

## C. ABBREVIATED CAPITOL HISTORY (SEE SECTION II FOR COMPLETE HISTORY)

### I. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



#### AN ELOQUENT SYMBOL

When the Territory of Utah petitioned for Statehood successfully in 1895, it evinced a determination to become an integral part of the United States. No longer could it be considered merely a theocratic refuge or a colonial outpost. As it became a state in 1896, it became a full-fledged partner in the nation. The Capitol's design reflects this arrival into the American mainstream by its design.

#### DESIGN:

Today the gleaming dome that overlooks our capitol city is a powerful symbol of solidarity, community and democratic tradition. As in other state capitols, Utah's dome draws its inspiration from the architectural vocabulary of ancient Greece and Rome. The colonnade, Greek pediment, symmetrical plan and formality of design speak in stone of our democratic ideals. The archetypes also had earlier antecedents in Bramante's Tempietto of Renaissance Rome. The dome superimposed upon rectangular massing of the capitol reflects the philosophical and artistic legacy of many generations, including Thomas Jefferson's.

#### FINANCES:

In March 1888 19.46 acres of land were donated by Salt Lake City to the State for its "Capitol Hill." Several additional parcels were purchased to give the Capitol an appropriately ample setting to be prominently viewed, and to provide for future growth on the campus. Today the Capitol site contains 42 acres and serves as a vital urban park. The Capitol project's budget grew significantly from 1909 until the building's completion and occupancy in 1916. In 1909 a bond issue of \$1,305,000 was authorized for the Capitol's construction, but later it was reduced to \$1,000,000 by the legislature. By the time the architect was selected three years later, the project cost was not to exceed \$2,000,000. The approved budget for all costs reached \$2.5 million in 1916, a figure that was slightly less than the final cost of about \$2,750,000.

The two year campaign to build Utah's first dedicated State Capitol ended in 1911 with the governor's signature. When Edward Harriman, the president of the Union Pacific Railroad, died in 1910, the law required a five percent Utah inheritance tax (\$798,546). This unexpected windfall gave the project the initial boost it needed.

#### TALENT:

From the outset Utah's first Capitol commission was determined to use Utah talent and materials. Fortunately Richard Kletting, an immigrant Utahn, won the competition for architect on March 13, 1912. His design was innovative, simple, dramatic and classical in detail and massing.

Kletting was a meticulous administrator during the Capitol's construction. As the lead designer, he also skillfully guided the three and a half year project through its many challenges and changes. This would be the master architect's last major work.

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During the depression, four Utah artists (Lee Greene Richards, Gordon Cope, Henry Rasmussen and Waldo Midgley) recorded the history of Utah in the rotunda murals. Numerous busts and statues displayed in the Capitol's halls and chambers form a distinctive lineup of Utah notables—both as subjects and as artists. Subjects include: Brigham Young, Emmeline B. Wells, Martha Hughes, Unca Sam and Ute Indian Chief John Duncan. Artists include famous Utahns like: Cyrus Dallin, Millard F. Mallin, H.L.A. Culmer and Avard Fairbanks. Altogether, there are approximately 200 pieces of art on display within the Capitol, virtually all by Utah artists.



Displays and plaques remind and educate the public about exemplary Utahns and Utah's interesting cultural history. The beehive sculptures symbolize industry, order and tradition. A memorial plaque to all peace officers who died in the line of duty attests to their heroism. Our heritage comes alive and credit for Utah achievement is acknowledged.

#### MATERIALS:

The Capitol Commission established by Governor William Spry in 1909 evaluated and used building materials mostly native to Utah. For example, the granite quarries in Little Cottonwood Canyon, the marble from deposits of the Utah Marble and Construction Company, near Newhouse in Beaver County, the onyx or travertine from deposits near Low Pass in Tooele County, the sandstone from quarries in Emigration Canyon, oolite limestone from Sanpete County, and marble from the Birdseye area of Utah county. Many local firms bid on and received contracts for products such as: builders hardware, electrical equipment, a clock network, vacuum cleaner system, furniture and carpets.

#### STEWARDSHIP:

Renovations and additions to Capitol Hill have been made with an eye to the future and to the past. By mid-century, the State outgrew its office space and needed to consider expanding. The idea of remodeling the State Capitol had been considered necessary for years and the acute shortage of space demanded some solution. Yet “to change the stately dignity and grandeur of the structure was a step nobody wanted to take.” In the mid 1950's, however, a group of architects was assigned to plan changes that would bring the capitol up to date. These included: redesigning “the interior layout, leaving the massive partitions, and at the same time rendering the edifice more flexible and more adaptable to modern-day office procedures.” Despite these good intentions, many of the changes, especially to the interior, were done at the sacrifice of the Capitol's historic character-defining architectural qualities.

In 1957 the State legislature appropriated funds for a state office building. A master plan to combine aesthetic considerations with those of function and economy was also implemented. In 1957 the legislature appropriated \$3,000,000 for the construction of a new office building and \$ 741,000 for a remodel of the Capitol. Preliminary plans for a \$298,000 cafeteria, a \$995,000 connecting plaza and a \$200,000 parking facility received unqualified approval of the State Building Board in March 1960. These structures, together with others, form the current Capitol campus.

For Utah's Capitol to continue to symbolize the character and genius of our great State, it must be restored and maintained by the same means as in the past. It must come from the best of Utah's manpower, materials, mentality, and money.

