Teacher-Led Activities

Hall of Justice: Then and Now

Background

The Hall of Justice is located at the western end of the Capitol Complex, an area of state-owned land that contains state office buildings. The location's appearance has changed significantly over time.

Before Lansing was established in the mid-1800s, the area was covered in thick forest. Even after being named the state capital, Lansing remained little more than a village. For several decades, the city ended one block east of the Hall of Justice's current location. By the first half of the 20th century, a neighborhood with homes, businesses, and a school was built there.

As the state's population increased, state government grew to the point it no longer fit entirely in the State Capitol. Thus, the Capitol Complex was created. During the late 1940s–2000s, the State of Michigan acquired land west of the Capitol through eminent domain (see page 13), removed the existing buildings, and constructed state office buildings, including the Hall of Justice.

The change has been so great that visitors from earlier eras would hardly recognize the area from one time period to the next.

Hall of Justice

The Hall of Justice, dedicated in 2002, is headquarters for the state's judicial branch of government. It houses court offices and courtrooms for the Michigan Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. Built of limestone and capped by a glass dome, the six-story Hall of Justice faces the State Capitol – independent yet in relation to the executive and legislative branches of government, symbolic of how state government works.

Statistics

- 6 stories
- 10 elevators
- 16-feet-high glass dome
- 224 windows
- 1,200 interior doors
- 2,930 tons of steel
- 14,000 pieces of limestone
- 16,000 cubic yards of concrete
- 280,000 square feet

Suggested Activities – Analyze primary sources, including a map, drawing, historical photographs, real estate records, and the current landscape to evaluate change over time. Respond to a speech about this change.

Curriculum Subjects – Social Studies, ELA.

Capitol Complex Map (Current)

Today

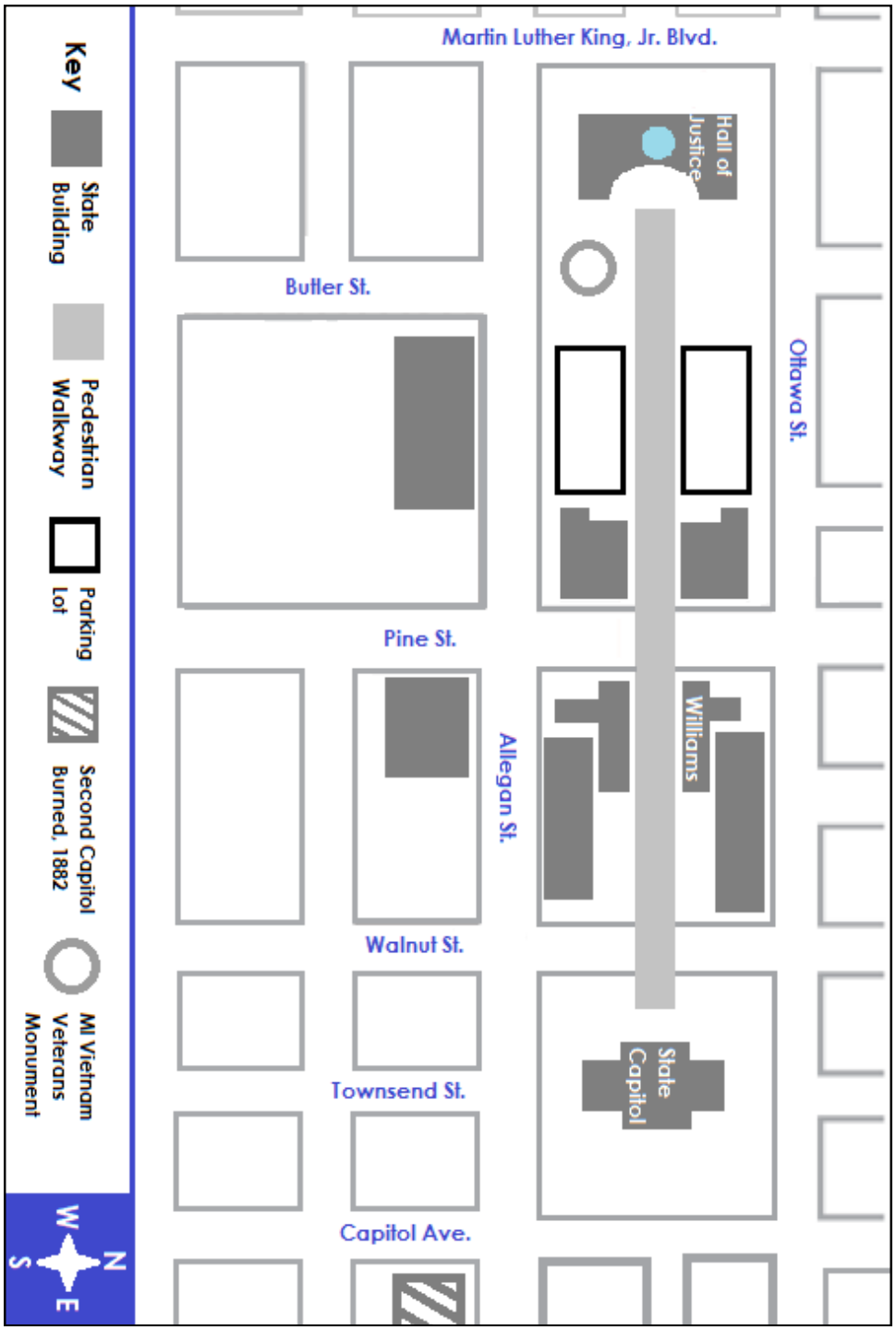
This is a current map of the Capitol Complex. Major landmarks, such as state office buildings, are shown, but not all features are included.

Suggested Activities

Use map-reading skills to identify:

- Cardinal directions (north, south, east, west)
- State buildings
- Four locations where the Michigan Supreme Court has met in Lansing
  - ◊ Second Capitol, which was lost in a fire in 1882
  - ◊ State Capitol
  - ◊ G. Mennen Williams Building
  - ◊ Hall of Justice
- Pedestrian walkway
- Parking lots nearest the Hall of Justice
- Michigan Vietnam Veterans Monument
- Streets

Compare the map to what you see while standing in the Capitol Complex. What would you add?



Capitol Complex (c. 2000)

Planning Drawing

As the Hall of Justice was planned and constructed 1999–2002, drawings like this one were created by the building's architects to show what the Hall of Justice might look like when it was completed.

Suggested Activities

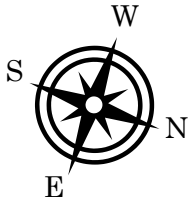
Compare the drawing to the Capitol Complex Map on page 2.

- Find the cardinal directions (north, south, east west)
- What do you see in the drawing? How is it different than the map?
- Can you find the three buildings in the drawing where the Michigan Supreme Court has met?
  - ◊ State Capitol
  - ◊ G. Mennen Williams Building
  - ◊ Hall of Justice

Compare the drawing to what you see while standing in the Capitol Complex.

- What is the same?
- What is different?
- Why do you think there are differences? (Remember, this is not a photograph.)

Courtesy Michigan Supreme Court.



Capitol Complex, Aerial Photo (1948)

Background

This is an aerial photo taken from an airplane in 1948.

At that time, the area west of the State Capitol looked like many city neighborhoods. It included homes, churches, an elementary school, and businesses.

The current location of the Hall of Justice is at the top of the page, marked Detail. This section of the photo appears at larger sizes on the next two pages.

Identifying information, such as street names and notable buildings, is handwritten on the original photograph.

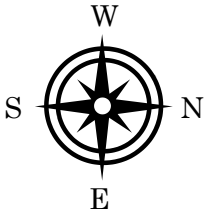
Suggested Activities

Compare the photo on this page to the Capitol Complex Map (page 2) and Capitol Complex Drawing (page 3).

- Find the cardinal directions (north, south, east west)
- Where is the State Capitol?
- Can you match up the streets? Are there differences? Why?
- What else is the same?
- What else has changed?

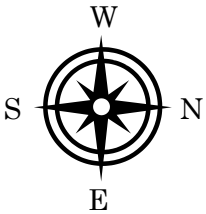
Detail

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Abrams Collection.



Capitol Complex, Aerial Photo (1948) – Detail

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Abrams Collection.



This photo is the top section of the aerial photo on page 4. It is labeled Detail.

Suggested Activities

Study the photo carefully.

- What streets are shown in the photo? It may be helpful to compare it to the map. Note: Logan Street is now called Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard.
- What other landmark is labeled on the photo?
- What types of buildings or other features do you see in the photo?

While standing in front of the Hall of Justice, compare the photo to what you see.

- What features are the same or similar?
- How many buildings in the photos still exist? Where are they located?

The Neighborhood (1930s–1960s)

Background

The following pages include photos and other information about buildings in the 1930s–1960s. All of these buildings are now gone.

You may be able to estimate the former locations of these buildings by using clues, such as:

- Street numbers across the road. For example, 924 would have been across the street from 925.
- The location of current features. For instance, Michigan Avenue is still open west of Martin Luther King Jr., Boulevard, and Butler Street runs north and south of the property. There is a sidewalk that runs roughly in the path of the former Butler Street.

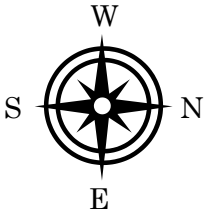
Note

As you investigate, please watch carefully and stay on safe areas of the sidewalk around the perimeter of the Hall of Justice property.

Some locations are now in and near frequently used driveways and parking lots.

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Abrams Collection.

This photo is the same as Capitol Complex, Aerial View (1948) – Detail on page 5. The gray square is roughly the current location of the Hall of Justice building. Street numbers correspond to former properties representative of the neighborhood in the 1930s–1960s; see pages 7–11 for real estate records and other details.



Suggested Activities

Study one or more of the primary sources on pages 7–11 to find out:

- What was the purpose of the building?
- Did the building have any special features?
- About how many people used the building each day?

Compare the photos to what you see in and near the Capitol Complex.

- Do any of the buildings look similar to the photos?
- If not, where do people go now instead?

The Neighborhood (1930s–1960s)

1026 West Allegan Street

1026 W. Allegan $7500 SW-C #31857

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Stebbins Collection.

1026 W. ALLEGAN — Address
$7500.00 — Price
SW-C — Code
31857
C-1033

no Real Estate

COMMERCIAL—BUSINESS

Street 1026 W. Allegan
Price $ 7500.00 Terms $ ..... down, balance
$ ..... per mo., incl. int. at ..... %
Type Bus. Now in Bldg.: Spag's Food Mkt.
Description of Bldg. Brick-Siding

Owner Paul Spagnuolo
Address
Phone 2-6915 Key at
Year Built ..... Zoning

FEB 17 1954

Will Exchange for

RENTALS	Leases	EXPENSES	
1st Fl.	$ 110.00	Insurance	$
2nd Fl.	$	Water	$
3rd Fl.	$	Fuel	$
4th Fl.	$	Elect.	$
Misc. Inc.	$	Gas	$
		Taxes	$
		Janitor	$
		Misc.	$
Total	$	Total	$

Lot Size ..... x ..... Ass'd Val. $
Bldg. Size ..... Zoning
Heat
No. Stories ..... Alley
Heated by ..... Loading Dock
Elevators: Pass. ..... Freight
Type of Constr. ..... Roof
Repair
R. R. Siding

Mtge. or L.C. $ ..... Held by
Paymts. $ ..... Int. Rate ..... %
Reason for Selling
Remarks: Inventory at Cost (no Real Estate)

Copyright
LANSING BOARD OF REALTORS
Office: MAURICE BLALLEN
Phone: 5-7174
Listed By: JOHN PETROFF
Salesman's Phone 4-7638

Address	Price	Code	
1026 W. ALLEGAN	$7500.00	SW-C	31857

The Neighborhood (1930s–1960s)

101 West Michigan Avenue

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library.

January, 1960

MICHIGAN AVENUE SCHOOL

1019 West Michigan Avenue

Construction: Original building built 1915 Cost: $107,400

Facilities:
1 Kindergarten room
10 Classrooms - grades 1 through 6
2 Special rooms
Small auditorium and gymnasium
Library
Principal's office

Present Enrollment: 306

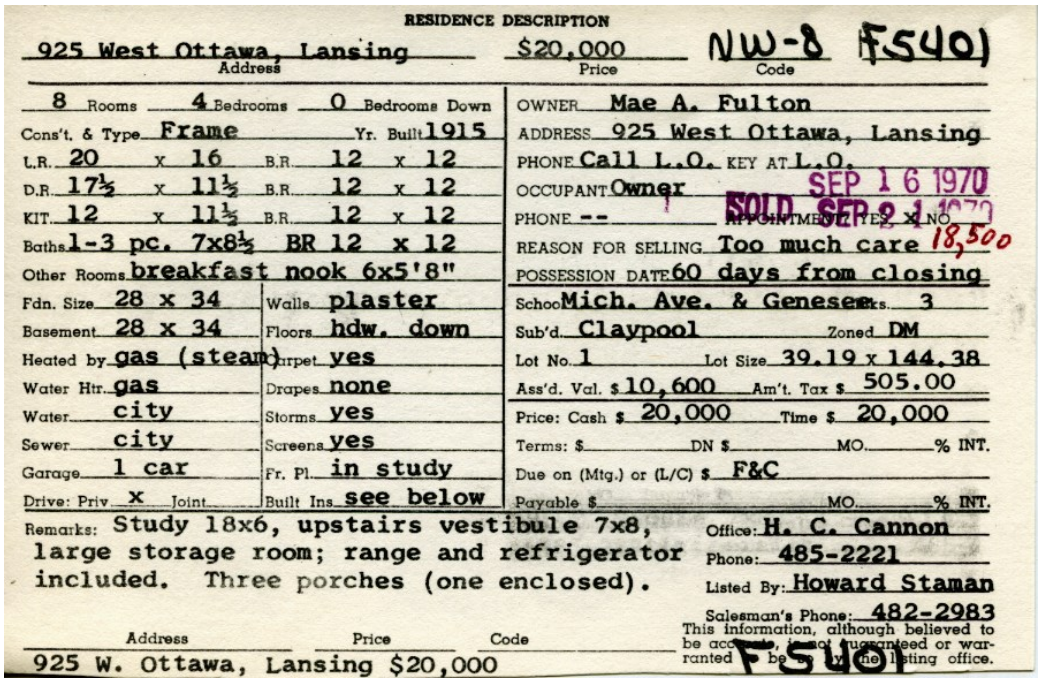
Capacity: 325

Site: 1.34 acres

The Neighborhood (1930s–1960s)

925 West Ottawa Street

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Stebbins Collection.



RESIDENCE DESCRIPTION

925 West Ottawa, Lansing (Address) — $20,000 (Price) — NW-8 (Code) F5401

8 Rooms 4 Bedrooms 0 Bedrooms Down	OWNER Mae A. Fulton
Cons't. & Type Frame Yr. Built 1915	ADDRESS 925 West Ottawa, Lansing
L.R. 20 x 16 B.R. 12 x 12	PHONE Call L.O. KEY AT L.O.
D.R. 17½ x 11½ B.R. 12 x 12	OCCUPANT Owner SEP 16 1970
KIT. 12 x 11½ B.R. 12 x 12	PHONE -- APPOINTMENT YES X NO SOLD SEP 21 1970
Baths 1-3 pc. 7x8½ BR 12 x 12	REASON FOR SELLING Too much care 18,500
Other Rooms breakfast nook 6x5'8"	POSSESSION DATE 60 days from closing
Fdn. Size 28 x 34 Walls plaster	School Mich. Ave. & Genesee Blks. 3
Basement 28 x 34 Floors hdw. down	Sub'd. Claypool Zoned DM
Heated by gas (steam) Carpet yes	Lot No. 1 Lot Size 39.19 x 144.38
Water Htr. gas Drapes none	Ass'd. Val. $ 10,600 Am't. Tax $ 505.00
Water city Storms yes	Price: Cash $ 20,000 Time $ 20,000
Sewer city Screens yes	Terms: $ DN $ MO. % INT.
Garage 1 car Fr. Pl. in study	Due on (Mtg.) or (L/C) $ F&C
Drive: Priv. x Joint Built Ins. see below	Payable $ MO. % INT.

Remarks: Study 18x6, upstairs vestibule 7x8, large storage room; range and refrigerator included. Three porches (one enclosed).

Office: H. C. Cannon
Phone: 485-2221
Listed By: Howard Staman
Salesman's Phone: 482-2983

This information, although believed to be accurate, is not guaranteed or warranted to be so by the listing office.

Address — Price — Code
925 W. Ottawa, Lansing $20,000 F5401

Fun Facts

This house has the same street number as the Hall of Justice has today. In 1940, a lawyer named Robert T. Arvidson rented a room here. He argued cases before the Michigan Supreme Court in the 1950s. At that time, the Court was housed at the State Capitol.

The Neighborhood (1930s–1960s)

115 North Butler Street

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Stebbins Collection.

115 N. Butler — $23,500.00 — NW-C — B6551

Address — COMMERCIAL — Price — Code — MAY 8 1963

Street: 115 N. Butler
Price $ 23,500 — Terms $ 3,000 down, balance 200.00 per mo., incl. int., at 6 %
Type Bus. Now in Bldg: Insurance & Apt.
Description of Bldg. 2-story Frame
Off Street Parking 4-also parking, front
Owner: Fred Stringham
Address: 115 Butler
Phone: IV-21301 Key at
Year Built: 1903-remod. '27 & '51

RENTALS	Leases	EXPENSES	
50.00		Insurance	$ 177.00
55.00		Water	$
25.00		Fuel	$
		Elect.	$
Owner occupies 1st floor		Gas	$
150.00		Taxes	$ 407.00
		Janitor	$
		Misc.	$
Totals per Mo. 280.00		Total	$ 584.00

Lease Renewal Conditions
Lot Size 41.25 x 101 — Ass'd Val. $ 7,200
Bldg. Size 24 x 58 — Zoning F-comm.
Sprinkler — Ceiling Height 14'
No. Stories 2 — Alley
Heated by Gas — Loading Dock
Elevators: Pass. — Freight
Type Const. Frame — Roof Comp
Basement Full
Repair good — R. R. Siding

Mtge. or L.C. $ 15,000 — Held by E. J. Carrel — Paymts. $200.00
Reason for Selling Liquidate — Int. Rate 6 %
Remarks: Will consider trade or land contract

This information, although believed to be accurate, is not guaranteed or warranted to be so by the listing office.

Leases Expire

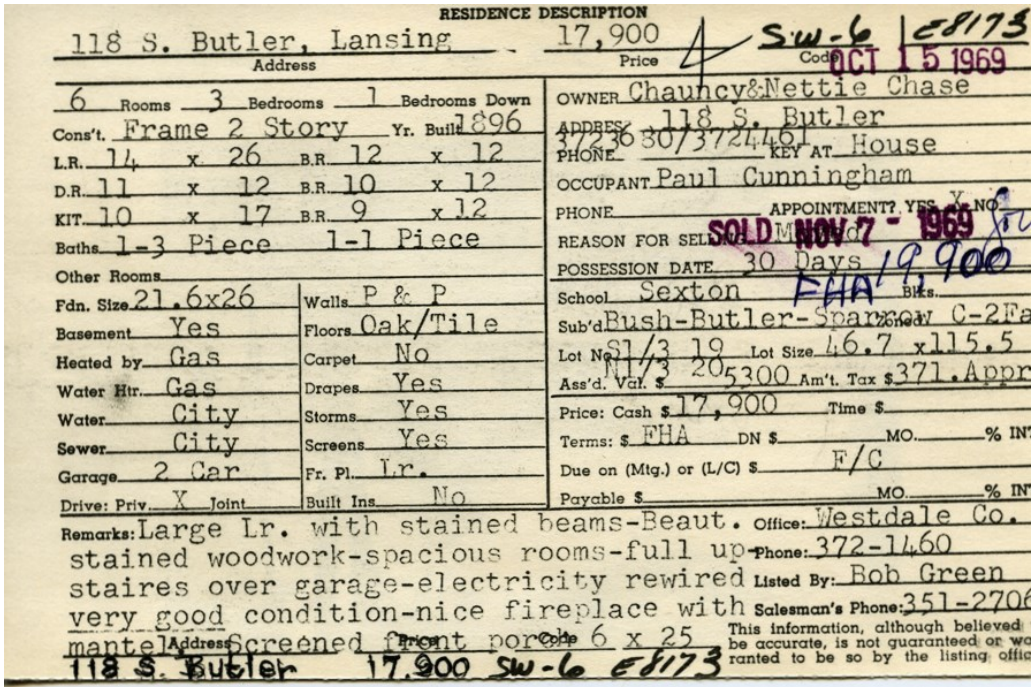
Copyright
LANSING BOARD OF REALTORS
Office: Real Estate Mart
Phone: IV-45481
Listed By: Eugene Irwin
Salesman's Phone: ED-21737

Address	Price	Code
115 N.Butler	$23,500.00	NW-C B6551

The Neighborhood (1930s–1960s)

118 South Butler Street

Courtesy Capitol Area District Library, Stebbins Collection.



RESIDENCE DESCRIPTION

118 S. Butler, Lansing — Address
17,900 — Price
SW-6 — Code
E8173
OCT 15 1969

6 Rooms 3 Bedrooms 1 Bedrooms Down
Cons't. Frame 2 Story Yr. Built 1896
L.R. 14 x 26 B.R. 12 x 12
D.R. 11 x 12 B.R. 10 x 12
KIT. 10 x 17 B.R. 9 x 12
Baths 1-3 Piece 1-1 Piece
Other Rooms
Fdn. Size 21.6x26 Walls P & P
Basement Yes Floors Oak/Tile
Heated by Gas Carpet No
Water Htr. Gas Drapes Yes
Water City Storms Yes
Sewer City Screens Yes
Garage 2 Car Fr. Pl. Lr.
Drive: Priv. X Joint Built Ins. No

OWNER Chauncy&Nettie Chase
ADDRESS 118 S. Butler
PHONE 372-3630/372-4461 KEY AT House
OCCUPANT Paul Cunningham
PHONE APPOINTMENT? YES X NO
REASON FOR SELLING
POSSESSION DATE 30 Days
SOLD NOV 7 - 1969
FHA 19,900
School Sexton Blks.
Sub'd Bush-Butler-Sparrow Zoned C-2Fa
Lot No. S1/3 19 N1/3 20 Lot Size 46.7 x115.5
Ass'd. Val. $ 5300 Am't. Tax $ 371.Appr
Price: Cash $ 17,900 Time $
Terms: $ FHA DN $ MO. % IN
Due on (Mtg.) or (L/C) $ F/C
Payable $ MO. % IN

Remarks: Large Lr. with stained beams-Beaut. stained woodwork-spacious rooms-full up-staires over garage-electricity rewired very good condition-nice fireplace with mantel Screened front porch 6 x 25
Address 118 S. Butler 17,900 SW-6 E8173

Office: Westdale Co.
Phone: 372-1460
Listed By: Bob Green
Salesman's Phone: 351-2706
This information, although believed be accurate, is not guaranteed or wa ranted to be so by the listing offic

Remembering the Neighborhood

Background

In 1970, the Michigan Supreme Court reluctantly left its chambers in the State Capitol on the promise that a Supreme Court building would be constructed. For more than 30 years the Court shared space with the Attorney General's Office in what is now known as the G. Mennen Williams Building.

During those years, the Hall of Justice property was cleared and used as unpaved parking lots for state workers. Plans came and went, and many people feared the area would remain an eyesore forever.

When the groundbreaking ceremony for the Hall of Justice took place in 1999, the Michigan Supreme Court took a moment to acknowledge the former neighborhood.

Suggested Activity

Read the passage from Justice Michael F. Cavanagh's speech, asking listeners to recreate the neighborhood in their mind's eye.

Discuss or write journal entries about their reactions to the passage either from the their own perspective or that of a participant in the ceremony or that of a former neighborhood resident.

This Was a Neighborhood. People Lived Here.

". . . Look around you, what do you see? A parking lot, an empty field, an unpaved block. Ignore the passing traffic for a moment, what can you hear in the place? Can you hear a screen door swing shut? Can you hear children on a playground? What do you smell here? Is someone cooking an early supper?

"It looks like we are building a Hall of Justice on a vacant lot, but we are not. This was a neighborhood; people lived here. People who gave up their homes so that we might build here. From Martin Luther King Boulevard back to the Capitol was in integrated neighborhood of homes and small businesses. Right about where we are standing, on the southeast corner of Michigan and Martin Luther King Boulevard was the Michigan Avenue Elementary school. All the way back to Chestnut and Walnut Streets were houses, a few of them grand by the standards of the day, but most of them modest working-class homes. . . . There were barbershops and small groceries, but most of this area was taken up with single family homes of people who worked at the Olds plant, at Fisher Body, or for the state. People raised children here, walked to the Olds plant or to the Fisher Body plant each day for work, and came home at night to the warmth of family.

"The people who lived here left their homes in the 1970s to make room for what was then envisioned as the new Capitol and for expansion of the state office buildings. Today we put up a Hall of Justice. We build it not in an empty field, but in a neighborhood; not among parked cars, but atop the homes and playgrounds and dreams of the people who lived here. . . . [A]s we do our work in this new building, as we follow our oath to follow and to do justice and right, let us not forget that we take this land in trust.

"Supreme Court justice and Court of Appeals judges come and go. We serve for a time, and then we give our seat to another. The people of Michigan remain. To them we give our oath, and from them we receive the opportunity to serve.

"This is a great day. We are breaking ground for a facility that we have needed for several generations. . . . [L]et us do all we can to ready ourselves in our courts for the challenges that lie ahead, so that this will be, in every respect, a true Hall of Justice."

– Justice Michael F. Cavanagh
Hall of Justice Groundbreaking Ceremony, October 12, 1999

Eminent Domain

Background

How did the Capitol Complex change from a neighborhood of homes and businesses, to a collection of state office buildings? It was created through state government's power of "eminent domain."

In the United States, governments may take private property for a public purpose, such as building a road. Both the U.S. Constitution and the Michigan Constitution guarantee financial and due -process protections to landowners.

That means the government must have a known process, which may involve courts, in order to take the land. In addition, the government must offer "just compensation," or a fair payment for the property.

Constitutional Provisions

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES (EXCERPT)

Amendment V

. . .nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

CONSTITUTION OF MICHIGAN OF 1963 (EXCERPT)

Article V, Section 2 Eminent domain; compensation.

Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation therefore being first made or secured in a manner prescribed by law. . . . Compensation shall be determined in proceedings in a court of record. . . .

Interpreting Primary Documents

These resources will aid students as they study and interpret primary documents, including visual sources such as photos and maps.

Links

National Archives

Primary Document Analysis Worksheets
http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/

These detailed worksheets for different types of primary sources, including photographs and maps, help introduce students to primary documents and the types of information that can be gathered from them.

Visual Thinking Strategies

Method and Curriculum – Visual Thinking 101
http://www.vtshome.org/what-is-vts/method-curriculum--2

This strategy encourages students to look carefully at visual sources and interpret what they see. Teachers facilitate their students' observations by asking simple, open-ended questions and paraphrasing student answers.