

Self-guided Tour



STATE
CAPITOL

Capitol Architecture & Symbols

Kletting's Neoclassical Revival design draws upon ancient Greek and Roman roots, which have become architecturally symbolic of American democracy. Kletting's dignified exterior continues into the interior with tunneled atriums, all three chambers visible from the Rotunda center, and skylights—symbolizing transparency in government.

Kletting incorporated many more symbols and details in his design. Fifty-two Corinthian columns with decorative acanthus leaf detail line the outside of the Capitol building. They are made of local granite quarried from Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Look for the following as you explore the building:



Laurel wreaths—symbolic of victory, vitality, and success



Lions—symbolic of pride, strength, authority, and protection



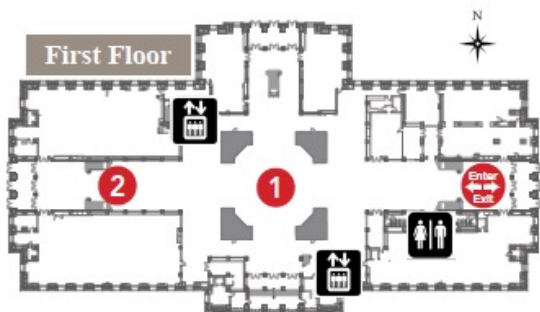
Beehive—Utah's state emblem, symbolic of industry and unity

Capitol Grounds

The Capitol grounds were designed by the renowned landscape company Olmsted Brothers of Brooklyn, who also designed Central Park in New York City and the U.S. Capitol's grounds in Washington, D.C. Olmsted's plans for the Utah State Capitol grounds featured an oval walkway around the proposed buildings and expanded the land to 40 acres. The plan also positioned the Capitol building so that it was clearly seen from the valley below.

Monuments, statues, and plaques are dispersed throughout the grounds, including the Mormon Battalion Monument located on the southeast side of the grounds. It was dedicated in 1927 and became the first monument on Capitol Hill.





1. Hall of Governors & State Seal

Portraits and biographies of Utah's past state governors are located in the Hall of Governors.

Natural light filters into the space from all sides—a prominent design element throughout the building. Replicas of Edison-era light bulbs grace the ceiling, demonstrating the Capitol's historic electricity.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Capitol building in 2016, the Great Seal of the State of Utah was added in the center of the hall.

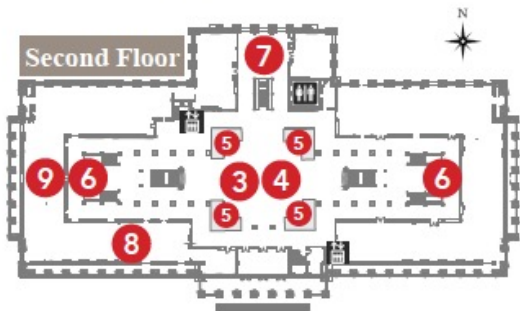


The perimeter of the Hall of Governors is lined with medallions representing each of the state's 29 counties.

2. West Gallery

The West Gallery features displays that showcase artifacts, images, and historical information that bring Utah's past and present to life.

The Liberty Bell replica is one of 55 that were commissioned by the United States Treasury in 1950 and forged in France. The bells were made to the exact size of the original bell, standing at six-feet tall and weighing more than 2,000 pounds.



3. Rotunda

The most grand and spacious room in the People's House is the Rotunda. It serves as the backdrop for many public, private, and government events.

The dome stands 165 feet above the Rotunda floor. It contains a mural featuring seagulls, Utah's state bird, soaring among the sunset-tinted clouds. The largest painted seagulls have a wingspan of six feet.

The columns, floor and symmetrical wall panels are all carved out of Georgia marble, which was transported to Utah by railcar. There are 24 monolithic columns, weighing 25,000 pounds each, lining the room.





4. Cyclorama & Pendentive Murals

The Rotunda artwork was added in 1935 through the Depression-era Public Works of Art Project, which funded the cyclorama and pendentive murals.

The cyclorama (the circular portion), depicts scenes from 19th century Utah life, such as *Gulls Save the Wheat Fields* and *Driving the Golden Spike*. The pendentives on the four large piers feature murals depicting the earliest explorations of the region, including *Fremont First Sees Great Salt Lake 1843* and *Brigham Young and Pioneers Entering the Valley*.

5. Niche Sculptures

Kletting recommended four classical niche sculptures to symbolize values and ideals fundamental to Utah's culture. During the Capitol restoration, artists were selected to fulfill Kletting's vision. Each of the 11-foot bronzes employs an adult mentor and a youthful learner.

6. Lunettes

The half-moon-shaped paintings at each end of the vaulted atriums were among the first commissioned artworks installed in the Capitol in 1917. The west mural is titled *The Passing of the Wagons* and the east is titled *Madonna of the Covered Wagon*.



7. Brigham Young

The monumental bronze statue is of Utah's first territorial governor, Brigham Young. Displayed near the statue are images of the 16 federally appointed governors who led the Territory of Utah between 1850 and 1896.

8. State Reception Room

The State Reception Room, nicknamed the “Gold Room” for its lavish furnishings and gold leafing, was designed to host formal state functions. It features a Beaux-Arts ceiling mural titled *Children at Play*. Rich ornamentation was globally sourced to fill the room—walls of golden marble quarried near Birdseye, Utah; silk wall panels from Italy; chandeliers from France; Circassian walnut veneer tabletop from Russia; and purple Queen’s coronation velvet from England.

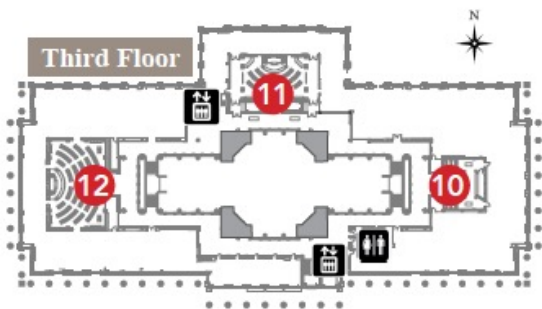


9. Office of the Governor

The Office of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor consists of staff offices, a reception area, and working offices for the governor and lieutenant governor. The governor also has a ceremonial office used for bill signings, press conferences, and meetings with the public.

The ceremonial office contains the “tomado desk” and bookcase created from trees toppled on Capitol grounds when a tornado ripped through Salt Lake City in 1999. They are a symbol of Utah’s spirit and determination—a reminder that something good can come from a disaster.





10. Supreme Court Chamber

The Supreme Court is the highest court of appeal in the state judicial system. It is comprised of five justices appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. Most of the court's business is now conducted in the Scott M. Matheson Courthouse in downtown Salt Lake City. The Capitol's historic courtroom is used several times a year for ceremonial functions.

The painting above the Bench, titled *Caroline Bridge*, depicts one of three natural bridges in Utah's Natural Bridges National Monument. This bridge boasts a span of 210 feet, making it one of the longest natural bridges in the world.

The historic stoplight on the center podium is used as a timer in the court. It was presented to the Supreme Court in 1916 by the family of Lester Wire, a Salt Lake City police officer and inventor of an electric traffic light.

11. Senate Chamber

The Senate is a body of 29 individuals elected to four-year terms, each serving a district of approximately 100,000 citizens. As Utah has a “part-time” or “citizen” legislature, the Senate and House meet in their respective chambers annually for a 45-day session.

The Senate Chamber features a multi-paneled landscape of Utah Lake. In 2006 during the restoration, two murals were commissioned featuring northern and southern Utah landscapes.





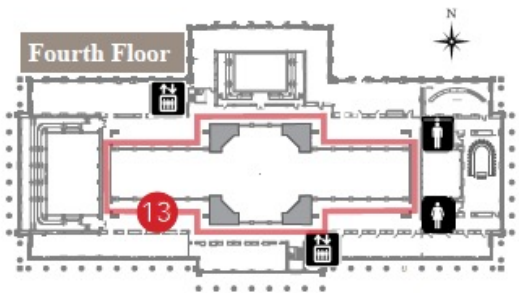
12. House Chamber

The House of Representatives shares responsibility with the Senate for creating the laws of the state. Utah's 75 representatives serve two-year terms and are each elected from a district of approximately 40,000 citizens.

The Latin phrase *VOX POPULI*, which means "voice of the people," is behind the speaker's seat as a reminder for the purpose of the Chamber.

Murals original to the Capitol include *Dream of Brigham Young* and *Jim Bridger and the Discovery of the Great Salt Lake*. The murals, *Seraph Young Votes* and *Engen Brothers Bring Skiing to Utah*, were added in 2007 during the restoration.





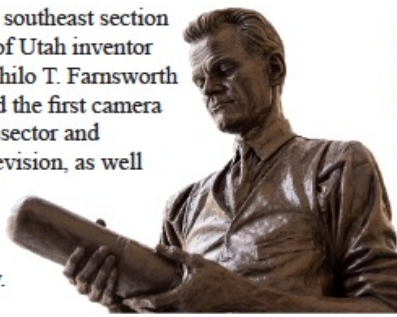
13. Fourth Floor Gallery



The gallery features rotating exhibits, statues of significant figures from Utah's history, and up-close views of the Rotunda's cyclorama and pendentive murals.

The Rotunda chandelier, which can be seen clearly from this floor, was hung in 1915. Replacement shades for the chandelier were donated during the restoration by the Arkansas State Capitol, which has an identical fixture. The chandelier weighs approximately 1,000 pounds while the supporting chain weighs an astonishing 5,000 pounds.

Located in the southeast section is a sculpture of Utah inventor and scientist Philo T. Farnsworth who developed the first camera tube image dissector and all-electric television, as well as patents that influenced the world of nuclear energy.



Capitol Preservation Board

As stewards of the Capitol, the Capitol Preservation Board (CPB) oversees and cares for the buildings and the grounds on the Capitol Hill complex.

The CPB also preserves the building's treasured artifacts, artworks, and historic furnishings for the people of Utah.

The Capitol welcomes more than 200,000 visitors each year for guided tours, meetings, weddings, free speech rallies, and official State of Utah business.

Visitor Services Center: 801-538-1800
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Scheduling & Events: 801-538-3074
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