



U.S. CAPITOL *visitor center*

Building Facts “By the Numbers”

580,000 - The square footage of the Capitol Visitor Center, which comprises three levels below ground including new space for the House and Senate. This is roughly three quarters the size of the Capitol. Emancipation Hall, the heart of the Visitor Center, is 20,000 square feet, nearly three times the size of the Capitol Rotunda.

193,000 - The Capitol Visitor Center project footprint covers 193,000 square feet or approximately five acres – equivalent to five football fields – an area that is larger than the footprint of the Capitol itself. More than 8,000 workers have been involved on the project since tree preservation work began in November, 2001.

65,000 - The excavation for the Capitol Visitor Center required the removal of 65,000 truckloads of soil or 650,000 cubic yards of material.

85 - There were 85 new trees planted to revive landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted’s original design of tree-lined paths leading visitors to the Capitol.

3 million – Three million visitors are expected to come through the Visitor Center each year. During peak season, 15,000 – 20,000 people are expected to pass through the Capitol Visitor Center daily.

26 - There are 26 restrooms located in the Capitol Visitor Center. (This compares with five public restrooms in the Capitol.) The Visitor Center has 10 family restrooms as well.

23 – There are 23 elevators in the Visitor Center and adjacent expansion areas.

2 - There are two Orientation Theaters in the Capitol Visitor Center where visitors will start their tours of the Capitol by watching a 13-minute orientation film that introduces them to the Capitol and illustrates how government was initially established in the United States. There are also two small theaters in the Exhibition Hall where visitors may watch the proceedings in the House and the Senate chambers.

16,500 - The Exhibition Hall, where visitors may explore the only exhibition in the world dedicated to telling the story of Congress and the U.S. Capitol, is 16,500 square feet. Highlights include rarely seen historic documents from the National Archives and the Library of Congress, artifacts from around the country, and an 11-foot-tall touchable model of the Capitol dome.

400,000 - Workers set more than 400,000 pieces of stone for the Capitol Visitor Center, some weighing as much as 500 pounds. The stone used in the Visitor Center was selected based on how closely it matched the existing colors and textures of the stone in the Capitol. Sandstone, which was the principal material in the original Capitol, is the dominant stone in the Visitor Center, with nearly 200,000 square feet of coverage on interior walls and columns.

530 - There is a 530-seat Restaurant in the Capitol Visitor Center serving soups, salads, entrees and a variety of other items. This compares with no public eating spaces in the Capitol prior to the opening of the Visitor Center. There are also two Gift Shops in the Visitor Center.

6 – Excavation began in August 2002 and was completed in the fall of 2003. Work on the building structure began late in 2003. A Certificate of Occupancy was issued in July 2008. Construction of the Visitor Center took six years.