

Following consultation with members of the Congress and with interested public agency representatives, it is recommended that legislation be introduced to establish the National Visitor and Student Center. The legislation should provide for the necessary authorization and appropriations for the National Visitor and Student Center based on the concept developed in this report, and for the designation of the operating agency, the appointment of an Advisory Commission, site acquisition, and the design and construction of the Center.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE "VISITOR STUDY: VISITOR ECONOMIC SUPPORT AND FACILITIES FOR DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON, D.C."¹

(A study prepared for Downtown Progress by Stanford Research Institute)

Coverage of the Study

1. Volume and characteristics of visitors to the Washington Metropolitan Area in 1960.
2. Expenditures of visitors in the Washington Metropolitan Area and in Downtown in 1960.
3. Volume of visitors to the Washington Metropolitan Area in 1970 and in 1980.
4. Expenditures of visitors in the Washington Metropolitan Area and in Downtown in 1980.
5. Discussion of possible facilities for visitors to Washington.
6. Technical appendices: Techniques for estimating and projecting visitor volumes and expenditures.

Selected Findings and Forecasts

Data are presented on number of visitors, purpose of trip, mode of travel, season of trip, length of stay, type of lodging, number in party, place of origin, and expenditures in the Washington area and in Downtown, from which the following significant findings and forecasts have been selected:

1960 findings

Volume.—15.4 million people from outside of the Washington Metropolitan Area visited the Washington area in 1960. Of this total, 5.6 million stayed one night or more and 9.8 million stopped for at least four hours but did not stay overnight.

Purpose.—Of the 15.4 million total, 42.9% came for pleasure, 30.0% for business, 20.5% combined business and pleasure, 2.4% for conventions, and 4.2% in groups, mostly students.

Mode.—Of the 15.4 million visitors, 75.4% came by automobile, 8.1% by air, 7.2% by rail, 5.1% by scheduled bus, and 4.2% in chartered buses. Of the 5.6 million overnight visitors, 64% came by automobile; of the 9.8 million less-than-one-day visitors, 82% came by automobile.

Season.—The seasonal variation showed 29.7% in the spring, 31.4% in the summer, 20.8% in the fall, and 18.1% in the winter.

Origin.—As for place of origin, 65.9% came from the area within 250 miles of Washington, 14.4% from the 250 to 499 mile ring, 12.7% from the 500 to 999 mile ring, and 7.0% came from more than 1,000 miles away.

Lodging.—Of the 5.6 million overnight visitors, 68% stayed in hotels, motels and rooming houses and 32% stayed with friends and relatives. Of those who stayed in commercial lodging places, 20.2%, or 773,810 visitors, stayed in Downtown. Downtown contained 5,320 visitor rooms in 1960, 23.7% of the total of 22,477 "acceptable" visitor rooms in the Washington Metropolitan Area.

1970 and 1980 visitor volumes

In 1970, 24.0 million visitors will come to the Washington area. Of these, 8.8 million will stay one night or more and 15.2 million will stay for less than 1 day.

In 1980, 35.0 million visitors will come to the Washington area. Of these, 13.0 million will stay one night or more and 22.0 million will stay for less than a day.

¹ Downtown is bounded generally by Pennsylvania Avenue, 15th Street, M Street, and North Capitol Street, Northwest.