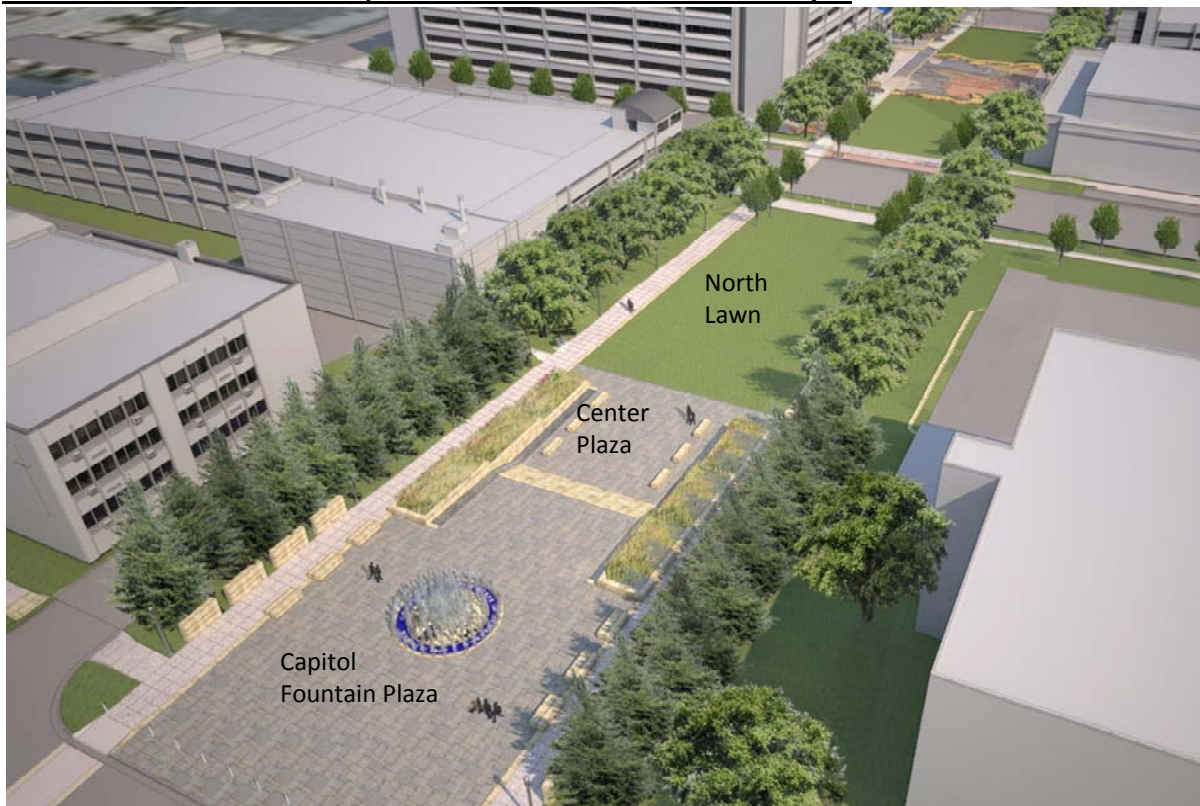


Educational and Interpretive Features of Nebraska's Centennial Mall

Nebraska's Centennial Mall, K to L Streets Block: We The People



Aerial View of K to L Streets Block, looking north.

Organizing theme

The southernmost block of Nebraska's Centennial Mall, the block literally in the mid-day shadow of the Capitol tower, celebrates and educates about citizens joining together as the civil entity we call the State of Nebraska.

Spatial Organization

The south block consists of a large grassy lawn at the north end (North Lawn), a small central paved plaza (Leaders Plaza), and a large paved fountain plaza immediately across K Street from the Capitol (Fountain Plaza). The north lawn will emphasize citizens and their communities, the center plaza will feature individual leaders, and the south plaza will emphasize the State and state government.

North Lawn

Interpretive materials on the north portion of the block are limited to the pathway plaques lining the inner sides of the broad walkways flanking the Mall. Ninety-three of the 18"x18" granite pathway plaques identify the counties of Nebraska, each with an outline map of the state, the name and outline of the county, a star for the county seat, and the name of that community. The counties will be arranged alphabetically with 46 of the plaques on one side of

the Mall and 47 on the other, so the pattern is quickly recognizable and visiting students can find their own county. The county plaques will occupy approximately 70 feet of approximately 120 feet available, leaving 50 feet of pathway plaques on each side to feature noteworthy citizens. Approximately 30 Nebraska citizens will be identified for 36"x18" bronze biographical plaques, interspersing them among the county granite plaques on a 1:3 basis. Citizens featured should have significant achievements, substantive Nebraska connections, and collectively encompass the ethnic, religious, and racial diversity of Nebraskans, so visiting students might "see themselves" in these citizens. Examples include the Pound family and the LaFlesche family.

One plaque might consist of Willa Cather's 1926 interview statement: *"On Sunday we could drive to a Norwegian Swedish church and listen to a sermon in that language, or to a Danish or a Swedish church. We could go to the French Catholic settlement in the next county and hear a sermon in French, or into the Bohemian township and hear one in Czech, or we could go to church with the German Lutherans."*

Center Plaza

The small central plaza of the south block offers a certain sense of enclosure at the heart of the block, a few steps below the main plaza and set apart from the walkways by planters. The planter walls and limestone seating blocks offer opportunities for inscriptions, while beyond the planters, the pathway plaques continue the interpretive opportunities along the outer walkways.

On the vertical surfaces facing the seating plaza, a few brief quotations from Nebraska leaders emphasizing our commonwealth will be chosen. Each quotation would be amplified by a pathway plaque along the adjoining walkways, so that exploration would be rewarded and understanding increased. Selected quotations include:

- Standing Bear on the case and Judge Dundy's momentous decision: *"That hand is not the color of yours, but if I prick it, the blood will flow, and I shall feel pain. The blood is of the same color as yours. God made me, and I am a man"*
- Ted Sorensen: The good news, to relieve all this gloom, is that *". . . a democracy is inherently self-correcting. Here, the people are sovereign."* Inept political leaders can be replaced. Foolish policies can be changed. Disastrous mistakes can be reversed.

Capitol Fountain Plaza

The centerpiece of the plaza is a circular, "basin-less" fountain of choreographed jets emerging from the pavement, which depicts the Great Seal of the State of Nebraska. Special interpretive opportunities are limestone walls on the outer sides of the pathways, four east and four west, framing the center of the Plaza. Major inscriptions and etchings on these walls offer the most important interpretive and decorative opportunities on the entire Mall. Selected quotations include:

- Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Speech on March 1, 1861: We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break

our bonds of affection. *“The mystic chords of memory, . . . stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”*

- George W. Norris on the creation of the Nebraska Unicameral: *“To get good government and to retain it, it is necessary that a liberty-loving, educated, intelligent people should be ever watchful, to carefully guard and protect their rights and liberties . . .”*

Nebraska’s Centennial Mall, L to M Streets Block: Our Home Nebraska

Organizing theme

The L to M Street Block is located immediately east of the Nebraska State Office Building. Features within this block reflect upon the natural history of Nebraska, the transition of prairie to modern agriculture, and conservation of the land and water that are vital to the ecology and the economy of the state.

Spatial Organization

The L to M Street Block is organized around a large central plaza featuring the outline of the State of Nebraska within the eco-regions of Great Plains. A fountain with a series of rushing water jets symbolizes the Missouri River defining the eastern border of the state. Two shaded seating areas are located on the east side of the Mall.

Pathway plaques lining the broad walkways flanking the Mall will feature individuals and organizations who have written or spoken about our relationship with the land where we live, or who have played a key role in land and water conservation. Selected examples of individuals and quotations include:

- Willa Cather from her book *O Pioneers*: *“We come and go, but the land is always here. And the people who love it and understand it are the people who own it-- for a little while”.*
- Willa Cather from her *Book My Antonia*: *“As I looked about me I felt that the grass was the country, as the water is the sea...And there was so much motion in it; the whole country seemed, somehow, to be running.”*
- Chief Standing Bear, to U. S. District Court Judge Elmer S. Dundy, Omaha, 1879: *“The swift-running water, the Niobrara, pours down between the green hills. There are the graves of my fathers. There again we will pitch our teepee and build our fires. I see the light of the world and of liberty just ahead.”*
- Professor John Earnest Weaver, prairie ecologist
- J. Sterling Morton, founder of Arbor Day
- Professor George Beadle, geneticist
- Professor Theodore Kiesselbach, corn hybridizer

**Nebraska’s Centennial Mall, three central blocks from M to P Streets:
Community Mosaic of Nebraskans**

Organizing theme

The three central blocks are intended to become a collection of stories of the people and organizations that contribute to the societal fabric of Nebraska, as told through granite and bronze plaques.

Spatial Organization

The three central blocks of Nebraska’s Centennial Mall remain open to vehicular traffic and parking as part of the overall traffic circulation system for downtown Lincoln. The broad flanking walkways connect through the three central blocks. Bands of granite pavers on the insides of the walkways provide opportunities for pathway plaques. Landscape plantings, areas of turf and large shade trees unify the three central blocks with the northern and southern pedestrian blocks of the Mall.

Pathway Plaques

Individuals, families, and organizations will have the opportunity to sponsor granite or bronze pathway plaques within the broad pathways flanking the Mall.

Nebraska’s Centennial Mall, P to Q Streets, Q to R Streets: Sparking the Good Life - Imagination to Innovation



Aerial View of Two Northern blocks generally looking east

Organizing theme

The design and themes of two northern blocks of Nebraska's Centennial are related to the University of Nebraska – Lincoln campus. Visitors will have opportunities to learn about and be inspired by creative work of Nebraskans in the arts, humanities, science, and entrepreneurship.

Spatial Organization – P to Q Streets Block

The P to Q Streets block consists of a plaza with its southern boundary defined by a choreographed fountain with leaping jets of water symbolizing the creative energy of imagination, a small central plaza and seating area west of the UN-L College of Journalism Anderson Hall main entrance, and a green lawn "quad". A series of broad steps between the lower plaza and the upper central seating area creates an informal amphitheater for programmed activities.

Imagination to Innovation

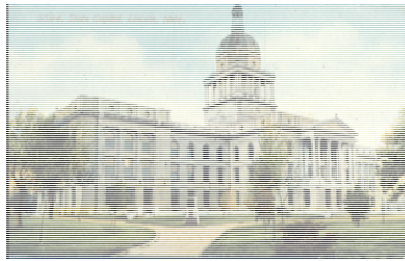
Nebraskans notable for their contributions to the arts, humanities, science, and entrepreneurship will be recognized on 18" x 36" bronze biographical plaques. Examples include:

- Mari Sandoz
- Johnny Carson
- Ted Koozer
- Don Clifton
- Warren Buffett

Spatial Organization – Q to R Streets Block

The Q to R Street block consists of a large green lawn "quad" and walkways. A granite sculpture by Jene Highstein remains a central feature of the block. A small plaza along R Street (Reflection Plaza) is located across R Street from the Nebraska State Historical Society. This plaza provides tree-lined vista of the State Capitol Building and capitol fountain, and an opportunity to reflect on the history of the Nebraska State Capitol Building and its environs, including Nebraska's Centennial Mall.

Reflection Plaza



Anchoring the north end of Nebraska’s Centennial Mall is Reflection Plaza where the story of the history and evolution of Nebraska’s three state capitol buildings will be told, including the current iconic building and its public malls. Interpretive plaques will be mounted on the low wall so visitors can review information regarding the founding of Lincoln, and the plan for the new prairie capitol city with an emphasis on the State Capitol Building as an organizing feature within the landscape. A selected example of quotations includes:

- Ted Sorensen, Counselor: *“Of all the cities in which I have lived—Lincoln, Washington, Boston, New York—the air, water, and politics were always cleaner in Lincoln.”*