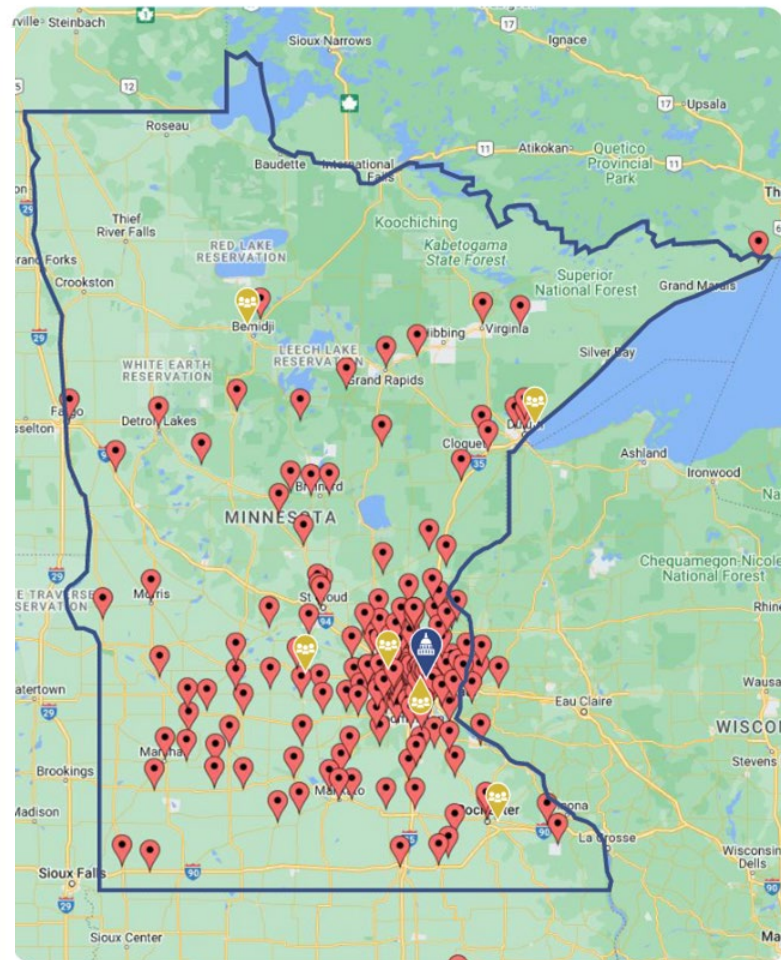
Community Surveys  
2,434 total responses  
in 3 languages

EST. +7,500

Emails  
sent to stakeholder  
groups, community  
members, etc.

5,200+

Unique Website Visitors  
to <https://mncapitolmall.engage.sasaki.com/>



## LEGEND



Minnesota Capitol Mall



Survey Response



In-Person Event

Figure 17: Statewide community engagement



Figure 28: Capitol Rotunda Pop-Up



Figure 29: The Black Market Pop-Up



Figure 22: HmongTown Marketplace Pop-Up



Figure 23: Frogtown Community Center Pop-Up



Figure 30: Capitol Rice LRT Pop-Up



Figure 33: Duluth UMD Hockey Pre-Game Pop-Up



Figure 26: Saint Paul Winter Carnival Pop-Up



Figure 27: Design Charrette participants quickly generating ideas



Figure 32: Bemidji Craft Fair Pop-Up



Figure 31: Willmar Kids Connection Experience Pop-Up



Figure 24: More Minnesota Focus Group discussing initial framework ideas



Figure 25: Design Team and other stakeholders synthesizing Design Charrette takeaways to present back to participants



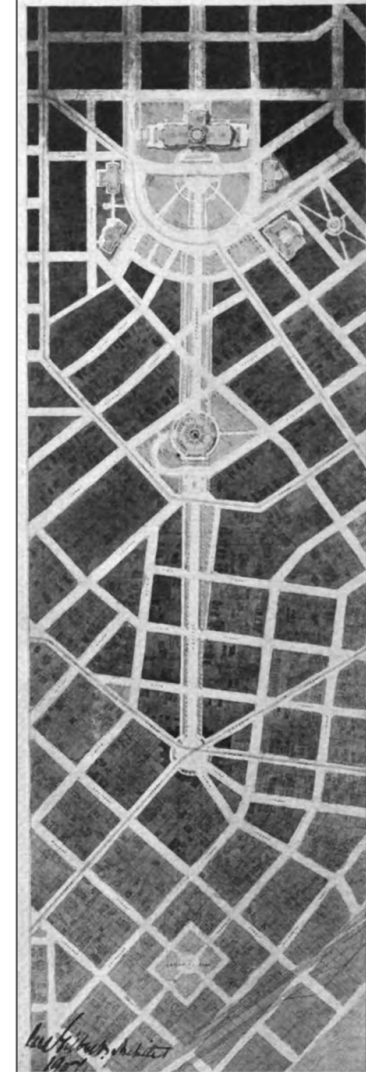


# **The Purpose of the Capitol Area**



**“The largest front steps in the state say that this is a place where everyone is welcome. The message is amplified in the promenade with the tiered mall spaces stretching south, and the grand avenues extending outward as if they were arms embracing all Minnesotans.”**

*2040 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area, p37*





Special Guerilla Unit Veterans and Families  
Remembrance Day Thursday, May 14. Photo by  
Catherine Davis



**The Everyday**



**The Big Day**



**Framing Historic  
Preservation +  
Transformation**

# **Minnesota State Capitol in historic context**

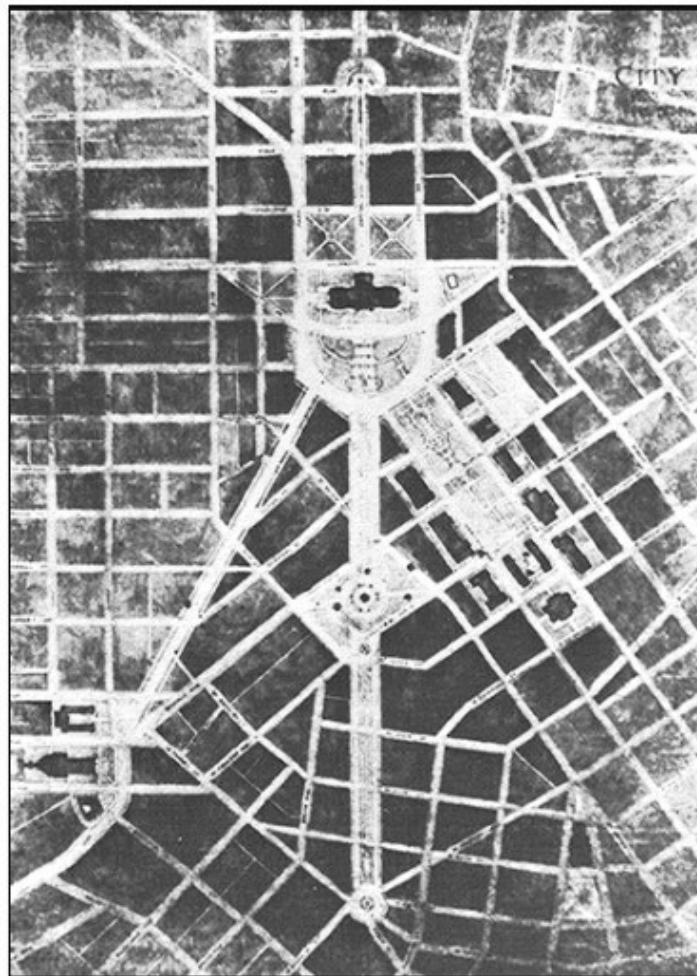






Wabasha Street in 1896, Looking North toward the Future Site of the Capitol Building<sup>92</sup>





Cass Gilbert's 1903 Plan<sup>105</sup>

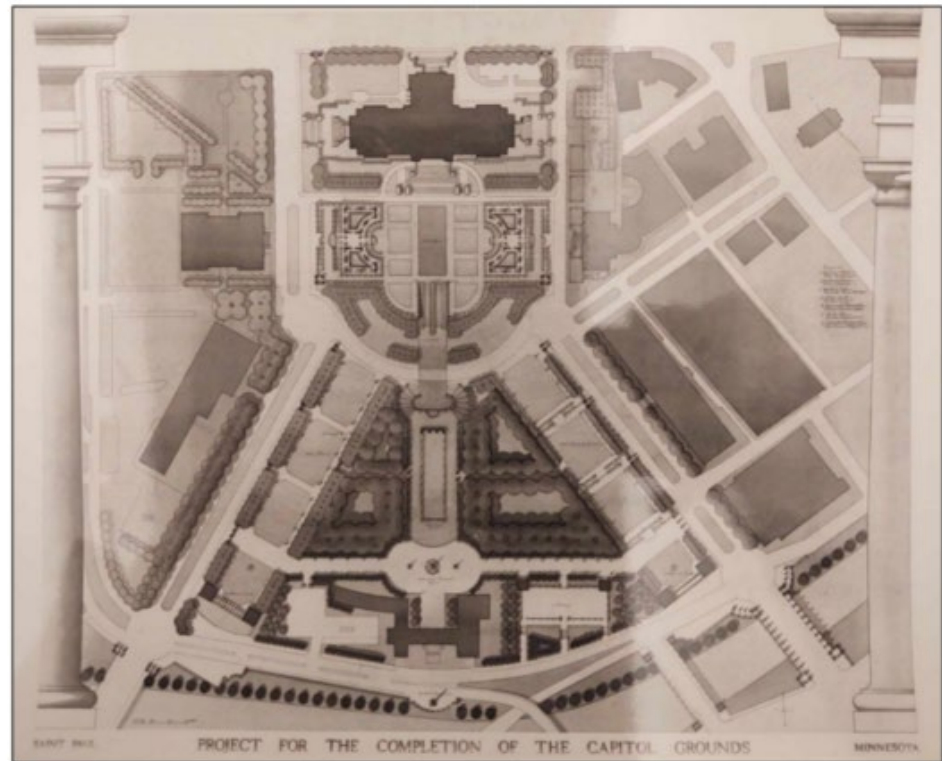
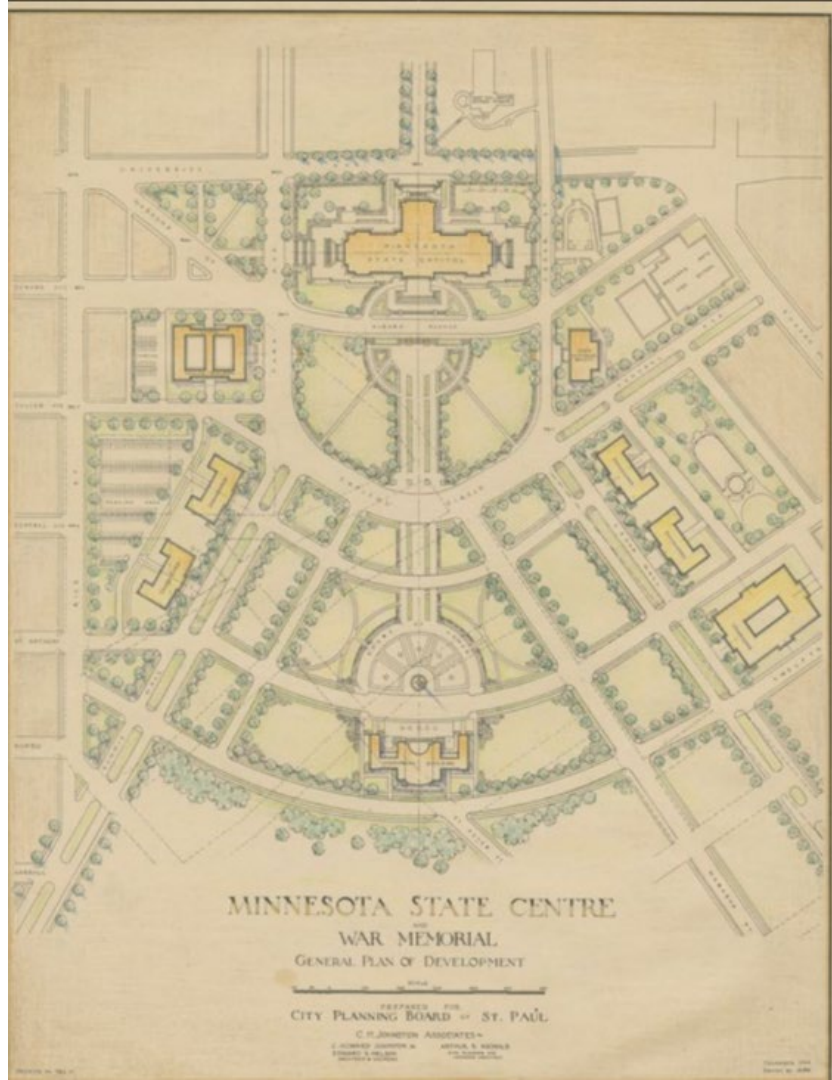


Capitol Building under Construction in 1903<sup>108</sup>





1941 Aerial View of the Capitol Building and Approaches<sup>122</sup>

1986 Landscape Plan for Capitol Grounds<sup>164</sup>

# CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

## What is a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR)?

**Cultural landscapes** are historically significant places that reveal human interaction with the physical environment over time.

A **Cultural Landscape Report (CLR)** describes the physical history, analyzes existing conditions, and recommends treatment actions to preserve, restore, or rehabilitate the cultural landscape.

*(National Park Service)*

## How does the CLR influence the Capitol Mall Design Framework?

The Capitol Mall Design Framework draws upon the CLR to best understand the historic intentions and features of the site.

The CLR also informs how the Capitol Mall can be **adapted to accommodate evolving needs, while still paying homage to the past.**



As a landscape, the plan for the Capitol Mall evolved over the period of significance (1902-1962). This study evaluates the key features and the ability of the landscape to convey its significance.

- Capitol Grounds, Cultural Landscape Report

Vegetation at Capitol Building, 1960<sup>244</sup>

# PERIOD PLAN (1962)\*

EXHIBIT 2

## LEGEND

- Historic District Boundary
- Building
- Building Podium
- Structure
- Roadway
- Bridge
- Parking & Loading
- Walkway (Primary)
- Walkway (Secondary)
- Memorial Paving
- Water Feature
- Turf Lawn
- Planting Bed
- Deciduous Tree
- Hedge Row

N 0' 75' 150' 300'



\*plan represents an approximation based on available imagery; surrounding context is not consistent with conditions in 1962



**Evolving a 21st  
Century Capitol  
District**

**THE CAPITOL AREA IS MORE WELCOMING FOR MORE MINNESOTANS. THE DESIGN FRAMEWORK LAYS OUT A MULTI-PHASE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND A SERIES OF DESIGN GUIDELINE RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE USED AS A DECISION MAKING TOOL MOVING FORWARD.**

**LEGEND**

- CAAPB Boundary
- CMDF Limit of Work
- Proposed Building
- Memorials
- (A) MN State Capitol
- (B) New State Office Building\*
- (C) MN Senate
- (D) MN Judicial Branch
- (A) Aurora Promenade
- (B) Civic Plinth
- (C) Open Glades

- (D) Arboretum
- (E) Native Prairies
- (F) Sears & Rice BRT Node
- (G) University & Rice Mobility Hub
- (H) Cass Gilbert Memorial Park
- (I) Robert Street Station Plaza
- (J) Visitor Amenity Building
- (K) Cedar and Wabasha Deck Node
- (L) MNHS Plaza
- (M) Western Sculpture Garden
- (N) Atrium

\* SOB Landscape to be Coordinated



Figure 149: Capitol Mall Design Framework



**What are the  
Fundamental Ideas?**

# EIGHT BOLD DESIGN MOVES DESIGN FRAMEWORK CAPITOL AREA

Enhance  
Experience

Reinvigorate  
Nodes

Right-Size  
the Streets

Sculpt  
Topography

Public  
Space  
Strategies

Celebrate  
Water

Planting  
Strategies

Cass Gilbert  
Memorial  
Park

# ENHANCE THE USER EXPERIENCE FOR ALL MINNESOTANS





Capitol  
Building



Minnesota  
WWII Memoria

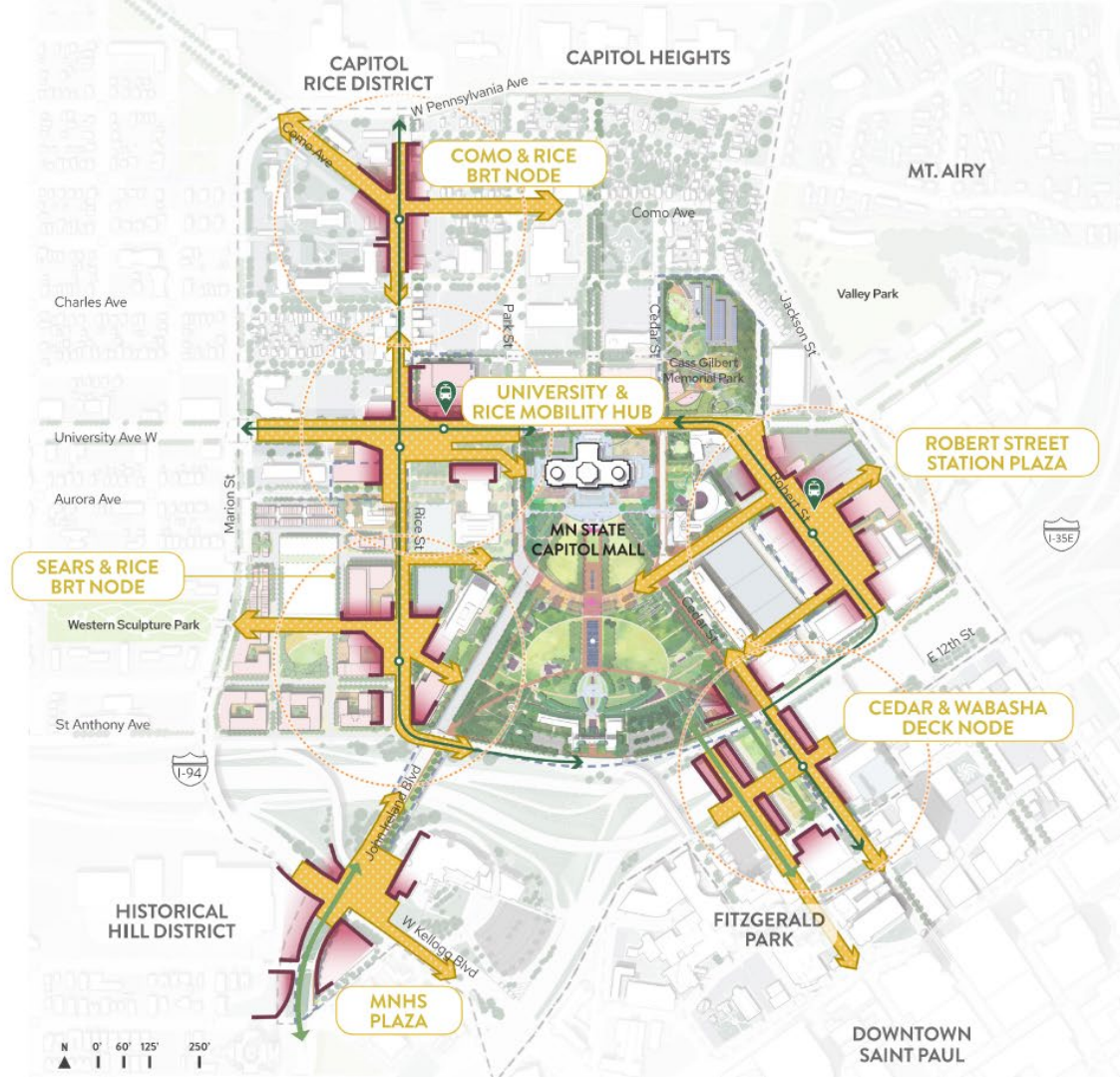


Minnesota  
Veterans Mem



Reflection Pool

# REINVIGORATE NODES THAT CONNECT MINNESOTANS TO THE CAPITOL



# REINTEGRATE NODES

MATRIX

| LOCATION                       | TYPOLGY                                                            | KIT OF PARTS |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| UNIVERSITY & RICE MOBILITY HUB | Multi-modal mobility hub<br>Urban Core                             |              |
| SEARS & RICE BRT NODE          | Mixed-use district with enhanced transit options<br>Urban District |              |
| COMO & RICE BRT NODE           | Neighborhood Transit<br>Street with Bike Lanes                     |              |
| ROBERT STREET STATION PLAZA    | Mixed-use district with Multi-modal mobility hub<br>Urban Core     |              |
| CEDAR & WABASHA DECK NODE      | Iconic urban park and Activity Hub                                 |              |
| MNHS PLAZA                     | Cultural destination                                               |              |

190 Capitol Mall Design Framework

REINTEGRATE NODES

## UNIVERSITY + RICE MOBILITY HUB

VISION AND KIT OF PARTS

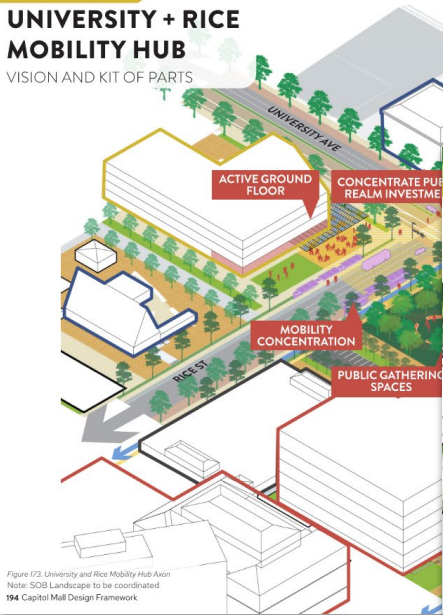
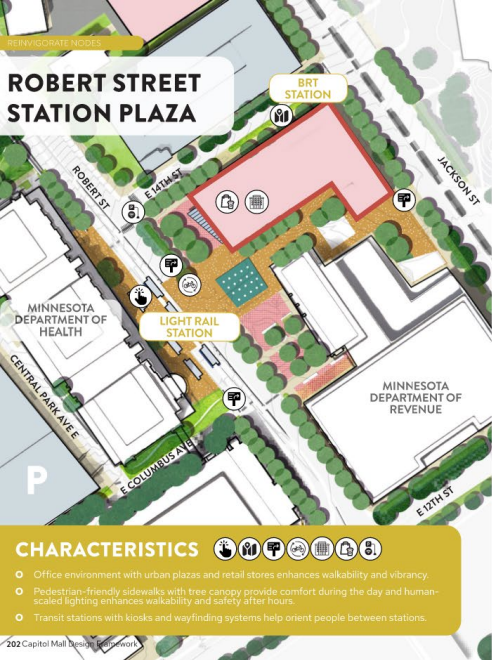


Figure 173. University and Rice Mobility Hub Axon  
Note: 500' Landscape to be coordinated  
194 Capitol Mall Design Framework

## ROBERT STREET STATION PLAZA



### CHARACTERISTICS

- Office environment with urban plazas and retail stores enhances walkability and vibrancy.
- Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks with tree canopy provide comfort during the day and human-scaled lighting enhances walkability and safety after hours.
- Transit stations with kiosks and wayfinding systems help orient people between stations.

202 Capitol Mall Design Framework



Figure 186. The Avenue, Washington D.C.  
Source: The Avenue DC, Sasaki



Figure 188. Hooper Street, San Francisco, CA  
Source: Hooper Street, SurfaceDesign, <https://www.solid.com/hooper-street>



Figure 187. Dilworth Park  
Source: Dilworth Park, CLIV Studio, [www.theclivstudio.com/dilworth-park](http://www.theclivstudio.com/dilworth-park)



Figure 189. The Avenue, Washington D.C.  
Source: The Avenue DC, Sasaki



Figure 190. Ponderosa Commons, University of British Columbia  
Source: Ponderosa Commons, Hega Collaborative, <https://landscape.com/ponderosa-commons/>

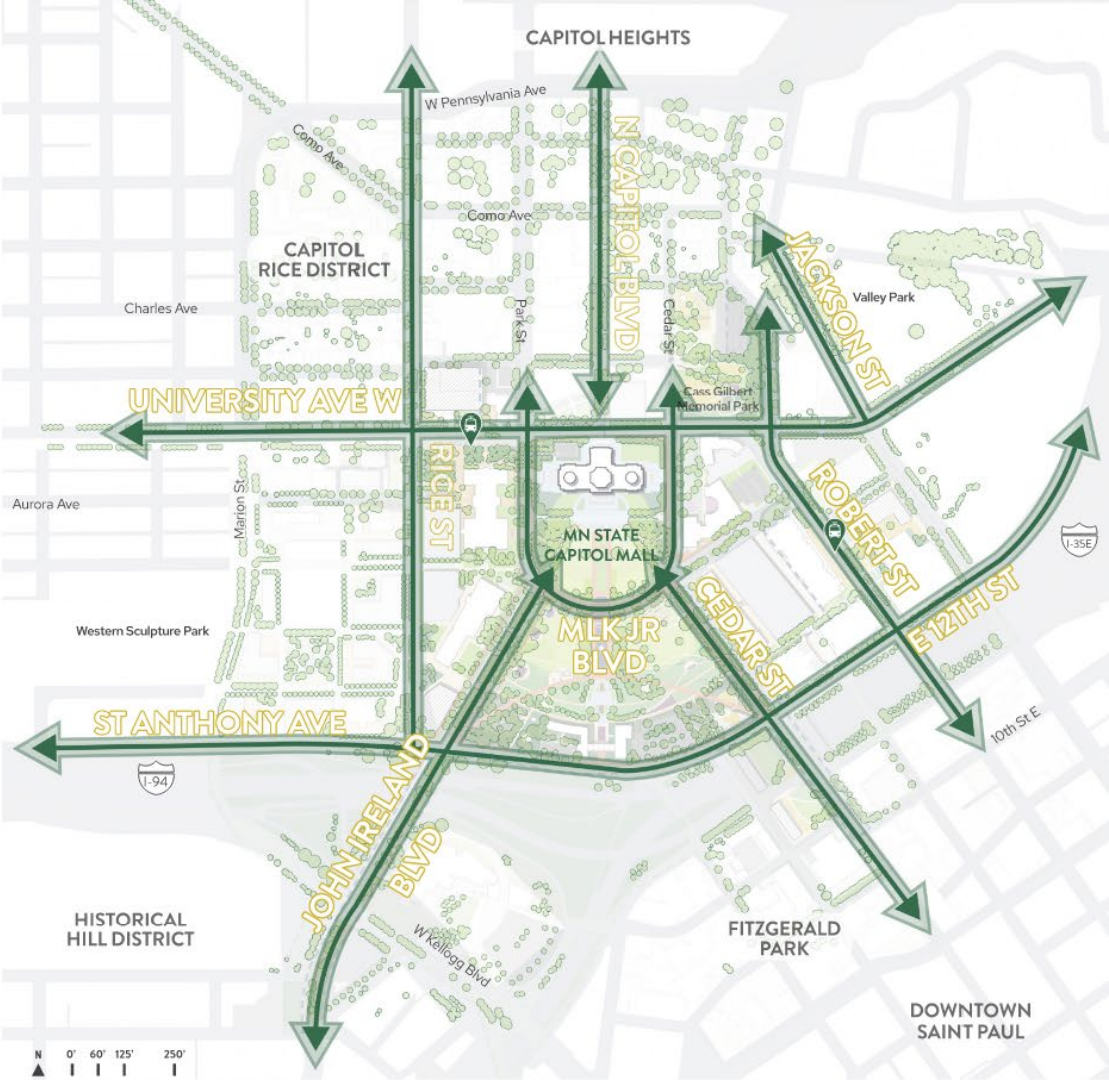


Figure 191. Hooper Street, San Francisco, CA  
Source: Hooper Street, SurfaceDesign, <https://www.solid.com/hooper-street>

Design Framework 203



**RIGHT-SIZE THE ROADS  
AND REINFORCE THEM  
WITH TREES**



## PARKING SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION

CAPITOL CAMPUS

### TAKEAWAYS

Total Existing Campus Parking Stalls: 5,757  
\*\*Parking Stall Inventory was done in April 2024. \*\*Note is total parking stalls available on Capitol Campus.

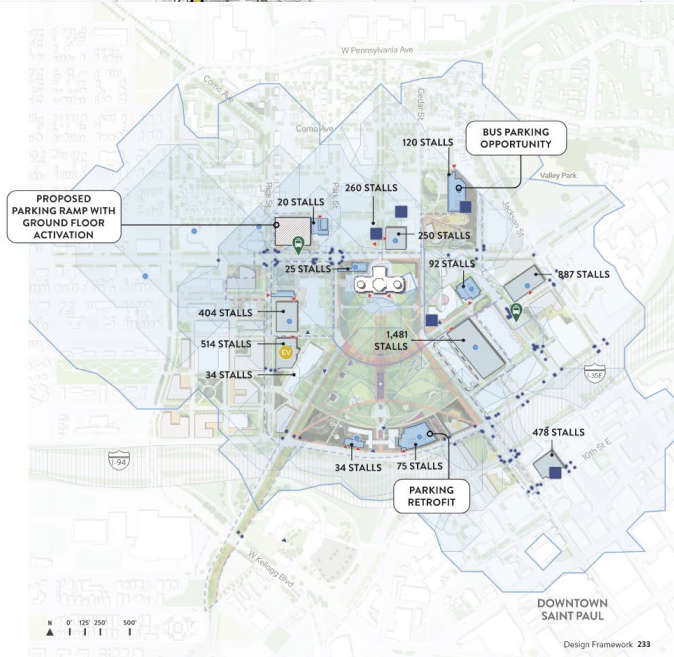
Existing Parking Stalls Removed: 888

Total Adjusted Parking Stalls: 4,869

#### LEGEND

- Surface Parking
- Parking Ramps
- ADA Parking
- ADA Ramp Entrances
- Parking Entrances
- EV Parking
- 3-Minute Walked from Parking Lots
- Pedestrian Crossing Signals

Figure 209: Parking Supply + Distribution  
232 Capitol Mall Design Framework



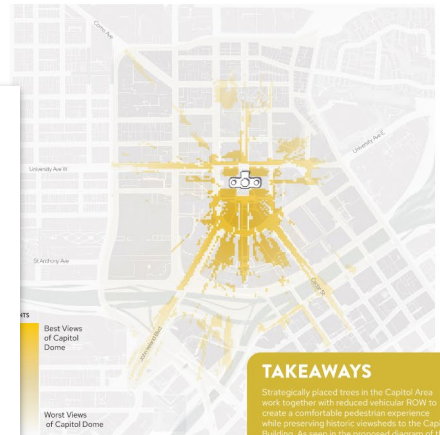
Design Framework 233

## PRESERVE HISTORIC VIEWS

EXISTING



PROPOSED

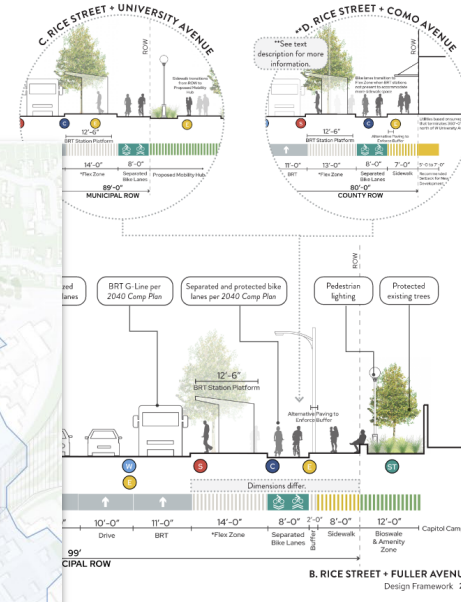


### TAKEAWAYS

Strategically placed trees in the Capitol Area work together with reduced vehicular ROW to create a comfortable pedestrian experience while preserving historic viewsheds to the Capitol Building. As seen in the proposed diagram of the viewshed, views are concentrated on the Drive of the Capitol Building.

Figure 206: Framework Viewshed towards Capitol

Design Framework 213

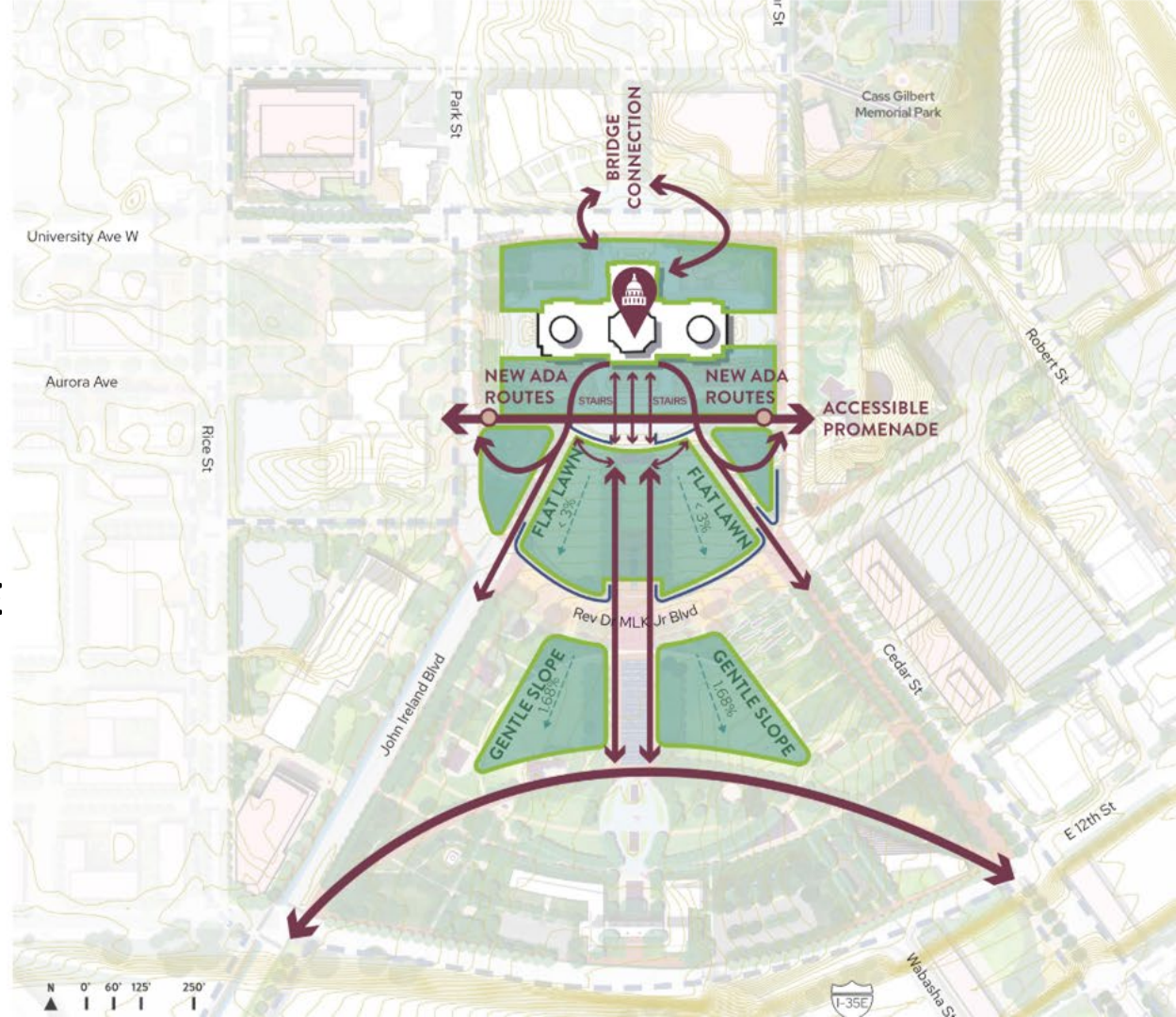


B. RICE STREET - FULLER AVENUE

Design Framework 217



**SCULPT TOPOGRAPHY:  
TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY  
AND SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATE  
SECURITY**



## PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

### ADA ACCESSIBILITY

Vital to the Design Framework is a re-envisioned pedestrian circulation network that better connects Capitol Campus arrival points and other points of interest. The linear north-south circulation stretching from the Capitol Building to the Veterans Service Building is an integral design feature of the Cass Gilbert and Johnstony/Nelson/Nichols plans. The Design Framework preserves and reinforces this north-south connection. Additionally, primary circulation along the Aurora Promenade, John Ireland Boulevard and Cedar Street connect pedestrians to and from Downtown and the Cathedral of Saint Paul. Building upon the existing pathway on the Lower Mall, additional pedestrian paths capture those arriving from the southern entry points and create a clear and curated experience throughout the many memorials of the Lower Mall. See Introduce New Public Space Strategies for more information. Lastly, proposed pedestrian bridges and enhanced crosswalks across University Avenue connect the Capitol Campus to the neighborhoods in the north as well as the re-envisioned Cass Gilbert Memorial Park.

#### LEGEND

- Major Mall Access Points
- Pedestrian (Capitol Area)
- Stairs
- ADA Circulation**
  - ▲ ADA Ramps to Buildings
  - Primary Circulation
  - Secondary Circulation
  - Tertiary Circulation
  - Trails

Figure 239: Pedestrian Circulation  
250 Capitol Mall Design Framework



DOWNTOWN  
SAINT PAUL  
Design Framework 251

## SECURITY TECHNOLOGIES

### DIAGRAMS

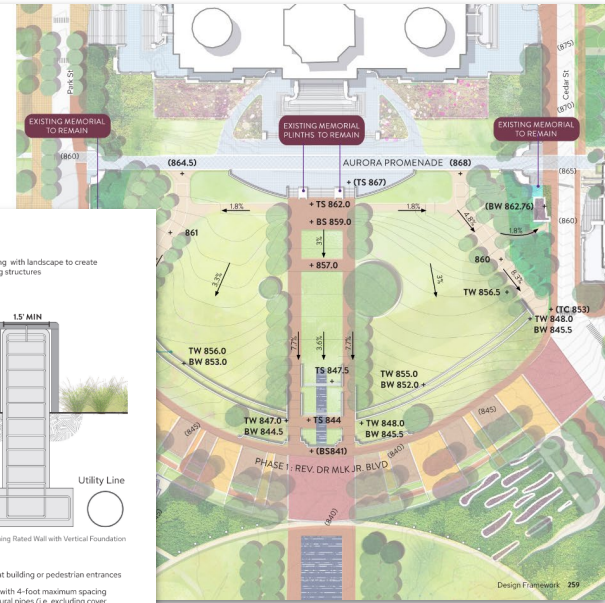
#### SIGHT LINES + SETBACKS

- Implement recommended 33-foot setback from building to maintain clear sightlines
- Mount surveillance cameras at a nine-foot minimum height to prevent unmounting
- Maintain clear sightlines with a minimum of nine-foot clear height of trees
- Set back bollards from sidewalks with planting aesthetics are more crucial

## ADA ACCESSIBILITY AND SECURITY

### UPPER MALL

Phase 1 of the Design Framework focuses on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and the Upper Mall. More specifically, it strives to create consistent 3% slopes within the eastern and western flanks of the Upper Mall, as well as the prominent north-south axial connection. To achieve this, stepped 2-foot, 6-inch impact rated retaining wall steps step down to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard; this feature not only provides additional security to those gathering in the Upper Mall, but creates places to sit or moments for browsing and signage.



#### ANTI-RAMMING RATED WALL

- Ensure three-foot minimum height to be effective in stopping vehicles
- Utilize anti-ramming rated walls in areas where aesthetics are more crucial
- Consider integrating with landscape to create landscape retaining structures

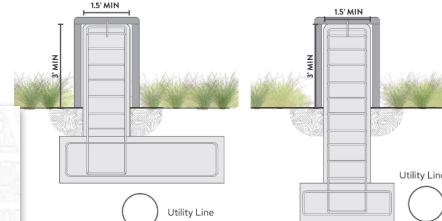


Figure 229: Anti-Ramming Rated Wall with Horizontal Foundation

Figure 231: Anti-Ramming Rated Wall with Vertical Foundation

#### BOLLARDS

- Place bollards at building or pedestrian entrances
- Space bollards with 4-foot maximum spacing between structural pipes (i.e. excluding cover dimension)
- Install a minimum of two bollards per foundation
- Install bollards with a decorative stainless steel or powder coated sleeve with custom RAL color

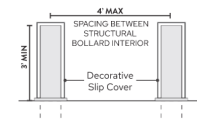


Figure 232: Bollards

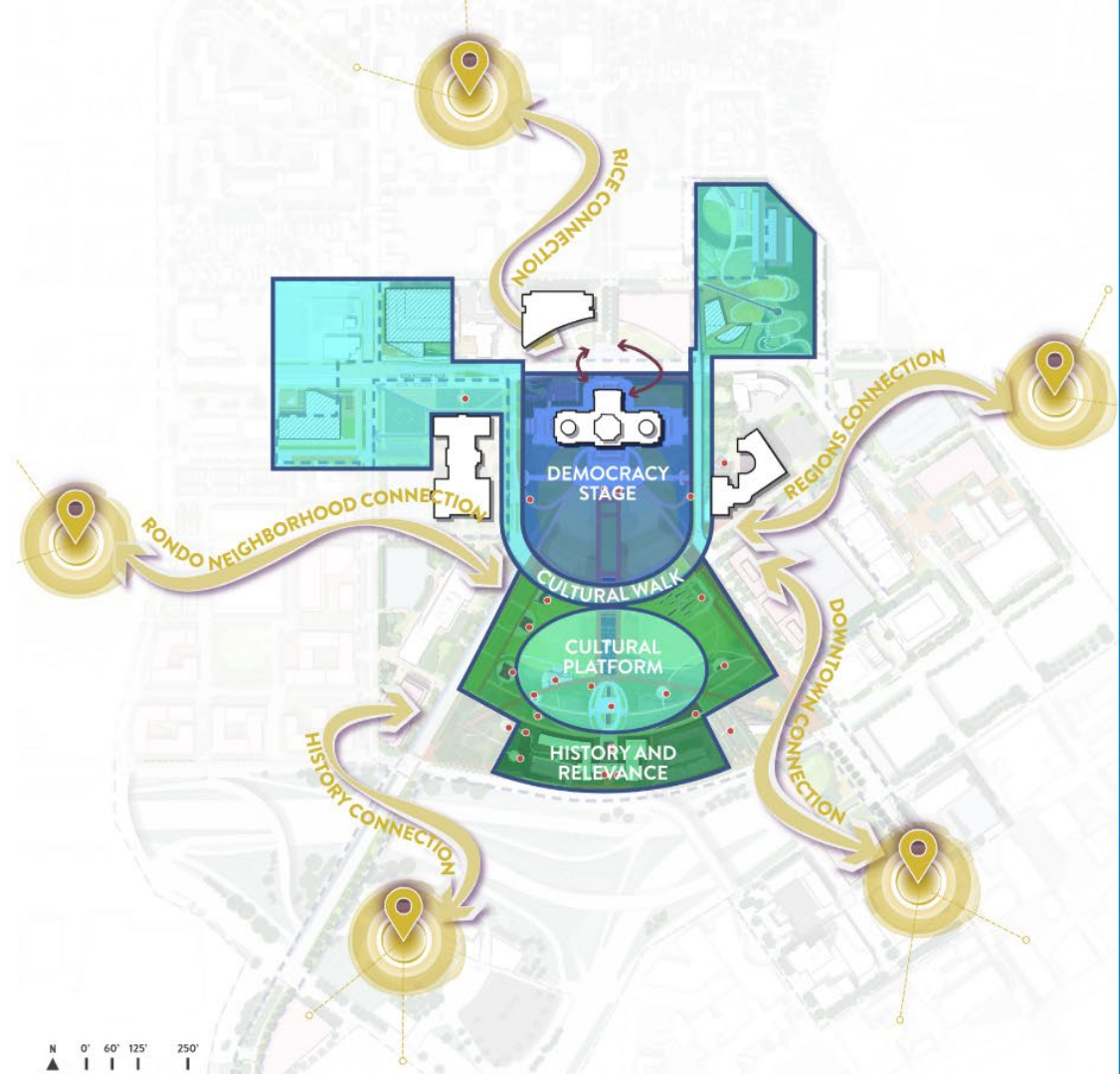
Design Framework 247

Figure 230: Anti-Ramming Rated Retaining Wall



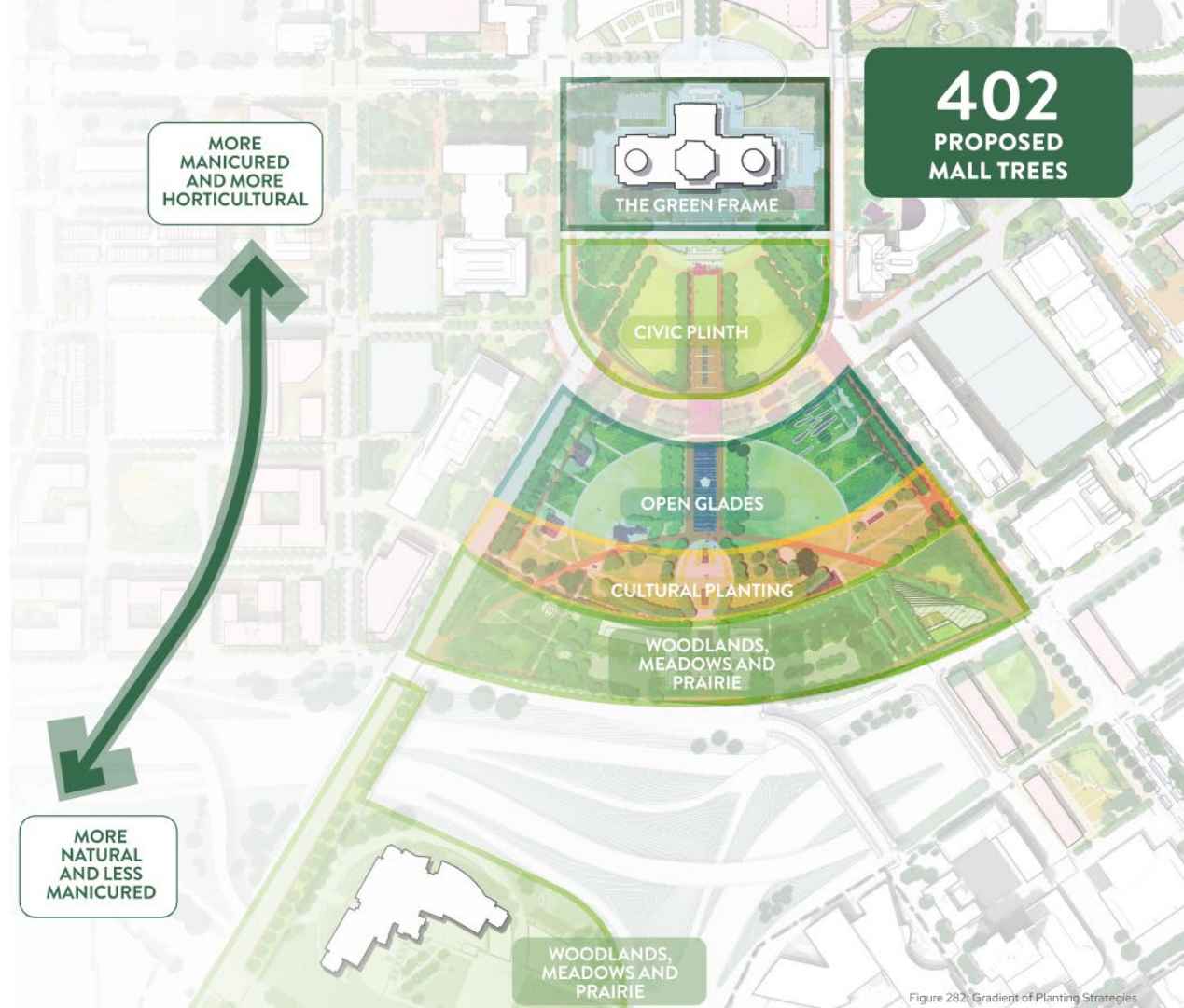
# VISITOR EXPERIENCE:

CONNECT THE CITY AND  
MINNESOTANS TO THE  
CAPITOL AREA and  
CAMPUS



## CREATE A GRADIENT OF PLANTING STRATEGIES

SUPPORTING CULTURAL  
PROGRAMMING, SUSTAINABLE  
MAINTENANCE AND HUMAN  
COMFORT GOALS



## PLANTING STRATEGIES

### PLANTING PALETTE

#### TYPOLGY MATRIX

| TYPOLGY         | TREE SPECIES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| THE GREEN FRAME | <div>SHADE</div> <div> <i>Acer saccharum</i> (Sugar Maple)<br/> <i>Quercus x warei</i> "Nadler"<br/>                     (Kindred Spirit Oak)<br/> <i>Tilia americana</i> (Basswood)<br/> <i>Ulmus americana</i> (American Elm)                 </div> <div>ORNAMENTAL</div> <div> <i>Cercis canadensis</i> (Eastern Redbud)<br/> <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i><br/>                     (Thornless Honey Locust)<br/> <i>Juniperus chinensis</i> "Trautman"<br/>                     (Trautman Juniper)                 </div> |
| CIVIC PLINTH    | <div>GROVE</div> <div> <i>Ulmus americana</i> (American Elm)<br/> <i>Tilia americana</i> (Basswood)                 </div> <div>SHADE</div> <div> <i>Celtis occidentalis</i> (Hackberry)<br/> <i>Gymnocladus dioica</i> (Kentucky Coffeetree)<br/> <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> (Bur Oak)<br/> <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> x <i>robur</i><br/>                     (Heritage Oak)                 </div>                                                                                                                                                |
| OPEN GLADES     | <div>SHADE</div> <div> <i>Acer saccharum</i> (Silver Maple)<br/> <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i><br/>                     (Thornless Honey Locust)<br/> <i>Quercus ellipsoidalis</i> (Northern Pin Oak)<br/> <i>Tilia americana</i> (Basswood)<br/> <i>Ulmus americana</i> (American Elm)                 </div> <div>ORNAMENTAL</div> <div> <i>Cercis canadensis</i> (Eastern Redbud)                 </div>                                                                                                                     |

Source: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/trees/index.html>  
 Source: HGA, Minnesota State Capitol Restoration Project, 16 Oct. 2015.  
 Source: <https://extension.umn.edu/trees-and-shrubs/trees-and-shrubs-minnesota-landscapes>

## PLANTING STRATEGIES

### TREE CANOPY COVERAGE

#### EXISTING TREE CANOPIES

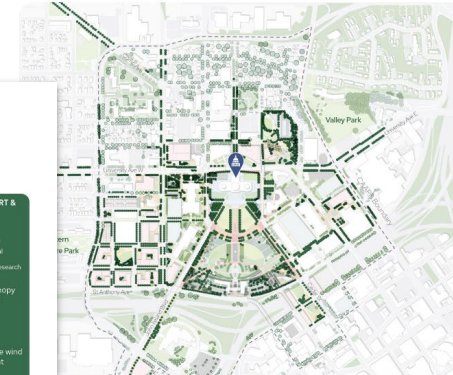


## PLANTING STRATEGIES

The Design Framework supports a variety of landscape strategies, including green infrastructure, natural drainage and infiltration, and selective planting material for long-term maintenance. Some specific interventions include the following:

- Increase native street trees to provide shade and thermal comfort
- Design seasonal plantings to frame the Capitol

#### PROPOSED TREE CANOPIES



Capitol Area Tree Canopy (Proposed)

Existing Trees  
Proposed Trees

#### METRICS

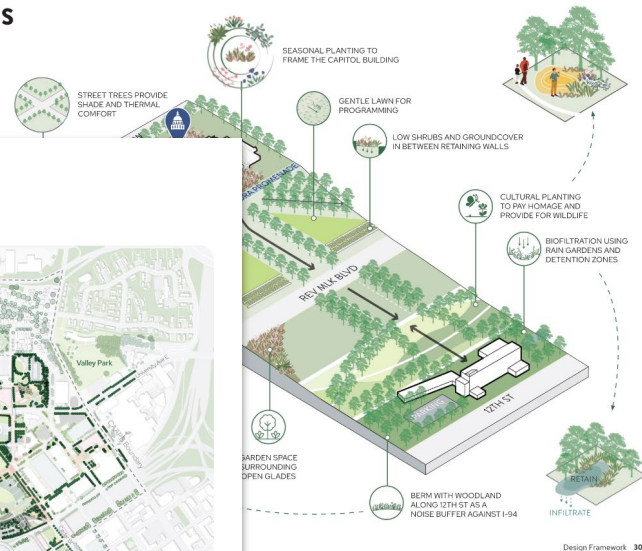
Proposed Trees in Mall: 402  
 Proposed Trees in Cass Gilbert: 121  
 Proposed Trees in MLK: 32  
 Proposed Street Trees: 151

Existing Trees Removed or Relocated: 259

**Total Proposed: 1,968**

Design Framework 305

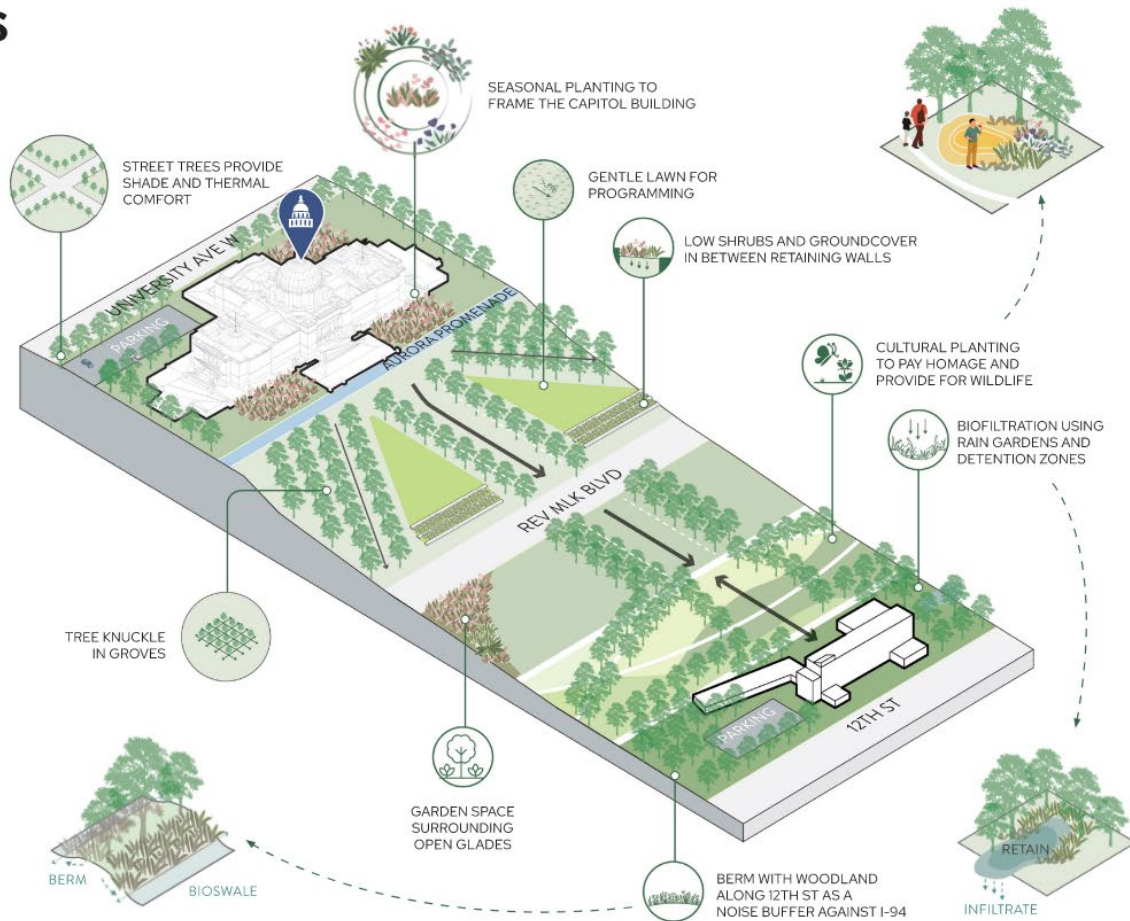
| PLANT COMMUNITIES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | MAINTENANCE & PERFORMANCE | NOTES ON HUMAN COMFORT & CLIMATE CHANGE                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Asclepias syriaca</i> sub <i>tuberosa</i> (Common Milkweed)<br><i>Hydrangea paniculata</i> "SMHPLQ"<br>(Little Quick Fire Hydrangea)<br><i>Ilex verticillata</i> "Red Sprite" (Red Sprite Winterberry)<br><i>Juniperus sabina</i> "Blue Forest" (Blue Forest Juniper)<br><i>Nandina sp.</i> (Dwarf)<br><i>Nepeta fassena</i> "Walker's Low" (Walker's Low Catmint)<br><i>Spiraea betulifolia</i> "Tor" (Tor Birchleaf Spiraea)<br><i>Taxus x media</i> "Taunton" (Taunton Yew)                                                                                     | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○<br>HIGH         | Climate-ready trees based on principles of projected climate and University Minnesota Research<br>Increased shade canopy for thermal comfort<br>Dynamic height differences to create wind flow at human height |
| <i>Asclepias syriaca</i> sub <i>tuberosa</i> (Common Milkweed)<br><i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i> (White Sagebrush)<br><i>Nepeta fassena</i> "Walker's Low" (Walker's Low Catmint)<br><i>Panicum virgatum</i> (Switchgrass)<br><i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i> "Dionna May"<br>(Little Devil Ninebark)<br><i>Rhus aromatica</i> "Gro-Low" (Fragrant Sumac)<br><i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> (Indiangrass)<br><i>Spiraea betulifolia</i> "Tor" (Tor Birchleaf Spiraea)<br><i>Verbena hastata</i> (Blue Verben)                                                                 | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○<br>MED          | Pollinator and wildlife friendly landscape<br>Develop maintenance friendly plant communities based on ecologies                                                                                                |
| <i>Diospyros virginiana</i> (American Persimmon)<br><i>Hydrangea paniculata</i> "SMHPLQ"<br>(Little Quick Fire Hydrangea)<br><i>Ilex verticillata</i> "Jim Dandy" (Jim Dandy Winterberry)<br><i>Ilex verticillata</i> "Red Sprite" (Red Sprite Winterberry)<br><i>Prunus americana</i> (Wild Plum)<br><i>Rhus aromatica</i> "Gro-Low" (Fragrant Sumac)<br><i>Schochrythrum scoparium</i> (Little Bluestem)<br><i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> (Indiangrass)<br><i>Spiraea betulifolia</i> "Tor" (Tor Birchleaf Spiraea)<br><i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i> (Prairie Dropseed) | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○<br>MED          | Increased carbon sequestration<br>Noise buffering along I-94 with Wetlands, Meadows, and Prairies<br>Strategic placement of canopy trees to avoid security cameras                                             |



# PLANTING STRATEGIES

The Design Framework supports a variety of landscape strategies, including green infrastructure, natural drainage and infiltration, and selective planting material for long-term maintenance. Some specific interventions include the following:

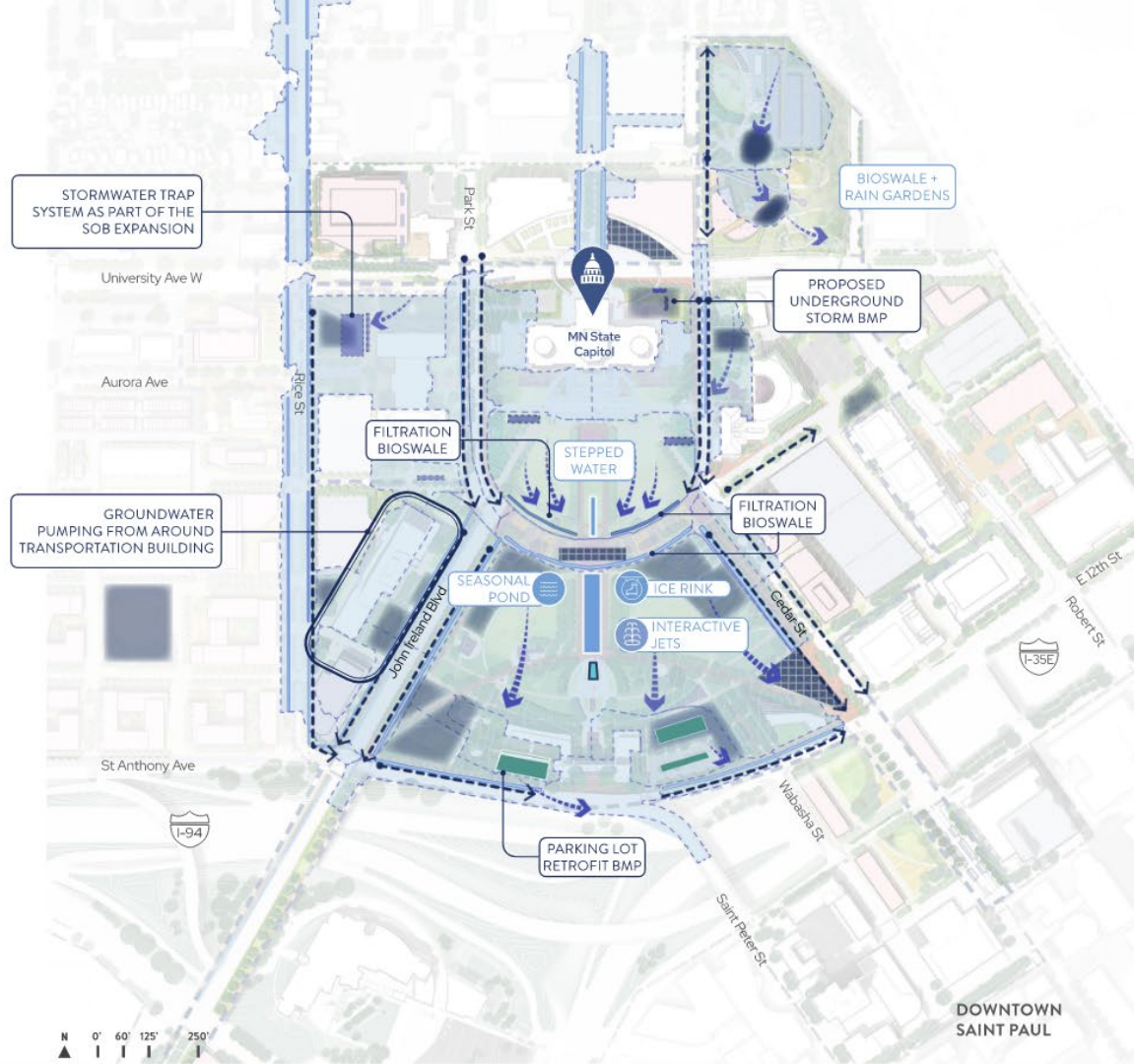
- Increase native street trees to provide shade and thermal comfort
- Design seasonal plantings to frame the Capitol Building
- Create gently sloped lawns for event programming
- Utilize low shrubs and groundcover to provide greenery while maintaining sight lines and security
- Select cultural plantings to pay homage and support wildlife
- Add biofiltration through rain gardens and detention zones
- Buffer interstate noise and pollution using berms with woodland plant species along East/West 12th Street







# Celebrate Water throughout All Seasons



## CELEBRATE WATER

# STORMWATER BMP FOOTPRINTS AND CATCHMENT AREAS

## GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The newly tree-lined streets around the Capitol Mall will incorporate open-topped planter boxes with climate resilient vegetation and associated subsurface systems to capture, hold, infiltrate, and treat stormwater runoff from adjacent hard surfaces including sidewalks, roadways, and trails. These subsurface systems should include specially-engineered soil media designed to store, filter, and promote infiltration of stormwater runoff. These soil systems provide sufficient volume for healthier root growth for the newly planted street trees to support a better growing environment. Stormwater entering these systems will be filtered and allowed to infiltrate into the

ground, when feasible, reducing the amount of urban pollutants entering the surrounding storm sewer and being discharged to the nearby Mississippi River (Hahakwapa). In situations where the infiltration of stormwater is prohibited by state or local guidance due to site conditions, such as poor or contaminated soils, the filtered stormwater will be conveyed into the surrounding storm sewers in a cleaner condition.

## STORMWATER REUSE WITHIN THE CAPITOL MALL IRRIGATION

Currently, the Upper Mall and Lower Mall encompass nearly 20-acres of lawn area and plantings, each of which has different irrigation demands with irrigation systems currently sourced with potable water. As part of this build

## CELEBRATE WATER

# STORMWATER SYSTEMS

## PRECEDENT IMAGERY



move, underground storage tanks for the capture and storing of stormwater runoff from the surrounding area will be installed within the centralized and southern portions of the Capitol Mall. The tanks will be plumbed to connect into the existing irrigation system for the Capitol Mall. Water flowing into these tanks will be filtered to remove pollutants, stored, and then used as a replacement for potable water for a more resilient approach to irrigation of the Capitol Mall.

## INTEGRATING CLIMATE RESILIENT PRACTICES WITHIN THE SOUTHERN MALL

As the priorities for the southern mall transition away from surface parking and toward additional green space, climate resilient stormwater practices will be woven into these reimagined landscapes. Stormwater bioinfiltration basins and native vegetation will be artistically incorporated and utilized to capture stormwater runoff from the remaining hard surfaces, filtering the water to remove pollutants and allowing it to infiltrate when possible. In situations where the infiltration of stormwater is prohibited by state or local guidance due to site conditions, bioinfiltration practices will be utilized. As remaining parking areas in the southern mall area are reconstructed, there are opportunities to incorporate green stormwater management practices

either directly adjacent to or within the parking areas itself using linear bioinfiltration or filtration basins and tree trenches to treat runoff, soften the hardscape of the parking areas, and provide additional tree canopy.

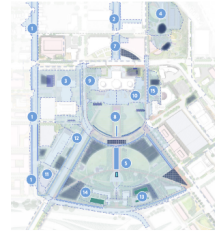


Figure 273: Stormwater Catchment Areas Key Map

| BMP CONCEPT                                                                                                                                                  | BASIN # |    |   |   | BMP FOOTPRINT (SF) | VOLUME (CF) | CONTRIBUTING AREA (SF) | CONTRIBUTING AREA DESCRIPTION                             |                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----|---|---|--------------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Integrated green stormwater infrastructure within modified streetscapes along John Ireland Blvd, Cedar Street, Rev. MLK Blvd, Rice Street, and W 12th Street | 1       | 2  | 3 | 4 | 5                  | 86,974      | 1,095,272              | Adjacent roadways, sidewalks, and other neighboring areas |                                                                                                                                  |
| Upper Lawn filtration bioswales                                                                                                                              | 7       |    |   |   | 4,305              |             | 237,707                | Southern portion of Upper Mall areas                      |                                                                                                                                  |
| Bioswale & rain garden at Capitol Complex Lot Q and Cass Gilbert Park                                                                                        | 8       | 9  |   |   |                    | 19,514      |                        | 177,733                                                   | New solar canopy over bus parking, regraded Lot Q parking lot, and contributing park areas                                       |
| Parking lot retrofits & neighboring bioswales in southern Mall area                                                                                          | 10      | 11 |   |   |                    | 22,221      |                        | 134,784                                                   | Lower Mall areas surrounding the Veterans Service Building, Lot I and Lot J parking lots                                         |
| Underground stormwater filtration & reuse system (Central Mall location)                                                                                     | 12      |    |   |   | 10,736             |             | 909,781                |                                                           | Areas surrounding Capitol Building, Upper Mall, adjacent Capitol Complex properties, roadways, and surrounding streetscape areas |
| Underground stormwater filtration & reuse system (Southern Mall location)                                                                                    | 13      |    |   |   | 22,947             |             | 1,896,855              |                                                           | Areas tributary to Central Mall reuse system, plus Lower Mall, neighboring roadways, and surrounding streetscape areas           |
| Underground stormwater filtration & reuse systems at SOB site                                                                                                | 14      | 15 |   |   |                    | 2,275       |                        | 181,546                                                   | Portions of State Office Building expansion, adjacent site, and parking lot areas                                                |

## CELEBRATE WATER

# STORMWATER BMP FOOTPRINTS AND CATCHMENT AREAS

The Design Framework integrates a resilient district stormwater management system and green stormwater infrastructure while taking a closer look at the contributing areas.

## BMP CONCEPTS

## CATCHMENT AREAS



276. LRT Station at Robert St and 14th St  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/1346501956/12046857852/> (via album-7257054770785784/)



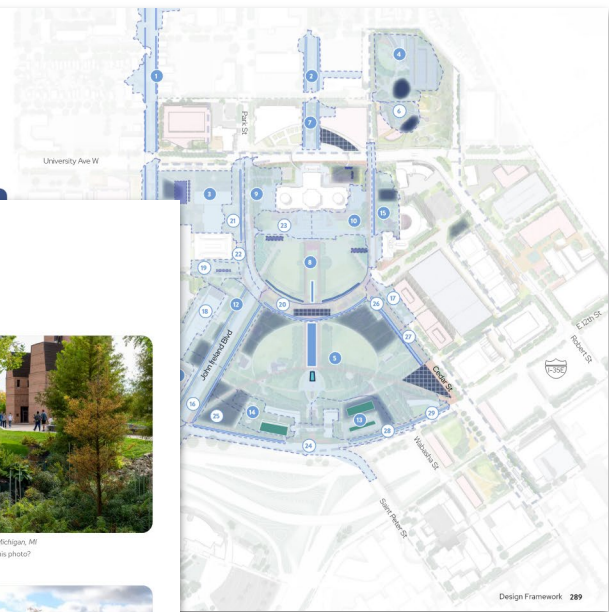
Figure 281: University of Michigan, MI  
 Source: n/a who saved this photo?



279. Marion Street and University Ave  
 ce: <https://www.capitolregionid.org/projects/green-line-structure/>



Figure 280: Maplewood Mall, Maplewood, MN  
 Source: <https://remed.org/projects/maplewood-mall-retail/>



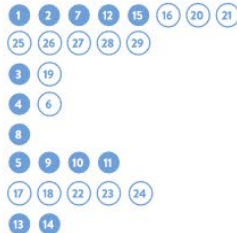
# STORMWATER BMP FOOTPRINTS AND CATCHMENT AREAS

The Design Framework integrates a resilient district stormwater management system and green stormwater infrastructure while taking a closer look at the contributing areas.

## BMP CONCEPT

- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Underground Storm Chamber
- Rain Garden + Bioswales
- Filtration Bioswales
- Stormwater Reuse
- State-Owned Parking Lot Retrofit

## CATCHMENT AREAS



Note:

- See Estimated BMP Footprints on Proposed Conditions for information on BMP concepts and contributing area descriptions

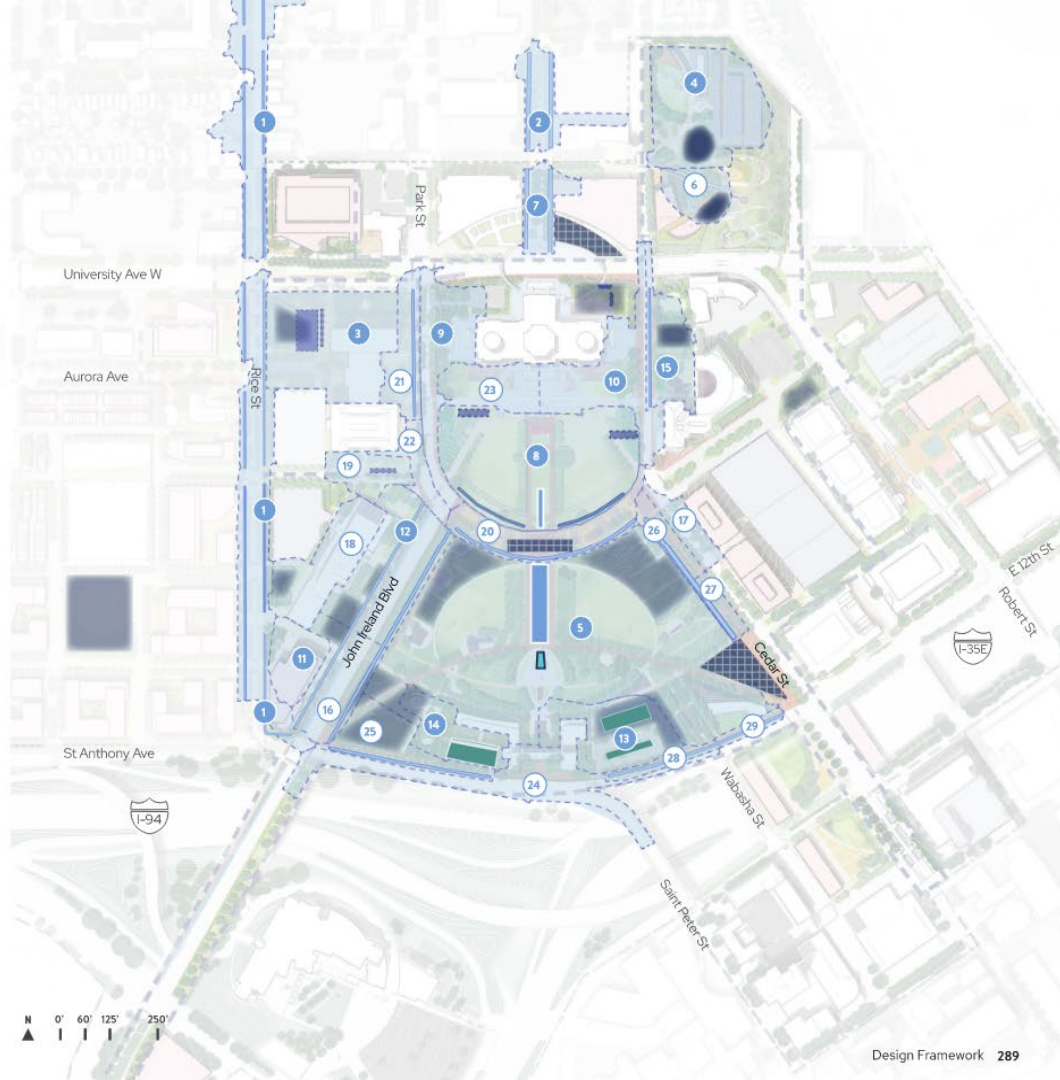
## LEGEND

|                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Underground Storm Chamber       | Catchment Area                       |
| Green Stormwater Infrastructure | State-Owned Parking Lot Retrofit BMP |
| Water Feature                   | Underground Storm Chamber (Existing) |
| Stormwater Reuse                | Water Feature (Existing)             |
| On-Surface Water Treatment      |                                      |

Figure 272: Stormwater BMP Footprints and Catchment Areas

Source: Capitol Region Watershed District and Barr document

Source: HGA, Minnesota State Capitol Repairs, Restoration & Preservation, 09 May, 2014.



# MULTI-GENERATIONAL SPACE

TRANSFORM CASS GILBERT MEMORIAL PARK INTO A MULTI-GENERATIONAL SPACE FOR PLAY, RECREATION AND VIEWS



# USER AND ANNUAL PROGRAMMING

## USER EXPERIENCE

Take advantage of a walk to the neighboring park on a day trip to the Capitol for a variety of activities made to accommodate a large group of users from daily visitors such as Residents and Community, Office Workers to visitors who come far for a meaningful trip, such as Visitors and Students for an educational trip.

## VISITORS

- Get a nice overlook to the Capitol Building and Downtown at the Overlook
- Trace the Cultural Trail from various access points, such as the Rice Station Hub



## OFFICE WORKERS

- Place for gathering after work
- Lunch spot with a view
- Flexible space easily accessible from neighborhood



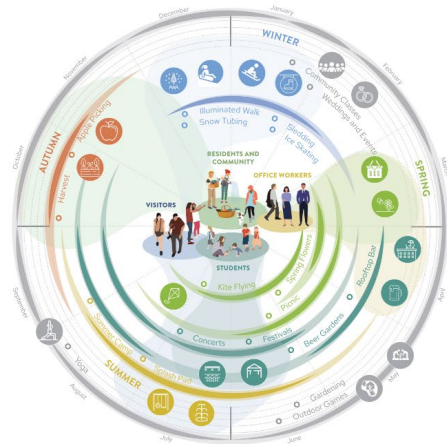
## RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY

- Multi-use event spaces
- Various seating arrangements to accommodate large and small groups of users
- Connected network of pedestrian trails from Capitol Area to Capitol Heights



## STUDENTS

- Engage and learn with the Discovery Museum and Educational Garden
- Play after class at the various flexible and play areas



## ANNUAL PROGRAMMING

The proposed design incorporates existing topography to build a tiered outdoor space for overlooking the Capitol Mall and Downtown while also providing opportunities for various programming. The addition of a multi-use amenity building inserted into the hill of the site folds in another level of flexibility in user experience with seasonality.



Figure 304: Izy's Playground, North Carolina  
Source: Izy's Playground, North Carolina Landscape.



Figure 305: Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Garden, Ohio  
Source: Randall L. Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Garden.

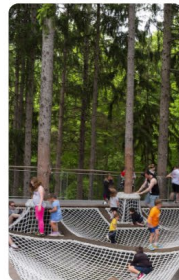


Figure 306: Whiting Forest, Michigan  
Source: Lehoux, Nic. Whiting Forest, Caitlin Brady.



Figure 302: Sister Cities Park, Philadelphia  
Source: Studio Brian Hanes. Sister Cities Park, Philadelphia. Party Space.



Figure 303: Biosbosch Museum, Netherlands  
Source: Tilman, Ronald. Biosbosch Museum, Netherlands. Arch Daily, www.archdaily.com/777852/biosbosch-museum-ideal-studio-marco-vermeulen.



Figure 307: Clark Art Institute, Massachusetts  
Source: Cheong, Becky. Clark Art Institute, Massachusetts. Fathom.

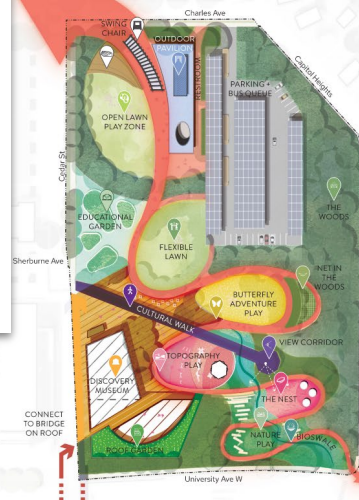


Figure 308: Pier 36, New York  
Source: Olin Studio. Pier 36, New York. Olin Studio, www.theolinstudio.com/news.

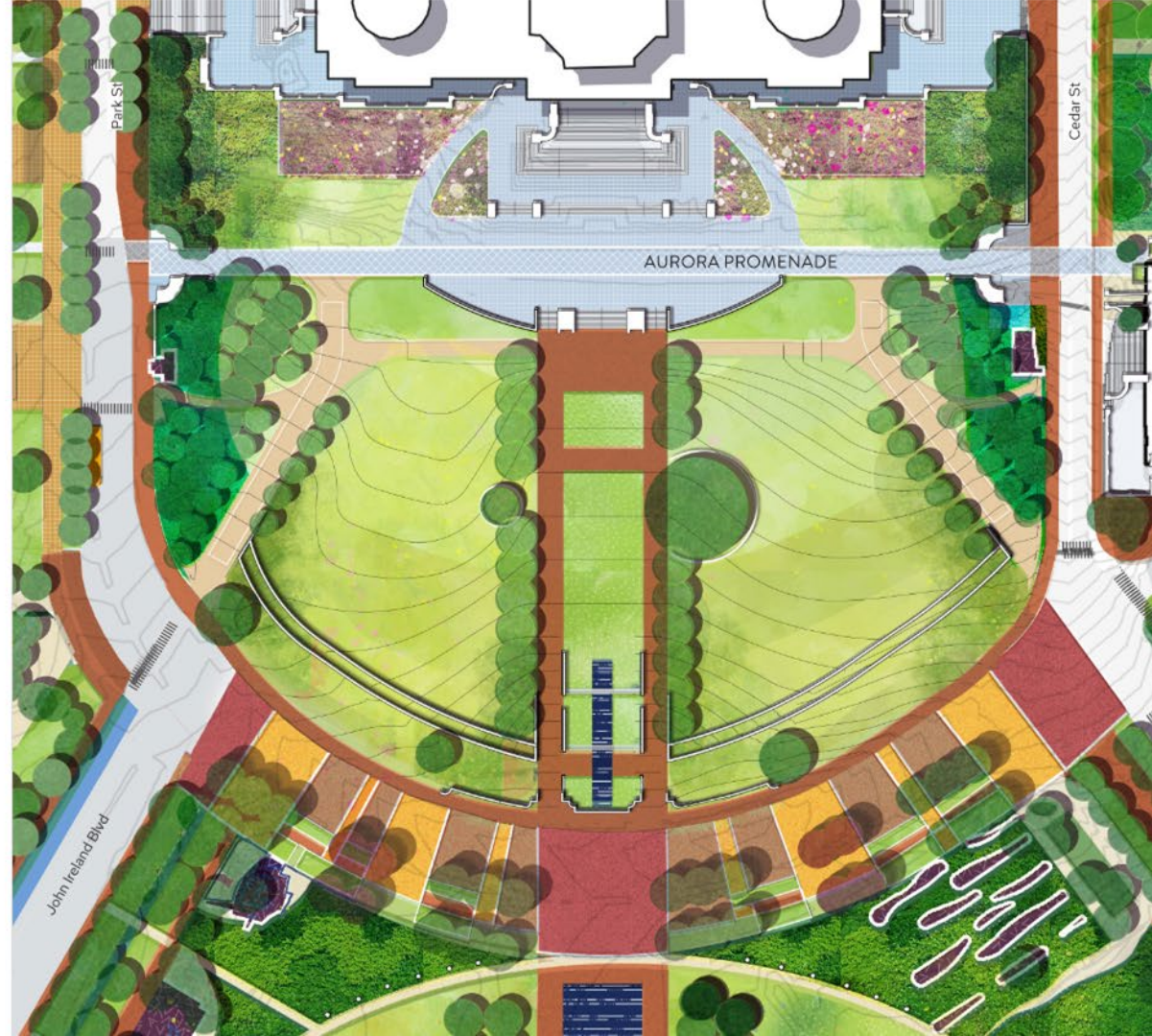
318 Capitol Mall Design Framework

Design Framework 319

Design Framework 321



**CONVERT REV. MLK JR.  
BLVD. INTO A SHARED  
ACTIVE STREET FOR  
MINNESOTANS**





# PROPOSED DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLAN

## CAPITOL MALL

### LEGEND

- CAAPB Boundary
- CMDF Limit of Work
- Proposed Building
- Memorials
- A MN State Capitol
- B New State Office Building\*
- C MN Senate
- D MN Judicial Branch
- A Aurora Promenade
- B Civic Plinth
- C Open Glades
- D Arboretum
- E Native Prairies
- F Sears & Rice BRT Node
- G University & Rice Mobility Hub
- H Cass Gilbert Memorial Park
- I Robert Street Station Plaza
- J Visitor Amenity Building
- K Cedar and Wabasha Deck Node

\* SOB Landscape to be Coordinated

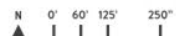
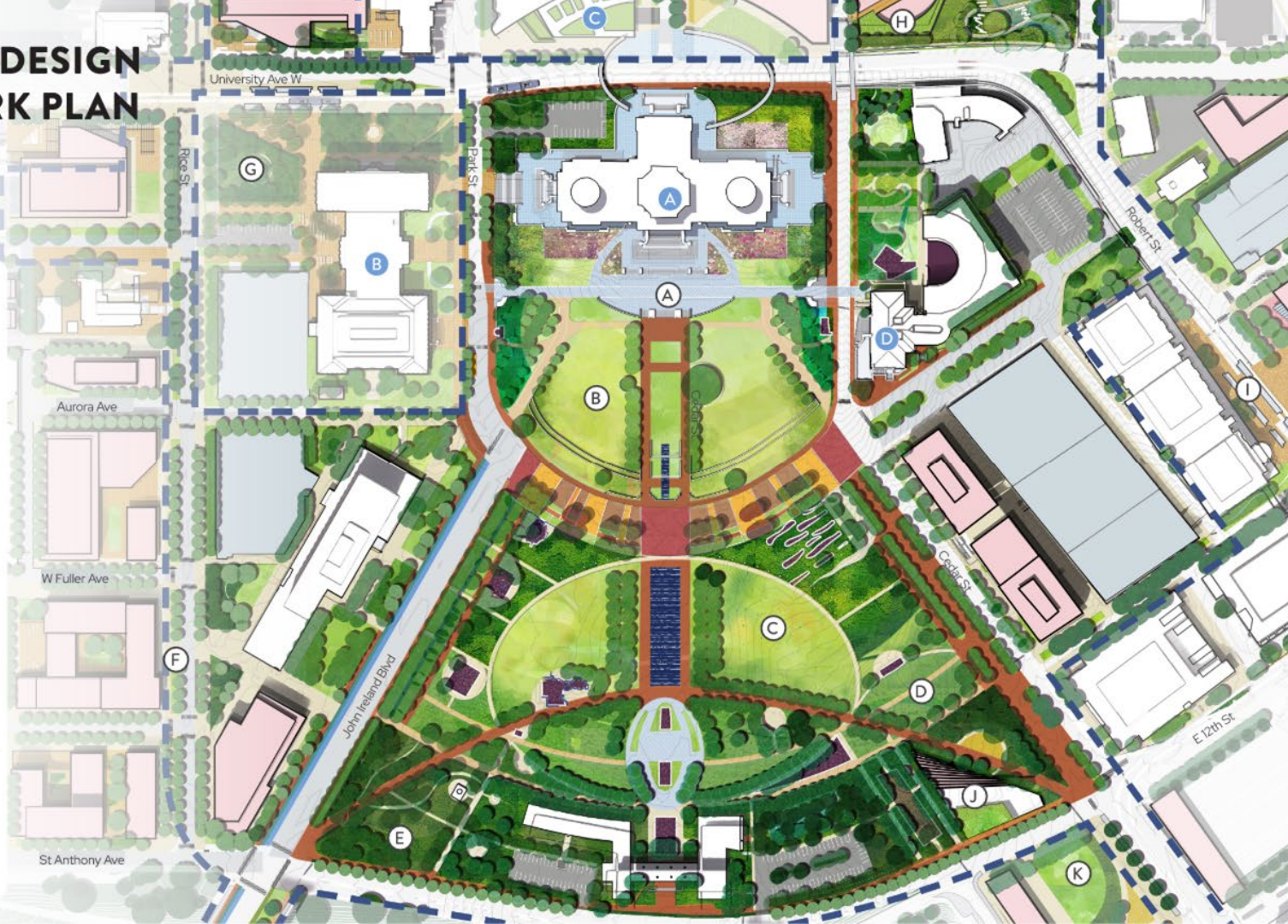


Figure 150: Capitol Mall Design Framework  
Zoom In



# Capitol Mall Framework Implementation:

Trees & Plantings

Benches

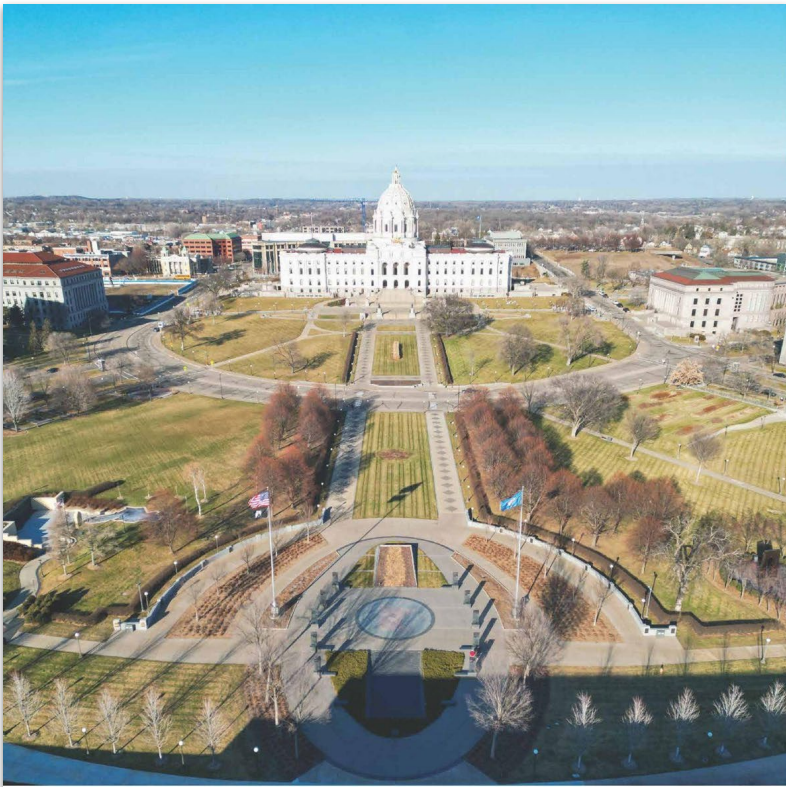
Tribal Flag Plaza

Rice Street Reconstruction

Commons/Green Space at Rice and University



## **How is the CMDF Meant to be Used?**



**The Capitol Mall Design Framework is a planning document based on a rigorous process and expertise.**



**MINNESOTA CAPITOL MALL  
DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD (CAAPB)  
05.20.2024

# Examples of Creative Partnerships:

## **Madison Downtown Partnership Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI):**

- 40+ year nonprofit supporting a healthy, thriving downtown.
- 480+ members across public, nonprofit, and private sectors.
- Helped manage the State Street Mall and launch major events.
- Supports connectivity between the State Capitol, downtown, and waterfront.
- Dane County Farmers' Market is a major driver of Capitol-area vitality.

## **Denver Civic Center Conservancy**

- Independent nonprofit supporting Denver's Civic Center Park, publicly owned by the city/county.
- Leads activation, management, partnerships, and fundraising.
- Led the 2005 Civic Center Master Plan and continues implementation.
- Builds partnerships with major private-sector supporters.
- Focuses on making Civic Center both a civic gathering place and an active daily park.

## **Bryant Park Corporation Model**

- Nonprofit organizations support restoration, maintenance, programming, and district management.
- Does not own the land; operates through lease agreements with the City and Library.
- Partnership model combines public ownership with nonprofit management.
- Funding and revenue initiatives support operations, maintenance, and activation.
- Demonstrates a long-term public-private management model for a major civic space.

# FRAMEWORK

## PHASING STRATEGIES

### A DYNAMIC PROCESS

|    | CAPITOL MALL AND ADJACENT PARK IMPROVEMENT | CAPITOL AREA ACTORS                          | FUNDING AVENUE                          | COST      | PROJECT DEPENDENCIES                                                                                  |
|----|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | I-94 CAP AND ADJACENT PARK                 | Partnership at Federal, state and city level | Federal government                      | \$ 60-75M | Saint Paul Ramsey County Public Health Relocation                                                     |
| 2  | CASS GILBERT PARK                          | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy, earned income   | \$ 8-20M  | Relocate reduced parking on nearby site                                                               |
| 3  | BRIDGE OVER UNIVERSITY                     | CAAPB / Admin, DOT                           | Grants, State and Philanthropy          | \$ 8M     | Prior project: redevelopment of existing Admin; Suggested parallel project: North Capitol Streetscape |
| 4  | LOWER MALL - OVAL PATH                     | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 1-2M   | None, suggest to work with other Lower Mall Improvements                                              |
| 5  | LOWER MALL - MAIN PATH                     | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 3-5M   | None, suggest to work with other Lower Mall Improvements                                              |
| 6  | LOWER MALL - CURVY PATH                    | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 1-2M   | None, suggest to work with other Lower Mall Improvements                                              |
| 7  | LOWER MALL - WEST LANDSCAPE                | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 2-3M   | The oval path and John Ireland South of 94                                                            |
| 8  | LOWER MALL PARKING TRANSFORMATION          | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 2-3M   | The Lower Mall Curvy Path (Improvement #6)                                                            |
| 9  | LOWER MALL - VISITOR CENTER                | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy, earned income   | \$ 5M     | Demolition of existing parking lot                                                                    |
| 10 | LOWER MALL ALL OTHER IMPROVEMENTS          | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 2-3M   | All other Lower Mall prior projects                                                                   |
| 11 | PARK NEAR LAW LIBRARY                      | CAAPB / Admin, Private Sector                | State and Philanthropy, private funding | \$ 5-8M   | None                                                                                                  |
| 12 | PLANTING AROUND CAPITOL                    | Exclusively CAAPB / Admin                    | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 1-2M   | None                                                                                                  |
| 13 | OVERALL SITE UPGRADES                      | Partnership at the state and city level      | State and Philanthropy                  | \$ 7-10M  | Suggest to build with other projects                                                                  |

|    | STREET PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT      | CAPITOL AREA ACTORS                             | FUNDING AVENUE                         | COST        | PROJECT DEPENDENCIES                                              |
|----|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | NORTH CAPITOL STREETSCAPE            | Partnership at Municipal level                  | State and Philanthropy                 | \$ 5M       | Suggest to parallel with Bridge Over University                   |
| 2  | UNIVERSITY AND RICE PUBLIC SPACES    | Partnership at the state and city level         | Federal grants, State and City funding | \$ 7M       | Suggest to parallel with Rice District Redevelopment              |
| 3  | JOHN IRELAND NORTH OF 94             | Partnership at the state and city level         | State and Philanthropy                 | \$ 3M       | None, suggest to be parallel or close to Cedar North of 94        |
| 4  | JOHN IRELAND SOUTH OF 94             | Partnership at the state and city level         | State and Philanthropy                 | \$ 3-5M     | John Ireland North of 94                                          |
| 5  | CEDAR NORTH OF 94                    | Partnership at the state and city level         | State and Philanthropy                 | \$ 3M       | None, suggest to be parallel or close to John Ireland North of 94 |
| 6  | CULTURAL LOOP OUTSIDE OF MLK         | Partnership at the state and city level         | State and Philanthropy                 | \$ 6M       | MLK                                                               |
| 7  | CEDAR BRIDGE TO CASS GILBERT UPGRADE | Partnership at the County and city level        | State, County, Philanthropy            | \$ 3M       | None, suggest to be parallel or close to Cass Gilbert Park        |
| 8  | ROBERT / 14TH STATE OFFICE           | Partnership at the State, County and city level | State, County, Philanthropy            | \$ 6-10M    | Suggest to parallel with Robert / 14th Development                |
| 9  | RICE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS        | Partnership at the State, County and city level | State, County, Philanthropy            | \$ 6-10M    | University / Rice intersection improvement                        |
| 10 | MLK EAST IMPROVEMENTS                | Partnership at the State, County and city level | State, County, Philanthropy            | \$ 6-10M    | None                                                              |
|    | POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PARCELS        | CAPITOL AREA ACTORS                             | FUNDING AVENUE                         | COST        | PROJECT DEPENDENCIES                                              |
| 1  | UNIVERSITY AND RICE DISTRICT (NE)    | Partnership with Private Sector                 | Private funding with State Incentive   | \$ 40-50M   | Parallel with or after University / Rice Public Space Improvement |
| 2  | UNIVERSITY AND RICE DISTRICT (SW)    | Partnership with Private Sector                 | Private funding with State Incentive   | \$ 20-30M   | Parallel with or after University / Rice Public Space Improvement |
| 3  | REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING ADMIN      | Partnership with Private Sector                 | State Funding Only                     | \$ 50-60M   | None                                                              |
| 4  | ROBERT AND 14TH STATE OFFICE         | Partnership with Private Sector                 | Private funding and State Funding      | \$ 40-50M   | Find space for reduced parking as needed                          |
| 5  | JOHN IRELAND AND RICE PARKING        | Partnership with Private Sector                 | State, Philanthropy, Private funding   | \$ 25-35M   | Find space for reduced parking as needed                          |
| 6  | CENTENNIAL BLDG REPLACEMENT          | Partnership with Private Sector                 | Private funding with State Incentive   | \$ 40-55M   | None                                                              |
| 7  | REDEVELOPMENT NEAR SEARS             | Partnership with Private Sector                 | Private funding                        | \$ 500-700M | Find space for reduced parking as needed Implementation333        |

# CAPITOL MALL DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLAN

FROGTOWN

Enhance  
ExperienceReinvigorate  
NodesRight-Size the  
StreetsSculpt  
TopographyPublic Space  
StrategiesCelebrate  
WaterPlanting  
StrategiesCass Gilbert  
Memorial  
ParkCREATE MULTIMODAL  
TRANSIT HUBSDIVERSIFY USES  
AND CONNECT  
COMMUNITIESCAPITOL RICE  
DISTRICT

CAPITOL CAMPUS

CAPITOL MALL

Sculpture Park

John Ireland Blvd

## MORE WELCOMING FOR MORE MINNESOTANS

The Proposed Capitol Mall Design Framework makes a Mall that is MORE WELCOMING FOR MORE MINNESOTANS. The Design Framework lays out a multi-phase implementation strategy and a series of design guideline recommendations to be used as a decision making tool moving forward.

CAPITOL AREA

CAPITOL HEIGHTS

CAAPB BOUNDARY

INCREASE TREE  
CANOPY HUMAN  
COMFORTCREATE MULTI-  
GENERATIONAL  
PUBLIC SPACEMAINTAIN  
VIEWSHEDS  
AND RIGHT SIZE  
ROADSCONNECT  
MEMORIALSINCREASE  
AMENITIES AND  
WAYFINDINGFITZGERALD  
PARK

**More Welcoming  
for More Minnesotans**



**The Purpose of the CMDF is to guide the next generation of decisions.**

**A plan for a 21st Century Capitol...**

# EIGHT BOLD DESIGN MOVES DESIGN FRAMEWORK CAPITOL AREA

Enhance  
Experience

Reinvigorate  
Nodes

Right-Size  
the Streets

Sculpt  
Topography

Public  
Space  
Strategies

Celebrate  
Water

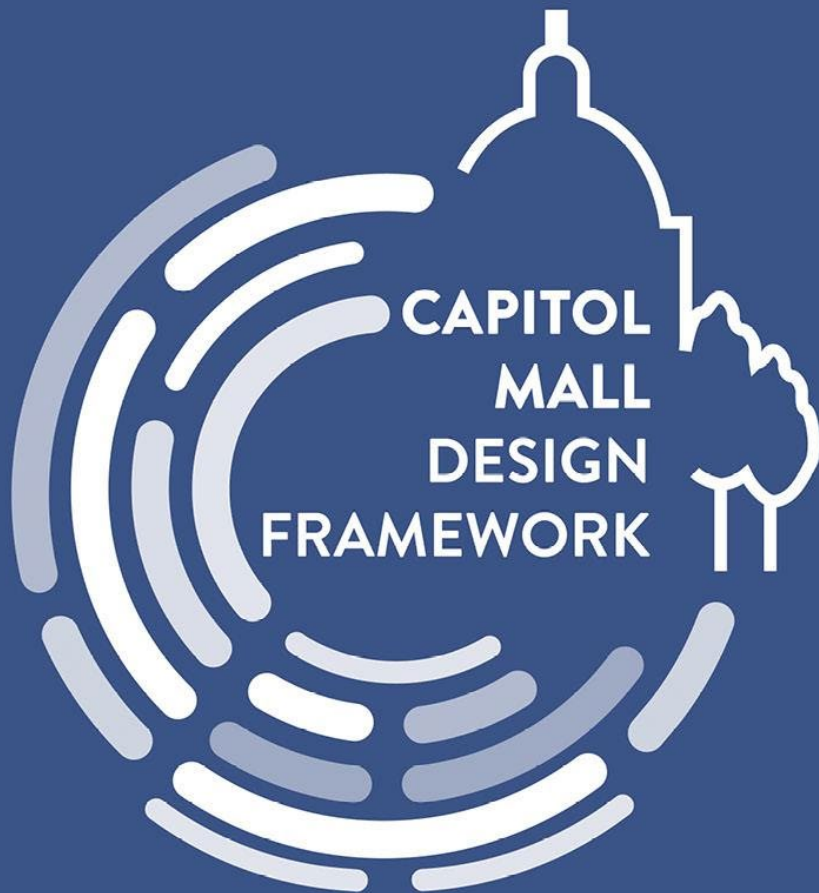
Planting  
Strategies

Cass Gilbert  
Memorial  
Park

**WE BUILT THE STATE CAPITOL ON THE  
THEORY THAT NOTHING WAS TOO GOOD  
FOR MINNESOTA. LET US DEVELOP THE  
CITY ON THE THEORY THAT NOTHING IS  
TOO GOOD FOR SAINT PAUL.**  
– CASS GILBERT



Figure 2: Minnesota Capitol Building above the Minnesota World War II Memorial  
Source: Damon Farber, *Minnesota Capitol*, Jan 2024.



## Thank you!

Erik Cedarleaf Dahl  
Executive Secretary  
Capitol Area Architectural and  
Planning Board  
(O) 651-757-1507 | © 651-373-0234  
[mn.gov/caapb](https://mn.gov/caapb)