

# The Capitol Visitor Center: A New Visitor Experience at the U.S. Capitol

The U.S. Capitol is an international symbol of our representative democracy. As our nation grew in size and complexity, the Capitol Building tried to keep pace. New additions were constructed and state-of-the-art technologies were installed in this historic building.



*Artist's rendering of the entrance to the CVC and an October 2007 photo of the entrance.*



However, with more and more people visiting the Capitol every year, Congress recognized the need for new and better visitor amenities and accessibility, improved safety and security, and enhanced opportunities for citizens to learn about Congress, the legislative process, and the Capitol.

A new, underground Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) was designed and constructed to welcome visitors to the U.S. Capitol. At nearly 580,000 square feet, the CVC is the largest project in the Capitol's 212-year history. Construction began in August 2002. The CVC is scheduled to open in fall 2008.

## *A New and Improved Capitol Experience Awaits...*



*Before: Visitors to the Capitol were crowded into the Crypt and Rotunda.*

As visitors enter the CVC, they will see the Capitol Dome through two grand skylights and can stop by the information and timed pass desks to prepare for their visit.

- In the Exhibition Hall, the story of our representative democracy, juxtaposed with the building of the Capitol, is told. Historic documents and artifacts, a 10-foot model of the Capitol Dome, and virtual House and Senate Theaters with live video feeds are also featured.



- In the two Orientation Theaters, a moving, historic film about the history of Congress and the Capitol will prepare visitors for their tour of the Capitol.
- For the first time, visitors will have a place to dine in the U.S. Capitol. A new restaurant facility with a capacity for more than 500 people will be open to the public.
- Items in two gift shops provide guests with the opportunity to commemorate their visit. Many other amenities await visitors as well, including family restrooms.



*Fall 2008: Visitors will enter the CVC and see a grand view of the Capitol Dome.*

December 2007