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**NORTHWEST AIRLINES AND SMITHGROUP DESIGN EDWARD H.  
MCNAMARA TERMINAL / NORTHWEST WORLDGATEWAY  
TO FOCUS ON PASSENGER CONVENIENCE**  
*New airport terminal design marries architectural beauty with simplicity*

**DETROIT (January 31, 2002)** – The Edward H. McNamara Terminal / Northwest WorldGateway is uniquely designed to focus on passenger convenience. Travelers passing through this state-of-the art facility will not only be impressed with its modern design, but also with its simplicity.

“People who see this airport will be struck by its innovative design,” said Jim Greenwald, Northwest’s vice president, facilities and airport affairs. “That design gave us the opportunity to break new ground and offer customer amenities that set a new standard for airports.”

Detroit-based architecture/engineering firm SmithGroup, working with Northwest Airlines, designed the terminal with one goal in mind: To create an unparalleled facility for customer convenience, repositioning Detroit Metro Airport as one of the great airports of the world.

“From its small, thoughtful passenger conveniences to its first-of-a-kind Express Tram, we feel the terminal is going to quickly catapult Detroit Metro to world leader status,” said David R.H. King, chairman of SmithGroup.

Northwest and SmithGroup incorporated the best passenger convenience features, reviewed the designs of dozens of major airports both in and outside the U.S., but in the end designed an airport unique to Detroit.

SmithGroup selected materials such as stainless steel and metal panel that reflect Detroit’s legacy as an international center of industrial design, rather than using automotive images. “This facility represents the industrial strength and pride of Detroit and the state of Michigan,” said Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara. “It’s an airport that will make local residents proud and visitors awed by its design and convenience.”

The terminal's unique linear design stems largely from the prescribed shape of its site, located amid the airport's six existing runways.

Working within the narrow confines that the land provided, the designers added features such as:

- A **main concourse** (Concourse A) **that is nearly one mile long**, in contrast to the parallel concourse orientation of other major U.S. airports such as Denver International Airport and Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport. This provides for easy-to-follow, sequential numbering of gates.
- The **Express Tram, a fully enclosed, automated people mover** located inside Concourse A – the only such vehicle in the world located within a concourse. Rather than moving passengers underground or outside the terminal itself, the Express Tram will quietly move on a cushion of air on the mezzanine level of Concourse A, 21 feet above travelers. An open, tube-shaped structure that surrounds the track was designed to help further minimize the tram's sound.
- A **6-foot-by-37-foot directional sign** in the center link area, which displays information on the location of the terminal's gates and recommends the best way to reach the various gates (by foot, moving sidewalk or Express Tram).
- A **39-foot-wide, black-granite water feature**, which will serve as a focal point at the midpoint of Concourse A where it meets the center link. SmithGroup partnered with WET Design, an internationally acclaimed water feature design firm, to design the 39-foot-wide, black granite water feature. Created to emulate today's global travel, the speed and color of the water feature streams may be changed to create different effects.
- An **800-foot passenger tunnel**, which architects call a "non-tunnel." The tunnel connects Concourse A to Concourses B and C and features sculpted art-glass panels and a sound-and-light show. The top of the tunnel is lined with a fabric that when lit, makes passengers feel as if they're not traveling underground at all.

Designers incorporated thoughtful features to help passengers as they move through the terminal. Each ticket counter includes a shelf, designed and located to serve as a writing surface or convenient place for passengers to momentarily place a briefcase, purse or carry-on. In addition, all restroom stalls have flip-down shelves to hold a bag.

The terminal includes a number of eye-catching architectural features. As passengers step into the ticketing area, the ceiling soars to a height of 36 feet, giving visitors a sense of spaciousness. Natural light enters through a continuous line of floor-to-ceiling windows that span the entire 750-foot length of the ticketing area. Above, the arc-like roof uses an exposed king-post truss and framing system to reach column-free heights of up to 87 feet.

The terminal's high-end interior finishes include those not usually found inside U.S. airports, including terrazzo flooring, granite counter tops, ceramic tile, stainless steel and metal panel. Handcrafted Detroit Pewabic tiles, finished with a metallic-luster glaze, adorn restroom entrances.

All of these materials were chosen not just for their look and feel, but also for their durability. In particular, the terrazzo floor was chosen over carpet for its sturdy, long-lasting finish. Carpeting was incorporated into gate areas because of the soft, quiet environment it provides passengers waiting to depart.

As with the architecture, designers also used restraint when selecting the interior color schemes. Neutral colors such as beige and blonde allow the large building to escape from becoming visually overwhelming, and provides a neutral 'canvas' for the individualized storefronts of the terminal's more than 80 shops and restaurants. The simple, restrained architecture and neutral colors used also act as a backdrop to the high contrast, well-placed informational and directional signage.

### **About Northwest Airlines and the Edward H. McNamara Terminal / Northwest WorldGateway**

Northwest Airlines is the world's fourth largest airline with hubs at Detroit, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Memphis, Tokyo and Amsterdam. With 2,400 daily departures, Northwest and its partners serve more than 750 cities in 120 countries on six continents. Based on statistics compiled by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Northwest was the most on-time U.S. airline among the seven largest network carriers for the period 1990-2000. Together with Wayne County, Mich., Northwest is opening a new \$1.2 billion domestic and international airport terminal on February 24, 2002, which includes 97 gates, 18 luggage carousels, 1.5 miles of moving walkways, along with two express trams capable of carrying 4,000 passengers per hour.

Wayne County's Detroit Metropolitan Airport is undergoing one of the most dramatic transformations of any airport anywhere. In addition to the new Edward H. McNamara Terminal / Northwest WorldGateway, the airport also recently opened a new 10,000 ft. runway, and within just one month, Metro will open a brand new airport South Access Road providing a second primary entrance to the airport off of another major area interstate highway. Together with the opening of the new McNamara Terminal, these projects mark the culmination of a multiyear capital improvement program, which will make Metro Airport one of the finest air transportation gateways in the world.

### **About SmithGroup**

SmithGroup, Inc. ([www.smithgroup.com](http://www.smithgroup.com)) is the nation's 6th largest architecture, engineering and planning firm, with offices in Detroit, Washington, D.C., Chicago,

Phoenix, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Ann Arbor and Madison. Founded in 1853, the firm will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2003.

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***(For more information on the terminal, refer to <http://www.newdetroitterminal.com> or contact Northwest Corporate Communications at 612-726-2331 or Wayne County at 734-942-3558.)***