

Improvements

Proposed improvements will make getting to and from the Center safer and easier while dramatically improving the West End's cityscape. The initial cost estimate for all improvements is \$269 million. Estimates are tabulated on page 17. Major elements of the overall improvement package, identified during the course of the study, are outlined on the following pages. No funding has been secured nor have funding plans been developed.

- Kennedy Center Plaza:** Central to the proposed design is a plaza, which set atop a deck over the Potomac Freeway would provide a new public space and stately approach to the Center from the east. E and 25th Streets would connect to the plaza, thus reestablishing the local street grid. The freeway and ramps immediately east of the Kennedy Center would be modified to accommodate through traffic beneath the plaza. The plaza, using freeway air rights, would contain a large public square and two potential building sites¹ whose use would be determined with extensive public input over the next several years. This will create a rare opportunity to define new civic space in the Monumental Core.

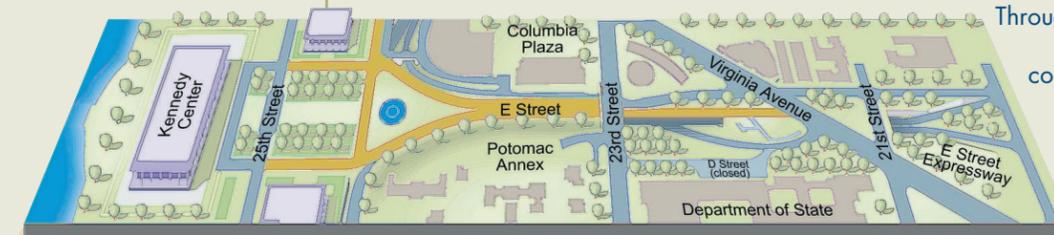


A deck, connections to 23rd Street, underground parking, landscaping, and non-vehicular access improvements are included in the plaza's cost.



A grand staircase, from the terrace to the riverfront promenade, would provide direct access to the waterfront and address the Center's ambivalent relationship to the river.

- Riverfront Access:** A grand open stairway (with elevators for the handicapped) would link the Kennedy Center terrace to the riverfront promenade, where a floating dock could serve river boats. This would properly present the Center to the waterfront and reconcile the Center's ambivalent relationship to the river. The open design would preserve views to the river from the parkway. These changes would facilitate pedestrian, bicycle, and river access and restore an important element of the building's original design.
- E Street Approach:** E Street would be modified at its western terminus to link the Center with President's Park and the core of the City.



E Street would be extended from the plaza to 23rd Street. An eastbound lane would be added from 23rd Street to Virginia Avenue.

- Through traffic would continue to use the E Street expressway below the plaza, while local traffic would use an improved surface-level street connected to the plaza.
- Traffic and Safety North of the Kennedy Center:** New connections would be built between the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway and the Potomac Freeway in the vicinity of K Street. This would improve the freeway's directness and convenience, diverting traffic from the parkway to the freeway. Reduced through traffic on the parkway would improve the riverfront promenade for pedestrians and

1. The plaza deck would be structurally independent from any buildings. If building did not occur within the plaza, an additional 100,000 square feet of deck would be required within the footprint of the building sites, adding \$36 million to project costs.