

City Hall to plant rooftop garden amid downtown's concrete canyon

Is it a roof or a courtyard?

A hidden spot on top of a one-story section of Minneapolis City Hall is both, really. And starting next summer, this place will deal a small blow against global warming.

The center roof of the historic building will become a luxuriant park with plants climbing into the air and a miniature Mississippi River flowing past a walking path.

The "green roof" movement in construction makes buildings more friendly to the environment by using vegetation to absorb the sun's heat and capturing rain that would otherwise wash filth into rivers.

To build the system of cisterns, garden plots and a shallow water feature, the city and county are each spending \$154,000, while private grants are contributing \$160,000.

Part of the roof is already green. A patch of moss discovered growing on the gravel is a variety never before found in Hennepin County, said L. Peter MacDonagh of the Kestrel Design Group, the green roof's designer.

The moss, which will be transplanted, is officially known as *Leptodictyum humile*, although they're calling it Minneapolis City Hall Moss.

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