

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE "PLANNING STUDY FOR A NATIONAL VISITOR AND STUDENT CENTER IN WASHINGTON, D.C."

(Summary of a study prepared for Downtown Progress, the National Capital Downtown Committee, Inc., by Booz, Allen & Hamilton, Inc.)

Concept of the National Visitor and Student Center

The National Visitor and Student Center is proposed for Washington, D.C. to help meet the needs of the increasing millions of visitors and students who come to the Nation's Capital each year. On the basis of studies which have provided information about present and future visitor volumes and characteristics, and with the advice of government agencies and private organizations that now minister to the needs of visitors to Washington, the National Visitor and Student Center has been conceived as follows:

The Center would be a single building, with adjacent parking, designed and equipped to receive and orient visitors and students, to provide for their basic needs of comfort and convenience, and to assist them in moving expeditiously to other parts of the Nation's Capital, where interests generated by the programs in the Center would be satisfied in greater depth.

The orientation programs would cover three themes:

- I. History of the United States.
- II. Organization and operation of our Government.
- III. Development of the National's Capital.

These themes would be presented by means of films, exhibits, and other media.

Structure and Site Requirements

The Center would be designed to accommodate visitor volumes of 50,000 or more a day which would be achieved during the 1970's.

The size of a structure to house the theaters, exhibit space, and services for the expected attendance would be between 152,000 square feet and 200,000 square feet, with adjacent parking facilities to provide for an ultimate capacity of 4,000 automobiles. With multilevel construction a site of at least 7.5 acres would be required.

Proposed Locations

Two desirable locations for this Center, determined by detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis, would be:

1. At Massachusetts and New Jersey Avenues, adjacent to the proposed Center Leg Freeway;
2. Union Station.

Estimated Costs

The cost of a new structure and site for the National Visitor and Student Center is estimated at \$12 million.

The cost of the required parking structures and site is estimated at \$13 million. This cost could be amortized from parking revenues.

Thus, the total initial capital outlay required might be about \$25 million of which \$12 million would not be subject to amortization.

These costs would increase, of course, if special monumental architecture is specified, or if additional open land is desired around the Center.

Means of Accomplishment

The National Park Service would be an appropriate agency to assume responsibility for the establishment and the operation of the Center. Also, an Advisory Commission with members drawn from appropriate public agencies and private organizations should be appointed to provide policy guidance with respect to programs and operations.