

Louvre Museum

Paris, France

Role: Museum planner for reorganization and expansion of the historic Art Museum and Palace building

Program: Permanent and changing art exhibits, libraries, collections storage, grand lobby, cafes, gift shops, function spaces, classrooms, exhibit support, and offices

Total Building Area: 2,260,000 sf

Status: Planning work completed in 1984

Description: In 1983, the French Minister of Culture and the Director of the Louvre Museum announced that the Ministry of Finance would be vacating the entire Rivoli Wing of the Louvre Palace, allowing the Museum to gain some 500,000 sf of additional space. We were retained to prepare a conceptual plan for a complete reorganization of the Museum that would achieve the following objectives:

1. provide urgently needed new visitor services facilities, including information/ticketing areas, public dining facilities, gift shops, restrooms, telephones and other amenities;
2. reorganization of the exhibition galleries so that visitors would be able to orient themselves and find specific parts of the exhibited collections;
3. provide parking for 1,000 cars and 350 busses, easily accessible to the Museum;
4. provide secure, well planned support facilities, offices and service access to and within the building.

Three aspects of this challenging project influenced almost all the decisions that resulted in our reorganization plan: the size of the building, its linear configuration, and the fact that the Louvre is both a Museum and a Palace.

Shortly after our museum planning work was completed and approved, the Museum underwent the extensive renovations and expansions generally following our recommendations. I. M. Pei's famous glass pyramid became the iconic symbol of the new Louvre. This signals the public entrance that leads to the underground lobby and visitor service areas below the courtyard connecting the entrances to the major art galleries.

The Louvre continues to be one of the largest and most highly visited museums in the world, housing one of the most extensive and precious collections.

