



The Axtell Group

BUILDING YOUR BANK OF TRUST

MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL COMPLEX

Security Assessment Series



Prepared by: The Axtell Group
Fall 2025

Assessment Series (Assessment Dates):

- ☒ Public Executive Summary – December 2025
- ☐ Capitol Security Environment Background – October 2025
- ☐ State Capitol Building – October 2025
- ☐ Senate Building – November 2025
- ☐ Centennial Building – November 2025
- ☐ Judicial Center – December 2025

PUBLIC DATA

This document provides a summary of the 2025 security assessments conducted for the Minnesota State Capitol Complex.



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of This Public Executive Summary

The safety and resilience of the Minnesota State Capitol Complex are central to the functioning of Minnesota's state government and to the continued ability of Minnesotans to participate in public life. Large numbers of visitors, employees, elected officials, students, and community organizations use these buildings each year.



The State of Minnesota (State) has a long tradition of maintaining openness within its public institutions, and the public's ability to access government buildings is a defining feature of the State's civic identity. At the same time, the State has a responsibility to ensure that public business can be conducted safely and without disruption. This Executive Summary provides an overview of the focused security assessments conducted at the Capitol Complex during the fall of 2025. It describes the purpose of the assessment, the scope of work involved, and the methodology that guided the review while protecting sensitive information that is not appropriate for public distribution.

The four building-specific reports generated during this assessment contain detailed operational findings that are classified as nonpublic under Minnesota Statutes section 13.37. These materials include descriptions of identified security vulnerabilities, public and controlled access systems and pathways, staffing patterns, architectural constraints, camera, alarm, and records technology systems, and other information the disclosure of which would be likely to substantially jeopardize the security of the Capitol buildings and the individuals who work in and visit these spaces.

The purpose of this Executive Summary is to offer transparency and to support a well-informed public conversation while maintaining the integrity of the State's security posture. It has been structured to provide readers with clarity and context without disclosing information that could place the Capitol Complex at greater risk.

1.2 Scope of the Assessment

The assessment focused on four primary buildings within the Minnesota State Capitol Complex. These are the State Capitol, the Minnesota Senate Building, the Centennial Office Building, and the Judicial Center. Each facility has a distinct operational purpose and architectural layout. The State Capitol supports legislative chambers, executive functions, ceremonial events, and high volumes of public visitors. The Minnesota Senate Building houses legislative offices, committee rooms, and public meeting spaces. The Centennial Office Building currently supports members of the Minnesota House of Representatives during the renovation of the State Office Building and also provides administrative workspace for tenant agencies. The Judicial Center houses the Minnesota Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the State Law Library, and administrative offices.

Despite these differences, the buildings function as an interconnected system that relies on a connected tunnel system, shared access routes, public corridors, parking facilities, and common security functions. The assessment used a consistent analytic framework that examined access control, internal circulation, perimeter and exterior conditions, staffing models and methodologies, technology and system integration, emergency preparedness, and protective intelligence practices. The intention of the assessment was to understand each building individually while also identifying complex-wide patterns that impact the entire security environment.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology used in this assessment reflects commonly accepted and best practices associated with the evaluation of government buildings and critical infrastructure. The work was conducted by a multidisciplinary team with expertise in federal law enforcement, state and local law enforcement, private and government sector physical security, technology integration, emergency management, security design, and behavioral threat assessment. Members of the team also have experience in protective intelligence operations, dignitary protection, emergency response management, advanced surveillance technologies, and continuity planning.

1.3.1 Field Walkthroughs and On-Site Observations

Walkthroughs were conducted across the four buildings during multiple visits at different times of day. These observational periods included routine business hours, higher volume periods associated with hearings and public events, and times when building traffic varied significantly. However, the legislative bodies were not in session during the assessment period, which could change or further complicate observed vulnerabilities.

The walkthroughs focused on how people entered and moved through each building. Observations were made at entrances, stairwells, elevator lobbies, tunnels, loading docks, mechanical areas, and public spaces. Evaluators examined how building design influenced sight lines, queuing patterns, visitor flow, and the ability of staff to monitor conditions and respond when needed. These observations also highlighted constraints caused by historic architecture and prior renovations.

1.3.2 Stakeholder Interviews and Engagement

Structured interviews and engagement sessions were conducted with Minnesota State Patrol leadership, troopers assigned to the Capitol Complex, Capitol security officers (CSOs), legislative members and staff, judicial members and employees, tenant agency representatives, facilities and engineering staff, emergency management personnel, the Minnesota Government Relations Council, the League of Minnesota Cities, and open access and privacy advocates. These conversations provided insight that could not be gained through observation alone.

Participants described daily operational challenges, staffing constraints, communication processes, historical incidents, coordination issues, and areas where improvements could enhance safety and efficiency. The themes that emerged significantly shaped the assessment's conclusions.

1.3.3 Review of Policies, Procedures, and Emergency Plans

The assessment team conducted a thorough review of emergency plans, access control policies, active threat procedures, evacuation and shelter instructions, badge and credentialing policies, post orders, and communication protocols. These documents were compared to national guidance, including standards from the Interagency Security Committee, ASIS International, the National Fire Protection Association, and the United States Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center. This review helped identify gaps between written policy and operational practice and identified opportunities for improved clarity, training, or cross complex coordination.

1.3.4 Technology and Infrastructure Assessment

The technology and infrastructure assessment focused on the tools and systems that support safety monitoring, access control, emergency response, and staff awareness. Evaluators analyzed camera coverage, video quality, recording systems, access control hardware, keycard systems, intrusion detection, duress alarms, communication tools, and monitoring practices.

Assessors reviewed how individual components functioned and how they interacted with other systems. The review highlighted opportunities to modernize equipment, reduce blind spots, and introduce integrated platforms capable of unifying monitoring, analytics, alarms, and access control across the complex.

1.3.5 Benchmarking and Comparative Analysis

A comparative review of security practices in all fifty states was conducted to understand how Minnesota's approach aligns with national patterns. This included an examination of weapons screening practices, visitor management processes, badge standards, protective intelligence systems, and emergency preparedness measures. The review demonstrated that Minnesota is among a small number of states that do not conduct regular weapons screening, which currently is not conducted at most Capitol Complex buildings with the exception of the Judicial Center. Understanding these differences helped shape a pathway for future discussions about modernization and provided context for the broader recommendations contained in the internal reports.

1.3.6 Synthesis and Complex Analysis

Following completion of the individual building assessments, the team consolidated its findings to identify patterns across the entire Capitol Complex. This synthesis recognized that the buildings operate within a shared ecosystem where circulation patterns, staffing responsibilities, visitor expectations, and emergency considerations overlap. The synthesis allowed the team to identify areas where coordinated enhancements would provide greater benefit and where modernization efforts would strengthen the resilience of the complex as a whole.

1.4 Limitations of This Public Summary

This summary does not include building-specific vulnerabilities, diagrams, or risk scoring, as this information is classified as nonpublic security data. The purpose of this public summary is to provide transparency and context without revealing sensitive information that could undermine the safety of employees, elected officials, visitors, or other members of the public. The content focuses on patterns and strategic considerations rather than operational details.

2. Capitol Complex Overview

2.1 Role and Significance of the Minnesota Capitol Complex

The Minnesota State Capitol Complex is the symbolic and operational center of state government, and its legal designation is established in Minnesota Statutes chapter 15B. Chapter 15B describes the Capitol Complex as the collection of buildings and related properties within the Capitol Area that support the work of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The facilities within the complex support legislative sessions, judicial proceedings, executive functions, public engagement, historic interpretation, ceremonial events, and daily administrative activity. These activities draw visitors from across Minnesota and the nation who come to observe government in action, participate in civic processes, or experience the historic significance of the Capitol. This environment is open, busy, and essential to the public's understanding of democratic government, yet it also requires coordinated protective measures to ensure safety. The scope of this assessment series was intentionally limited and focused on four primary buildings that anchor the functional and symbolic core of the Minnesota State Capitol Complex:

State Capitol

- Serves as the focal point of the complex and houses the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, legislative and judicial chambers, and prominent public spaces.

Minnesota Senate Building

- Provides office and meeting space for senators, legislative staff, and members of the public, and serves as a venue for hearings and civic participation.

Centennial Office Building

- Supports legislative and administrative work and serves as temporary space for the Minnesota House of Representatives during periods of renovation or high activity.

Judicial Center

- Houses the Minnesota Supreme Court, the Minnesota Court of Appeals, the State Law Library, and judicial administration.

These buildings are connected through a system of tunnels and shared circulation routes that facilitate efficient movement for employees, officials, legislators, and judicial personnel. This interconnected layout provides operational advantages but also creates shared challenges in access control, monitoring, and situational awareness across the complex.

2.2 Current Security Environment

The security environment surrounding government institutions has changed significantly in recent years. State capitols throughout the country have experienced increased public activity, larger demonstrations, and substantial growth in the number of threats directed toward public officials. Reports from national law enforcement organizations show consistent increases in threat cases and concerning communications affecting government institutions. Minnesota has not been exempt from these trends.

Activity within the Capitol Complex often reaches volumes that require coordinated security responses. Committee hearings, public rallies, advocacy days, and school visits bring large numbers of people into the complex on a regular basis. These events require security personnel to respond to fluctuating conditions while maintaining consistent service to employees and visitors. The Judicial Center has security needs that differ from the other buildings due to the nature of judicial operations. Case proceedings, scheduled hearings, predictable movement patterns, and the presence of judges and court staff require heightened awareness and stable protective conditions. Legislative buildings experience different pressures. The State Capitol and the Minnesota Senate Building frequently receive large, unscheduled groups and individuals who arrive without appointments. The Centennial Office Building, particularly during its role supporting the House of Representatives, maintains a high volume of legislative activity while also hosting administrative tenants and public visitors. These varying pressures create a security environment that changes throughout the day and throughout the year.

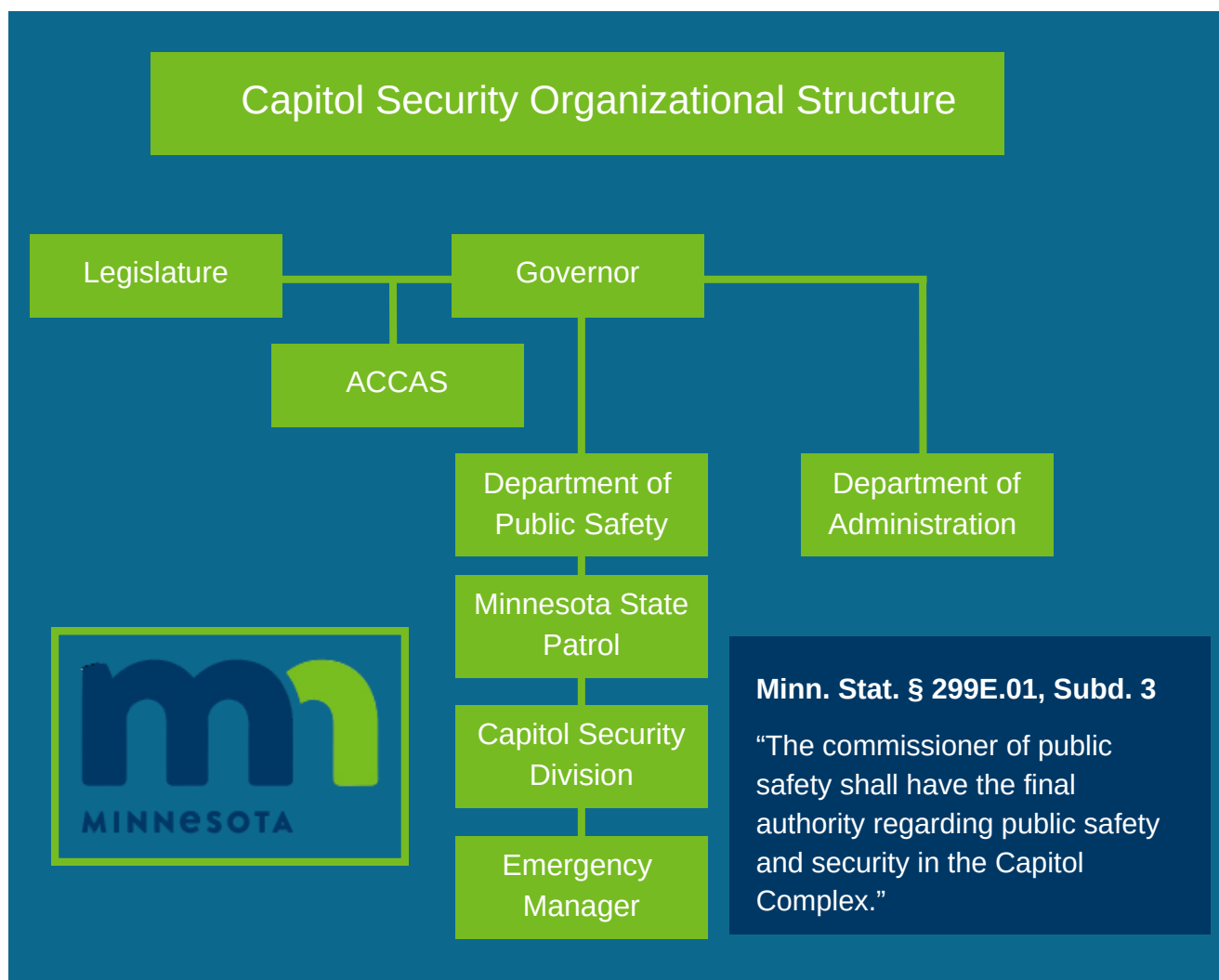
Concerns regarding threats toward public officials have increased in Minnesota and elsewhere. The workforce within these buildings deserves an environment that supports stability, confidence, and continuity of operations. Visitors expect government institutions to be safe and well prepared. The grounds of the Capitol Complex add another dimension to the security environment. They attract recreational visitors, tourists, advocacy groups, seasonal events, ceremonial gatherings, and media coverage. These conditions contribute to a vibrant civic space while also requiring highly coordinated planning.

Taken together, these factors define an operational environment that requires a balance between accessibility and preparedness. The Capitol Complex cannot fully restrict access in a manner similar to a federal facility, yet it cannot respond effectively to current risks without meaningful safeguards. The security posture must reflect the values of Minnesota while ensuring that it is appropriate for the level of activity, visibility, and operational importance of the complex.

2.3 Minnesota State Patrol Security Authority and Governance Environment

Security authority for the entire Capitol Complex is assigned under Minnesota Statutes section 299E.01, which designates the Minnesota State Patrol Capitol Security Division as the agency responsible for maintaining safety, order, and protected access throughout this high-profile government district.

This responsibility reflects a longstanding decision by the State to entrust protective operations to a professional law enforcement organization with experience in public safety, dignitary protection, and emergency response. The assessment team observed that State Patrol personnel consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to their mission. Troopers assigned to the complex displayed professionalism, situational awareness, and dedication to the safety of employees, elected officials, and visitors. Their conduct throughout the assessment reflects the agency's values and its focus on public service.



Although the State Patrol, under the direction of the Commissioner of Public Safety, carries statutory responsibility for Capitol security, the current governance structure limits its ability to independently implement improvements or respond to operational needs.

Authority over building functions is distributed among several agencies. The Department of Administration manages building maintenance, equipment repair, vendor contracting, technology procurement, and facility upgrades. The Advisory Committee on Capitol Area Security (ACCAS) provides policy guidance and coordination but does not operate within a single chain of command with operational authority. And resources for security improvements must be prioritized within budget constraints. ***As a result, the State Patrol must work within a system where it is responsible for security outcomes but does not control all of the tools, infrastructure, or resources required to achieve those outcomes.***

These structural limitations create delays and challenges. Repairs to cameras, card readers, alarms, and other protective systems must pass through facility management workflows that can contribute to delays when repairs are needed or vulnerabilities are identified. Technology improvements require approval through procurement channels with specific statutory requirements. Operational adjustments often require coordination with agencies that have different priorities or timelines. These governance realities do not reflect a lack of effort by any organization. Instead, they are a consequence of a complex administrative environment where authority and responsibility are distributed among several entities.

The assessment team observed that the Minnesota State Patrol works diligently within these constraints. Personnel routinely adjust procedures, compensate for technology limitations, and collaborate with partner agencies to maintain protective readiness. The challenges identified in this report are not critiques of staff performance. They reflect the fact that the agency charged with protecting the Capitol Complex operates in a system with many interdependencies outside of the agency's control that places significant responsibility on its shoulders while limiting its ability to initiate improvements independently.

Strengthening Capitol Complex security in the long term will require clarifying governance responsibilities and ensuring that the State Patrol has the support and tools needed to fulfill its statutory mission. The agency's professionalism and adaptability provide a strong foundation. Enhancing the structures that surround this work will help ensure that Minnesota's most visible public institutions remain safe and resilient.

3. Dangerous Weapons Screening in Government Buildings

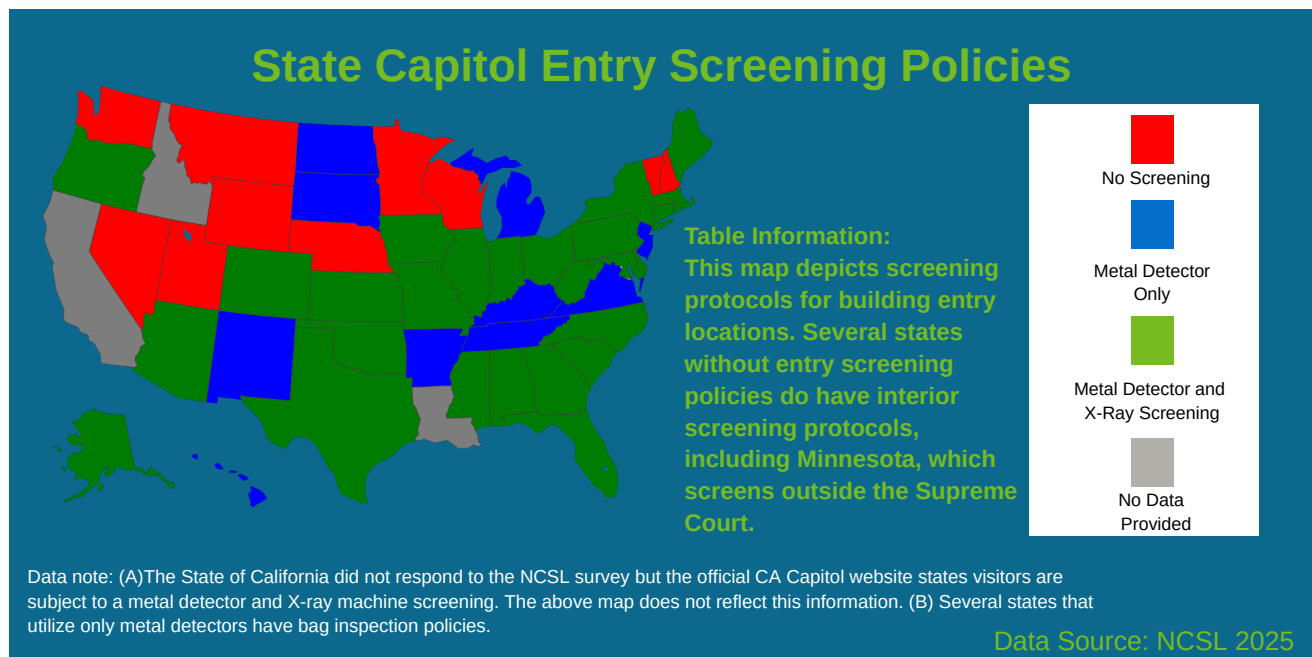
3.1 Purpose of Screening Programs

Screening programs in government buildings are designed to prevent dangerous items from entering spaces where essential public functions occur. Screening enables security personnel to detect and deter the introduction of unlawful firearms, explosives, chemical substances, sharp objects, and other dangerous items that could place people at risk. National guidance produced by the Interagency Security Committee, ASIS International, and protective agencies identifies screening as a fundamental layer of security that reduces opportunities for violence, accidental discharge, or the misuse of hazardous items.

In buildings such as state capitols, where large and varied groups of visitors enter daily, screening establishes a predictable and orderly entry process. People may arrive for legislative hearings, judicial proceedings, school visits, advocacy events, public demonstrations, or business with state agencies. Screening helps maintain consistent protective conditions. Although screening introduces an additional step at entry, it also supports a stable environment for the workforce that interacts with many individuals they have never met.

3.2 Comparative Analysis With Other State Capitols

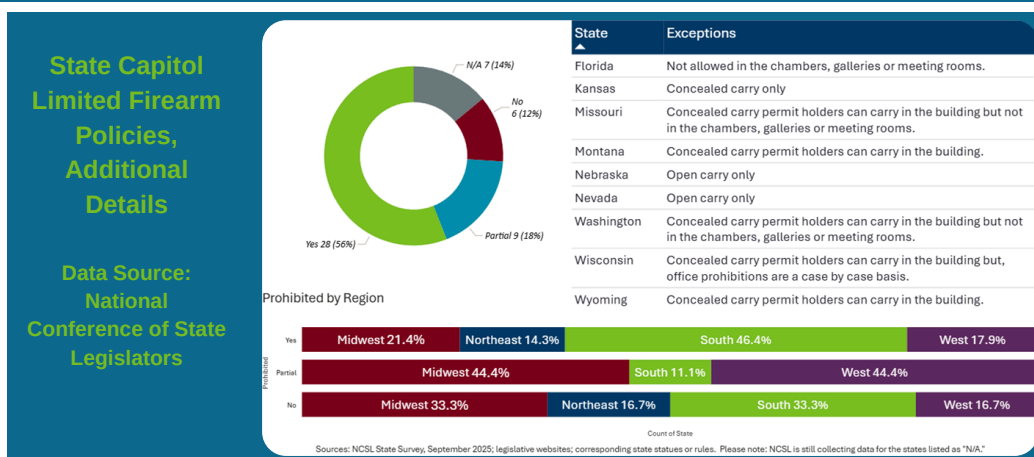
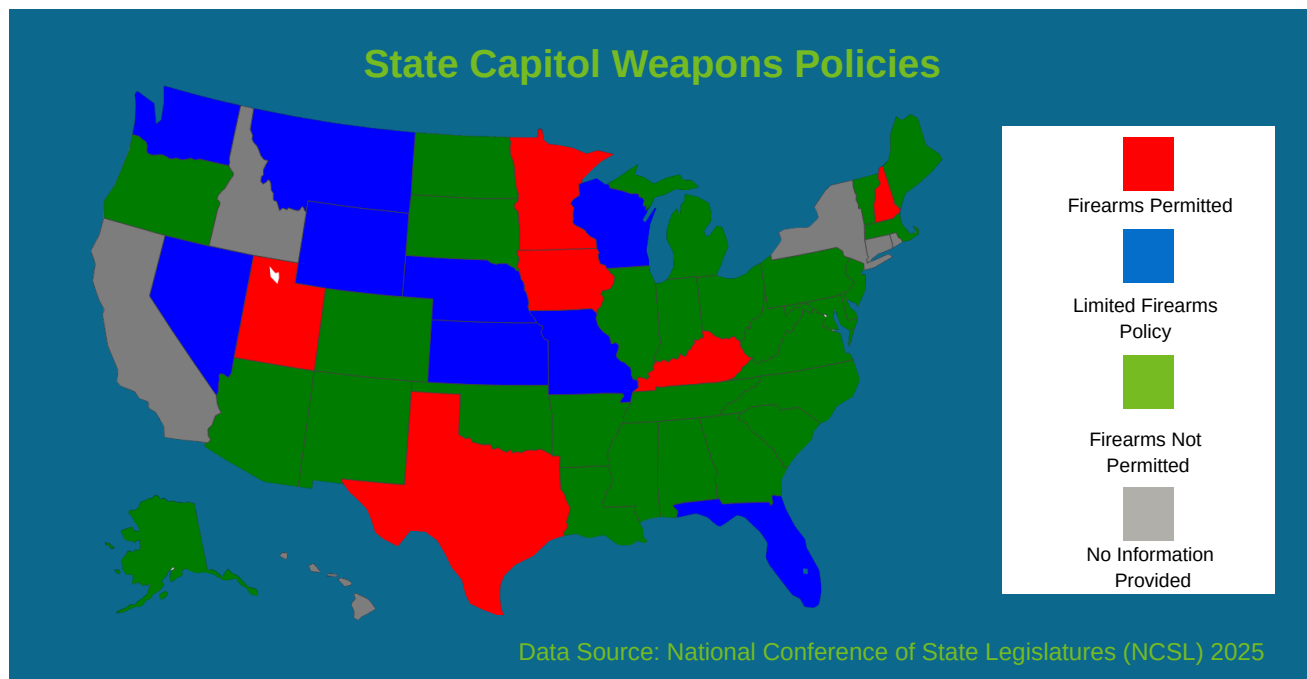
A review of weapons screening practices across the fifty states shows clear trends. Most states prohibit firearms inside their capitol buildings and enforce those prohibitions with screening tools such as magnetometers or X-ray systems.



3.2 Comparative Analysis With Other State Capitols (Cont.)

Many states have used screening programs for years. A small number rely on models similar to Minnesota's current approach. Several states expanded their screening practices after significant security events or concerns about threats directed toward state government institutions.

Minnesota is among the states with the least restrictive entry conditions. This difference is significant when considering the high volume of public activity within the Capitol Complex and the presence of several branches of government within a small geographic area. It is estimated that nearly 300,000 individuals visit the Capitol each year. (Minn. State Register, July 15, 2024, 49 SR 53.) All three branches of government are housed in the complex, along with significant cultural and historical attractions.



3.3 Observations Across the Capitol Complex

Among the four primary buildings, the Judicial Center is the only facility that conducts screening. The Judicial Center's screening operations are managed by trained personnel who use weapons detection equipment to support the safety of judicial proceedings and the movement of judges, staff, and the public. The State Capitol, the Minnesota Senate Building, and the Centennial Office Building do not conduct weapons screening at their main entrances. This reflects Minnesota's longstanding commitment to public accessibility, but it also results in inconsistent levels of protection across the complex. The buildings have different entrances, designs, and visitor patterns, which introduces complexity but does not eliminate the feasibility of screening.

3.4 Why Screening Matters in Minnesota's Context

Screening contributes to safety in several ways. It reduces the risk of intentional violence and accidental discharge. It helps security personnel identify dangerous items that individuals may carry with ill intent. It can deter attempts to bring weapons into public buildings to make a point or express anger. Screening supports the ability of government facilities to host large and sometimes contentious gatherings. It also protects staff who routinely interact with unscheduled visitors. In recent years, increased threats toward public and elected officials across the country have influenced state capitols to reevaluate protective measures. Screening is a widely recognized and broadly understood security tool. It does not represent the only approach to security, but it is one of the most commonly used practices for supporting safe public access in high profile government environments.

The Capitol Complex's current open access reflects the State's collective civic values, but uncontrolled open access does not balance accessibility with safe accessibility for all.

Screening measures that help identify unlawful or dangerous weapons support a secure and welcoming environment for everyone who visits and works in these spaces. Consideration of screening practices would need to reflect Minnesota's traditions of openness while also acknowledging the realities of current public security requirements.

4. Cost Assessment Limitations

4.1 Cost Estimates Not Included

The assessment does not include cost estimates for recommended security measures. Meaningful financial projections require detailed information and policy decisions that extend beyond the scope of a security evaluation. Reliable estimates depend on formal architectural design, engineering analysis, structural review, and procurement. These steps are necessary because the four buildings in the Capitol Complex vary significantly in age, characteristics, mechanical systems, and preservation considerations. Any attempt to estimate costs without these inputs would be speculative and incomplete.

Costs related to security technology introduce similar limitations. Prices vary according to vendor selection, supply chain conditions, product families, licensing structures, and integration requirements with State networks. A modernization effort that includes analytics, unified security platforms, upgrades to recording systems, or expansion of access control infrastructure cannot be priced reliably until the State determines the technology governance model it intends to adopt. Decisions about standardizing systems or maintaining separate building-level infrastructures carry different long term financial implications.

Staffing models also influence costs. Decisions regarding the deployment of Minnesota State Patrol troopers, CSOs, or contract security staff involve labor considerations, training requirements, supervisory structures, and planning for emergency staffing needs. These are policy matters that require administrative and legislative direction before associated costs can be estimated. Without a defined staffing model, no meaningful projection can be made.

The State's procurement structure further influences cost estimation. Minnesota follows statutory purchasing requirements that determine whether competitive bidding is required, whether master contracts can be used, and how projects must be sequenced. These requirements influence vendor availability, project timelines, product compatibility, and overall cost. To be effective, many security improvements must integrate with larger information technology systems or building infrastructure. Those integrations require coordination with procurement staff, information technology governance bodies, facility managers, and contracted vendors. Cost estimates produced without this coordination would not reflect actual purchasing conditions.

Public presentation of cost information also introduces risks. Publishing projected costs for protective equipment or infrastructure improvements may reveal the scale of anticipated security measures or signal potential resource limitations. This could allow individuals with malicious intent to draw inferences about the State's protective posture. For this reason, cost modeling should be handled with care.

A dedicated improvement and cost evaluation should follow once State leadership has defined whether and which recommendations will be implemented and how modernization efforts will be structured. This type of evaluation should include architects, engineers, procurement specialists, security integrators, Minnesota IT Services, and budget staff who can determine the true scope of work, produce detailed specifications, and apply the State's procurement requirements appropriately.

The role of this assessment is to identify security needs and recommend protective measures that support a resilient and well-prepared Capitol Complex. The role of a cost assessment is to determine how those measures can be implemented within the State's procurement and budgeting processes.

5. General Findings

The assessment of the four primary buildings within the Capitol Complex resulted in hundreds of observations and recommendations across the core security domains. These domains include access control, internal circulation and zoning, perimeter conditions, staffing and protective operations, security technology, emergency preparedness, and protective intelligence. The individual building reports contain the specific observations and findings that informed these recommendations. Although those documents contain information that could be used by an intentional actor to defeat protective measures in the complex, the number and character of the recommendations reflect the complexity of protecting a large, historic, and highly visible network of government buildings that support a wide range of public and government functions.

Throughout the assessment, the team observed that the Minnesota State Patrol troopers and CSOs providing services demonstrated professionalism, vigilance, and a consistent commitment to the safety of the Capitol Complex. The security posture at each site was not static. Staff adjusted procedures, refined their approach as conditions changed, and adapted to the high level of activity that defines the complex. Additionally, the Senate and House Sergeant-at-Arms Offices were also found to be extremely dedicated to their mission of maintaining orderly legislative process and decorum, and in augmenting legislative member safety and security.

These observations revealed a culture of continuous improvement rather than complacency. The assessment team saw multiple examples of security staff identifying emerging issues, modifying their posture, and finding ways to fulfill their responsibilities even when system limitations or infrastructure constraints presented challenges.

Although the assessment produced a large number of recommendations, this work should not be interpreted as criticism of personnel performance. Modern security requires far more than staff presence or procedural checklists. It relies on coordinated governance, adequate staffing, clear authority structures, integrated technology, and the ability to respond quickly to changing conditions. No recommendation, whether physical, technological, or organizational, functions independently of the others. Security threats change, building use patterns evolve, and public expectations shift over time. A security posture that succeeds today must also be capable of adapting to future needs. The recommendations in the reports are intended to identify opportunities to strengthen the infrastructure, governance structure, and system integration that support daily security operations.

5.1 Summary of Security Recommendations

While the building reports contain hundreds of recommendations, they align under a common set of broad security domains. These domains represent the core areas where improvements will have the greatest impact on safety, operational continuity, and the long-term resilience of the Capitol Complex. Together they offer options to meaningfully improve safety preparedness and operations while preserving Minnesota's commitment to public access.

5.1.1 Access Control Screening and Visitor Management

Most buildings within the complex do not conduct screening for weapons or hazardous materials. This creates inconsistent levels of protection and exposes staff and visitors to preventable risk. Establishing a consistent screening model, supported by an electronic visitor management system, would create predictable entry conditions across all primary buildings. Screening reduces the likelihood that dangerous items enter crowded public spaces and supports a stable and safe environment for employees, public officials, school groups, advocacy organizations, and the general public.

5.1.2 Authorized Access Control and Credential Oversight

Employee access practices vary across the complex, and several buildings operate without strong controls at staff entrances.

Common challenges include single factor authentication, varied badge designs, inconsistent display practices, and tailgating. Centralizing credential oversight, standardizing the badge system, enforcing visible badge display, and strengthening access control points reduce the possibility of unauthorized entry and improve accountability across interconnected buildings and tunnels.

5.1.3 Internal Circulation and Zoning Controls

Once inside the complex, visitors and contractors can reach internal corridors, elevators, meeting rooms, cafeterias, and administrative zones with limited restrictions. Zoning improvements such as enhanced elevator controls, hardened safe rooms, and targeted monitoring reduce the spread of risk inside the buildings. These measures help ensure that the public spaces remain welcoming while limiting unsupervised access to sensitive work areas.

5.1.4 Perimeter and Exterior Grounds

The exterior grounds attract demonstrations, media activity, ceremonial events, tourists, and daily pedestrian movement. Several structures have minimal standoff distance from vehicle approach routes. Improving perimeter protections through bollards, reinforced landscaping, improved lighting, and expanded exterior camera coverage strengthens the first layer of security at the complex. These measures reduce the potential impact of unauthorized vehicle access and support safer movement patterns during high-activity periods.

5.1.5 Staffing Models, Post Orders, and Operational Readiness

Security operations rely heavily on the presence of Minnesota State Patrol troopers and CSOs. Staffing levels, post expectations, and operational responsibilities differ across the complex. Establishing consistent post orders, improving staffing levels at high-risk locations or during times of high activity, adding rover positions, and strengthening communication systems will support a more uniform and effective protective posture. These improvements enhance situational awareness and will help ensure that personnel have the tools and guidance needed to respond effectively during routine operations and emergencies.

5.1.6 Technology and System Integration

The assessment found significant variation in camera quality, coverage, and alarm functionality across the complex.

Opportunities exist to improve visibility and monitoring within and around facilities. Duress alarms are inconsistent and often not integrated with camera systems. Modernizing camera technology, improving analytic capability, upgrading alarm coverage, and consolidating systems into a unified platform will enhance detection, response, and coordination during security incidents.

5.1.7 Emergency Preparedness

Emergency plans, drills, communications systems, and response capabilities are not fully aligned across all buildings. Some areas lack adequate audio announcement coverage, and participation in emergency training varies. The entire Capitol Complex would benefit from the addition of basic first responder resources, and a unified Capitol Complex Emergency Action Plan.

5.1.8 Protective Intelligence

The use of protective intelligence tools is not new. Protective intelligence is an important part of a comprehensive safety and security framework used by security professionals to assess protective needs. Protective intelligence does not monitor speech or political beliefs; it focuses only on behavior and context when safety concerns emerge. Effective protective intelligence programs enable early identification, assessment, and management of potential safety threats, while maintaining openness and accessibility. Developing a behavioral threat assessment and management framework will strengthen preparedness and support early intervention when concerning behavior is identified. These measures enhance the complex's ability to prevent incidents, respond effectively, and recover operations smoothly. The State Patrol has made recent changes in this area and continues to evolve by adding investigative staff and strengthening protocols with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

6. Conclusion

The assessment of the Minnesota State Capitol Complex confirms that the State has a capable and committed security workforce and a protective posture that continues to evolve in response to changing conditions. The four buildings reviewed in this assessment support legislative sessions, judicial proceedings, executive branch responsibilities, and public activity that represent a full scope of state government. Each building encounters different operational demands, but all share the need for a stable and secure environment that supports public access, staff safety, and the continuity of government services.

The findings outlined in this summary highlight opportunities to enhance everyday safety at the Capitol Complex through improvements in access control, internal circulation, technology integration, staffing models, emergency preparedness, and protective intelligence practices. These opportunities should be viewed as part of a long-term effort to modernize a complex that combines historic architecture, essential state operations, and a high level of public engagement.

The purpose of this Executive Summary is to provide an understanding of the assessment while protecting sensitive information required to maintain the safety of the complex. The summary reflects the State's commitment to transparency and its recognition that public institutions must remain accessible. The assessment supports this commitment by offering a path toward strengthening security while respecting Minnesota's values of civic participation and openness.

The State is well positioned to enhance the security and resilience of the Capitol Complex. Improvements can be made through careful planning, sustained leadership attention, and coordinated efforts among partner agencies. A secure Capitol Complex supports public trust. A resilient complex supports continuity of government. A safe complex supports the democratic life of the State. Strengthening the protective structure around these buildings will help ensure that the Capitol Complex remains a place where public business can be conducted confidently, openly, and safely for years to come.

About The Axtell Group

The Axtell Group is a Minnesota-based consulting firm that helps public and private organizations strengthen safety, security, and operational readiness. Led by former Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell and former Assistant Chief Robert Thomasser, the firm draws on decades of leadership experience protecting Minnesota's capital city.

Since transitioning from public service, the team has supported more than one hundred clients across sectors including government, healthcare, education, critical infrastructure, and the private sector – with experience ranging from local businesses to Fortune 500 companies. This work emphasizes practical improvements, strong partnerships, and a careful balance between safety, accessibility, and organizational mission.

The firm's professionals bring extensive experience in public safety, physical security, emergency management, and organizational assessment. This depth of expertise allows The Axtell Group to evaluate complex environments and help clients build confident, resilient operations that support the people they serve.



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