

A VISION AND
ACTION PLAN
TO REVITALIZE
THE HEART OF
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERACTIVE DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE

DECEMBER 12, 1996



THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

MARION BARRY, JR.
MAYOR

Dear Citizen:

Downtown Washington, D.C. is at an exciting turning point and 1997 will be an especially noteworthy year. The opening of the MCI Center next fall, as well as the opening of the new Ronald Reagan Building and World Trade Center on Pennsylvania Avenue, will bring major new activity. Meanwhile, plans are moving forward for the new home of the Washington Opera in the former Woodward and Lothrop building and for our major new convention center. Renovation is underway in Chinatown and there is new activity in Pennsylvania Quarter. A number of other projects, both large and small, are under construction or poised to move ahead.

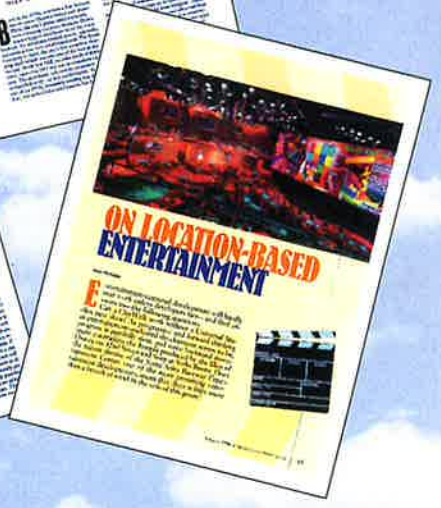
With these key opportunities in mind, I asked Herb Miller to chair the Interactive Downtown Task Force to see how even more energy could be brought to Downtown in terms of new retail/entertainment uses, information technology, housing and the arts. We need to transform Downtown as we work to transform our city and our government. The Task Force, appointed last May, includes over 100 members from the Washington community and experts from around the country who have devoted thousands of hours of their time to outline a new vision for the center of Downtown. I want to thank Herb Miller for his imagination and energy, and to commend all of the task force members for a tremendous amount of innovative work in a short seven month period.

The Task Force's summary report, A Vision and Action Plan To Revitalize the Heart of Washington, D.C. outlines new dimensions which can be added to our Downtown and suggests a series of implementation steps. The summary report is augmented by detailed reports from the nine committees of the Task Force. I am excited about the recommendations and call for the Washington community to examine these proposals and move forward with the transformation process.

In 1979, I called for the creation of a "Living Downtown" for Washington, D.C. Since then, we have seen tremendous progress but there is still much to do. This report dramatically outlines what the future of Downtown Washington can become. Now is the time for all of us to work together to create a dynamic Downtown. One that reflects Washington, D.C. as a world capital in the 21st century.

Sincerely,
Marion Barry Jr.

Marion Barry Jr.
Mayor



DOWNTOWNS ACROSS AMERICA ARE BEING REBORN

THE VISION AND GOALS

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1. The Vision for Downtown Washington

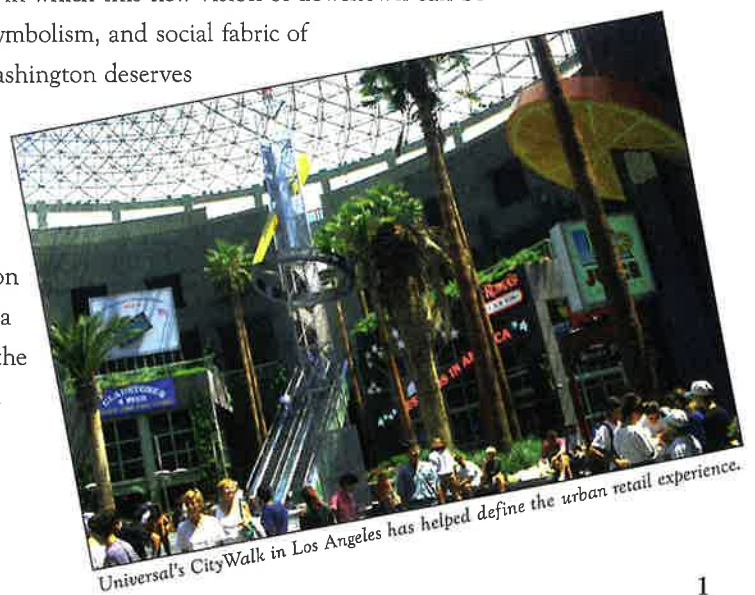
Downtown Washington is poised to capture a dramatically changing tourist and urban entertainment market evolving to meet the economic, social, and civic needs of the new information age. As Washington enters this new era, the Interactive Downtown Task Force has sought to build on what is uniquely Washington and on the means of converting its existing assets to achieve maximum return, while repositioning our city as a true world capital.

All over America – all over the world – a new set of economic forces is helping to shape and revitalize city centers. Increasingly, major urban downtowns, benefitting from changes in technology and demographics, are becoming magnets for arts, entertainment, sports, and information venues. A new generation of “urban entertainment retail” such as Planet Hollywood, Niketown Superstores, and Virgin Record Megastores is just the beginning of a trend integrating retail with entertainment themes. This trend is being embraced by the Hollywood motion picture industry and vertically integrated retailers, creating major urban entertainment destinations which will become the focal attractions of

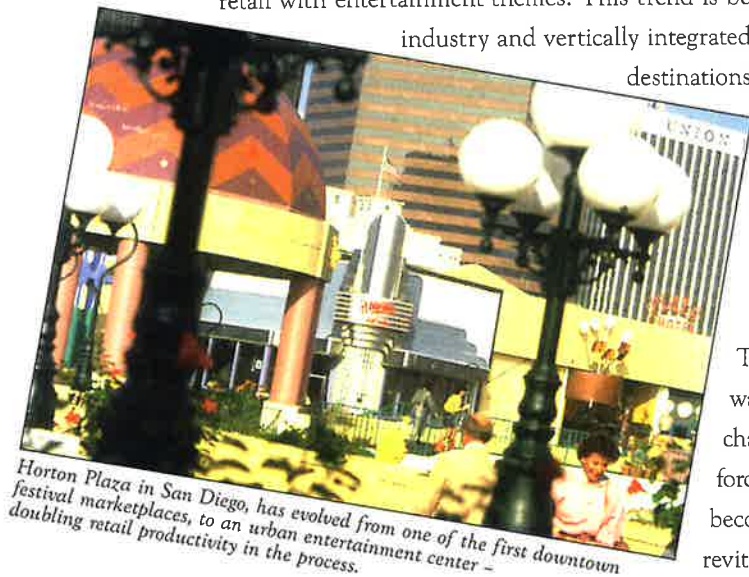
downtown in the next century. In cities like Baltimore, Cleveland, and Phoenix recently built facilities have brought millions of people downtown while creating new forms of civic pride.

The Mayor’s Interactive Downtown Task Force was established to explore the complexities of change and opportunity represented by these new forces and to recommend ways in which they can become an integral part of our local urban revitalization efforts. National leaders from business, government, retail, entertainment, and civic groups

have joined together to focus on the practical ways in which this new vision of downtown can be adapted to the unique history, plan, architecture, symbolism, and social fabric of Washington, D.C. The Task Force believes that Washington deserves such a vital center to restore a strong and steady heartbeat to downtown, and deserves the prominent place on the national and international stage that such a living center would bring. The Task Force also realizes that Washington, in addition to being our home, is also the nation’s capital and a leader of world democracy; therefore the center of the city should capture and radiate this reality in more than purely monumental or symbolic ways.



Universal's CityWalk in Los Angeles has helped define the urban retail experience.



Horton Plaza in San Diego, has evolved from one of the first downtown festival marketplaces, to an urban entertainment center – doubling retail productivity in the process.

2. MARKET FORCES: LEADING THE VISION

Downtowns are on the leading edge of the major economic change of the 21st century in which information and knowledge will become primary commodities, replacing labor and industry as central organizing forces. Within this context are three key economic forces propelling and expanding downtown economies: entertainment, tourism, and information.

The entertainment marketplace includes a variety of participation forms, many of which are becoming increasingly integrated with each other as the definition of leisure changes. The result in retail is a convergence of experience as arts, culture, libraries, sports, and family attractions share common features. The term “interactive” best describes the qualities of these evolving experiences of shopping, participation, and enjoyment.

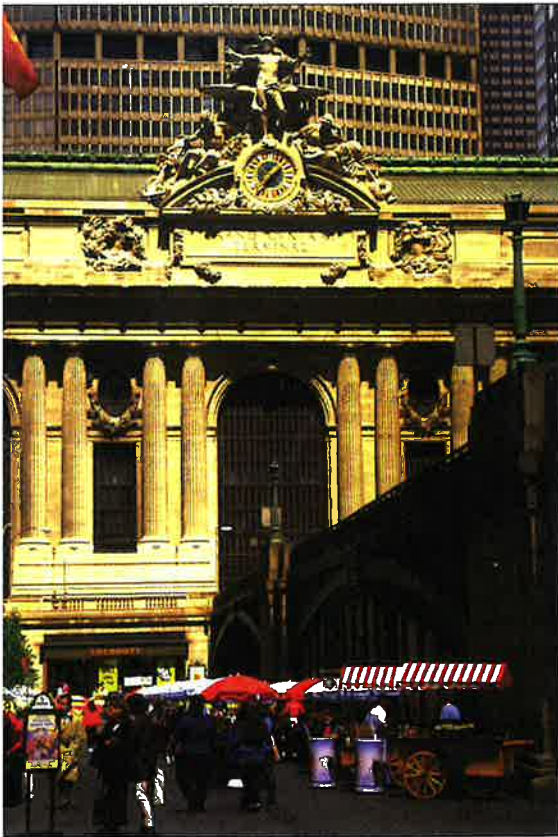
Tourism is the second force shaping downtowns that will continue to grow and expand to satisfy the demands of the new consumer. Already, tourism is one of the leading economic forces in the world. There are many dimensions to the tourism market, including visitors who come for meetings and conferences. Among the most

important aspects of tourism is the cultural segment. Washington’s many national, political, and cultural institutions make it ideally suited to this market.

The information and knowledge-based economy is the third economic force which is changing center cities. In downtowns, this force takes many shapes, including business activities which provide both knowledge-based and value-added service to customers. Today new kinds of businesses are being created especially to harness the new forms of information and to shape the way it is used. Downtowns are now homes to an innovative category of business called “the new media” which supports software development and Internet-based services and products. The number of new media workers in New York City, for example, has tripled to 75,000 in the last three years. Washington, for both regulatory and entrepreneurial reasons, has become one of the world centers of the telecommunications industry, but must act to maintain that position.



A dramatic example of Washington's potential is the observation that comparable world class cities enjoy 12-16 million square feet of retail development; D.C. presently supports only approximately 4 million square feet of retail.



Well designed and managed parks and public plazas are a proven public draw and result in reliable economic anchors.



After 20 years Boston's Faneuil Hall is still very much alive and vibrant.

3. THE SETTING FOR THE VISION

In all of the cities in which dramatic rebirth has taken place, that rebirth has occurred in the cities' historic centers and traditional retail marketplaces. The old downtown of Washington has perhaps the most dramatic and historic urban fabric of any American city – a perfect setting for the new vision. L'Enfant's famous plan, on which Washington is built, encouraged a retail core halfway between the White House and the Capitol at Market Square. The area between 7th and 9th Streets, which still contains some of the most attractive and delightful historic structures in the city, is the focus of the Task Force recommendations.

Today, the mixed cultural restaurant, residential, and entertainment uses on lower 7th Street, a neighborhood asset achieved through a concerted planning and investment effort, portend the renaissance of people living, shopping, and visiting downtown on an 18-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week basis. All of the great cities have, as a key component, large numbers of people living downtown. The attractiveness of downtown living has caused dramatic growth in other cities. In Toronto, over 2 million square feet of vacant office space is being converted to residential use. In the Wall Street area of New York City the number of residences has doubled as the result of efforts to expand this sector of the community. One of the goals of the Task Force is to identify opportunities and incentives to expand downtown living in Washington.



D.C.'s renovated Union Station proves there is a great demand for new urban entertainment retailing.

Great cities have also benefited from the use of efficient transportation. Washington has one of America's best downtown transportation assets in the Metro system, which is designed to bring the surrounding population into the heart of downtown. This great system also reinforces L'Enfant's plan of a north-south retail core by providing stops at Market Square, Gallery Place, and the New Convention Center site, as well as in the heart of the city at Metro Center. Other assets that will serve as the physical framework for growth are now being put in place. The Task Force has focused its energies on the area between Market Square and Mount Vernon Square, which is ready to achieve maximum benefit from these major investments. The new



The state-of-the-art MCI Center is slated to open in late 1997 and will host some 200 sports and entertainment events annually, serving as a major draw of visitors through the core of our city.

MCI Center to the immediate east follows the lead of several other American cities which have recently placed major sports venues in the heart of downtown and have reaped substantial rewards in the form of spin-off development resulting from increased visitors downtown. The new Convention Center, and the redevelopment of the old Convention Center, to the immediate north and west, respectively, will spur major redevelopment activity in the vicinity of Mount Vernon Square.

The construction of the Washington Opera at Metro Center will establish a western arts anchor with direct access via Metro. It is the nature of downtowns to create and take advantage of the dynamic effect resulting from the proximity of such great attractions.



The Task Force also recognizes one of the greatest assets around which to grow its vision: The Mall and the great institutions of the Smithsonian. While two of the Smithsonian's museums are located in the downtown (The National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Arts), the core of the Smithsonian activities is located on the Mall immediately adjoining downtown to the south. Over time the Smithsonian will continue to grow and to become more important nationally and internationally. A new set of major activities, properly positioned along the 8th Street Pedestrian Precinct but linked broadly to the purposes of the Smithsonian through connections to the American spirit, could fulfill a broader purpose and draw upon a larger market.

In the areas bordering the downtown to the east and the west are several buildings which symbolize the essence of Washington to national and international visitors: the Capitol and the White House. The center of Washington can draw upon these connections just as it does with the Smithsonian to create a place and a space in which the

civic and political life of the city and the country can be affirmed.

With all of these assets at its heart, Washington is one of the few cities in the world poised to capture the defining market forces of the 21st century. By doing so it will fulfill its long-standing

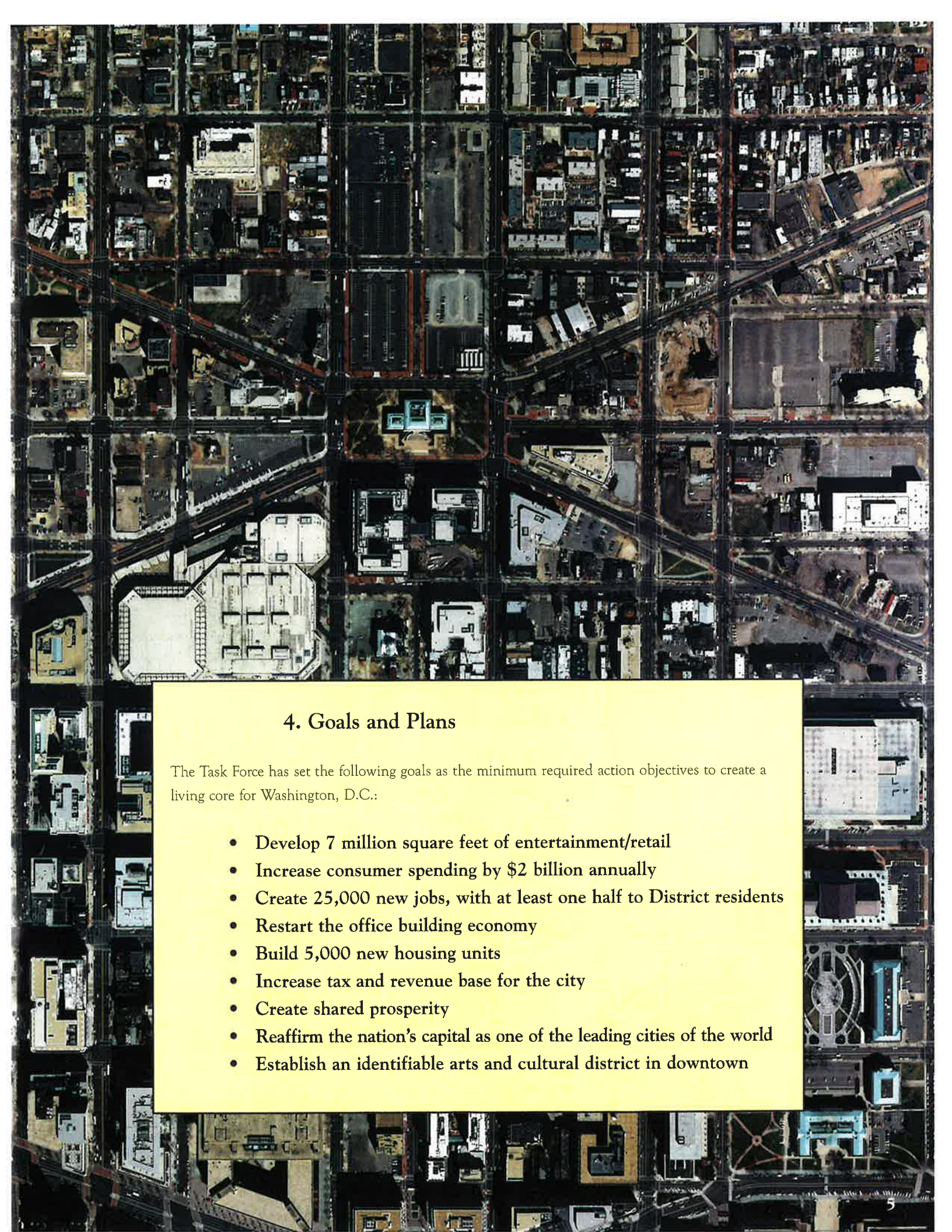
dream for a world class "living downtown." Failure to act now to seize these market forces will allow them to be captured by our region's suburbs and edge cities, undermining the development of downtown Washington, and the city as a whole, for generations to come.

The time is right for action.



Above, left and below: Scenes of the Smithsonian and the Mall, a concentrated area of our nation's capitol that hosts over 20 million visitors annually.



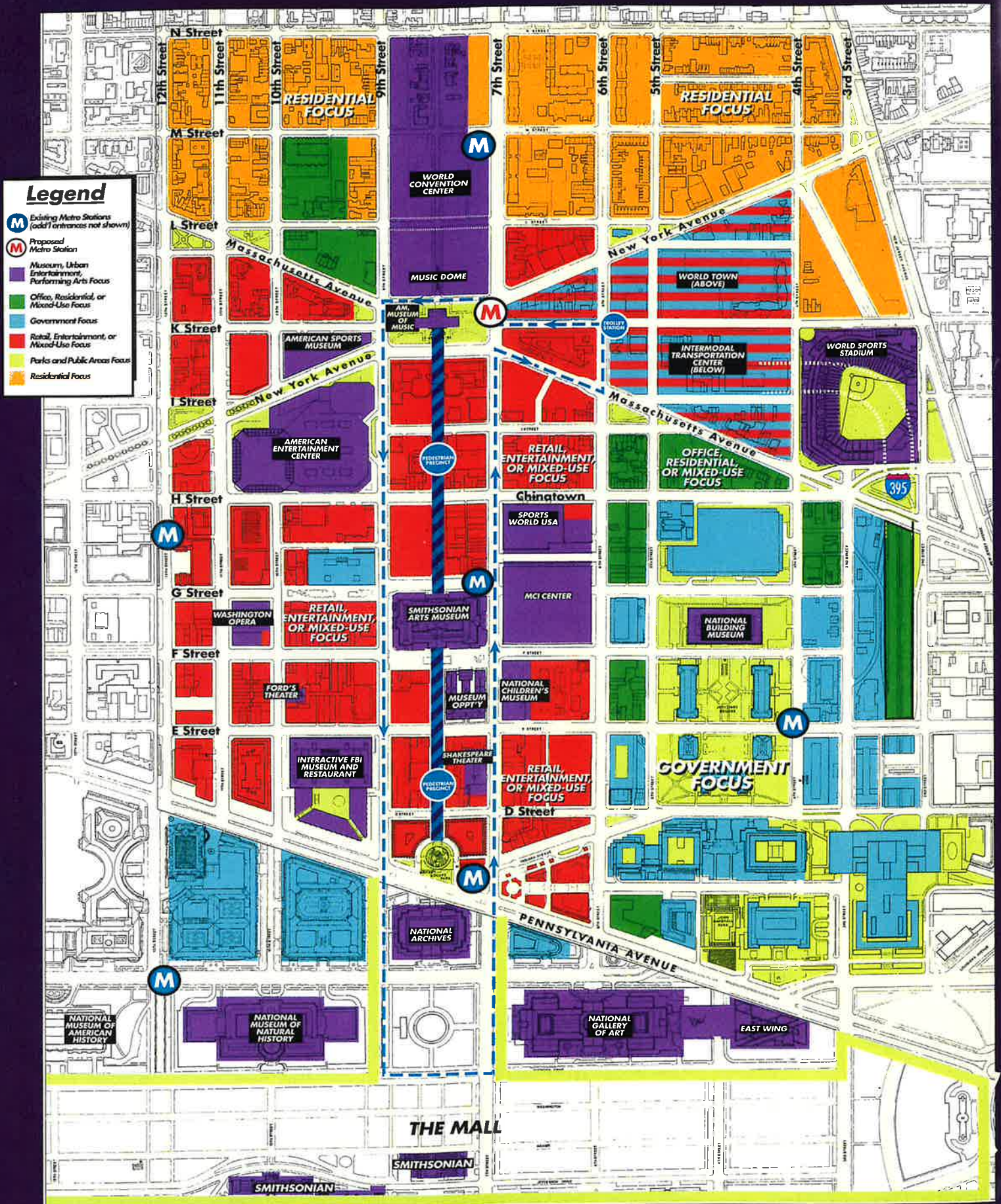
An aerial photograph of a city grid, likely Washington, D.C., showing a dense network of streets and buildings. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing text and a list of goals. The background image shows various urban structures, including large office buildings, smaller residential or commercial buildings, and some open lots. The grid pattern is prominent, with streets running in a regular pattern.

4. Goals and Plans

The Task Force has set the following goals as the minimum required action objectives to create a living core for Washington, D.C.:

- Develop 7 million square feet of entertainment/retail
- Increase consumer spending by \$2 billion annually
- Create 25,000 new jobs, with at least one half to District residents
- Restart the office building economy
- Build 5,000 new housing units
- Increase tax and revenue base for the city
- Create shared prosperity
- Reaffirm the nation's capital as one of the leading cities of the world
- Establish an identifiable arts and cultural district in downtown

The Planning Concept



INTERACTIVE DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE

Mayor Marion Barry Jr.

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THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN

The Committee Reports of the Task Force set out a broad menu of projects and development objectives. The Task Force has affirmed the core values of the existing Downtown Plan which call for the creation of a “living downtown.” The Task Force recommendations do not change existing zoning, but rather illustrate an effective land use pattern accomplished through integrated incentives for development.

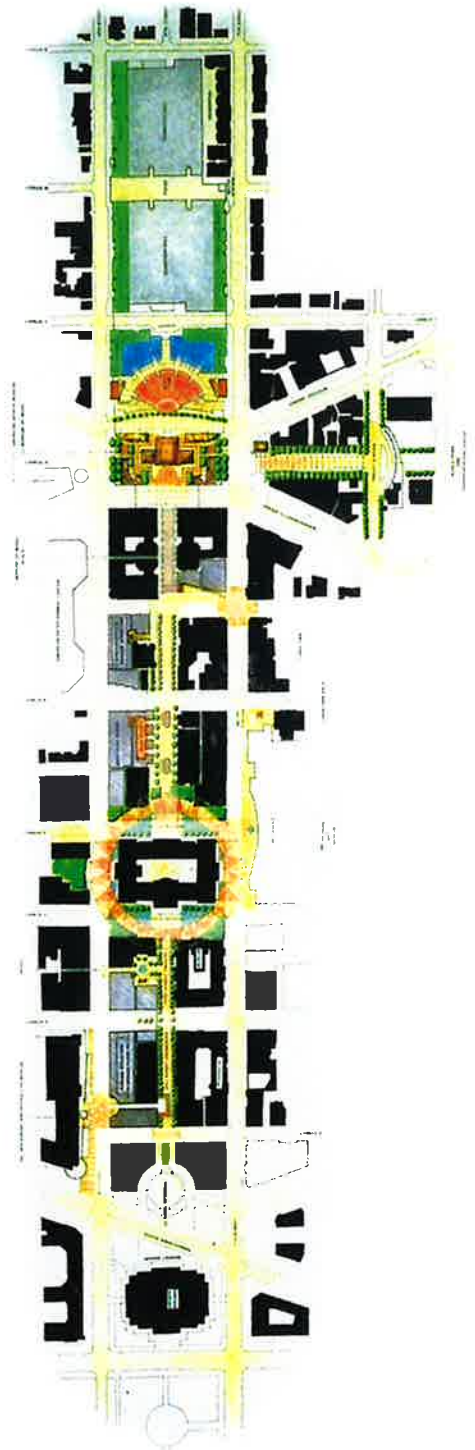
1. THE 8TH STREET PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT

The Task Force efforts have been focused on the area of downtown between 7th and 9th Streets. There has been substantial development over the last decade of a 7th Street Arts Corridor in general, and of the Pennsylvania Quarter in particular, but it stops at the National Museum of American Arts. Viewing such attempts to “push” development and pedestrian activity northward from Pennsylvania Avenue as a precursor, the Task Force has concentrated on ways to “pull” activity up through the traditional retail heart of the city by developing a northern anchor for the new center of Washington, D.C. along a reinvigorated pedestrian corridor.

This will be achieved by the interaction of three significant elements:

- **The development of new retail/entertainment venues celebrating the strength of American popular culture**
- **The development of new international communication and trade facilities reflecting America’s impact on the world (World Town)**
- **The development of an Intermodal Transportation Center bringing tourists and residents swiftly and safely into the center of Washington, D.C.**

This proposed development plan for the 8th Street Pedestrian Precinct keeps all streets open but allows strong pedestrian utilization.



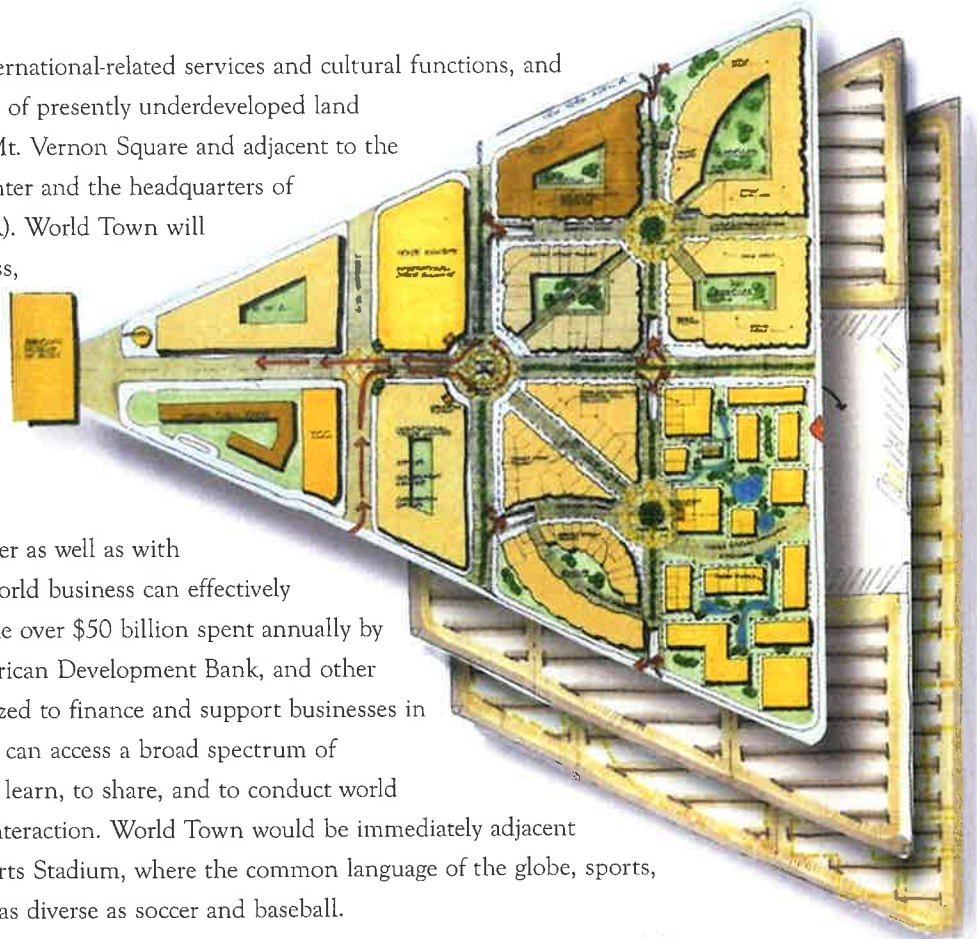
RETAIL/ENTERTAINMENT VENUES

New interactive museums and urban entertainment destinations (UEDs) celebrating America's contribution to global culture will be developed in Washington, many in adapted facilities that are evocative of and ideally suited to movies, sports, or musical entertainment. Among potential uses for these sites are an American Museum of Music and a Music Dome possibly located in the Mt. Vernon Library/World Convention Center complex, an American Entertainment Center located in the existing Convention Center, sports-related retailing and dining immediately adjacent to the new MCI Center, and the American Sports Museum located in space to be constructed on an undeveloped parcel north of the American Entertainment Center. The total development of these major venues would be approximately two million square feet. Together they would form a set of magnet attractions, built around the celebration of modern American popular culture, intended to anchor the northern end of the proposed precinct while complementing the celebration of American culture which is on display at the many Smithsonian Institution locations along the Mall. These magnet attractions are discussed in more detail in Section 2, The Projects.



INTERNATIONAL AND TRADE FACILITIES (WORLD TOWN)

World Town focuses on international-related services and cultural functions, and would occupy several blocks of presently underdeveloped land immediately to the east of Mt. Vernon Square and adjacent to the new World Convention Center and the headquarters of National Public Radio (NPR). World Town will unite governmental, business, tourism, and trade elements from major nations focusing on every continent in a single interactive site where governments can efficiently communicate with each other as well as with our Federal government. World business can effectively be conducted by utilizing the over \$50 billion spent annually by the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and other financial institutions organized to finance and support businesses in developing nations. Visitors can access a broad spectrum of information and services to learn, to share, and to conduct world business and government interaction. World Town would be immediately adjacent to the proposed World Sports Stadium, where the common language of the globe, sports, will find its voice in games as diverse as soccer and baseball.



A proposed design for World Town.

V

THE INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER

visitors and commuters to the celebration of American popular culture and World Town will be encouraged to visit the center of Washington because of the new Intermodal Transportation Center beneath World Town. Easily accessible and secure underground parking for up to 10,000 cars and tour buses will be developed at the northern terminus of Interstate 395 adjacent to New York Avenue, and will serve the two most heavily traveled automobile entrance corridors impacted by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. From this location, tourists can easily reach the Metro subway system and public transportation, as well as a new light rail trolley linking the Mall with the new Convention Center, the MCI Center, and the interactive museums and shops of the new center of Washington along 7th, 8th, and 9th Streets.

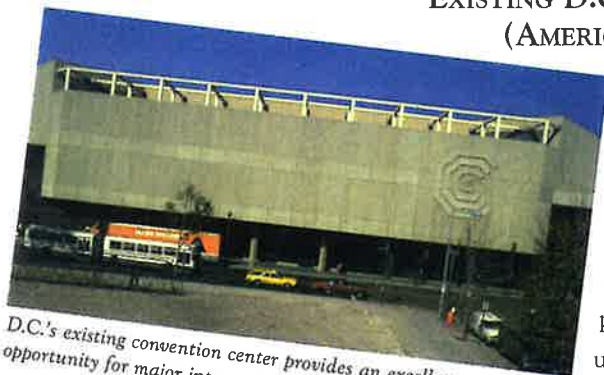


Many cities have developed attractive and convenient transportation systems to connect downtown destinations.

2. THE PROJECTS

The 8th Street Pedestrian Precinct, World Town, and the Intermodal Transportation Center are the foundation which supports and nourishes the actual economic muscle of the Plan. A cameo of each of the major potential development sites follows.

EXISTING D.C. CONVENTION CENTER (AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT CENTER)



D.C.'s existing convention center provides an excellent opportunity for major interactive retail development.

The existing structure represents one of the most significant assets possessed by Washington in its pursuit of new-generation entertainment/retail providers. This site creates unique opportunities for visionary development firms to create very large scale

interactive retail complexes. The flexibility to locate 20 or more movie theaters within an existing column-free structure, to construct total environments within the 39-foot clear height interior volume on the second level, and the street accessibility for destination retailers makes this building a significant asset worth preserving and re-using. Accordingly, the Task Force has identified this site as the possible location of the American Entertainment Center along with the addition of 500 new residential housing units.



D.C.'s Le Droit building has the potential to become a retail and residential site – a perfect example of re-use co-existing with historic fabric.

T NATIONAL MUSIC DOME

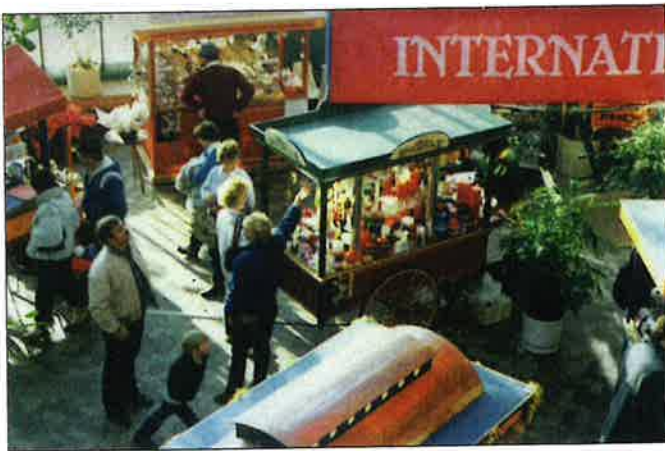
The Music Dome is a profit-oriented performance venue providing studio quality audio and video facilities for live performances in a 21st century setting. Besides serving as a venue for “live” events, it would also be operated by a national entertainment production company to produce events for telecommunications consumption. There are a number of similar smaller venues in cities like Nashville, Tennessee, home of Country & Western music. This transmission capability would be ideally suited to linking Convention Center events to a global audience, and to linking governmental or World Town events and data through the “Smart Downtown”, described on page 15, to a global audience. The kinds of events produced in such a facility are intended to complement and not compete with events at other nearby venues such as the MCI Center.



CARNEGIE LIBRARY (AMERICAN MUSEUM OF MUSIC)

One of the prettiest but least accessible buildings in downtown, the Carnegie Library is proposed as the site of a new interactive museum, in this case, the American Museum of Music including potentially the Grammy Awards Museum. A preliminary plan, which would preserve the integrity of the building, explores the possibility of a pedestrian connection through Tech World underneath K Street, linking the Library, and the Convention Center north of it, to the 8th Street

Pedestrian Precinct. By excavating the remainder of the block on which the Library sits, up to 100,000 square feet of museum space for a variety of unique American music forms such as jazz, musicals, and pop, would be developed without altering the exterior of the existing Library building.



NEW CONVENTION CENTER

Envisioned by the Task Force as a World Convention Center recognizing Washington D.C. as the world’s capital, this major development just north of Mount Vernon Square has the potential to be more than a traditional large, free-standing box-like structure. The Task Force has recommended that the National Music Dome be incorporated in the Center through a slight realignment of the Center’s physical program, without changing its proposed envelope. This redefined project could allow for 21st century virtual conventions broadcast from the Music Dome along with digital technology transmitting convention displays worldwide. Altogether the World Convention Center could become an

integral part of World Town, the “Smart Downtown” linking public and private sectors through communications, and the proposed Museum of American Music, thereby contributing to the economic success of the neighborhood while generating income for itself. The Convention Center Authority Board has begun selecting architects to start the design of this key facility, and the Task Force hopes its vision will help guide the planners of this site to think in even more creative ways.



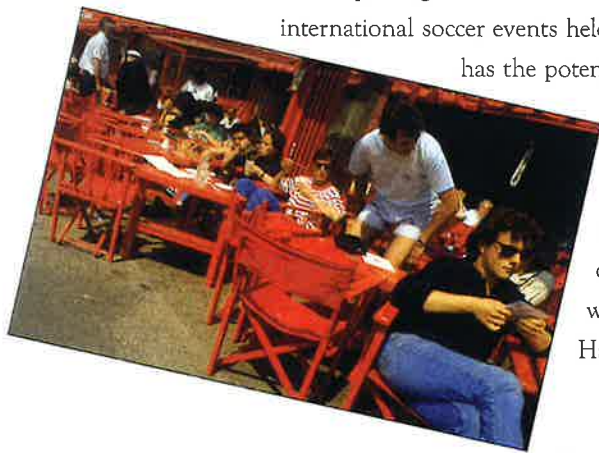
This new Convention Center is just one project that contributed to Denver's 10,000 net additional jobs in the last three years.

AMERICAN SPORTS MUSEUM

Sports are a major element in American life, especially in Washington. There are untapped reserves of international sporting fever in Washington demonstrated by the record attendance at international soccer events held locally. An American Sports Museum, properly executed,

has the potential to become as significant an attraction as the Air and Space Museum, drawing all ages and economic groups.

Different floors could feature different kinds of sports and could be jointly developed with national sports associations. No other city has such a museum on the scale contemplated; it could be a true “home run.” This museum would do for sports and Washington what the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame has done for music and Cleveland.



SPORTS-RELATED RETAILING AND DINING

Thematically related to both the MCI Center and the American Sports Museum, but providing retail opportunities afforded by neither, a sports-related retail development near the MCI Center would attract some of the best entertainment/retail providers. Retailers such as Niketown, Dick's Sporting Goods, The Original All Star Cafe, and Dave and Buster's consistently create some of the most visually interesting and successful retail/entertainment environments. A development incorporating these uses, convenient to the 8th Street precinct, would provide street activity during the day as well as into the late evening hours.



A WORLD SPORTS STADIUM

Also sports related, and obviously more speculative, is the possibility of constructing a new baseball stadium downtown over I-395. Such downtown stadia as Jacobs Field in Cleveland, Coors Stadium in Denver, and Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore, convincingly demonstrate the positive economic return and heightened civic pride that such developments engender. The move of the Orioles from Memorial Stadium to Camden Yards netted an

additional \$57 million of economic activity for the City of Baltimore in its first year of operation, demonstrating the value of co-locating sports immediately near other dynamic downtown activity generators. The Task Force recommends that this concept be studied in greater detail.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The success in other cities of Children's Museums and "Exploratorium"-style venues indicates that such a venture would find great vitality in downtown. Baltimore is building a new Children's Museum which is a joint venture with the Disney Company and The Rouse Company. It may be possible to relocate and upgrade the National Capital Children's Museum from its current location to create a similar attraction.

Washington could pursue such a venture, possibly in conjunction with a 30,000 square foot Camp Disney attraction or the new Toys 'R' Us "Kids World" department store. Properly executed, such a museum would attract not only day trips from local schools but also the thousands of families that visit Washington annually.

Maurice Sendak, renowned author of the childhood favorite, "Where the Wild Things Are" is the creative force for the primary family area at Sony's Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco. Each area and attraction flows naturally - from the themes of Sendak's wilderness world to the many other entertainment, retail and dining experiences throughout this cutting-edge example of location-based entertainment.



T SMITHSONIAN ARTS MUSEUM

The Patent Office Building, which currently houses the National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Arts (both operated by the Smithsonian Institution), occupies a central site on the 8th Street Pedestrian Precinct. Both museums are reservoirs of untapped future potential, but in their current form the elevated entrances and forbidding street level discourage use and access from 7th, 8th and 9th Streets. As part of the plan to create a vital pedestrian linkage along 8th Street, the Task Force recommends that the Smithsonian investigate opening the lower level of this building to an interactive pedestrian space, similar to the walkway between the East and West Wings of the National Gallery, enclosing the central court into an atrium for arts activities, and installing an Americana collection on the street level, presenting on a permanent basis a portion of the crafts, arts, and folklife celebrated annually on the Mall. In this way, this site would become a more dynamic attraction and a portal for pedestrian activity up the 8th Street Pedestrian Precinct, as well as create new street level display areas on 7th and 9th streets.



Well planned festivals and events can attract millions of people to downtown destinations.

OTHER RETAILING AND MUSEUM OPPORTUNITIES

The Task Force has not yet fully identified all of the kinds of projects which are possible. Instead, it has focused on several key or catalytic projects which could total more than four million square feet of new activity. There are other intriguing proposals: an American Culinary Museum, an American Intelligence (Spy) Museum, an American Museum of Health and Medicine, and an American Auto Museum. Arts-related projects, with the highest priority on a dance theater, would also be included. There are other major retail outlets and theme restaurants which could also establish a presence in the downtown. The Task Force recognizes that the marketplace, once excited by possibility, will create its own momentum as it has done recently around Times Square and Grand Central Station in New York City, and in the Central City District in Philadelphia where 400 new retail establishments have opened in the last 5 years. Together these new investments would create the remaining three million square feet of retail and entertainment developments.



In addition to a state-of-the-art, 12-screen multiplex, Sony Theatres' Lincoln Square project in New York City included one of the first commercial 3-D IMAX auditoriums in the country.

3. HOUSING

As important as all of the museums and retail projects combined is the need for residential development downtown. It is central to the concept of a living downtown, not only in Washington but in every world class city. The Task Force strongly embraces all previous and existing efforts to create a range of housing options. It believes that calls for more housing should be raised to the level of imperative. It also recognizes that translating the need and demand for residential development into reality requires economic incentives, such as tax abatements and use of revenue bonds and other dedicated funding. The Task Force views housing as a special project category, and has devoted an entire Committee to study ways to construct 5,000 residential units downtown, of which approximately 2,000 are between Massachusetts Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue. Of the 5,000 units, approximately 1,000 to 2,000 could be built on currently under-utilized Federal and District properties.



The Heritage on the Garden, a mixed-use residential, retail and hotel site developed in Boston, Massachusetts.

4. OFFICE DEVELOPMENT AND HOSPITALITY

While not immediately addressing the office market in the center of Washington, the Task Force believes that there are opportunities for future growth and development in this sector. In the last three years, downtown Denver added 10,000 net new jobs to its economy, many of which require commercial office space. The proposal to create a World Town envisions a considerable amount of office space. The Task Force believes that the office market in this area of downtown will be strengthened and enhanced by focusing on new retail and housing products, and that it will easily become the premier office destination of the region.

5. PLANNING FOR THE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Many of the new projects proposed in the Planning Concept will place greater demands not only on the Metro system but on the street and parking system downtown as well. While the Task Force recommends taking advantage of the great asset of Metro and expects to utilize this asset to the fullest, there is also a need for dramatically increased parking as well as new pedestrian and surface



Baltimore's light rail solution for inner city transportation.

mobility services to help offset the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

Members of the Task Force estimate that in order to handle future demands of all of the possible proposed development, in excess of 15,000 additional parking spaces will be necessary in the downtown area to serve the seven million square feet of new retail/entertainment venues, especially the new MCI Center and proposed World Sports Stadium. Additionally, it would be

necessary to transform the pedestrian environment along 8th Street into a pedestrian way, similar to major pedestrian concourses around the world, to serve as the northern extension of the Mall. In order to move people from the major activities along the Mall and up this corridor, the Task Force proposes that a light rail trolley system be instituted along 7th and 9th Streets. Further study is essential.



6. CREATING ECONOMIC LINKAGES

One of the primary goals listed in the vision is the creation of shared prosperity. Task Force members believe that the generation of new economic activity must contribute to both the revitalization of the city in general and to the many social and economic demands of the residents of the city. While an increased tax base created both by improved property values as well as growth of a middle-class residential base resulting from the proposed developments will have positive and dramatic effects on the economy of the city, creating new jobs and business opportunities, the Task Force recognizes that such an indirect approach is not sufficient. Direct and

explicit ways need to be developed to link development directly with the broader needs of the community.



An "interactive" fountain.

7. SMART DOWNTOWN

As Washington evolves into a 21st century downtown with many kinds of businesses and activities depending on computer-based information technologies, it will be essential for the entire downtown to have the appropriate infrastructure to

support these technologies. The center of Washington will become a Smart Downtown, taking advantage of innovations which will inform pedestrians where to go, motorists where to park, and tourists where to stay and what to enjoy when they make their next trip.

In order to make this happen, the Task Force recommends that a study be undertaken of the present economy of the downtown, managed cooperatively with an organization like the D.C. Agenda Project, to determine job and business development opportunities for the residents of the city and to establish a set of policies and practices to guide both present and future development in the downtown. Washington needs approaches to these issues which provide meaningful participation in wealth generation but go beyond a policy of regulation and constraints on development to achieve the desired end.



Many downtowns have begun to market themselves just like businesses. Local and national tourists are drawn to events and everyday attractions by multi-million dollar marketing budgets. Most of these dollars are generated through well-managed cooperative advertising programs.



F

THE BUILDING BLOCKS

1. WASHINGTON CENTER ALLIANCE

ollowing in the footsteps of other cities whose downtown leaders have formed strong and effective partnerships among all important interests, a new organization will be established in Washington to shepherd the vision developed by the Task Force into a dynamic reality of future development, businesses, and new jobs. The organization will be called the Washington Center Alliance, and it will bring together the leadership of many key public, private, and civic sectors in the downtown, to provide a mechanism for combining their efforts through a set of coordinated commitments of physical and human capital. The objectives of the Alliance will be:

- **To assume the stewardship and legacy of the Task Force's work**
- **To shape the broad vision for the center of the city and integrate it into the region**
- **To promote and sustain arts and culture in the downtown**
- **To help generate new wealth for the city**
- **To ensure that wealth is shared wisely and broadly**

The Alliance will be modeled on similar organizations like The Alliance For Lower Manhattan, The Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, The Denver Partnership, The Association For Portland (Oregon), and The Central Houston Association, whose efforts have led to dramatic improvements in their center cities' environment and economy. Immediately, the focus of the Alliance will be to:

- **Develop an action plan to catalyze the major projects**
- **Guide the transportation and access planning**
- **Assist in downtown development creation**
- **Create new economic linkages between the downtown and the city's neighborhoods**
- **Champion the establishment of a tax increment finance district to provide financial assistance for new retail/entertainment, housing and area-wide improvements**
- **Launch new efforts to build more downtown housing**
- **Interface with federal agencies to achieve optimum use of federal financial, building and operational assets**

Over time it is expected that the Alliance will develop the kind of organizational structure typical of its companion organizations in other cities, which will allow it to both provide leadership as well as direct services, usually through subsidiary corporations. The Alliance will be similar in many respects to private sector organizations which manage mixed-use suburban developments. These private sector organizations have management corporations (equivalent to a Business Improvement District), development assistance organizations (equivalent to a Community Development Corporation), marketing organizations, transportation management organizations, and business and job development corporations.

Creating this constellation of organizations under a single umbrella organization will ensure integration of diverse federal, local, international, civic and private interests in a cohesive unit dedicated to delivering programs and services to enhance the social and economic environment of the center city. A future model for the Alliance may look like the following:



"The Green Machine" is a powerful weapon in New Orleans' "War on Grime" campaign.



Baltimore's "Clean and Safe" teams have transformed downtown areas into an inviting destination for visitors.



2. THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

One of the keys in other cities' revival of the downtown has been establishing an organization to provide a high level of operational management services for the downtown area. These services, provided through a Business Improvement District (BID), enhance existing public services and provide amenities which make the downtown area competitive with the best shopping centers in the region. Leaders of downtown organizations throughout the country realize that center city areas now compete against such managed environments. The need now is to provide comparable services downtown and to build on the competitive strengths of the city center.

BIDs have even more immediate impact. They help to reduce crime (up to 47% in some cities), improve physical appearances, provide high levels of street and public space maintenance, and address street disorder and aggressive panhandling. The BID will accomplish these tasks principally through a specially trained work force, which augments but does not supplant existing municipal workers, who act as "hospitality guides" to ensure the area is clean, safe, and friendly. There are over 400 such districts in North America.



Taking advantage of legislation passed by the District of Columbia government in the spring, the District of Columbia Business Industry Association (DCBIA) is assuming the leadership role in formulating the establishment of a BID in the downtown area of Washington. Taking a lead from other cities, the planning effort will look at ways to:

- Enhance security
- Improve cleanliness and maintenance
- Deal with aggressive panhandling and other street disorder
- Provide new marketing and promotional resources
- Enhance the physical environment by improving streetscape and signage
- Help to improve transportation and parking management

The recent policy decision announced by the U.S. General Services Administration Administrator, affirms that GSA can "contract for services" of BIDs where its buildings are located, thus creating new partnerships with center cities and opening the possibility of a direct contribution from the Federal real estate presence toward operating a vibrant downtown.



Philadelphia's world renowned safe and clean programs share some of the credit for attracting over 350 new retail establishments to the city over the last five years.

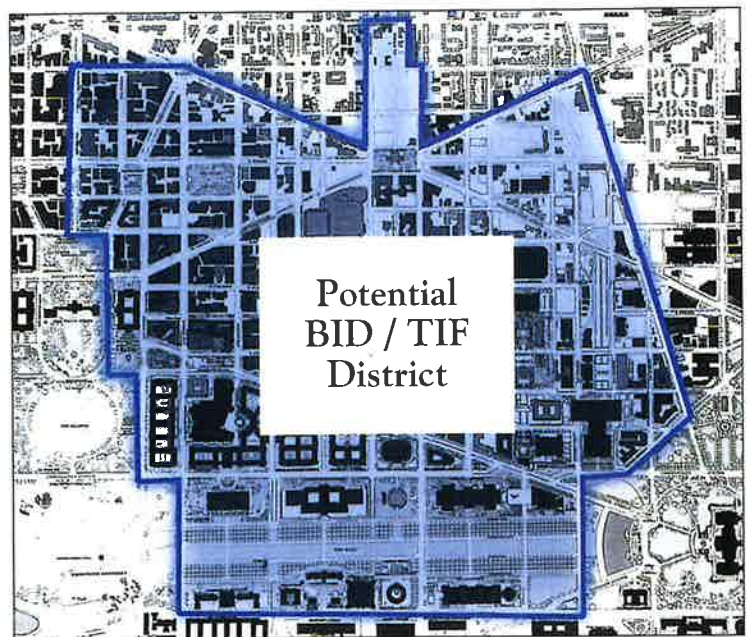
3. TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT

In order to implement many of the plans and projects which underpin the Task Force vision for the downtown, there is a need to create supplementary fiscal resources and incentives to help stimulate its development. Because of its needs to meet many other social and economic objectives throughout the District of Columbia, the city's overall business tax burden downtown is greater than its suburban and regional competitors. The Task Force proposes the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), a tool which has been used in 34 other states (including Maryland and Virginia) to provide financial incentives for development without creating new taxes, and without decreasing or redirecting existing tax revenue.

The District of Columbia, acting under legislation which is being introduced, can create a designated area in which a portion of future taxes resulting from new development are used to pay off bonds which are issued in anticipation of these new developments. This creates a funding source for the infrastructure improvements required for the projects to happen in the first place. In most communities, the city still gains a portion of the new tax revenue as well as other ancillary economic benefits: more jobs, businesses, visitors, residents, and increased earnings.

In general, this procedure takes advantage of tax free bonding capacity allowed under I.R.S. regulations and is very attractive to potential bondholders. The bonds are secured by future taxes only, generated by proposed development within the designated district. The taxes to support the TIF bonds include property and sales taxes. Cities in a majority of the other states routinely issue non-taxable TIF bonds to finance public sector aspects of development, such as property acquisition, relocation of employees and construction of public infrastructure such as sidewalks, utilities, parking, and streetscaping improvements.

By adopting this financing technique the District would merely be catching up with other jurisdictions, like Montgomery and Fairfax Counties, which are in direct competition with downtown. Preliminary estimates, based on projections of sales tax and incremental property taxes resulting from the creation of seven million square feet of additional retail/entertainment, are that a TIF could create an additional \$1 billion of development funding over 10 to 15 years. A fund of this magnitude is vital to support the scope of infrastructure investment needed for new development.



CONCLUSION

This report lays out a new vision, a conceptual plan, and a set of actions which will launch a major revitalization of the center of one of the world's great cities.

It invites collaboration and cooperative action.

It is the start of a new day for Washington.

THE PROCESS

In April of 1996, Mayor Marion Barry Jr. convened the Interactive Downtown Task Force to study and recommend a plan to revitalize the core of our city. Barry invited renowned Washington-based developer Herbert S. Miller to head the Task Force. Over 100 local community leaders, government officials, as well as developers, and business representatives from around the country, were appointed to the Task Force.

The Task Force was organized into nine committees: User Friendly, Information Technology, USArts, North Area/Mixed Use Residential, Economic/Tax, Streetscape/Parking, Interactive Museum, World Town/International Trade, and Land Use/Zoning. Over a seven month period, through three full committee meetings, numerous committee sessions, and two press conferences, a vision and plan of action was developed.

This publication is a summary of the nearly 300 pages that comprise the final reports from each committee. These complete reports are available. Call 202-727-6600 or fax 202-727-3787.

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