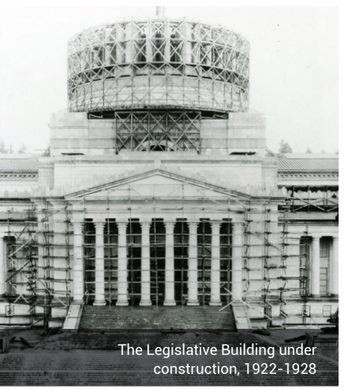
# Welcome
to the Capitol Building.

Original wood-frame Capitol, circa 1909

## The Land
Prior to American settlement, the Olympia area was known as "Cheetwoot" (the Black Bear place) by the Coastal Salish tribes. Several names were used for the area as American settlers moved in, but by 1850 the name Olympia was in use. Shortly after Washington became a territory in 1853, a wood-frame Capitol building was constructed on the current Capitol Campus.

## The Capitol Group
In 1911, New York architects Walter Wilder and Harry White won a competition to design the state capitol. Their "Capitol Group" entailed five structures designed to appear as a single building from the Puget Sound. They were constructed over the next three decades: Temple of Justice (1912), Insurance Building (1921), Legislative Building (1928), Cherberg Building (1937), and O'Brien Building (1940).


The Legislative Building under construction, 1922-1928

## The Legislative Building
The brick and sandstone dome, the tallest masonry dome in North America, measures 287 feet tall from the ground to the top of the cupola. The exterior sandstone came from quarries in Wilkeson, Wash. The granite steps and massive foundation pieces came from Index, Wash. Maxfield Keck of New York designed the building's sculptural elements in sandstone, bronze and plaster, many of which were carved in place by master craftsmen. Tiffany Studios created many of the light fixtures. After its completion, no other capitols in the U.S. were built in this classical style.

# Washington State Capitol

A Self-Guided Tour

## Regular Hours*
Weekdays: 7:30 am - 5 pm
Weekends: 11 am - 4 pm

## Guided Tours*
Weekdays: 10 am, 11 am, Noon, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm
Weekends: 11 am, Noon, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm
Free guided tours start from the second floor near the main entrance. For a group tour of 10 or more, please make reservations at 360-902-8880.

## Additional Attractions
The Capitol Campus includes more historical and significant sites, including the Governor's Mansion, Temple of Justice, Memorials and Parks.

*Hours of operation are subject to change for legislative session, holidays, and special events. Please check the website when planning your visit.

## Contact Us
**Visitor Services**
416 Sid Snyder Avenue SW, Olympia, WA 98504
360-902-8880 | tours@des.wa.gov
www.des.wa.gov/CapitolCampus

Please consider returning this guide for re-use at the Main Entrance kiosk. Thank you.

Washington State Department of Enterprise Services

# A Brief History

**1853** — Washington becomes a U.S.territory. Isaac Stevens is appointed Washington's first territorial governor.

**1855** — Construction begins on a wooden territorial capitol building located near the present site of the Legislative Building.

**1856** — The building is completed in time for the fourth territorial legislative session. The 40- by 68-foot building houses the Senate and House chambers, committee rooms, and territorial library.

**1889** — U.S. Congress authorizes Washington to become the 42nd state and grants 132,000 acres of land for the construction of the permanent capitol. The state seal is created by Olympia resident and jeweler Charles Talcottt.

**1893** — New York architect Ernest Flagg is selected to build the new capitol building. The foundation is completed, but is halted in 1894 due to lack of funding. It sits unused for nearly 30 years.

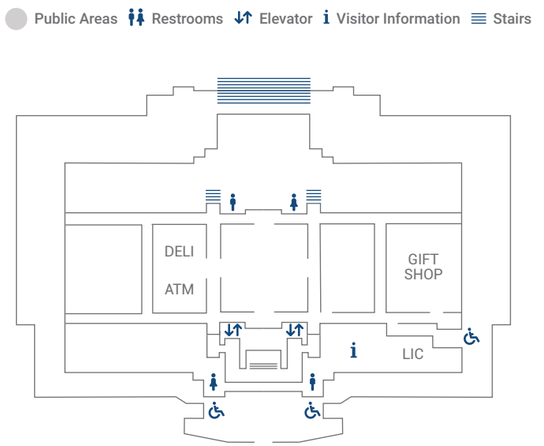
**1901** — The state purchases the 1892 Thurston County Courthouse to be used as Legislative Chambers for the next 23 years.

**1911** — A nationwide competition is held for a "group concept" for the Capitol Campus. New York architects Walter R. Wilder and Harry K. White win.

**1922** — Above ground construction starts on the present Legislative Building.

**1928** — Legislative Building is completed.

# Ground Floor



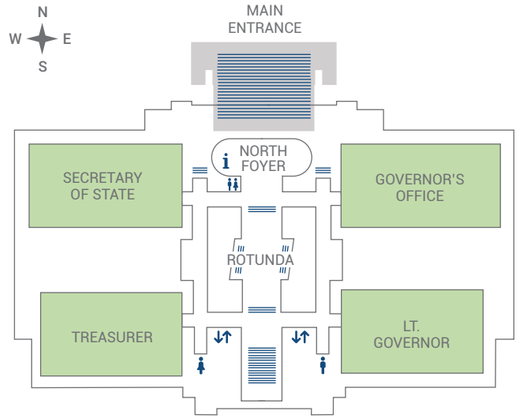

### Visitor Services Office (i)
Provides visitor assistance with tours and events.
Located in Room 111
360-902-8880 | tours@des.wa.gov
Mon-Fri: 7:30 am - 5 pm | Sat-Sun: 11 am - 4 pm

### Legislative Information Center (LIC)
Provides visitors with public information about legislative proceedings and processes.
Located in Room 110
360-786-7573 | www.leg.wa.gov
Mon-Fri: 8 am - 5 pm | Sat-Sun: Closed

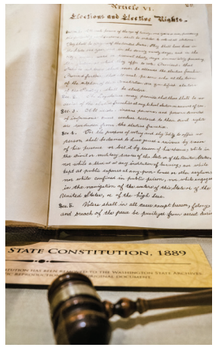
### Gift Shop
Sells Washington souvenirs and locally made products.
Mon-Fri: 9 am - 4 pm | Sat-Sun: 11 am - 4 pm
360-782-1889 | giftcenter@leg.wa.gov

### Café & Deli
Serves breakfast and lunch.
Open weekdays. Closed weekends.
360-956-1639

# Second Floor

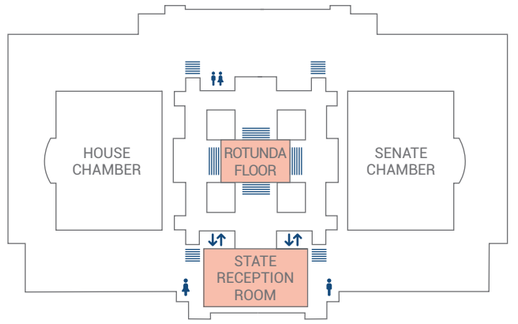



### North Foyer/Main Entrance
At the main entrance, **six large cast-bronze doors** feature relief images of early industry and scenic beauty in Washington State. Inside, there are two statues whose originals stand in the U.S Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. The first is of **Marcus Whitman,** a trained physician who was instrumental in bringing American settlers to Washington. The second replica is of **Mother Joseph**, who was responsible for construction of many hospitals, orphanages and schools in the Northwest. The public hallways and rotunda are clad in **marble from Alaska**.

### Four Corners/Executive Offices



The second floor houses the offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and State Treasurer. Visitors are welcome Mon-Fri, 8 am - 5 pm. The Secretary of State office houses a **replica of the Washington State Constitution** (shown on the left) and often hosts special exhibits that are well worth a visit.

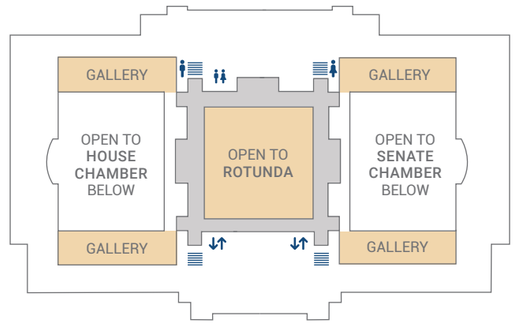
# Third Floor




### Rotunda Floor (Located between floors 2 & 3)
Hanging from the rotunda ceiling on a 101-foot chain is an ornate **5-ton bronze chandelier** containing more than 200 light bulbs. As the largest chandelier ever created by the artists of the Tiffany Studios in New York, it traveled west by train and was assembled and installed in the rotunda during the final stages of construction in 1928. **Four statuesque lamps**, also created by Tiffany Studios, are located in the corners of the rotunda. Embedded in the center of the floor is the **State Seal**. The seal is used extensively as a decoration throughout the building on railings, doorknobs, furniture and curtains.

### State Reception Room
**Bresche Violet Marble from Italy** lines the State Reception Room. This room is used for formal state ceremonies, receptions and meetings. Tiffany chandeliers, **heavy velvet draperies** and a colorful carpet contribute to the elaborate decor in this ceremonial room. The original carpet, made by the Mohawk Company of New York, was the world's largest single-loomed carpet at the time of its installation. The carpet protects an unusual herringbone-design Bahamian teakwood floor, which is occasionally uncovered for events such as the Governor's Inaugural Ball. The base of the **massive round table** was carved from a single piece of Circassian walnut by the Slone Furniture Company of New York.

# Fourth Floor




### Legislative Galleries
Galleries are open to the public Mon-Fri, 10 am - 4 pm, and when legislative proceedings are in progress. Washington lawmakers meet annually beginning in January. Legislative sessions last 105 days during odd-numbered years and 60 days during even-numbered years.

### House Chamber
Washington's 98 State House Representatives are elected for two-year terms. The Representatives select a leader from among their ranks to be the Speaker of the House. High on the wall above the rostrum are three reader boards. During a vote, the two outer boards list the last names of Representatives while the middle board displays the name of the bill. Representatives' names turn green when they vote "yes" and red when they vote "no." At the end of the vote, the middle board displays a final vote tally. The House Chamber has **French Escalette marble** and **walnut desks**.

### Senate Chamber
The 49 Senators serve staggered four year terms. The Lieutenant Governor, elected by the public every four years, presides over the State Senate. To vote, Senator's names are called and they verbally respond with their vote. The Senate Chamber has **German Fermosa marble** and **mahogany desks**.