



CONSIDERATIONS

There are several considerations to be addressed as decisions are made to revitalize Independence Quarter.

FEDERAL LAND AND FACILITIES GSA and its tenants are working to significantly increase operational and space efficiency of the federal real estate portfolio, at individual facilities and through workplace management and operations. Significant drivers in this effort are several Executive Orders and Congressional directives to eliminate excess federal property and wasteful spending, conserve energy and water, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as address changing agency missions and shifts in work force technology and demographics. The concentration and configuration of federally owned land and facilities in Independence Quarter can help advance these directives.

GSA has improved the DOE building to increase energy and space efficiency; however, they are also evaluating how to address the long term operational needs of the agency. GSA is also assessing the feasibility, costs, and benefits of disposing of four triangular under-used parcels along the Maryland Avenue corridor. Congress has also introduced legislation directing GSA to sell the corner site at Independence Avenue and 12th Street, SW for the National Woman's History Museum, as well as portions of the DOE complex.

While potential redevelopment of the DOE Headquarters and the potential disposition of these parcels will address agency needs and help meet executive and legislative directives, it is important to retain ownership of an adequate amount of federal land to meet federal office space needs and retain cabinet agency headquarters in this area. To maximize government efficiency and ensure continuing operations of public service, it is critically important that federal agencies not be displaced and that real estate and facility operation decisions not be made in isolation or in a piecemeal fashion. A comprehensive approach is necessary to maximize the use of the land and its real estate value.

CULTURAL FACILITIES The Study Area is garnering interest from potential museum and memorial sponsors because of its proximity to many Smithsonian Institution facilities, the National Mall, and the Wharf, a new community being developed along the

Washington Channel. The National Woman's History Museum is seeking Congressional approval to purchase federal land at or near the southwest corner of 12th Street and Independence Avenue, SW. Congressional legislation has been introduced to authorize the National Museum of the American Latino Commission use of the Arts and Industries Building and an underground annex for the museum. Other sponsors in the exploratory stages of museum or memorial development are also expressing an interest in this area.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION At the turn of the 20th century, the area was a walkable neighborhood of houses, businesses, and offices. The street and the block configuration were altered with the introduction of the Urban Renewal Plan after the Second World War. Built in the 1930s, the Cotton Annex pre-dates urban renewal and has been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). While the L'Enfant Plan of Washington is also listed in the NRHP, the portion of Virginia Avenue between 9th Street and Independence Avenue does not contribute to the L'Enfant Plan because the avenue was abandoned and views to the Washington Monument blocked. If restored, its non-contributing status could be re-evaluated in this area. Although 10th Street is a contributing element of the L'Enfant Plan, the view corridor between the Smithsonian Castle and the waterfront is non-contributing because the view was blocked when the Forrestal Complex was constructed in 1970. The Forrestal Complex is nearing the threshold for consideration but has not yet been fully evaluated for listing in the NRHP. However, the DC State Historic Preservation Office has indicated that it considers restoration of the 10th Street view corridor more important than preservation of the Forrestal Complex if it is ultimately determined eligible for the NRHP. Redeveloping the Forrestal Complex will reestablish Virginia Avenue and its link between Reservation 113 and the Washington Monument, restore views between the Smithsonian Castle and the waterfront, and reclaim the street grid and the block configuration of the L'Enfant Plan. The federal government will be required to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act in the development of proposals to sell, alter, repurpose, or redevelop resources considered eligible for or listed in the NRHP.