

of about 1,600,000 square feet of prime exhibit space with a high ceiling.

This floor would be the first level above the railroad tracks and would vastly extend the National Visitor Center as presently proposed, providing a continuous exhibit space from the front of the existing terminal building all the way back to L Street.

The immediate and complete use of this floor, of 1.6 million square feet gross, would be given to the National Visitor Center by the founding corporation, except possibly for a relatively small double-decked area of about 150,000 square feet on which would be built the new and modernized terminal facilities.

Our studies indicate, however, that the new railroad terminal facility could and perhaps should be constructed in the area shown on plate 3 in the printed statement, except one floor lower. This would be possible without infringing upon the Mail Handling Building area, since the roof of that building is at the same level as the floors of the concourse and esplanade.

This would allow the entire first floor to be used by the Department of Interior for the purposes of the National Visitor Center as a natural extension from the esplanade. It would also allow the omission of the "escalators to tracks" shown in plate 3 of this printed statement, since train passengers would be able to reach their train platforms on the same level as that of the terminal offices where they would have bought their tickets.

This plan would also allow enlargement of the esplanade area as indicated on plate 3. Moreover, the "ramp up" shown on plate 3 would be practically level with California Street from which it originates. Egress from the terminal facility for automobiles and buses could be either via a second "flat ramp" back to California Street, lanes of the same ramp enlarged, or via the first parking floor and the west ramp.

However designed and engineered, this proposal would bring about a much-needed redevelopment of this mail-handling building corner. The very old and dilapidated building would be razed and rebuilt in the process of putting in foundations—with perhaps more efficient and additional mail-handling facilities for the Post Office Department, at no cost to the Government.

The addition of this 1,600,000 square feet of prime exhibit space to the National Visitor Center and the additional 7,000 parking spaces would allow the present accomplishment of stated objectives which could not be accomplished by the Center as presently conceived.

First, Public Law 89-790 calls for provision for "exhibits and displays"—and I am quoting—"by the individual States, territories, possessions, and the District of Columbia with respect to their history, resources, scenic attractions, and other appropriate matters." This large additional space would be ample for these individual displays and with a large amount of space remaining to provide for more thorough and instructive exhibits of the Federal Government and the Nation's Capital, as well as ample space for accommodating the large projected increases in numbers of visitors. Moreover, it is an understanding that the Smithsonian Institution has warehouses full of first-class Americana exhibit material which it has no place to show. Some of this space could be used to great advantage for selected exhibits from this source.

Second, the Study Commission report recommendations state, "At the earliest date, consideration should be given to expanding the park-