Inhabited by Mississippian culture 500–1,000 years ago and platted in 1853, Red Wing is likely the oldest continuously inhabited place in Minnesota. Town development expanded from its original plan along the riverfront to the valley and cliffs, thanks to a trade-friendly location and prosperity from the production of wheat, shoes, and pottery.
Despite its title, this map promotes the streetcar transportation system; our eyes follow its tracks marked in bright red lines. One hundred years ago you could hop on a streetcar south of Stillwater or in Inver Grove and take it all the way to the western shore of Lake Minnetonka. The system not only stitched together widespread communities, but also promoted suburban development.
Recording for posterity Minnesota’s entry into the Union in 1858, this map is the first to depict the new state. No distinction was made between proposed and existing roads, an exaggeration of the state’s development. The cartographer intended to promote immigration and settlement this way.