Extending the Legacy imagines a new capital created over many years by evolving coalitions of government agencies, corporations and community groups. Such optimism is nothing new for Washington. It took a century for L'Enfant's original vision to triumph over commercial expediency. Another 30 years passed before the Mall described in the McMillan Plan came into being. *Legacy* will be no different. While some projects may be completed within a few years of its adoption, others could take 20, 40, even 80 years, depending on political and economic conditions.

NEW ALLIANCES

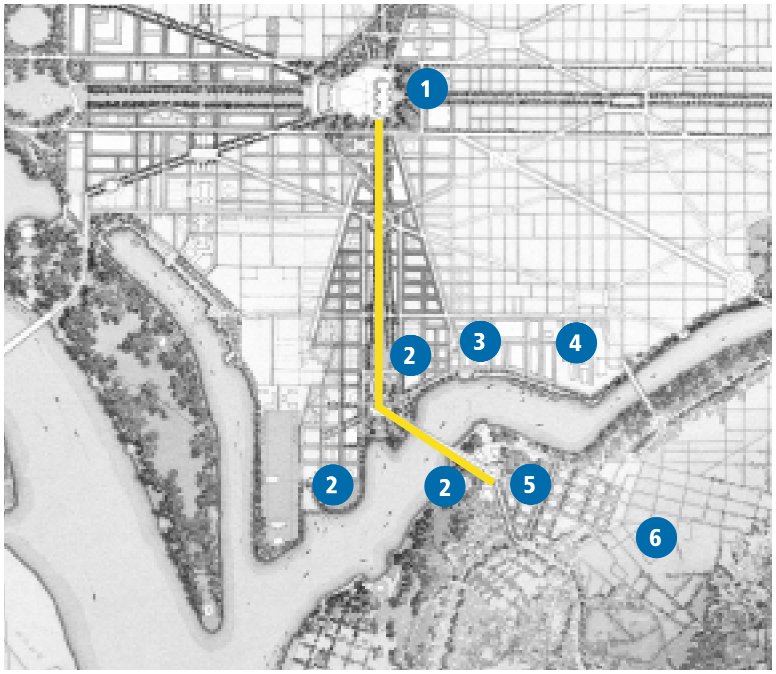
Even though *Legacy* looks ahead 50 to 100 years, the first decade will be decisive. Plans for key areas of the city must be completed and sites for future museums and memorials identified. To accelerate the process, some type of economic development corporation must be created. This corporation would pool the resources and programs of federal and District governments, private businesses, foundations and neighborhood groups. It would also have the authority to acquire, exchange and sell land, issue bonds and distribute grants and tax credits to companies that invest in blighted neighborhoods.

While the final form of this development corporation is undetermined, such an organization is essential to providing the leadership and the funding for major infrastructure improvements — removing freeways, redeveloping waterfronts — as well as for community redevelopment. The corporation would offer an alternative to business as usual, having more flexibility than a typical city planning agency. Its mandate would be to respond creatively to new conditions rather than to apply formulaic solutions to complex problems.

NEW INITIATIVES

Extending the Legacy proposes both long-range capital improvements and short-term initiatives directed at urgent urban problems. These "First Initiatives," to be carried out mainly by the new development corporation, are the piers and beams on which the vision of a new Washington rests. They are meant to show the plan in action, on the street and around the neighborhood, in order to generate public and private support for bolder proposals later on.

South Capitol Development Opportunities



1 U.S. Capitol

2 Anacostia Waterfront

3 Southeast Federal Center

4 Washington Navy Yard

5 Poplar Point

6 Old Anacostia Neighborhood

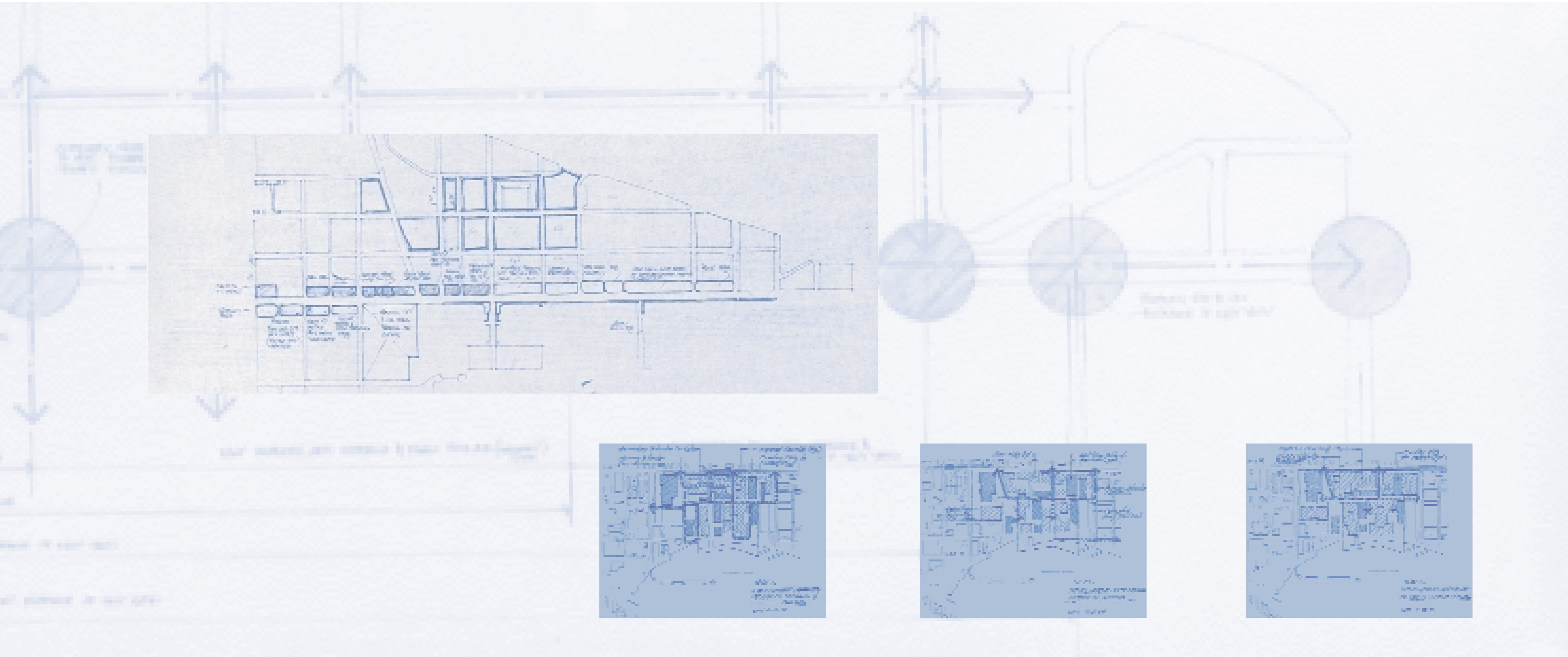
The most ambitious initiative — and a paradigm for future projects — is the redevelopment of South Capitol/M Street, an historic but blighted area near the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers. As an opportunity for enlightened community planning, the area is unequaled. Yet at the moment, its infrastructure is fractured; its housing substandard; its economy shattered by decades of disinvestment.

The South Capitol/M Street corridor is anchored by the Washington Navy Yard and the Southeast Federal Center, major employers with ambitious expansion plans. The Navy Yard is gaining 5,400 employees as the result of the recent Base Closure and Realignment Act. Most of them will occupy new or renovated buildings in the Yard, including the procurement branches of the Navy that are magnets for subcontractors. These companies could locate near the Yard, or in the adjacent Southeast Federal Center, a fallow 55-acre site that the federal government plans to redevelop. The renovation of the Federal Center and the Navy Yard together will create an estimated 6,200 construction jobs and another 15,000 permanent jobs.

A deteriorating M Street will be renewed.

Thousands of new employees will require banks, restaurants, dry cleaners and other services that could spark the commercial rebirth of South Capitol and M Streets, SE. The area's main arteries will be enhanced with trees, sidewalks, banners and benches. These are more than cosmetic improvements. As the streets improve, more people will travel them to and from work. More people means greater security, and greater security translates into more investment in the neighborhood. Instead of abandoned buildings and vacant lots, the area could attract apartments, stores and offices. M Street, SE is an example of a small initiative with a big payoff.

NCPC anticipates that the redevelopment energy from South Capitol and M streets will spill over to Poplar Point and Anacostia, two key segments of *Legacy*'s proposed 22-mile urban waterfront. With its river setting, Metro connections and panoramic views of the Capitol, Poplar Point could be part of a new southern gateway to central Washington. Congress has already directed the National Park Service to prepare an interim plan for its 110 acres that includes numerous ball fields and tennis courts. As more people are attracted to the area, its future as a regional economic, cultural and educational center will brighten.



The Southeast quadrant of the city will be a focus of future redevelopment.

Government and private businesses could provide money and technical expertise, much of it funneled through an economic development corporation. *Legacy* in fact urges federal agencies to take the lead in locating offices and cultural facilities in this area. Residents need to see that new development can respect local history and still produce the jobs and economic stability that they desperately need but have never had.

Not all First Initiatives will have the scope and complexity of South Capitol Street or Poplar Point. Some will focus on a specific local need — a new bridge, a neighborhood plaza — while others may serve a particular constituency, such as foreign tourists or business travelers. Reconfiguring the highway ramps around the Kennedy Center could be a joint venture of the National Park Service and the District's Department of Public Works. The repair or replacement of the deteriorating Roosevelt Bridge, linking Washington and Northern Virginia, could be another cooperative effort.

At a pedestrian scale, First Initiatives recommends a comprehensive and coordinated visitor orientation program for central Washington. It would involve improved maps and signs and a network of information kiosks to direct visitors to museums, subways, historic sites and special events. Eventually, the program would be expanded to the entire city.

This is more than an exercise in courtesy and flashy graphics. Twenty million persons visit Washington each year, generating $295 million in tax revenue. Nurturing tourists is vital to Washington's long-term economic interests.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Extending the Legacy takes such a long view — and the future is always so cloudy — that calculating its total cost is impossible. Yet the estimated $3.4 billion needed for transportation improvements alone makes federal participation essential. The plan proposes that as bridges, tunnels, railroad tracks and other key pieces of the city's infrastructure conclude their useful lives, they be replaced by new structures that revitalize large areas of the city. No more billions to prop up the status quo. This is an economic as well as a political decision. Engineering studies show that repairing aging infrastructure costs nearly as much as building from scratch. Since the city will have to spend billions anyway, why not build new and better instead of patching indefinitely?

Funding for capital improvements in national parks and on federal lands could come from the regular appropriations of the agencies involved, with new museums and memorials funded from private contributions.

History shows that such public investment can be recouped many times over in new development and increased property taxes. The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, one of Washington's sparkling success stories, turned $149 million in public money into $1.5 billion in private investment over 20 years. Economists estimate that a new development corporation, with approximately $50 million capitalization and $100 million in tax credits, could likewise generate $1.5 billion in private investment.

In more concrete terms, Union Station went from a $5 million annual liability to one of the most popular and profitable attractions in Washington. Since reopening in 1989, it has drawn 70,000 visitors a day, created 1,900 jobs and generated over $35 million in sales tax revenue for the District. Its impeccable restoration has sparked the construction or renovation of eight other buildings in the area, including Postal Square and the Thurgood Marshall Judiciary Building, and transformed the northern side of Capitol Hill.

Legacy estimates that reconfiguring the roads and ramps around the Kennedy Center will liberate 23 acres of land for public use, with a development value of almost half a billion dollars. The 51 acres recaptured from removing a portion of the Southeast/Southwest Freeway has an estimated value of nearly $1 billion. This reclaimed land, combined with other development outlined in the plan, will stimulate investment, generate jobs and help shore up the District's sagging tax base.