

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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COMMISSION MEETING

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OPEN SESSION

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THURSDAY,
APRIL 1, 2021

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The meeting convened via
Videoconference, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight
Time, Beth White, Vice-Chair, presiding.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS
PRESENT:

BETH WHITE, Vice-Chair
LINDA ARGO, Mayoral Appointee
EVAN CASH, Office of the Chairman of the Council
of the District of Columbia
ARRINGTON DIXON, Mayoral Appointee
COLIN DAVENPORT, U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
PETER MAY, Department of the Interior
CHELSEA DAVIS, U.S. Senate Committee on
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
PAUL McMAHON, Department of Defense
ANDREW TRUEBLOOD, Office of the Mayor of the
District of Columbia
MINA WRIGHT, General Services Administration

NCPC STAFF PRESENT:

MARCEL C. ACOSTA, Executive Director
JULIA KOSTER, Secretary to the Commission

ANNE SCHUYLER, General Counsel
CARLTON HART, Urban Planner
JOHANNA McCREHAN, Urban Planner
DIANE SULLIVAN, Director, Urban Design & Plan
Review Division
LEE WEBB, Federal Preservation Officer

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(1:01 p.m.)

VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Good afternoon, and welcome to the National Capital Planning Commission's April 1, 2021, Public Meeting.

First item, Ms. Koster, could you please take the roll call?

1. COMMISSION ROLL CALL

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner Trueblood?

COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Here.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner McMahon?

COMMISSIONER McMAHON: I'm here.

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner May?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Here.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Argo?

COMMISSIONER ARGO: Here.

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Vice-Chairman White?

VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Here.

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner

1 Wright?

2 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Here.

3 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner

4 Dixon?

5 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Here.

6 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner

7 Cash?

8 COMMISSIONER CASH: Present.

9 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner

10 Davis?

11 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Here.

12 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. And

13 Commissioner Davenport?

14 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Here.

15 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. I would note

16 that Marcel Acosta, the Executive Director; Anne

17 Schuyler, General Counsel; and Diane Sullivan,

18 the Director of the Urban Design and Plan Review

19 Division, are also in the meeting.

20 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you. Noting

21 the presence of a quorum, I'd like to call this

22 meeting to order.

1 At an earlier Executive Session today,
2 the Commission elected me to run today's meeting.
3 And this meeting is livestreamed and will be
4 available in a few days as a video on NCPC's
5 website.

6 If there is no objection, the agenda
7 is adopted as the order of business.

8 We will now play a short video clip of
9 the Pledge of Allegiance.

10 (Pledge of Allegiance video clip played.)

11 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: I would also like
12 to take a moment to pause for a moment of silence
13 for all of those affected by COVID-19 in our
14 nation and around the world.

15 (Moment of Silence observed.)

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you. In
17 response to the COVID-19 guidance on public
18 meetings, NCPC will conduct its public meetings
19 online until circumstances change. I want to
20 share how we will be conducting Commission
21 business.

22 Votes by the Commission will be

1 conducted by roll call. When Commissioners wish
2 to be recognized, they should unmute, turn on
3 their webcams, and request to be recognized.

4 During Commission deliberations, I
5 will use a round robin format to ask each
6 Commissioner if they have questions or comments.
7 During deliberations, all Commissioners should be
8 on video during that time, unless you are
9 experiencing technical issues. When you wish to
10 put forward a motion, a second, or an amendment,
11 please unmute, identify yourself, and make the
12 motion.

13 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

14 3. ELECTION OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE
15 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: The next two agenda
17 items are procedural. Our bylaws specify that in
18 April of each year the Commission elects a new
19 Vice-Chair and the other members of the Executive
20 Committee. So while we have recently taken
21 similar actions, we are doing so again. I note
22 that Commissioners Dixon and May are willing to

1 continue to serve on the Executive Committee, and
2 I would also be pleased to continue as Vice-
3 Chair.

4 With that in mind, is there a motion
5 to elect a Vice-Chair of the Commission?

6 COMMISSIONER McMAHON: This is
7 Commissioner McMahon. I nominate Ms. White for
8 the role of Deputy Commissioner, Vice
9 Commissioner.

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Oh, thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Second.

12 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: The motion that I
13 will serve as Vice-Chair has been moved and
14 seconded.

15 Ms. Koster, can you please take the
16 vote by roll call?

17 And, Commissioners, please say yes,
18 no, or abstain.

19 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner
20 McMahon made the motion, and I believe
21 Commissioner Wright, among the chorus, made the
22 second. So Commissioner Trueblood?

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COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner McMahon?

COMMISSIONER McMAHON: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner May?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Argo?

COMMISSIONER ARGO: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner White?

VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Wright?

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Dixon?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner

Cash?

COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes.

MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davis?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Abstain.

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Commissioner

Davenport?

COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Abstain.

MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Two

1 abstentions. All the rest affirmative.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Well, thank you for
3 that vote of confidence, and I look forward to
4 continuing to serve the Commission.

5 Next, is there a motion to elect two
6 Commissioners to serve on the Executive
7 Committee?

8 COMMISSIONER ARGO: I'd like to make
9 that motion, Madam Chair.

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes, please.

11 COMMISSIONER ARGO: I move that
12 Commissioner Dixon and Commissioner May serve on
13 the Executive Committee for the coming up.

14 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you. Is
15 there a second?

16 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Second.

17 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner
18 Wright. A motion that Commissioners Dixon and
19 May will serve on the Executive Committee has
20 been moved and seconded.

21 Ms. Koster, can you please take the
22 vote by roll call?

1 MS. KOSTER: Yes. Thank you.
2 Commissioner Trueblood?
3 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes.
4 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner McMahon?
5 COMMISSIONER McMAHON: Yes.
6 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner May?
7 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes.
8 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Argo?
9 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Yes.
10 MS. KOSTER: Vice-Chairman White?
11 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.
12 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Wright?
13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.
14 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Dixon?
15 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes.
16 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Cash?
17 COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes.
18 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davis?
19 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Abstain.
20 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davenport?
21 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Abstain.
22 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Two

1 abstentions. All the rest in the affirmative.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
3 Commissioner May and Commissioner Arrington Dixon
4 for agreeing to serve. I look forward to serving
5 with you.

6 4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: With that, we will
8 move to Agenda Item 4, which is the Report of the
9 Vice-Chair. And I wanted to share that Senator
10 Gary Peters, Chairman of the Committee on
11 Homeland Security and Government Affairs, has
12 informed me of his designated alternates to
13 represent him on the Commission. Lena Chang,
14 Governmental Affairs Director and Senior Counsel,
15 is first alternate; and Chelsea Davis,
16 Professional Staff Member, is second alternate.

17 Ms. Davis, I want to welcome you and
18 Ms. Chang to the Commission.

19 Also, Colin Davenport, an alternate
20 for Congresswoman Maloney, is joining us today
21 for the first time. So welcome to you as well,
22 Mr. Davenport.

1 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Thank you.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you both.

3 5. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

4 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Agenda Item 5 is
5 the Report of the Executive Director, Mr. Acosta.

6 MR. ACOSTA: Thank you, Madam Chair.
7 Working with our interagency stakeholders, they
8 have been making great progress on developing
9 Pennsylvania Avenue concept alternatives. We do
10 plan to provide an informational briefing on the
11 Pennsylvania Avenue initiatives to the full
12 Commission at our June meeting.

13 I would also like to take this
14 opportunity to acknowledge that it has been a
15 year since we started holding virtual Commission
16 meetings due to the pandemic. Many thanks to
17 Commission members, our applicants, and members
18 of the public for your willingness to adapt to
19 our virtual meeting format over the last year.

20 Finally, I'd like to recognize the
21 entire NCPD staff for their outstanding work to
22 ensure that we are successfully able to continue

1 our mission.

2 You do have my written report in your
3 packets. I am happy to answer any questions that
4 you might have.

5 Thank you.

6 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
7 Mr. Acosta. And I would like to add sincere
8 thanks to the staff for making this possible and
9 making to work so smoothly. It's not an easy way
10 to work, but I can say you haven't missed a beat,
11 and we appreciate that and the flexibility.

12 Are there any questions of Mr. Acosta?

13 Great. Thank you.

14 I'd also like to thank the Commission
15 members for making this work, and the public,
16 because it's an interesting way to have these
17 meetings to be sure.

18 So Agenda Item Number 6 is the
19 Legislative Update. Ms. Schuyler?

20 6. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

21 MS. SCHUYLER: Thank you, Madam Vice
22 Chairperson. I have nothing to report. There

1 has been no significant movement on any of the
2 legislation that I'm tracking.

3 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you for that
4 up date. Any questions for Ms. Schuyler?

5 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Madam Chair?

6 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER DIXON: I would just like
8 to pick up on your earlier comment and express my
9 appreciation and -- for the staff bringing the
10 Commissioners into a new era with the computer
11 usage that we've had, because I think we all have
12 picked up things that are going to be useful for
13 us in other meetings in other ways.

14 So it has sort of been -- pushed us
15 into a learning curve, and that's -- I think that
16 has been pretty healthy. Thank you.

17 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Very true comments.
18 Thank you for sharing those.

19 7. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

20 7A. FILE NUMBER 8089

21 7B. ZC 14-13E

22 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Agenda Item 7 is

1 the Consent Calendar. There are two consent
2 calendar items on this month's agenda. The first
3 is for approval of preliminary site and building
4 plans for the Humphries Engineer Center
5 Maintenance and Supply Facility, submitted by the
6 United States Department of Defense, Army Corps
7 of Engineers.

8 The second is for a text amendment to
9 Subtitles A through K, U, and X; modifications
10 and clarifications to Penthouse and Rooftop
11 Structure Regulations, submitted by the Zoning
12 Commission of the District of Columbia.

13 Are there any questions regarding the
14 consent calendar items? And we do have people
15 available from the Humphries Engineer Center
16 Maintenance and Supply Facility and the Army
17 Corps of Engineers available, should anyone have
18 any questions.

19 Hearing no questions, is there a
20 motion to approve the consent calendar items?

21 COMMISSIONER MAY: So moved.

22 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Okay.

1 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Second.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner May
3 moved.

4 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Since that's my
5 role today; I'm the seconder in chief.

6 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: The motion has been
7 moved and seconded. Ms. Koster, can you please
8 confirm the motion and the second and take the
9 vote by roll call?

10 MS. KOSTER: You bet. Commissioner
11 May made the motion, and Commissioner Wright
12 chimed in with a second. Thank you.

13 Commissioner Trueblood?

14 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes.

15 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner McMahon?

16 COMMISSIONER McMAHON: Yes.

17 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner May?

18 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes.

19 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Argo?

20 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Yes.

21 MS. KOSTER: Vice-Chairman White?

22 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

1 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Wright?

2 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

3 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Dixon?

4 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes.

5 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Cash?

6 COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes.

7 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davis?

8 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Abstain.

9 MS. KOSTER: And Commissioner

10 Davenport?

11 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Abstain.

12 MS. KOSTER: Thank you. Two

13 abstentions. The rest in the affirmative.

14 8. ACTION ITEMS

15 8A. FILE NUMBER 8243

16 BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING

17 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you. So

18 first on the open session is Agenda Item 8A, to

19 approve comments on concept plans for the Bureau

20 of Engraving and Printing Currency Production

21 Facility. And to present is Mr. Hart. Welcome,

22 Mr. Hart.

1 MR. HART: Thank you. I hope you can
2 hear me. Can you hear me?

3 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes. Yes, I can.

4 MR. HART: That's fine. Thank you.
5 I just wanted to double-check.

6 Good afternoon, Commissioners. The
7 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, on behalf of the
8 Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which is part
9 of the Treasury Department, has submitted concept
10 design plans for a new currency production
11 facility to be constructed on land that was once
12 part of the Beltsville Agricultural Research
13 Center in Prince George's County, Maryland.

14 As you may recall, the Army Corps, the
15 BEP, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and their
16 consultant team provided an informational
17 presentation at the meeting this past February.

18 In this presentation, I will summarize
19 the information that they provided, as well as
20 describe the staff's analysis of the project.

21 So at concept review, the Commission
22 is focused on a few concerns, among them whether

1 the project is consistent with the comprehensive
2 plan and NCPD policies and plans. And you can
3 see a few of the concerns listed here.

4 Also, is the project site appropriate,
5 given the site context, and are there any
6 particular unique and/or complex issues?

7 Here is a timeline for the project.
8 We had the information presentation in February.
9 We are now at concept review. In the fall, the
10 applicant will submit the preliminary design, and
11 the final design is anticipated for the -- for
12 submission next year.

13 So you've heard the information
14 presentation at our -- in February, but I thought
15 it would be helpful to review some of the
16 information. You see the Washington, D.C.,
17 production facility, an older photograph that is
18 shown here. It was built in 1914 and has been in
19 operation for more than 100 years.

20 This image is, again, the main BEP
21 building downtown.

22 As BEP's currency production has

1 modernized and added more complex processes and
2 security features, the existing facilities are no
3 longer able to support an efficient, secure, and
4 innovative manufacturing process.

5 BEP noted in February that there are
6 a number of deficiencies that they are trying to
7 address with this new facility, and these include
8 building inefficiencies, health and safety
9 concerns, as well as security issues. I'm not
10 going to go into depth on these again, but wanted
11 to remind you of the reasons for the facility.

12 There are only two currency production
13 facilities in the United States, the one that is
14 located here in downtown Washington and the
15 Western Currency Facility in Fort Worth, Texas.
16 You can see that here in the right-hand portion
17 of the slide.

18 The Government Accountability Office
19 conducted a study in 2018 exploring the idea of
20 renovating the existing facility or constructing
21 a new facility. In that 2018 report, GAO noted a
22 new production facility would be less expensive

1 and better address BEP's need for a secure,
2 efficient, and flexible currency production than
3 a renovation of its Washington, D.C. facility.

4 BEP notes that there is a need for a
5 secure perimeter, and there is a greater
6 production efficiency on a single floor, neither
7 of which can be offered downtown.

8 BEP developed this site selection
9 criteria, which is shown here on the left-hand
10 portion of the slide. I'll focus on the third
11 bullet, which says that it needs to be located
12 within a 30-mile radius of the current downtown
13 facility.

14 And this is really because the
15 employees that are -- that work at this facility
16 are fairly specialized, and it takes years for
17 them to attain the required mastery of the
18 production process. And so moving that would be
19 a difficulty, and replacing those staff would be
20 a delay.

21 Access to a major interstate highway
22 within 10 miles is also one of the criteria, as

1 is locating near a major airport.

2 BEP has been exploring or replacing --
3 or, excuse me, has been exploring replacing or
4 renovating the existing facility for two decades.
5 While BEP explored both public and privately held
6 sites, BEP sought publicly owned signs, and they
7 include the Beltsville Agriculture Research
8 Center, the NASA Goddard campus, the RFK stadium
9 site, property at the FDA White Oak campus, and
10 the GSA Springfield warehouse site, to name a
11 few.

12 You can see some of these sites are
13 actually identified here that are privately owned
14 and publicly owned.

15 BEP stated that their -- the only site
16 that met the criteria and was available for
17 transfer is this parcel at the Beltsville
18 Agricultural Research Center, or BARC.

19 So staff notes that we understand this
20 is a unique situation, and requirements for this
21 program make it difficult to identify suitable
22 locations in the National Capital Region.

1 While staff acknowledges this site is
2 surrounded by agricultural area, this site does
3 have an existing infrastructure from the
4 abandoned poultry testing facilities that exist
5 there now. It meets the site selection criteria.

6 It is federally owned property, and
7 I'll note here that this being a federal facility
8 or federal land is something that is actually
9 supported by the comprehensive plan policies.
10 And it was -- this site was made available for
11 transfer by Congress from the USDA to the
12 Treasury Department.

13 Staff is generally supportive of the
14 site. However, we have concerns which are
15 focused on several areas. They are
16 transportation, the environment, historic
17 preservation, and site improvements. And I'll be
18 describing these later in the presentation.

19 So where is the site located? These
20 next few slides are intended to orient you to the
21 site. The facility is to be located on a
22 100-acre existing site in an unincorporated part

1 of Prince George's County. The closest town is
2 Beltsville, next to the west. You see that kind
3 of blinking here.

4 You'll also note that Greenbelt, the
5 city of Greenbelt, is actually south of the site
6 about two miles, and north of the site is south
7 Laurel. And I understand this map is somewhat
8 confusing or there's a lot of things going on,
9 but it's really intended to demonstrate that
10 there are a number of federal facilities in this
11 area which are identified on this map, so this
12 facility is being placed in an area that already
13 has a federal presence.

14 These are the transportation
15 facilities in the immediate vicinity of the site.
16 And they include the Greenbelt Metro Station and
17 I-495, which are to the south; the I-95 and Route
18 1 corridor, which are actually to the west; and
19 then the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, which is
20 National Park Service property, and that's
21 located to the east of the site.

22 And for a finer grain, look at the

1 site. We have Powder Mill Road, which is --
2 Powder Mill Road, which is due south of the
3 property. North -- excuse me, north of the
4 property is Odell Road, and then to the west is
5 Edmonston Road.

6 I'll also point out the Vansville
7 neighborhood, which is directly north of the
8 property, and then Beltsville you can see here,
9 which is just due west.

10 The next few slides will show some
11 landforms, land uses, and natural resources.
12 This landform topography slide demonstrates the
13 topographic changes on the site. We have a
14 plateau area that's in the central and northern
15 portion of the site, and then there is a southern
16 portion. In the southeast portion there is a
17 bowl or kind of a depression that's located
18 there.

19 There are a few ridges and things that
20 are -- rolling hills that are also off the site
21 but are nearby.

22 You can see the land uses near -- near

1 with the site, within a mile of the facility.
2 Again, there is agricultural and institutional to
3 the south and to the west. To the east is a
4 forested area, north is a residential community
5 and farther to the west is this commercial area.
6 And that's along Route 1.

7 For natural resources, there are some
8 wetlands on the site. As I noted, there is also
9 a forested area to the -- to the east, and a
10 conservation forested area that's actually to the
11 north. And in the southern portion of the site
12 is a wet meadow area, a wetland, and an
13 intermittent stream that's here on the very
14 southern portion of the site.

15 There is another intermittent stream
16 along Powder Mill Road, which is where the main
17 access road will intersect with Powder Mill.

18 And then just a few images of the
19 existing site. This is looking towards the site,
20 looking at some of the cropland and some of the
21 forested -- excuse me, the fields that are there,
22 the wet meadow as well as some rolling terrain

1 with a copse of trees.

2 And, finally, an aerial of the site.
3 This is of course taken during winter. This view
4 is actually looking north. This is Poultry Road,
5 which is the main road that you've seen on the
6 plans. And then Odell Road is actually to the
7 north here, and then the Vansville neighborhood
8 is due north of this.

9 And you'll also note some of the
10 existing buildings that are on the site. These
11 are -- these are part of the historic district,
12 and the buildings will need to be removed as part
13 of the project. I'll be discussing that later in
14 the presentation.

15 So the Army Corps conducted an
16 analysis to determine the layout of the building
17 and the explored three options, which are shown
18 here. Each of these layouts needed to include
19 the following functions: a manufacturing hall,
20 this orange area. This is where the currency
21 will be produced. An administrative function,
22 this light blue area, which is really to support

1 the currency production. The central utility
2 plant, which I think is self-explanatory. The
3 supply chain or the warehouse; this is actually
4 being consolidated from a leased space, which is
5 located in Lanham, Maryland, currently, and
6 that's this kind of peach color that's here.
7 And, finally, the Federal Reserve vault, which is
8 shown here on the image.

9 This process led to the identification
10 of Scheme C or the scheme on the right-hand side
11 as the preferred scheme.

12 So here is the proposed layout for the
13 building. It includes the elements I noted in
14 the previous slide. I will also note that there
15 will be a loading area on the north side of the
16 building connected to the warehouse and the vault
17 with these -- as indicated here.

18 This loading area is -- the location
19 of this area -- of this loading area is a result
20 of where the Federal Reserve vault and the
21 warehouse are, because these are where most of
22 the deliveries will be intended for.

1 Again, there are surface parking lots
2 to the east and to the south. There is an
3 existing -- excuse me. There will be a proposed
4 entrance, which is shown here, the prospective
5 rendering showing that here on the right. And
6 then there will be a road that's -- that will go
7 up to the north. This is actually an emergency
8 exit. It's not going to be used by the --
9 regularly by the employees on the site.

10 So staff analysis is focused on
11 several areas. I noted this earlier. These are
12 transportation, the environment, site
13 improvements, and the historic preservation. The
14 staff recommendations will be integrated into the
15 discussion about the project design.

16 So the building itself will be 960
17 feet by 960 feet for an area of just under a
18 million square feet. The height of the building
19 will vary between 40 and 50 feet. As you can see
20 on the site plan, the building will also
21 incorporate a green roof on 50 percent of the
22 roof, with the remainder of the roof being a

1 solar -- solar panels or photovoltaic system.

2 Other side elements include surface
3 parking on the east and south. They will be
4 incorporating low impact development measures.
5 There will be a walking pathway on the eastern
6 side of the site for employees, and then a
7 perimeter fencing around the entire site.

8 The site also includes three buildings
9 on the south of the site. This is actually the
10 main entrance for vehicles, and this will consist
11 of a building -- excuse me, a truck screening
12 building, a staff screening building, and then a
13 visitor screening building. There is also a
14 building that's to the north which will be a
15 guard booth.

16 The Army Corps notes that the total
17 building energy need is estimated at 48,000
18 megawatt hours per year. Rooftop solar voltaic
19 system, which is shown here, is estimated to
20 provide 18 percent of the building's total energy
21 needs.

22 One interesting fact is that the solar

1 panels are estimated to provide 101 percent of
2 the non-production-related energy needs. So
3 everything else other than the production area
4 will get its energy from this solar array.

5 So, and then as you can see in this
6 comparison provided by the applicant, there will
7 be a reduction of the metric tons of carbon
8 dioxide with the new facility as opposed to the
9 existing facilities. The new facility is
10 estimated at about 55 percent or 53 percent of
11 that what is -- which is being measured at the
12 Fort Worth, Texas, facility, which is a definite
13 reduction.

14 Regarding the parking ratio, there
15 will be 1,427 employees assigned to the facility,
16 spread over three shifts. This is a 24-hour
17 facility. You can see the shift hours here on
18 the left. The Army Corps is proposing 1,234
19 parking spaces on the surface parking lots. Of
20 these spaces, 1,184 will be for employees and 50
21 will be for visitors and the Ps.

22 There will be an effective parking

1 ratio of 1-to-1.1 for the site, and I'll note
2 that this is not consistent with the
3 comprehensive plan which indicates this
4 installation should have a 1-to-2 parking ratio.
5 The BEP is requesting a waiver for the parking
6 ratio.

7 So they have provided some
8 justification for requesting this waiver, and
9 that is shown here. They note that there are
10 constraints with using Metro. There is rigid
11 production shift hours, and the distribution of
12 staff are the reason those -- that rationale.

13 With regard to using Metro for
14 commuting, BEP notes the distance to Metro, a
15 lack of pedestrian or bike amenities, and the
16 operating hours make it difficult to rely on
17 Metro. They also note that the production shift
18 hours are set by employee unions and not easily
19 changed. And if employees are late to their
20 posts, this would result in having to stop their
21 production, which would create waste, which
22 increased the overall cost of producing currency.

1 And, finally, BEP described the
2 distribution of the staff as being from southern
3 Prince George's County and -- excuse me, and from
4 Charles County in Maryland, then in Virginia in
5 the Stafford area. And they note that commuting
6 via Metro is not convenient as -- for staff as
7 shifts don't overlap well with Metro's operating
8 hours.

9 So while staff understands that BEP
10 has provided some justification for requesting
11 the parking ratio waiver, we don't believe that
12 there has been sufficient information for us to
13 make a recommendation to the Commission.

14 In addition, a Transportation
15 Management Plan would provide additional
16 information on this. However, TMPs are not
17 required until preliminary review, which is -- as
18 I noted earlier, is expected this fall. And so,
19 therefore, we recommend that the Commission
20 require the Army Corps to provide the following
21 information with the TMP: specific justification
22 describing what a typical WMATA commute would be

1 for the production staff from Virginia and
2 Maryland and why this is not feasible, an
3 explanation of why the shift hours are difficult
4 to adjust to better accommodate commuting by
5 WMATA, a description of the USDA shuttle program.

6 There is a shuttle that USDA has been
7 the Greenbelt Metro and the BARC campus. And it
8 would be helpful to understand how the addition
9 of the BEP facility will impact the shuttle
10 program.

11 And then, finally, as part of the TMP
12 strategies, to minimize the single occupancy
13 vehicle load split, which by using things like
14 carpooling, rideshare, for additional shuttles.

15 Also with regard to surface parking,
16 BEP is proposing enhanced surface parking lots,
17 which incorporate a number of low impact
18 development measures. These measures are
19 identified here on the bullet -- bullets to the
20 left.

21 Staff noted to BEP that surface
22 parking is not consistent with the transportation

1 element of the comprehensive plan, which focuses
2 on structured parking. And staff notes a
3 structured parking option was being considered
4 last year. It was somewhat of a terraced, kind
5 of partially underground structured parking.

6 However, the Army Corps stated it
7 determined the surface parking was
8 environmentally actually better, but -- and there
9 were some other conditions -- there were other
10 issues, such as poor soil conditions. There was
11 the possibility of viewshed impacts of an
12 above-grade parking structure. And then there
13 was an analysis that was provided by the
14 consultant for BEP that described embodied carbon
15 or greenhouse gas emissions would be greater with
16 structured parking.

17 And I'll note that embodied carbon is
18 a relatively new term. It's defined by the World
19 Green Building Council as, quote/unquote, "Carbon
20 emissions associated with materials and
21 construction processes throughout the whole life
22 cycle of a building or infrastructure."

1 So while staff is still evaluating
2 this embodied carbon rationale, the idea that
3 structured parking in this instance is more
4 potentially -- is potentially more
5 environmentally impactful than compact
6 development and the efficient use of land, this
7 seems somewhat counter to what we typically see.
8 The transportation element includes the
9 structured parking policy to promote compact
10 development and allow space for future uses.

11 So we find it -- we just think that
12 it's important to clearly understand the
13 tradeoffs if surface parking is to be placed
14 here.

15 So staff finds that the proposed
16 surface lot conflicts with the comprehensive plan
17 policy that placing parking in structures,
18 preferably below ground in the interest of
19 efficient land use and good urban design, notes
20 that the preliminary objectives -- excuse me, the
21 primary objectives of efficient land use and good
22 urban design, which is minimal impact to the

1 environment, notes that the BEP recently
2 completed an in-depth environmental analysis,
3 evaluating the embodied carbon or greenhouse gas
4 emissions for different parking alternatives for
5 the site, and believes that the proposed surface
6 parking design is the least impactful and best
7 solution.

8 And since staff was only recently made
9 aware of this analysis, we felt it would be
10 helpful to the Commission to hear this prior to
11 the project being submitted in the fall.

12 So we are requesting that the U.S.
13 Army Corps of Engineers brief the Commission
14 before preliminary review on the status of the
15 TMP in addressing the comprehensive plan's 1-to-2
16 parking ratio, as well as the analysis that shows
17 how the proposed design for surface parking is
18 better environmentally than the structured or
19 underground parking.

20 So the Army Corps also conducted a
21 Transportation Impact study last year, which
22 analyzed impacts to 15 intersections. They're

1 identified on this map here. The site is shown
2 here in yellow.

3 And it included those intersections
4 that would have a failing level of service as a
5 result of this project, and these failing
6 intersections are identified here with the red
7 circles.

8 Three of the intersections are at the
9 Baltimore-Washington Parkway and Powder Mill
10 intersection, three others are along Edmonston
11 Road, which is to the west, and then one is
12 actually at the intersection between Powder Mill
13 Road and the access road going to the new
14 facility.

15 These intersections would be the most
16 impacted because the majority of the employees,
17 again, would be reaching the facility from the
18 south along either BW Parkway or from the
19 Beltway. And you can see the routes here.

20 And mitigation was discussed for these
21 intersections as part of a study, and staff is
22 interested in understanding the status of this

1 mitigation to address the impacts to these
2 intersections. And staff is requesting the Army
3 Corps submit this -- this mitigation with the
4 preliminary design.

5 Now, moving to the environment, in
6 particular stormwater management, the Army Corps
7 has developed a plan to determine how to reduce
8 the impact to the surrounding areas. This plan
9 will meet -- according to the BEP, will meet both
10 the Maryland Department of the Environment
11 Environmental Site Design as well as EISA
12 Section 438 requirements.

13 They are incorporating the strategies
14 on the left-hand portion of this slide to meet
15 these requirements. Since there are sensitive
16 areas on the site, again, several wetlands, the
17 wet meadow, and intermittent streams, staff is
18 requesting that the stormwater management plan be
19 submitted with the preliminary design.

20 With regard to tree replacement, the
21 Army Corps stated that there are 149 specimen
22 trees on the site. Some of these are standalone

1 trees, while others are part of the forested area
2 to the east, and that area over here.

3 And, unfortunately, the project is
4 calling for the removal of 125 of the designated
5 specimen trees, and these trees are actually in
6 either good or very good condition.

7 Since the building location will take
8 up the central portion of the site -- this area
9 here -- and then the entry area will be located
10 down here, it's unclear to staff if any of these
11 trees could be relocated, as the NCPC's tree
12 placement approach is really to preserve the
13 trees first. If preservation is not possible,
14 then transplant or relocate them. And then,
15 finally, you replace if that is ultimately
16 necessary.

17 Staff, therefore, finds that the Army
18 Corps is siting the building to minimize impacts
19 to existing forested areas; however, will require
20 the removal of 125 specimen trees, requests that
21 the Army Corps provide, as parts of a preliminary
22 design, a tree survey and replacement plan in

1 conformance with NCPD's policies.

2 Moving on to site improvements, here
3 are several plans showing the site circulation
4 for trucks, employees, and visitors. We note
5 that the truck route and loading dock in the plan
6 would be close to the residential areas to the
7 north. The loading dock area is here. And we
8 are concerned that there may be light or noise
9 impacts with this new facility being placed at
10 the site.

11 So we are requesting that the BEP
12 perform an analysis of operations at the proposed
13 loading dock on the north side of the building,
14 including any lighting or noise impacts on the
15 residential neighborhood north of Odell Road.

16 Another concern that staff had was
17 understanding the number of visitors that would
18 be coming to the site. Here is a kind of
19 close-up plan of the truck screening area, the
20 employee and VIP screening area, and then the
21 visitor screening area. This image here on the
22 bottom right is just showing what that employee

1 VIP screening building might look like, and then
2 what the visitor screening building may look
3 like.

4 And while this does not include much
5 visitor parking, as you can see on this image,
6 staff would like to know more about the tourism
7 and what that might look like, and we request
8 that the Army Corps provide information
9 describing the nature and frequency of visitors
10 and how this may impact the overall
11 transportation network.

12 We have a rendering of the site. This
13 is the southern facade of the building. It has
14 the parking off to the -- this is the southern
15 parking off to the right here, and a walking path
16 leading to the main entrance.

17 And there is some lighting that is
18 included in this image, a number of lighting
19 fixtures. But there are large areas for parking,
20 and BEP has not developed a light plan for the
21 site and shared it with staff. And we would,
22 therefore, request BEP provide a lighting plan

1 and include renderings from Odell Road showing
2 how this will not adversely impact the
3 residential area at night.

4 And, finally, for historic
5 preservation, this site part of the 1934 New Deal
6 master plan for the campus. The entire BARC
7 campus is a historic district. This is Area 200,
8 and they are -- of course, there are contributing
9 buildings and elements in this district.

10 These are 22 existing buildings and
11 structures on the site that cannot be reused on
12 the campus, given the nature of the proposed
13 facility. In addition, all of the buildings are
14 in poor condition, having been abandoned since
15 the mid-1990s.

16 There are three potentially eligible
17 archaeological sites that were identified on this
18 property, but after a phase 2 investigation, two
19 of these sites were eliminated from being
20 eligible.

21 The last site is not in an area that
22 would be disturbed by the project.

1 The Army Corps has initiated the
2 Section 106 process with the Maryland Historic
3 Trust and other consulting parties, and they are
4 developing -- they have developed and are
5 circulating a draft memorandum of agreement for
6 the -- for the site. This should be fully
7 executed fairly shortly, and staff notes the Army
8 Corps will submit proposed mitigation measures as
9 part of a Section 106 process at the preliminary
10 review.

11 Finally, with regard to referring the
12 project out, staff did refer the project out to
13 the Maryland Clearinghouse, the Maryland National
14 Capital Park and Planning Commission, as well as
15 the City of Greenbelt, in January of this year.

16 We received comments from all of these
17 groups. The Maryland state agencies noted that
18 the project would be consistent with our plans,
19 and several noted further consultation. This, of
20 course, would be the Maryland Historic Trust and
21 the Maryland Department of the Environment.

22 The Maryland National Capital Park and

1 Planning Commission requested that the project be
2 referred to it again at preliminary design, as it
3 didn't feel that there was sufficient information
4 for them to be able to respond to the project as
5 it was presented.

6 And then, finally, the City of
7 Greenbelt, they are here to speak on the project.
8 They have voiced their strong opposition to the
9 project, noting an incomplete draft environmental
10 impact statement, and that the project was, they
11 thought, being placed in an inappropriate site.

12 They did also provide information, if
13 the building were actually located here, then
14 there would be a number of items that should be
15 addressed. These items are listed here, and this
16 letter -- the letter that the City of Greenbelt
17 provided has been included in the staff report,
18 and their comments have been incorporated into
19 our recommendations.

20 Representatives from the city are here
21 to speak, in addition to representatives from
22 Beltsville, from the Vansville neighborhood

1 organization, and from the Prince George's County
2 and the state governments for your -- for your
3 benefit.

4 And with that, I will have -- I will
5 note that I have already incorporated the
6 Executive Director's recommendations into my
7 presentation. So I will spare reading several
8 pages of recommendations, and I will conclude my
9 presentation. I'm available to answer questions,
10 and there are representatives from the BEP, from
11 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and their
12 consultant team to answer questions as well.

13 Thank you.

14 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you, Mr.
15 Hart. Are there any questions from the
16 Commissioners?

17 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. Yes.

18 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner May.

19 COMMISSIONER MAY: I want to ask a
20 question about truck access. I mean, how will
21 trucks be accessing the site? You know, in the
22 outer network, I mean, how do they get -- how do

1 they get to the site?

2 MR. HART: There is -- they can go
3 either Edmonston Road -- I don't think they can
4 -- they are able to go on BW Parkway, given that
5 -- the limits that are there. So it would be the
6 Beltway to Edmonston Road. There is also
7 Route 1. They can go over to Powder Mill. There
8 is a couple of roads to go over there, but
9 Edmonston Road would be the main -- Edmonston to
10 Powder Mill would be the main route, or they
11 could go I guess Soil Conservation Road, which is
12 to the east of BW Parkway.

13 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Thank you.
14 Yeah. I mean, that was my main question, because
15 I wanted to make sure that nobody was under the
16 false impression that company vehicles could make
17 their way there on the Baltimore-Washington
18 Parkway.

19 MR. HART: They have actually been
20 talking to some folks at the National Park
21 Service about various things, including
22 intersection issues, and so they definitely have

1 -- I remember this being raised at a previous
2 meeting, so, yeah.

3 COMMISSIONER MAY: I mean, I think,
4 you know, we already have concerns with the
5 volume of traffic on the Baltimore-Washington
6 Parkway, and there are times of the day when it's
7 extremely slow. I don't know how that coincides
8 with any of the shift changes --

9 MR. HART: Yeah.

10 COMMISSIONER MAY: -- for the
11 facility. But I'm glad they are speaking with
12 our park staff who manage that parkway.

13 One other question is, I know that
14 early on -- and this may have been in a previous
15 presentation -- there was discussion of
16 alternatives for how the parking would be
17 located. Can you remind me or tell me whether
18 there was ever any thought to locating the
19 parking actually under the building itself as
20 opposed to putting in a structure or putting it
21 on the surface?

22 MR. HART: Yeah. They did not look at

1 parking underneath the building, partially
2 because of -- there are security concerns that
3 they have with doing that. I've heard this
4 before. They can kind of get in -- and I've
5 heard this from other agencies before, but they
6 can get into more detail as to what the
7 particular concerns were.

8 COMMISSIONER MAY: That's okay. I
9 just want to understand if that was ever
10 considered. I can understand the challenges of
11 not wanting to have parking under a building like
12 this. I just was curious as to whether it was
13 actually considered.

14 MR. HART: They did look at -- and I
15 say it's kind of a hybrid structure. They were
16 looking at somewhat of a terraced parking, so
17 that you would have a surface, and then there
18 would -- you know, there would be kind of parking
19 partially underneath another parking -- parking
20 area. So it would be somewhat of a structure,
21 but not a, you know, totally below ground
22 facility.

1 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. And then one
2 last question. Do we -- of the 125 specimen
3 trees that would be removed, do we know how many
4 of them are being removed for parking lots?

5 MR. HART: They could give you more
6 response for that. I don't know the exact number
7 that are -- that they are removing for parking.
8 I think most of them are for the building, but I
9 don't want to, you know, presuppose their
10 response.

11 COMMISSIONER MAY: So is there
12 somebody who is in the meeting right now who can
13 answer that question?

14 MR. HART: Yeah. They have their --
15 either their -- Joe Ruocco, who is with SOM, or
16 possibly Ms. Rhodeside.

17 MR. RUOCCO: Sure.

18 MR. HART: Ms. Harlowe.

19 MR. RUOCCO: Sure. Carlton, thank
20 you. Joseph Ruocco here with SOM.

21 Commissioner May, yes, there are --
22 the bulk of the trees are being removed for the

1 building proper. The higher percentage is being
2 removed for the building, and a much less
3 percentage for surface parking.

4 COMMISSIONER MAY: But we don't know
5 the actual numbers.

6 MR. RUOCCO: No. We can differentiate
7 that for future discussions and give you that
8 breakdown.

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: I think that might
10 be of interest in future reports.

11 That's it for me for questions.

12 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thanks,
13 Commissioner May.

14 I noticed there are several
15 Commissioners who would like to ask questions,
16 and the order that I noticed was Commissioner
17 Trueblood, Commissioner Cash, Commissioner Argo,
18 and Commissioner Wright. So we'll start with
19 Commissioner Trueblood.

20 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Thank you
21 very much. And thanks for the presentation, Mr.
22 Hart. So my question gets to one of our favorite

1 topics: parking. I know we have new parking --
2 you know, we have the policy in the comprehensive
3 plan. Remind me, you know, the 1-to-2 was
4 arrived at, from what I recall, assuming kind of
5 a regular office situation where people show up
6 during regular office ours. Is that fair?

7 So, to me, that means that you are
8 filling it up for eight hours a day or 10 hours a
9 day, or whatever that might be, and then it's
10 empty for the rest of the time.

11 So, in my kind of thinking about peaks
12 and flows here, if you're spreading that across
13 here shifts across the day, you actually need
14 fewer parking spaces because not everybody is all
15 there at the same time, like in a normal office
16 building.

17 So I guess -- so, well, anyway, I just
18 -- that was my question. You answered it. I'll
19 leave the rest for comments, unless you have --
20 yeah, I think you answered my question.

21 My only other question is, will you
22 just remind me what the proposal is in terms of

1 bike/ped facilities onsite?

2 MR. HART: They -- and I can ask Joe
3 Ruocco to respond to this further. As far as
4 I've been able to see, there weren't facilities
5 for bike and peds beyond there's I think a trail
6 that's for kind of employees to just walk up and
7 down to, you know, get some exercise during the
8 day. But not connecting, you know, on the roads
9 like along Powder Mill Road, as far as I've been
10 aware of that.

11 So I can ask them to respond further
12 if they've looked at that in any further method.
13 But I know that there are changing facilities for
14 them, you know, because they have to get out of
15 their kind of clothes they come with to the
16 uniforms that they will use once they are
17 actually in the facility and their work clothes
18 that they have.

19 MR. RUOCCO: Carlton, yes. The
20 intention is that from the intersection at Powder
21 Mill Road all the way up to the entry to the
22 parcel, we are studying adding a bike lane. And

1 as you noted, we do have locker room and shower
2 facilities for staff coming to the facility.

3 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Okay. Thank
4 you. I will save the rest. I think those are my
5 only questions. They will then turn into
6 comments later.

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.
8 Commissioner Cash?

9 COMMISSIONER CASH: Thanks so much.
10 I just had a few data call questions for -- BEP I
11 think would be the best one to answer. So right
12 now, how many parking spaces -- I assume there is
13 no parking spaces in the BEP facility itself
14 currently; is that correct?

15 MR. HART: My understanding is that
16 there are some parking that's there. I don't
17 know exactly how many. I don't know if Chuck
18 Davis is able to answer -- answer that question.
19 I think he's on the phone or on the line.

20 MR. DAVIS: Yes. So we have --
21 Commissioner Cash, we have several hundred onsite
22 parking spaces, and then we also provide employee

1 parking in a local -- in a nearby privately-owned
2 garage. We basically purchase those spaces for
3 our employees, or subsidize those spaces. So --

4 COMMISSIONER CASH: Okay. See, I saw
5 on the Federal Procurement Data System, it looked
6 like there was a contract, or there was at one
7 point, for about 300 parking spaces, adjacent and
8 private parking. But you say there's also some
9 spaces like in the building itself are
10 controlled --

11 MR. DAVIS: Correct.

12 COMMISSIONER CASH: -- by that.

13 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER CASH: So that leads me
15 to the other question is, what is the current
16 mix? So if there's only 300, maybe 500 spaces,
17 there seems to be a delta between what you're
18 proposing. So how -- do you have a breakdown of
19 the mix of people who commute in by Metro versus
20 actually park?

21 MR. DAVIS: Yes. We do have that, and
22 we will provide that in the next round. I think

1 we have provided that to staff on a preliminary
2 level, just as a data call. But it will be
3 significantly more single occupancy vehicles
4 going to the BARC facility as opposed to downtown
5 just because of the accessibility of Metro
6 downtown right now.

7 COMMISSIONER CASH: But is it maybe
8 like 50/50? Is it the vast majority? I mean, do
9 you know how --

10 MR. HART: From what I recall, it was
11 -- there was about 50 to 60 percent that were
12 taking Metro.

13 COMMISSIONER CASH: Metro? Okay.

14 MR. HART: And so the rest were --
15 were I guess either driving or some other method
16 of getting to work. And this was having to
17 remember it, and I don't -- Commissioner Cash, I
18 may be a little bit off on it, but it's -- it's
19 about that, maybe like 55 percent or so.

20 COMMISSIONER CASH: Okay. Well,
21 that's all my questions for now, but I'll have
22 more when we get to the discussion later.

1 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

2 Commissioner Argo?

3 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Do I have my mic
4 on? I can't tell.

5 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes, you do.

6 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Okay. Good. I
7 think most -- as anybody who is paying attention
8 to this can see, the questions are concentrated
9 on transportation and parking issues related to
10 this facility, and it seems as though I guess
11 attributable to the stage in which this is being
12 submitted.

13 But there are innumerable things that
14 need to be paid attention to before this gets
15 resubmitted. There's -- I'm a little surprised
16 that these issues weren't addressed in a more
17 straightforward way, even in the preliminary --
18 even in the preliminary presentation.

19 So I think there is a lot of
20 opportunity with the space that they have
21 available to provide the kind of alternatives
22 that we're looking for for employee commutes to

1 this facility. It's a big hole in the -- you
2 know, in the design and presentation.

3 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Okay. Thank you.
4 Commissioner Argo, do you have any further
5 questions?

6 COMMISSIONER ARGO: No. I appreciate
7 the opportunity to comment. Thank you.

8 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.
9 Commissioner Wright?

10 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay. Well, now
11 for something completely different. I will leave
12 the questions about parking and transportation
13 for now, which are concerning, but I want to ask
14 about the building.

15 You have taken pains to render what
16 seems a reflective surface, and can I ask -- put
17 a building skin, and are we talking curtain wall?
18 What are we looking at? It's hard to tell. I
19 apologize if I missed it in Carlton's very
20 well-written report, but I -- that was my first
21 question.

22 And my second question was regarding

1 height. At 40 to 50 feet, this is not a small
2 building, even, you know, in silhouette. So
3 could the architect or the Army Corps explain
4 those two things, please?

5 MR. RUOCCO: Yes. Hi, Commissioner
6 Wright. Thank you for raising those two points.
7 First off, you know, the design process is moving
8 quickly. The images that you have here are
9 actually outdated.

10 There are two types of fenestrations
11 on the building. And the first is a muted
12 stainless steel metal surface that is acting as a
13 screen for sun shading, which reduces the energy
14 load required to heat and cool the building,
15 which is reducing the carbon footprint, very
16 important for this facility.

17 That's on the southern portion, which
18 is facing the entry to the building, and that's
19 along the admin bar, where the administrative
20 staff and the laboratory workers are stationed.
21 And behind that -- it's about two-foot gap --
22 behind that is a conventional clear insulated

1 glass curtain wall. So staff from the interior
2 can look out and enjoy that pastoral view.

3 And the other condition is on the
4 east, west, and north, and those are opaque metal
5 panels, again, a very muted surface. It is not
6 specular. It is not reflective. We are being
7 very conscious of the sun striking that surface,
8 given the community. And so hopefully that
9 addresses your first point on reflectivity.

10 The second point on the building
11 height, in the EIS, early on, about a year ago,
12 we established a maximum height of 50 feet, and
13 we're currently trending under 40 feet. We
14 recently reduced the building by three feet.

15 So, again, in deference to the local
16 community, viewsheds from all of the public
17 roads, be it Powder Mill, Odell, or Edmonston, we
18 have a series of viewsheds that we have provided
19 to Carlton's team indicating that the building
20 for the most part is invisible from the public
21 realm.

22 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So you were --

1 what were the circumstances that led to your
2 ability to reduce the height? I'm trying to get
3 at why it's -- why does it need to be this tall?
4 Is it because the equipment needs it, or is it
5 impossible to reduce the height and have a
6 subterranean level? I'm asking earnestly. This
7 is not a "gotcha" question. It just seems taller
8 than it needs to be.

9 MR. RUOCCO: Fair question. It is a
10 large facility. Regarding the building height, I
11 did mention we did take three feet out of the
12 overall building. And we don't have elevations
13 in front of you.

14 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right.

15 MR. RUOCCO: But if one were to look
16 at the west elevation, which is the primary
17 elevation that anybody could ever possibly see
18 this facility from, given the topography and
19 given the existing forestation that exists along
20 Odell Road, so the most visible viewpoint is
21 where the cornfield is, and Carlton showed that
22 image.

1 What we're doing is to balance cut and
2 fill on a site, so that we're not taking any soil
3 off the site. We're reusing everything we have.
4 We're building an earth berm along the west
5 elevation of the building, which is rising, such
6 that from the top of that berm to the top of the
7 building it's approximately 17 feet. So it's
8 very, very low within the landscape.

9 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I'll take your
10 word for it. But I would ask that these -- in
11 your next submission that's detailed for us to
12 see from all sides, and preferably with some
13 sections.

14 I note you didn't answer my question
15 about whether it was required by the equipment.
16 I mean, I'm assuming that you're designing
17 towards a program, but I guess what I'm asking --
18 and it may -- is for a more complete explanation
19 of the program of requirements and how it
20 expresses itself in the building, or necessitates
21 the building height.

22 However, you reduce the visibility,

1 which again I take your word for it, but I'd like
2 to, you know, trust but verify.

3 MR. RUOCCO: Right.

4 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: And have that
5 visual evidence in the next submission. Thank
6 you.

7 MR. RUCCO: Absolutely. Happy to do
8 that.

9 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
10 Commissioner Wright.

11 Commissioner Davis, I believe you had
12 a question, and then I see Commissioner Dixon.

13 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I don't have any
14 questions. My questions were answered. Thank
15 you.

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.
17 Commissioner Dixon?

18 COMMISSIONER DIXON: My question goes
19 to the tourists. I think you mentioned you
20 mentioned there's parking for people who want to
21 come and tour. I know that the present facility
22 is very popular. People like to see the money

1 getting printed.

2 But I wasn't clear from the building
3 how that was going to be accommodated. And I
4 guess when we get more detail we will get a feel
5 for that, but I just -- I think it's going to be
6 an attraction in many ways. I just wonder
7 whether that is being worked into the scheme of
8 things.

9 MR. HART: Commissioner Dixon, I'll --
10 I think Mr. Davis from BEP may be able to give
11 some -- give a little bit of information about
12 that. This has been somewhat of a -- this is
13 somewhat changed over the last six to eight
14 months or so, and it may be helpful just to hear
15 where they are now.

16 And I don't think this necessarily
17 needs to be a very in-depth discussion right now
18 about this, but it would be helpful for them to
19 understand that a little bit more.

20 So thank you, Mr. Davis, if you could
21 provide that for them.

22 MR. DAVIS: Sure, Mr. Dixon. The

1 public tour feature for the facility will be
2 incorporated into the building itself. There is
3 a separate entrance point where the prescheduled
4 tourists will gather to be screened for security
5 purposes, and then they will be shuttled over to
6 the facility entrance, separate entrance from the
7 employees.

8 But they will enter onto, yes, the
9 first floor into a public tour lobby area with
10 exhibits about the U.S. currency program. The
11 Secretary is very -- the previous Secretary was
12 very interested in highlighting the U.S. currency
13 program, not just BEP.

14 Part of our mission is to educate the
15 public on U.S. currency and what features are on
16 it, how it's made, the history of it. They will
17 then go up to a second floor area where there
18 will be more exhibits, and then have the --
19 ultimately the overlook of the manufacturing
20 floor where they will be able to see currency
21 being made.

22 That is pretty much -- you know, there

1 will be different displays. One of them will
2 be -- as part of our historic discussions and
3 mitigations that we are working on, there will be
4 an exhibit area discussing the history of the
5 poultry side, and, you know, documenting what has
6 happened over the past several -- you know,
7 hundred years on that site.

8 There will also be an area where we
9 highlight the sustainability of the building with
10 the green roof, photovoltaics, and then
11 ultimately just areas -- you know, areas that
12 have description of how the currency is made, the
13 security features in there, and then just, you
14 know, how you can recognize counterfeit currency,
15 et cetera.

16 But all of this will be scheduled. We
17 do not anticipate the number of people that we
18 currently receive downtown. Our downtown
19 facility will stay open as a public tour because
20 of the location of the -- you know, to the Mall,
21 and you get a lot of foot traffic, whereas we
22 don't anticipate foot traffic drop-ins out at

1 this facility.

2 It will be more prescheduled, limited
3 to smaller groups and really -- and really target
4 the schools and the civic organizations around
5 the area. That's kind of what we're looking for.

6 I hope that answers your question.

7 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Thank you very
8 much. I didn't hear any mention of samples, but
9 I appreciate that.

10 (Laughter.)

11 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Are there any
12 further questions from our Commissioners?

13 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yeah. I do
14 actually have one more.

15 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Sure. Commissioner
16 May?

17 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yeah. And maybe we
18 covered this in the -- in the information
19 presentation a couple of months ago. I was
20 looking through my notes. I didn't see it there.
21 But I'm just curious about the programmatic need
22 and the projections for the need for currency,

1 paper currency, going into the future.

2 I'm probably not alone in experiencing
3 the fact that so many of my friends,
4 acquaintances, et cetera, don't have cash. They
5 don't carry cash. They don't use cash. It's a
6 rare thing. It's just not as necessary as it was
7 when -- even just a few years ago.

8 So I wonder if there has actually been
9 -- if somebody -- I mean, I assume you are
10 tracking or BEP is tracking the need for cash,
11 and that there is a projected reason why this is
12 necessary. But I just -- I just want to get some
13 confirmation that people are looking into the
14 future and saying, yes, we need this plant of
15 this size to make sure that we have enough cash
16 when so many people don't use it anymore.

17 MR. HART: Commissioner May, I think
18 this is probably -- Mr. Davis, again, is best to
19 respond to this, so I'll let him -- let him do
20 that.

21 MR. DAVIS: Commissioner May, I will
22 defer -- we have our Deputy Director, Marty

1 Greiner, on the phone. She can -- you know, she
2 is intimately involved with the Federal Reserve
3 Board, our ultimate client, and the Department of
4 the Treasury. And I'd let her speak to that,
5 please.

6 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

7 MS. GREINER: Yes. Hi. Marty
8 Greiner. We monitor this closely with the
9 Federal Reserve, who is our customer for United
10 States currency. Demand for currency remains
11 steady, and currently actually is -- has
12 increased fairly dramatically because of the
13 pandemic.

14 Anytime there is a disaster, either a
15 natural disaster or like what we're experiencing
16 over the last year, people flee to U.S. currency.
17 They hold on to U.S. currency. It's a safe
18 haven.

19 Our currency is used around the world.
20 It's used as a store of value, and also as --
21 while electronic transactions are growing, and we
22 do monitor that extraordinarily closely, the

1 Federal Reserve has studies that they perform
2 every year on the demand for currency.

3 The economies around the world are
4 also growing in terms of transactions and the
5 need for currency, and so, therefore, our demand
6 remains steady and growing. So we actually
7 anticipate very, very strong demand over the
8 coming years. And also, due to the pandemic, the
9 Federal Reserve is increasing their strategic
10 storage of currency, and so that will also
11 increase our demand in the coming years.

12 The final thing is is we also need two
13 facilities for continuity of operations. So if
14 we were to lose a facility, we need to make sure
15 that we are able to continue to manufacture
16 currency in the alternate facility. So there is
17 a continuity of operations factors that comes
18 into play.

19 The new security features that are
20 currently being worked on require equipment, and
21 the new equipment for manufacturing currency will
22 no longer fit in our existing facility. So that

1 was one of the other primary reasons why we need
2 a new facility.

3 COMMISSIONER MAY: And I'm not
4 questioning the need for a new facility. It's
5 more about the size and whether, you know, we get
6 however many years down the line when this is
7 built, whether in fact there will be sufficient
8 demand for all of this production capacity.

9 And it is reassuring to know that you
10 are looking at it, but I -- whether it's just
11 sort of a commonsense aspect of this that it has
12 changed so much in just the last 10 years, you
13 know, the way people -- at least the people that
14 I interact with -- the number who don't carry
15 cash and probably will never carry significant
16 amounts of cash. I'm like the only guy walking
17 around with bills in my pocket, you know?

18 MS. GREINER: Right.

19 COMMISSIONER MAY: And I just
20 attribute that to being old, and I can understand
21 how, you know, the fact that my sons don't carry
22 cash doesn't mean that much. They are indicative

1 of a generation, but that generation is
2 relatively small within the overall demand
3 picture.

4 I can understand that, but I also
5 expect it to grow and change, and I'm -- you
6 know, there is going to be a point in the future,
7 you know, where cash is virtually gone. I have
8 to believe it. I just don't know whether it's in
9 1,000 years or 100 years or 20.

10 But I'm glad to know that people are
11 at least thinking about it, and it would be a
12 shame if we -- if there was such an investment in
13 this building, and it turns out that you're --
14 you only have to run it half the time or use half
15 the capacity or something like that. So you've
16 answered my question. Thank you.

17 MS. FYNES: Hi. I'm sorry. Teresa
18 Fynes. There is something I'd like to add. I
19 think it's important to note, you know, in these
20 conversations about the move to a -- the proposed
21 move to a cashless society, there are more than
22 40 percent of households in this country that are

1 either unbanked or underbanked. And access to
2 cash is really important. We need to continue to
3 serve that audience.

4 COMMISSIONER MAY: I don't -- I don't
5 question that. My question was answered. And
6 please tell me who you are.

7 MS. FYNES: Sorry. I'm Teresa Fines
8 with the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Great. No,
10 I understand. I mean, I'm only witnessing a
11 small portion of the entire universe of this.
12 But I have to believe that the move toward being
13 cashless will grow in the future. So, but just
14 knowing you're looking at it is sufficient for
15 me. Thank you.

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Mr. Davis, did you
17 want to add anything?

18 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: No. Teresa Fynes
19 said exactly what I was going to say. We do have
20 a -- there is a Congressional concern about
21 underbanked and underserved populations.

22 COMMISSIONER MAY: More than just

1 Congress, I'm sure.

2 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. Yes, right.

3 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

4 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

5 Commissioner Dixon, I see you raised your hand
6 again?

7 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes. I just
8 have --

9 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Do you have another
10 question?

11 COMMISSIONER DIXON: It was not only
12 domestically, do we have populations that need
13 cash and don't have access to electronics that
14 allows you to move it -- money otherwise, but
15 internationally, hard currency is awfully
16 critical. And I'm going to tell you there are
17 certain -- many, many parts of the world that
18 agree the dollar is very important to have in
19 your hands. They don't want electronic stuff.
20 They don't trust the technology, and they want
21 it.

22 So at the international level, that's

1 why I think maybe even an ongoing consistent
2 demand will -- and even as you move forward in
3 time with the threats and the challenges to our
4 networks and our computer systems, it may be good
5 to have some hard-earned -- hard cash in your
6 hand rather than relying on your -- on your phone
7 tapping and your cards tapping and working.

8 So I think that it's going to happen.
9 You're right, Peter, but I think it's
10 internationally a real issue. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. Yeah.
12 Ms. Greiner made that point as well, and I
13 appreciate that. Like I said, the people who are
14 not carrying cash nowadays, certainly the realm
15 of people that I interact with, is a relatively
16 -- or a very small proportion of the total demand
17 picture. So I understand that.

18 Thank you. My question has been
19 answered repeatedly.

20 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you. Any
21 other questions from our Commissioners?

22 I have a question going back to the

1 parking and sort of traffic impact, based on a
2 comment Mr. Davis just made a few minutes ago
3 about visitors. And while it will be selective
4 and perhaps fewer in volume, I'm curious, when
5 you mentioned groups, how you anticipate those
6 groups would arrive. My guess would be by bus.

7 So I would like to ask, are you
8 thinking about your parking situation and traffic
9 flow in terms of buses? I think we have been
10 really talking about the employees coming to and
11 from, and, you know, single occupancy vehicles,
12 but how about buses and the impact on the
13 community with bus traffic?

14 MR. DAVIS: Yes. We are looking at
15 providing several parking spaces for buses. But,
16 again, all of our tours would be conducted
17 outside of the commuting hours, the normal
18 commuting hours. They would be, you know,
19 typically 9:00 to 3:00 or something like that.
20 That has not been finalized yet.

21 But, again, that would still be a
22 reserved timeslot for those individuals. We

1 wouldn't, you know, double-book or triple-book a
2 bunch of buses coming out. And we're really --
3 we're really assuming, again, it's going to be
4 local civic groups and local schools, et cetera.
5 It's not going to be the tourists coming from
6 downtown, because we're still going to be the
7 downtown public tour available for that -- for
8 the foreseeable future.

9 I mean, that tour is not going to
10 close. That was very important to, you know, our
11 Congressional oversight, and then also, you know,
12 the District of Columbia, and then also with the
13 previous Secretary.

14 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: So when you come
15 back, you'll have in your plan your projections
16 of how many tours a day, how many buses in and
17 out, that sort of thing? Because I think that
18 would be an important --

19 MR. DAVIS: Right.

20 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: -- detail to share.

21 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. We have already --
22 yeah, we have already started providing some of

1 that data, and, you know, we will further refine
2 it as we move forward.

3 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

4 MR. HART: Vice-Chair White?

5 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

6 MR. HART: Yeah. Just -- I mean, that
7 is actually one of the things that staff was
8 interested in understanding, because we -- we
9 were made aware of the kind of visitors coming
10 here, and we were not really sure how many we
11 were talking about.

12 And so what we were looking for, as
13 part of the staff -- for the recommendation to
14 you all is -- to the Commission is really
15 understanding that further. So it's definitely
16 on our mind as well.

17 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Right. I figured
18 it would be, but I just wanted to go ahead and
19 ask while we had so many people in the
20 conversation. But thank you. Appreciate that,
21 Mr. Hart.

22 So with that, we have eight speakers

1 who have signed up. I will call your name, and I
2 would ask that you unmute, turn on your webcam,
3 and begin your testimony.

4 First is David Iannucci from Prince
5 George's County Economic Development Corporation.
6 Mr. Iannucci, you have five minutes to provide
7 your testimony.

8 MR. IANNUCCI: Thank you, Ms. White
9 and to the Commissioners. Thank you very much
10 for this chance to talk. Again, my name is David
11 Iannucci. I'm the President and CEO of the
12 Prince George County Economic Development
13 Corporation. I'm speaking on behalf of Prince
14 George County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. You
15 have her letter of record that was submitted
16 dated January 25th, 2021. I would ask that that
17 be considered my written, the written record on
18 behalf of what I'm saying.

19 Again, I represent the Economic
20 Development Corporation, and we strongly support
21 the proposed Bureau of Engraving and Printing
22 location to Beltsville Agricultural Research

1 Center. It's an unused -- and I've been to the
2 site and walked around -- unused 100-acre parcel
3 that has clearly been abandoned with buildings
4 with trees growing out of them and so forth and
5 on a 6,500-acre preserve. We think this is a
6 very, very strong location for the Bureau of
7 Engraving and Printing. This \$1 billion federal
8 facility would add 1,427 federal jobs to Prince
9 George's County paying very good wages, and we're
10 very, very pleased with that.

11 About 31 percent, we understand, are
12 the existing BEP workforce already lives in
13 Prince George's County, so we think there's that
14 sort of important factor that the workforce has
15 strong connections to this county already. Quite
16 frankly, there's been a historic disparity on
17 federal facilities located in Prince George's
18 County relative to the other suburban
19 jurisdictions in the Metropolitan area. Where we
20 might have something over 20 percent of the
21 federal workforce living Prince George's County,
22 we only have 4 or 5 percent of kind of federal

1 jobs here in the county. So the ratio is more
2 than 3 to 1 of the people living here, and Bob is
3 in the county. And we think the BEP locating in
4 Prince George's County is the move toward
5 addressing that.

6 Notwithstanding that disparity, we
7 already are host to a number of important federal
8 facilities: Goddard Space Flight Center; the
9 Census Bureau; IRS; Joint Base Andrews, of
10 course. Most recently, the Citizenship and
11 Immigration Service has brought about 3,800 jobs
12 to near the southern end of the county, the
13 Branch Avenue Metro Station.

14 We have a brand new \$600 million a
15 year teaching hospital that will be opening in
16 June, a strong workforce, and we think there will
17 be important connections between the workforce
18 needs of BEP and ability to use the University of
19 Maryland, College Park, Capital College, and
20 other facilities in terms of the type of
21 workforce needs that you'll have in the future
22 because we're aware that a large percentage of

1 the BEP workforce is near retirement age. And
2 that will be a factor that will have to be taken
3 into consideration.

4 Now, the county has been very strong
5 in the past economically. We have led the State
6 of Maryland for job growth for six years. Of
7 course, we're feeling the effects of COVID very,
8 very strongly, and we've had more than twice as
9 many people lost their jobs in a four-month
10 period as we gained jobs in an six-year period,
11 so we welcome these jobs coming here.

12 We note that there are some very
13 important issues that have been raised by the
14 Environmental Impact Statement. I've heard a
15 very healthy and strong discussion by the
16 Commissioners today, and we understand that some
17 of those issues will have to be addressed,
18 particularly transportation issues and parking
19 issues. And we understand that and recognize
20 that, but I think it's significant to note that
21 the Environmental Impact Statement noted no
22 significant issues that would stand in the way of

1 the Bureau of Engraving and Printing locating
2 itself at Beltsville Agricultural Research
3 Center.

4 I also say, and I watch my time, that
5 I know that the people who run BARC actually are
6 very supportive of the Bureau of Engraving and
7 Printing because that has been an institution
8 also important to Prince George's County that has
9 been financially challenged with its
10 appropriation. And they welcome the payments.

11 We see Bureau of Engraving and
12 Printing's location at the Beltsville
13 Agricultural Research Center, strengthening the
14 mission of the Beltsville Agricultural Research
15 Center by an additional revenue stream that will
16 allow it to address longstanding infrastructure
17 issues of its own.

18 So there's also a tourism aspect that
19 has been talked about. We would welcome the
20 tourist aspect of the visitor center joining many
21 other facilities and attractions in Prince
22 George's County, and we considered that, overall,

1 the county is very, very supportive of the Bureau
2 of Engraving and Printing coming to Prince
3 George's County located at Beltsville
4 Agricultural Research Center.

5 So, again, on behalf of the County
6 Executive and Prince George's County government,
7 the Economic Developmental Corporation, I thank
8 you very much for your time and want to make it
9 clear the county goes on record strongly in favor
10 of this move to this location. Thank you.

11 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you, Mr.
12 Iannucci. Are there any questions? Hearing
13 none, our next speaker is Rodney Roberts from the
14 City of Greenbelt. Mr. Roberts, you will have
15 five minutes to provide your testimony.

16 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you for the
17 opportunity to speak today. I assume you can
18 hear me now.

19 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes, thank you.

20 MR. ROBERTS: Just the other day, I
21 stopped to enjoy a quiet moment at the Beaver Dam
22 Creek just a few hundred feet from the proposed

1 100-acre BEP industrial complex. As I enjoyed
2 the site of a Bald Eagle standing proudly atop
3 its nest, I could also see the sign that reads
4 Anacostia River Herring Restoration Project. I
5 wondered how Beaver Dam Creek, a small, slow-
6 moving creek, barely more than 10 feet wide and a
7 couple of feet deep in most areas, can survive
8 the influx of 120,000 gallons of polluted waste
9 water every day. I know the answer. It can't,
10 and it won't.

11 The site chosen by BEP to a near 1
12 million square-foot building and a 1,200-car
13 parking lot has been described by BARC scientists
14 as a, quote, rare savannah habitat that is home
15 to at least 230 species of birds and a natural
16 spring that provides a steady flow of crystal
17 clear water to Beaver Dam Creek. The stream that
18 was mentioned as being intermittent not
19 intermittent because I played there when I was a
20 kid, I go by there all the time. It's not
21 intermittent. It runs.

22 The site is dominated by hundreds of

1 trees that are 100 years-plus old, at least four
2 acres of wetlands, and a diversity of flora and
3 fauna. The entire site is proposed to be, quote
4 -- this is a quote from the same scientist that
5 did the bird survey -- "totally wiped out" and he
6 was very disturbed at the prospect of that
7 happening.

8 Beaver Dam Creek is known to be the
9 cleanest creek. Instead of crystal clear spring
10 water, Beaver Dam Creek would, henceforth, be
11 turned into (audio interference) for 120,000
12 people everyday. I am here to ask the National
13 Capital Planning Commission to help save and
14 preserve for (audio interference) what is really
15 at stake is the future of the largest, most
16 biologically diverse, continuous-forested open
17 space on the East Coast. Yes, the Beltsville
18 Agricultural Research Center has about 6,000
19 acres Patuxent wildlife research preserve, 12,880
20 acres, the undeveloped areas of NASA and the
21 Secret Service properties, both hundreds of
22 acres, and City of Greenbelt's 200-acre forest

1 reserve which abuts it will make up the largest
2 remaining continuous forested area on the East
3 Coast. This area is critical to the health in
4 the Chesapeake Bay and millions of residents of
5 the Washington, D.C. region. This area was once
6 famously and properly described by the late U.S.
7 Senator Paul Sarbanes as the lungs of the
8 Washington region.

9 There are other current known proposed
10 projects that will directly and adversely affect
11 the Beaver Dam, Indian Creeks, and Anacostia
12 Watershed: one, the BEP facility; two, the Maglev
13 train; three, Baltimore and Washington Parkway
14 widening, which may be facilitated because of
15 this; four, Capital Beltway I-95/495 widening;
16 and, five, Kenilworth Avenue widening.

17 Also, I believe these projects
18 constitute environmental racism because they all
19 directly and adversely affect a majority minority
20 community, even though there are clear
21 alternatives to all the proposed projects. If we
22 cannot preserve this last bastion of beauty and

1 biodiversity on the East Coast, we will never be
2 able to avoid the catastrophic effects of global
3 warming and climate change.

4 I think I have a little bit of time
5 left. One thing that has been mentioned is that
6 directly southwest and connected to this proposed
7 site are fields that have been under, have had
8 ongoing experiments for over a hundred years.
9 That's a very valuable asset to our country,
10 especially the fight of global warming is going
11 to pose a huge effect on our agricultural economy
12 and our ability to grow food for ourselves in the
13 future.

14 So this site is definitely not
15 suitable for this project. There are many other
16 sites within Prince George's County and the --

17 MR. HART: Your time --

18 MR. ROBERTS: -- site could be
19 located. Thank you.

20 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you, Mr.
21 Roberts. Are there any questions? Mr. Hart, I
22 guess I'll take a point of privilege as Chair

1 today. Is there a response to the concerns
2 raised about the environmental impacts? Would
3 someone like to speak to that?

4 MR. HART: Yes. Can you hear me?

5 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

6 MR. HART: Okay. Sometimes, I just
7 want to make sure I'm back on. So Mr. Roberts
8 brought up a concern about the, I guess he's
9 saying that there's wastewater that's being
10 associated with the project that's going into
11 Beaver Dam Creek. From my understanding, again,
12 we can ask the BP to respond to this in greater
13 detail, my understanding is that there is a
14 wastewater treatment plant that the water is
15 actually, the wastewater is going to. That is
16 actually connected to Beaver Dam Creek.

17 So, again, looking in the EIS, it
18 stated that there was the stormwater going from
19 the facility would reach this wastewater
20 treatment plant first, would be treated, and then
21 be released after it goes through treatment.
22 According to the EIS, there is sufficient, I

1 guess, capacity at the treatment plant to do
2 that.

3 And so I think that, while I
4 understand that there is a greater amount of
5 wastewater going to that facility, it is, there
6 is, it is not going directly into the creek
7 itself. Again, that's according to the EIS that
8 we have been provided. Again, that's kind of
9 information that's not included in that.

10 MR. ROBERTS: That's a pond for cows.

11 MR. HART: Again, I have to go by what
12 we have received as part of the information that
13 is, you know, the documentation that has been
14 provided here.

15 I think we've talked about the tree
16 impacts. I understand that there are, and the
17 staff has raised concerns about some of the trees
18 and whether or not there could be relocation of
19 some of the trees. And so we would look to have
20 some information from the applicant by the time
21 we get to preliminary design.

22 And I guess there were a number of

1 projects that were being included in this, not
2 necessarily that close but they were within about
3 two miles of the project, the widening of the
4 road, the Maglev project. But, again, this is a
5 particular site that is on a federal, existing
6 federal installation in the region.

7 I think there was an issue raised
8 about environmental justice, as well. And that
9 seems as though there is -- I'll let the
10 neighborhood organization from Vansville that is
11 here to speak. I'll let them actually talk
12 about, you know, their working with the applicant
13 and meeting with the applicant, and I guess there
14 are representatives from Beltsville, as well,
15 that can talk about that.

16 I'm not really sure if there's other,
17 you know, responses. It looks like Mr. Davis
18 would like to respond to some of this, as well.

19 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: I think that would
20 be great just to make sure we're sharing the
21 information we have now. And, certainly, Mr.
22 Davis, I know you're working on these issues and

1 will continue to respond as we move through the
2 process, but I just thought it was an important
3 point to respond now. So thank you for raising
4 your hand.

5 MR. DAVIS: Sure. I'd like to clarify
6 all of this once and for all. There's been a lot
7 of rumors that have been placed out here and a
8 lot of misinformation. So out of the 120,000
9 gallons per day, approximately less than 10,000
10 gallons per day is industrial. The rest is from
11 cooling tower blow down, it's from sanitary, et
12 cetera.

13 Of the industrial, we're talking about
14 rinse water from cleaning of plates and cleaning
15 of equipment. It goes through an on-site
16 industrial wastewater treatment plant. We remove
17 all metals. We adjust the pH. We do everything
18 that makes the water, basically, similar to
19 sanitary waste.

20 Upon leaving our facility, it will
21 then go to a USDA-owned treatment plant before it
22 is discharged into the creek. That facility is

1 currently operating at about 30 percent of their
2 permitted capacity. Once our effluent is
3 included in there, there will still be
4 approximately 50 percent of what the Maryland
5 Department of Environment has basically said that
6 that creek can handle. So, yes, it will add
7 volume, but it's still 50 percent of the
8 permitted capacity that the state has allowed
9 USDA to discharge.

10 And so that's part of the reason, one
11 of the reasons that, you know, USDA and BEP are
12 partnering is because we're going to help them
13 pay for, you know, the operations of that
14 facility. We're going to help them pay for the
15 operations of the federally-owned roadway system
16 that the public enjoys. Powder Mill Road is a
17 federally-owned road that allows the public to
18 cut through, basically, between the Baltimore-
19 Washington Parkway and Edmonston Road.

20 So, you know, I just wanted to, you
21 know, go on the record of saying all of that
22 because, you know, there's just been a lot of

1 misinformation for the last year, year and a
2 half, out there with regards to, you know, we're
3 going to destroy the Beaver Creek Dam or Beaver
4 Dam Creek, and, you know, we have no intentions
5 of doing that.

6 And so if we have any questions, I'd
7 be happy to answer them. Thank you.

8 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you so much,
9 Mr. Davis. And thank you, Mr. Roberts, for your
10 passion for this land and sharing your comments.
11 We will continue to look at these questions as we
12 move forward.

13 Next, is Helga Weschke from the
14 Maryland Department of Commerce. Ms. Weschke,
15 you have five minutes to provide your testimony.

16 MS. WESCHKE: Thank you and good
17 afternoon to the Commission members and the
18 attendees. I represent the Maryland Department
19 of Commerce. I'm the Director of Federal
20 Business Relations, and I thank you for the
21 opportunity to express our support for the Bureau
22 of Engraving and Printing to locate their

1 replacement currency production facility on the
2 Beltsville Agricultural Research Center campus,
3 and hopefully I won't have to repeat that.

4 I submitted a letter for the the
5 record that I'll outline very quickly. And our
6 focus is really on economic impact. Maryland has
7 over 60 federal facilities and 12 major military
8 bases. Our role is basically to support, grow,
9 and advocate for and partner with our federal and
10 military agencies.

11 A few examples which Mr. Iannucci just
12 mentioned in the county are NASA, IRS, Census
13 Bureau, NOAA, and Joint Base Andrews. And they
14 support thousands and thousands of jobs in the
15 area.

16 So bringing 1,600 highly-skilled jobs
17 will significantly impact Prince George's region
18 and the state economy. The construction of the
19 new technology-advanced currency production
20 operation versus the renovation of an aged
21 facility will result in a cost savings of over
22 \$600 million to the taxpayers.

1 Also, the Department of Treasury and
2 BEP have a commitment for green development and
3 the design of sustainable facility. And the
4 construction of the facilities is going to employ
5 approximately 1,700 construction workers,
6 resulting in an estimated total earnings of \$1.5
7 million over the life of the construction
8 project. And the 1,600 employees will have an
9 average yearly salary of \$99,000 per employee,
10 resulting in a total of earnings of \$16 million
11 annually.

12 And these numbers vary, but what I
13 currently have is 65 percent of the workforce
14 reside in Maryland and 43 live in Prince George's
15 County, but I'll let the experts address that.
16 And they will benefit from this Bureau's
17 relocation.

18 And the employees will have a positive
19 impact on the local economy as there are 2,000
20 retailers employing over 25,000 employees in a
21 five-mile radius of BARC.

22 Support of the project began in 2018

1 when Governor Hogan wrote key congressional
2 senators and representatives to encourage the
3 passage of the bills to authorize the transfer of
4 the land for and the construction of the currency
5 production facility on the Beltsville
6 Agricultural Research Center campus.

7 In 2019, the Maryland Commerce
8 Secretary, Kelly Schultz, sent a letter of
9 support during the scoping process. And just
10 last November, Governor Hogan expressed again his
11 support for the relocation during the draft
12 environmental impact statement comment period.

13 So as you can see, the location of the
14 Bureau of Engraving and Printing production
15 facility in the county will substantially impact
16 the economy, and the Governor recognizes this
17 impact and has encouraged it from the beginning
18 and will go forward. And I thank you and I also
19 thank David Iannucci for his support and his
20 presentation. Thank you.

21 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you very
22 much, Ms. Weschke. Are there any questions?

1 Next is Holly Simmons from the City of Greenbelt.
2 Ms. Simmons, you have five minutes to provide
3 your testimony. Ms. Simmons? There you are. We
4 can't hear you. No, not yet. Want to try again?

5 Ms. Koster, anything you can suggest
6 to help Ms. Simmons with sound?

7 MS. KOSTER: Why don't we go to the
8 next person, and we'll see if we can figure out
9 how to help Ms. Simmons come online.

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Great. Ms.
11 Simmons, we'll come back to you. Next is Howard
12 Zhang from the USDA. Mr. Zhang, you have five
13 minutes to provide your testimony.

14 MR. ZHANG: Thank you. Good
15 afternoon. My name is Howard Zhang. I serve as
16 the Center Director for the USDA, ARS, Beltsville
17 Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville,
18 Maryland. This center has been in this place for
19 111 years, since 1910. And the location we're
20 looking at has the history of the Beltsville
21 white, which is a turkey that 90 percent of the
22 country's turkey production has a genetic

1 connection to this turkey that was developed at
2 this site.

3 I have been involved with the BEP's
4 relocation project since 2017, and BARC views
5 this project as mutually beneficial to BEP and
6 BARC. The land, approximately a hundred acres
7 off of Poultry Road, has been underutilized, is a
8 brown field. Since BARC constructed a new
9 poultry research facility in the 1990s that
10 replaced the bulk of the functions in this area.
11 The exceptions are three poultry quarantine
12 building and a wildlife management building.

13 The transfer of the land was
14 authorized by Congress in 2018 and MOA between
15 ARS and BEP was signed in 2020. BARC's facility
16 staff have been with the Army Corps of Engineers
17 designing team in all aspects of this project.
18 We also at the Cultural Research Center fully
19 support this project.

20 I also wanted to say about
21 transportation, we run the last service from the
22 Greenbelt BARC station to -- no, the Metro

1 station to the campus, and we see possibilities
2 if employees with the BEP would use the Metro.
3 We can share the bus ride with them.

4 We also have a very large impervious
5 surface on campus. Our building mass is about
6 two million square foot, and, out of those, about
7 28 percent of our buildings are scheduled, in
8 terms of square footage, are scheduled to be
9 demolished in the next ten-plus years.

10 So we're going to significantly reduce
11 the amount of impervious surface on campus and,
12 hopefully, if you look at the BEPs moving in,
13 they're one million square foot of construction,
14 roughly, will make the overall locations non-
15 pervious surface about the same.

16 So I wanted to conclude my testimony.
17 I can answer any questions, if there are.

18 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you so much,
19 and please forgive me for mispronouncing your
20 name. Any questions? Hearing no questions,
21 thank you very much. And, Ms. Koster, were you
22 ready to go back to Ms. Simmons?

1 MS. KOSTER: I believe she's joined
2 just by phone, so let's see if she can join us
3 now. Ms. Simmons, are you available?

4 MS. SIMMONS: Yes, I think I should be
5 here.

6 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: We can hear you.
7 Thank you.

8 MS. SIMMONS: Okay, perfect. Good
9 afternoon, members of the Commission. For the
10 record, Holly Simmons, community planner,
11 speaking on behalf of the Greenbelt City Council
12 which voted in opposition to this project and
13 which it submitted a letter outlining serious
14 concerns. The city board is the Beltsville
15 Agricultural Research Center and value BARC as an
16 integral part of Greenbelt's green belt.

17 The city finds that the project
18 conflicts with the Beltsville Agricultural
19 Research Center's 1996 master plan, which has the
20 stated objective of developing a framework to
21 support accomplishment of the following items:
22 preservation of BARC's low-density character;

1 improvement of BARC's environment; and protection
2 of wildlife and birds, among others.

3 This industrial facility on BARC would
4 undermine established planning policies at the
5 county level, as well. The site is located
6 within the county's observed open space zone and
7 designated within the priority preservation area,
8 growth tier 4, the planned 2035 rule, and
9 agricultural policy area, and the sub-region one
10 master plan, all of which intend to prioritize
11 the preservation of prime agricultural land or
12 limit development.

13 Although the land on BARC is not bound
14 by local zoning or policy areas, these
15 designations provide clear indications of the
16 highest and best use for this land. During the
17 February 4 Commission meeting, BEP indicated that
18 the site is previously developed and not a green
19 field. It is true that more than 20 historic
20 buildings and structures currently occupy the
21 site, many of which are contributing researches
22 to the NOHP eligible BARC Historic District.

1 However, much of the site is undeveloped.

2 This fact is evidenced by the removal
3 of 3.6 acres of forest, nearly 80 acres of meadow
4 and agricultural communities, and 125 individual
5 specimen trees, the filling of nearly one acre of
6 wetlands, and the diversion and/or filling of 226
7 linear feet of stream that would be necessary to
8 complete this project.

9 The project will also impact Beaver
10 Dam Creek, a high-quality Tier 2 stream located
11 off-site on BARC. In addition to on-site impacts
12 to waterways that feed the creek, the facility
13 will discharge 120,000 gallons of treated
14 effluent to Beaver Dam Creek each day, thereby
15 increasing the amount of permitted discharge by
16 60 percent.

17 Further, the transportation mitigation
18 shown in the PIS which has now been addressed in
19 the concept submittal would add another 340,000
20 square feet, approximately eight acres, of new
21 impervious surface to local roadways. The city
22 is highly concerned about the impact of on- and

1 off-site hydrology and the wildlife and plant
2 species in wetlands, waterways, and flood plains.
3 Treasury has yet to identify how they will be
4 able to meaningfully mitigate the loss of and
5 impact wetlands, waterways, tree canopy, and
6 terrestrial and aquatic habitat, a fact which is
7 all the more concerning when considering the
8 potential cumulative adverse effect of this
9 project when combined with other major
10 development projects being contemplated in the
11 area, including the Baltimore-Washington Maglev,
12 which is considering two alternative sites for
13 its approximately 180-acre train maintenance
14 facility, two of which are located on BARC,
15 beltway widening, and Baltimore-Washington
16 Parkway widening.

17 The city also has serious concerns
18 regarding traffic and site accessibility. The
19 applicant proposes to relocate a facility
20 employing upwards of 1,600 people from an area
21 well served by public transport and easily
22 accessed on foot or by bicycle to an area

1 virtually unserved by public transit, located on
2 a rural road lacking pedestrian and bicycle
3 infrastructure.

4 Employees will generally travel in a
5 single-occupancy vehicle, which poses serious
6 concerns for congestion on already overtaxed
7 local roads. Additionally, it is possible that
8 an employee will have to travel farther to get to
9 the new facility. According to the TIS, an
10 employee survey conducted by BEP found that,
11 quote, the largest concentration of existing
12 employees comes from southern Prince George's
13 County, western Charles County, and northern
14 Stafford County, Virginia, with comparatively few
15 employees claiming residents north of the
16 proposed site.

17 This suggests that, although a large
18 minority of existing employees may live within
19 Prince George's County, moving the facility north
20 from its current location to Beltsville can
21 increase commutes for much of the facility's
22 workforce, potentially leading to increased

1 greenhouse gas emissions.

2 In summary, this project will have
3 significant adverse impacts on BARC, the human
4 and natural environment, transportation, and the
5 surrounding community. Thank you for this
6 opportunity to comment and to reaffirm the city's
7 strong opposition to siting this development on
8 BARC.

9 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you very much
10 for those comments. Are there any questions?
11 Hearing none, we will keep moving forward and,
12 Ms. Simmons, we'll continue to look for answers
13 to those questions as we work through the
14 process. So thank you very much, and thanks for
15 your creativity with your phone.

16 Next, we have Loveleen "Dee" Perkins
17 from the Vansville Heights Citizens Association.
18 Ms. Perkins, you have five minutes to provide
19 your testimony. Welcome.

20 MS. PERKINS: Thank you. And good
21 afternoon to the members of the National Capital
22 Planning Commission.

1 My name is Loveleen Dee Perkins.

2 Today I'm honored to be here to speak on behalf
3 of the member of the Vansville Heights Citizens
4 Association, Incorporated, and Mr. John D.
5 Perkins, President.

6 My presence today is to speak in
7 reference to Agenda Item File Number 8243, Bureau
8 of Engraving and Printing Currency Production
9 Facility.

10 We are in support of the relocation of
11 the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to the
12 Vansville Agriculture Research Center.

13 Vansville is a historic community in
14 Prince Georges County. And for statistical
15 purposes, Vansville is part of the Beltsville
16 Census designated place.

17 Vansville, Maryland was officially
18 designated as a historical site by the Maryland
19 National Park -- Capital Park and Planning
20 Commission on January 30, 1973.

21 You may ask why is this significant?

22 It is significant because the Vansville community

1 historical marker is located at Odell Road and
2 Old Baltimore Pike, which is within several
3 blocks of the park where the BEP seeks to house
4 its new facility, which is being relocated from
5 downtown Washington, D.C.

6 During several meetings of the
7 Vansville Heights Citizens Association,
8 Incorporated, we discussed and unanimously
9 agreed, and will welcome BEP to historic
10 Vansville community.

11 The Vansville Heights Association,
12 Incorporated welcomes the Bureau of Engraving
13 with the understanding that they will work hand
14 in hand with the Vansville community.

15 This is a community that they will be
16 a part of. And we inquire that there be minimum
17 to no impact.

18 We met with several representatives of
19 the BEP project, particularly with Mr. Chuck
20 Davis. He and his team shared their great
21 respect and an interest in maintaining our
22 historic area, with a desire to develop good

1 community working relations.

2 Mr. Davis and his team also shared
3 with us the following, to name just a few, of
4 their intent for our community.

5 The intent to remove the rumble strips
6 along the length of Powder Mill Road, to reduce
7 the significant noise generated as vehicles pass
8 over each strip.

9 The removal of 22 derelict facilities
10 associated with the existing site, each with the
11 public safety and environmental hazard.

12 Improvements to immediate traffic network in
13 accordance with the recommendations presented in
14 the 2020 impact study.

15 And the welcoming of the local schools
16 for field trips, events like career days, and
17 hands on experiences for chemistry week,
18 continuing with Project Lead the Way.

19 Our expectations are that if BEP is
20 located on BARC facility, they will continue to
21 reach out to the community for opportunities to
22 share in advance what changes may need to be made

1 at their facility that may impact our community.

2 Many of BEP employees are located in
3 Prince Georges County. However, BEP has shared
4 that for our community, in the future, higher
5 than average compensation job opportunities will
6 be available within the Bureau.

7 However, we're not naive, and we've
8 discussed and shared our concerns with BEP. And
9 we know that initial plans will continue to
10 evolve.

11 We're simply asking for continual
12 review of plans for specific infrastructure
13 improvements for several major roadways in our
14 area that will be critically impacted by the
15 increased workforce. Several major highways BEP
16 has under consideration for improvement are based
17 on the recommendations presented in the 2020
18 traffic study to BEP.

19 However, I'm not sure what
20 considerations will be given to Odell Road, a
21 very narrow, two lane, currently a well-traveled
22 road located at the back entrance of BARC.

1 It is said that we are to be good
2 stewards of our land, and use all of it in a very
3 proper and safe manner.

4 I'm sure the term environmental
5 stewardship is not new to anyone. It refers to
6 being responsible and protective of the natural
7 environment through conservation and sustainable
8 practices.

9 And this is based on a land ethic.
10 Dealing with man's relation to the land, and to
11 the animals and plants, which are upon it.

12 Land ethics should become a part of
13 our everyday life. And understanding this, we
14 should proclaim what we will do individually and
15 collectively to build and strengthen our
16 relationship to the land, to the animals, to
17 plants upon which they grow.

18 How will we take care of the water
19 used, the air we breathe, without the priority
20 being money, un-permitted concessions, and
21 without focus on self. Proper use of the land.

22 So, Vansville Heights Citizens

1 Association, Incorporated is encouraged,
2 supportive, and looks forward too many
3 opportunities to discuss this project in the very
4 early stages of its progression.

5 We look forward to a new neighbor,
6 BEP. Thank you.

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you very
8 much, Ms. Perkins. Are there any questions?

9 (No response)

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Hearing none, I
11 will make a comment. I really appreciate your
12 eloquence about the importance of the land ethic,
13 particularly given the work I do in my day job.
14 So, thank you for making that statement.

15 Next we have Cynthia Smith from
16 Greater Beltsville Business Association. Ms.
17 Smith, you have five minutes to provide your
18 testimony.

19 MS. SMITH: Thank you. And thank you
20 for the opportunity to address this commission.
21 I appreciate your time.

22 For the record, my name is Cynthia

1 Smith. And I am the President of the Greater
2 Beltsville Business Association.

3 GBBA, not to be confused with
4 Residents for a Better Beltsville, was formed in
5 2012. Our mission is twofold, in that we strive
6 to support the growth of small businesses in the
7 greater Beltsville area, as well as serve as
8 advocates for issues regarding health, transit,
9 education, and anything that directly affects our
10 community.

11 Let it be known that as an
12 organization, GBBA stands in favor of moving the
13 Bureau of Engraving and Printing, BEP, production
14 facility from Washington, D.C. to Beltsville,
15 Maryland.

16 From a small business growth --
17 business growth perspective, the people that are
18 employed at BEP will be potential customers to
19 the small businesses in Beltsville and the
20 surrounding areas.

21 These employees will need gas for
22 their vehicles. They will need places to eat,

1 drug stores and other retail venues for shopping.

2 And some may want to take an exercise
3 class before or after work. The businesses in
4 this area have much to offer, and really value
5 the opportunity to serve their customers.

6 BEP employees will have access to all
7 the wonderful products and services that this
8 area has to offer.

9 In terms of traffic, the Beltsville
10 and Vansville citizen's associations along with
11 GBBA, have long advocated for upgrading Route
12 201, Edmonston Road, and the other local roads
13 that have been impacted by the growth in our
14 area.

15 Upgrading Route 201 will increase our
16 ability to better move the traffic which exists
17 today, thereby reducing emissions while
18 supporting the increased traffic from the new
19 facility. This upgrade has long been needed.

20 In terms of impact on the environment,
21 the state of the art facility is an excellent use
22 in environmentally sensitive lands.

1 The impact on the environment is
2 minimal due to the inclusion of numerous green
3 building technologies, including the use of
4 photovoltaic panels, green roofs and rainwater
5 capture, just to mention a few of their
6 initiatives.

7 The upgrade in all the surrounding
8 roads also has a positive impact on our
9 environment, due to the lower emissions that
10 result from traffic moving rather than just
11 standing still, as it does today.

12 After attending a presentation of
13 BARC, regarding the new facility, I was very
14 impress -- also impressed by their plans for the
15 future.

16 I got the opportunity to see how a
17 facility like the one proposed here, has been
18 successful in Fort Worth, Texas, a newer facility
19 in a much more densely populated area.

20 As BARC has been a good neighbor, BEP
21 plans on investing their time and effort into
22 this community.

1 There are future plans to run a STEM
2 program in partnership with the local school
3 system, and possibly provide an opportunity to
4 have a vendor fair for local business, is what
5 being a good neighbor is all about.

6 Again, GBBA stands with Vansville, who
7 is the closest community affected with this
8 facility, and the other community organizations
9 who support moving this production facility to
10 Beltsville.

11 Thank you again for this opportunity
12 to provide testimony on behalf of GBBA.

13 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you, Ms.
14 Smith. Are there any questions?

15 (No response)

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Hearing none, we
17 will move to the next speaker. Thank you again.

18 Our last speaker is Karen Coakely.
19 Ms. Coakely, you have three minutes to speak.

20 MS. COAKELY: Okay. My name is Karen
21 Coakely. And I am speaking for myself
22 personally.

1 But, just for the members of the
2 National Capital Planning Commission, so that you
3 understand, I am also President of the Beltsville
4 Citizens Association, and I've been involved with
5 this for many, any years.

6 First of all, I stand strongly, and I
7 can also attest that the Association stands with
8 the Vansville Heights Citizens Association.

9 We have worked on many, many projects
10 over the years. And I agree Ms. Perkins'
11 comments about the communications we've had with
12 representatives from the Bureau of Printing and
13 Engraving.

14 I personally live three blocks from
15 the headquarters of BARC. I also want to let you
16 know that I support Mr. David Iannucci's
17 comments. I support Ms. Helga Weschke's prom --
18 comments.

19 Most importantly, Howard Zhang's. And
20 as I've mentioned before, Dee Perkins and Cynthia
21 Smith's comments and -- for this project.

22 Over the years I have watched the

1 various departments at the Department of
2 Agriculture move out of the Beltsville region.
3 And my concern is, the more we lose the projects
4 being done at BARC, the greater we put BARC at
5 risk.

6 It was mentioned that this complex is
7 part of the largest open space in the area.
8 Well, when this land sits there vacant, it makes
9 it easier for members of Congress to think about
10 selling off land, because this has been a real
11 threat over my entire life, you know, watching
12 people want to take pieces of BARC away.

13 I know you all are busy today, so I
14 just -- I don't feel I need to reiterate things.
15 I think what was said by the speakers I've
16 mentioned in the past.

17 But, I strongly, strongly support.
18 And I welcome the Bureau of Printing and
19 Engraving coming to the BARC complex.

20 And I know we will be working with
21 them hand in hand as we move forward. And I've
22 already submitted written testimony.

1 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Well, thank you
2 very much, Ms. --

3 MS. COAKELY: Hello?

4 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes. Thank you
5 very much, Ms. Coakely.

6 MS. COAKELY: I got --

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Can you hear me?

8 MS. COAKELY: Yes, thank you. Yes.
9 For a second I thought I lost -- lost it, and I'm
10 very conscious of my time. So, I just didn't
11 want to go over.

12 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Well, thank you
13 very much. You were very much in time. We
14 appreciate your comments.

15 Does anyone have any questions of Ms.
16 Coakely?

17 (No response)

18 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Hearing none, this
19 concludes the public testimony on this project.
20 Again, I would like to thank everyone who took
21 the time to share your testimony with us today.
22 And appreciate the thoughtful comments.

1 At this point, I'd like to open it up
2 to the Commission for discussion. And I will
3 start with Commissioner May, and then go in a
4 round robin format using our normal seating
5 order.

6 Please keep your webcams on during the
7 discussion if you will. And let's start with
8 Commissioner May.

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: So, I think a lot
10 of the concerns about the project came up during
11 the questions. And certainly much came up during
12 the testimony that we heard.

13 I think that there is more to be done
14 in transportation and parking. More to be done
15 to make sure that the building and the parking,
16 whether in structure or in surface parking, is
17 carefully placed and minimizes the impact on the
18 existing environment.

19 I mean, I do understand that, you
20 know, there are concerns about having decided to
21 locate in this, this place.

22 But, I think that generally speaking,

1 the project is reasonable and that we have to,
2 you know, our job is to help BEP and the Corps of
3 Engineers make the project the best that it can
4 be.

5 And locate it carefully. And make
6 sure that we're not overdoing parking, or we're
7 not making mistakes in how the parking is placed.

8 I think I'll let others speak more
9 specifically to their concerns about parking. I
10 appreciate the fact that it's a difficult puzzle
11 to solve, because it is the sort of facility that
12 is going to necessitate a substantial amount of
13 single occupancy vehicle use.

14 That's unfortunate, but you know, I
15 think in some ways, unavoidable. But, I think
16 it, you know, before we reach that conclusion
17 completely and give a final approval, I think
18 that there's more information that we're going to
19 need.

20 So, I don't know that I have anything
21 else looking at my notes. No, and I'm interested
22 in hearing what my fellow commissioners have to

1 say. Thank you.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
3 Commissioner May. Commissioner Argo?

4 COMMISSIONER ARGO: I'll align myself
5 with the, well, perhaps all of the comments that
6 Commissioner May just made. I appreciate it. I
7 don't want to repeat some of those.

8 I really appreciate the time and
9 effort that the individuals who came and -- came,
10 that's right, they didn't have to go anywhere,
11 this is Zoom.

12 Who testified today about their
13 support. And also, those who have some concerns
14 about the project. It's very important for us to
15 hear those.

16 I don't have any other comments at
17 this time. I appreciate all the work, and also
18 that the staff has, has done in this, you know,
19 in this project.

20 It's more complicated in some ways
21 then it appears to be initially. Thank you.

22 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

1 Commissioner Wright?

2 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I think I'm
3 going to hold my fire until next time. I need --
4 I need a lot more information.

5 I -- obviously. My concerns are about
6 the building. There are peo -- commissioners who
7 are a lot smarter than me about transportation
8 and parking.

9 But, the building, I think, I
10 understand the site analysis. I understand the
11 site selection process.

12 It makes a lot of sense in some ways.
13 And I think the testimony that -- that the
14 building, if not this, then something worse, is
15 probably accurate.

16 But, what a sad state of affairs.
17 That that's a criterion for thinking well, better
18 this than something worse.

19 Oh gosh, I like to think we're more
20 aspirational. But, I will be paying very close
21 attention to the building.

22 The materiality concerns me. The

1 height concerns me. And of course, I -- I know
2 that it's expensive to dig, but I wonder if it
3 isn't worth it.

4 So, I'm going to want to know a lot
5 more about the program and why the building has
6 to be 40 feet. And while I appreciate SOM's
7 reduction of the height already, three feet does
8 not elicit a great deal of enthusiasm from me.

9 I think they can -- I like to think
10 they can do better. But, I don't know enough
11 about the program.

12 So, that's what I'm going to be
13 looking for. And I want to repeat, please bring
14 sections. Thanks.

15 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
16 Commissioner Wright. Commissioner Dixon?

17 COMMISSIONER DIXON: I'll be -- I'll
18 be looking forward to the information that
19 Commissioner Wright gets. She's always focused
20 on issues that she's especially locked in on.

21 But, I join with Commissioner May and
22 Commissioner Argo's comments. I just think we

1 ought to make it clear as always, we hear it, we
2 hear the community, we hear the opponents, and we
3 see them.

4 And I think we'll just continue to
5 gather data as they go forward. And it's, you
6 know, I'm sure it will be fine. It will be
7 complicated, but fine.

8 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.
9 Commissioner Cash?

10 COMMISSIONER CASH: Thanks so much.
11 I just wanted to build on the question I was
12 asking earlier about the parking.

13 Because I am really concerned about
14 the parking here. This is always an issue where
15 an agency is so special that the parking ratio is
16 just not going to work for them.

17 You're in the national capital region.
18 These ratios were come up with for a reason,
19 because we can aspire to do that.

20 So, I want to reiterate what
21 Commissioner Trueblood mentioned earlier, that --
22 that I think these numbers with the 884 staff and

1 the need for a parking space for each staff when
2 it's split over three shifts, that just kind of
3 leaves me scratching my head.

4 So, I hope that there will be more
5 questions about that answered next time. But, I
6 also want to, in looking at the responses in the
7 EDR, talking about the -- making Metro hours out
8 to be the bad guy again.

9 Where even though we're only two
10 waking miles away from a Metro, the Metro hours
11 just aren't enough. It makes it seem like Metro
12 is some big external entity that the feds maybe
13 have no control over.

14 But, I'll just remind folks that the
15 Governors of Maryland, Virginia, and the Mayor of
16 D.C., reiterated a couple of months ago, they
17 wrote to the President, the incoming President,
18 asking once again, Metro is a shared commitment.

19 We know you give us some capital
20 money. But it would be great if you could throw
21 in a little bit of operating money so we can make
22 this work.

1 And I think this is a perfect
2 situation that shows why that should be
3 happening. Because the hours -- I asked WMATA
4 for the historical hours.

5 They pretty much always opened at 5:00
6 a.m. Which, I've done some, some runs on the
7 website. And you can get there by 6:30.

8 But, if that's just not early enough,
9 Feds, maybe throw in a few extra dollars and use
10 your two board members on there to say maybe we
11 should look at opening up at 4:30 in the morning,
12 or 4:00 to actually serve the needs of the region
13 and the federal entities that are here.

14 So, I just think that this whole red
15 herring about all these workers come by Metro now
16 into the city, and that will be an impossibility,
17 I just don't think there's been enough creative
18 thought here.

19 We have a greenbelt Metro station with
20 massive garages. People can drive there and take
21 the shuttle bus from there if they want.

22 But, I just think that we really need

1 to get the parking ratio in check at this
2 facility.

3 And then with regard to the parking
4 garage discussion, I was glad to hear there was
5 some discussion, at least, looking at some kind
6 of parking structure. I think that could be a
7 really great thing.

8 But, if you have the idea that
9 building a parking structure is actually worse
10 for the environment on a carbon footprint basis
11 then doing the surface parking lot, just leaves
12 me scratching my head.

13 Like, this is a facility that I
14 thought was supposed to open in 2025. We're
15 going to be well on our way in the next decade to
16 going much more towards an electric vehicle fleet
17 for -- for all consumers.

18 So, I think that those, these carbon
19 -- these carbon arguments that we hear are just
20 getting less and less. So, I really encourage
21 the team to go back and look at that parking
22 option again.

1 And maybe on top of that, if we have
2 a parking garage, maybe we can put some EV
3 charging stations in there, and actually kind of
4 be ahead of the curve for once with a really big
5 new federal facility that is going to need a lot
6 more cars.

7 But, I mean, I just -- I'm not
8 persuaded by any of the parking arguments that
9 are in here.

10 And I really urge before we look at
11 this again, to take another look at this.
12 Because I just don't think you can transportation
13 management plan your way out of this.

14 These are going to have -- you're
15 going to force certain folks to continue taking
16 the Metro, which they're doing today.

17 Or, you're going to have to come up
18 with some other solution that has less of an
19 impact. I mean, we're taking a giant pristine
20 farm field and putting thousands and thousands of
21 surface parking places on it.

22 That I'm sure in some future master

1 plan will show they're going to build a building
2 there.

3 But, we've seen that it's -- once
4 those spaces are there, I think it's just tougher
5 to take them away. So, it's better to put them
6 in a garage on the front end of you can.

7 So, that's just my -- my little bit of
8 a rant. But, I hope that it will -- that it will
9 be heard when we come back to talk about the
10 transportation elements of this.

11 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: A very thoughtful
12 rant, Commissioner. Thank you. Commissioner
13 Davis?

14 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Oh, thanks. I
15 don't have much new to add. I just want to echo
16 what Commissioners Dixon and Argo articulated.

17 I really appreciated hearing
18 perspectives from all sides on the issue. And
19 I'm looking forward to hearing the additional
20 follow up information.

21 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you. All
22 right, Commissioner Davenport?

1 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: No thoughts
2 at this time.

3 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: All right. Thank
4 you. Commissioner Trueblood?

5 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Thanks.
6 Well, first I, you know, I would also like to
7 reiterate that it was great to hear from the
8 various public witnesses. It helps give us a
9 little bit of view into what's happening.

10 And I guess I will quickly reprise my
11 lament at the site selection here. It seems like
12 maybe 20th century site selection based on, you
13 know.

14 I saw in the presentation, you know,
15 there were requirements that I would argue maybe
16 are not as forward looking as the federal
17 government needs to be, that led us to the site
18 that is not as, not as -- that leads us to a site
19 with the problems that we see, and that we hear.

20 And I don't know, you know, it's not
21 always NCP's role in site selection. But, I
22 really think we need to encourage soft fall site

1 selection that aligns with local, regional, and
2 federal mandates around what we need for our
3 region, but also our country and the world around
4 climate change.

5 And this site falls sort. Clear, just
6 end of -- end of story. But, as Commissioner May
7 said, that is that.

8 And so -- so, it shall be. And so we
9 shall be forced to deal with the implications.
10 And that's why we see the inability to meet
11 guidance around parking.

12 The inability to meet guidance around
13 trees. You know, it feels like, like really,
14 like it could be 1950. So, that is really
15 disappointing.

16 I look forward to seeing the ways that
17 there will be compliance with the policies. I'm
18 actually less interested in excuses and
19 justifications.

20 And more interested in just -- just
21 meet the policies. Meet the policies, please.
22 Just meet the policies.

1 And that is -- that I think would get
2 my support. Otherwise, I -- you know, that is
3 what you have control over. And that is what
4 should be met.

5 And if it's not met, I honestly, I
6 don't -- I don't know what a justification to me
7 would -- I just don't know, I mean, you know, I
8 don't know.

9 I'm open. And I look forward to
10 seeing that. But, unless the parking's met, I
11 don't -- I don't know how to support this.

12 So, I guess that's my -- that's my --
13 that's more of maybe a rant than Commissioner
14 Cash. But, maybe it's more of a lament. A
15 lament, that's what that is. Thank you.

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.
17 Commissioner McMahon.

18 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Thank you. I
19 guess when you go last, there's not much more to
20 say. So, I'll be short.

21 But, I appreciate everybody else's
22 input. I especially appreciate the work from the

1 NCPC staff.

2 Quite a great presentation and
3 detailed presentation. And the comments and
4 observations and views of the various public
5 members who -- who testified today with the very
6 key issues they bring up.

7 The only thing I'll bring up is, as we
8 take a look, and as we wait for the T&P to be
9 done and presumptive review before it comes back
10 to us for another review, is I'm looking at
11 Carlton's slide here.

12 It talks about the parking ratio. And
13 with the day time shift of about 1,138 people out
14 of 1,427, I would presume the T&P will address
15 that.

16 And the start with how many people
17 today are taking Metro, to help drive them to a
18 one to two ratio, the 1.2 ratio, or one to two,
19 which NCPC requires a site.

20 I think with between looking at that
21 harder. Taking a look at where people live today
22 and will be commuting from, combined with, you

1 know, the appropriate shuttle service from the
2 greenbelt Metro. And frankly, some provision for
3 onsite amenities to support the staff, I don't
4 know why that can't be achievable.

5 Doing that, and then combining that
6 with perhaps a parking structure, should
7 significantly reduce the impact on the green
8 space and especially, I guess, to the east side,
9 those large trees that we're worried about.

10 So, those are all perhaps my comments
11 today. And I'm looking forward to seeing this
12 project coming back. Thank you.

13 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: All right. Thank
14 you so much. If there are no more comments -- oh
15 sorry, Commissioner May, you have another
16 comment?

17 COMMISSIONER MAY: Thank you very
18 much. Sorry, I want to cut in before you wrap
19 up.

20 But, you know, some of the comments
21 started to make me think about the site selection
22 process. And I wonder what, if any, role NCPC or

1 staff may have had when this site selection
2 process was going on.

3 And I wonder if maybe Mr. Hart may be
4 able to talk to that?

5 MR. HART: Yeah. We were not part of
6 the site selection process. They were -- when we
7 first heard this, they -- we actually had -- they
8 actually had this site, the BEP site was it.

9 So, it was later on in their process.
10 But, -- in their thinking of the project. And I
11 think Mr. Davis can probably provide some kind of
12 information about that, but if you're interested
13 in it.

14 And it's something that because this
15 is -- this was a Congressionally, you know,
16 approved, I guess, transfer, this happened before
17 it got too basically -- basically got to NCPC
18 staff.

19 So, that transfer happened, or it was
20 allowed in the 2018 Farm Bill. So, it was about
21 three years ago. And so -- and they had been
22 actually thinking about this, you know, for quite

1 some time. So -- or BEP was.

2 So, yeah. It was approved.

3 COMMISSIONER MAY: It was -- there was
4 work that went into it before it went into the
5 Farm Bill.

6 MR. HART: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER MAY: So, my question,
8 and this is a question for -- it's -- for NCPC,
9 and what we do. And what constitutes planning.

10 Is the question of, why major federal
11 facilities like this, are located without
12 consultation with NCPC?

13 And I can think of one other glaring
14 example where a very bad site selection was made.
15 And of course, Ms. Wright knows which one I'm
16 talking about.

17 And that was the, you know, the siting
18 of DHS at St. Elizabeth's. Which, I know, you
19 know, I'm not -- I'm sure there are many on this
20 commission who still support that decision.

21 But, it was a very bad decision. And
22 I think it's proven to be a bad decision. And

1 if, you know, even I remember at the time when I
2 walked in the door after the decision was made.

3 And you know, it was -- you know, I
4 still say it was a bad decision. And I know
5 we're never going to, you know, go back and fix
6 that.

7 But, you know, going into the future,
8 shouldn't NCPC be involved in site selection on
9 major federal facilities like this?

10 Or say, you know, relocation of FBI
11 headquarters, or things like that? I know
12 sometimes, you know, because of the way the law
13 works, it's not in our purview.

14 But, you know, maybe it should be.
15 And maybe we should make the effort to insert
16 ourselves into it.

17 MR. HART: I don't know if -- if Diane
18 Sullivan wants to respond to this. Only because
19 it's a larger, kind of question.

20 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: It looks like
21 Director Acosta turned on his camera. So,
22 perhaps Director Acosta would like to address

1 the --

2 MR. HART: Either one, yes.

3 MR. ACOSTA: Let me try to answer part
4 of this. I think you do raise a very good point.
5 I think part of the issue is site selections are
6 coming from a number of different agencies.
7 They're not necessarily all in a place such as
8 like GSA in terms of they work together on it.
9 So, I think we do need to do a better job of
10 trying to identify or work more closely with
11 individual agencies to see kind of where they're
12 at in their process.

13 We've actually started this process
14 with a lot of the feds, departments where we've
15 been working with them on master planning. Ms.
16 Sullivan is in the process right now of trying to
17 catch up with some of the agencies to do that.
18 And actually, I think Diane may be able to answer
19 this, too, that we're actually starting up a more
20 aggressive or assertive meet-and-greet process
21 with some of the master plans that we haven't
22 heard from in a long time.

1 So, I think we're aware of these
2 issues, but I also think the process is, to some
3 extent, very decentralized in terms of
4 decisionmaking and kind of where the ideas might
5 come from. So, I think we just have to maybe
6 just do a better job of catching up each of the
7 agencies on an annual basis to make that
8 determination. I think we've made better
9 progress with DoD, for example, on their projects
10 where all their master plans come in.

11 MS. SULLIVAN: I just want to add to
12 that. Yes, so we're about to implement this
13 outreach strategy that we'll be doing every
14 single year over the summer with regard to the
15 upcoming fiscal years with every single agency
16 site out there beyond the District of Columbia.
17 Frequently, we work with everyone within the
18 District, but it's less frequent outside in the
19 environs. And so, we're going to be doing that,
20 and that's also aligning with the tracking of all
21 the TMPs.

22 So, I think we're going to come back

1 to you and just present sort of how we're doing
2 this as a very quick information presentation in
3 the future. And I couldn't agree more, we would
4 love to be more a part of the site selection
5 process and insert ourselves in that.

6 COMMISSIONER MAY: I see an
7 opportunity, not just to sort of insert some
8 controls and good guidance over the process, but
9 if you are, in fact, going to be working with all
10 the individual agencies on their upcoming needs,
11 there's an opportunity to be more of a
12 clearinghouse and to match up agencies that have
13 needs with agencies that have space.

14 MS. SULLIVAN: Right.

15 COMMISSIONER MAY: So, I mean, I think
16 it's a win/win all the way around if we can just
17 sort of get to that level of collaboration or
18 force that level of collaboration. And I
19 appreciate everything that you would do to make
20 that happen. So, anyway, I've been talking and I
21 know Mr. Trueblood would like to speak as well.

22 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes, and,

1 Commissioner May, I really appreciate that you
2 brought it up. I have some similar thoughts. I
3 think Commissioner Cash had his hand up first,
4 and then, we'll go to Commissioner Trueblood.
5 So, thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER MAY: Sorry. Thank you.

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: No, that's okay.

8 I was just trying to make sure I was tracking the
9 hands.

10 So, Commissioner Cash?

11 COMMISSIONER CASH: I would like to
12 defer to Commissioner Trueblood. I think that he
13 had his hand up first. I was on a different
14 thought on there.

15 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Oh, okay.

16 COMMISSIONER CASH: And I was going to
17 say so.

18 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: So, Commissioner
19 Trueblood?

20 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Thank you,
21 Commissioner Cash.

22 And I agree with you, Commissioner

1 May. We have these comprehensive plans,
2 policies, and things, and it feels like we sort
3 of end up -- we get wagged by all these other
4 things that happen around site selection and
5 needs. And the idea that you can do a site
6 selection without thinking about the planning
7 context is, I think, concerning.

8 Director Acosta, the point that it's
9 so decentralized that an agency can sort of set
10 whatever parameters they want that may or may not
11 be connected to broader policy goals in the
12 federal government, in the region, and
13 localities, I think this is an example of that,
14 right?

15 I still, as I mentioned the last time
16 this came up, this is totally disconnected from
17 goals, regional goals, that we've come up with at
18 the Transportation Planning Board and
19 Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.
20 It's like antithetical to them.

21 And so, I think I would suggest, to
22 your point, Commissioner May, we can't force

1 anything, but at least I would love for the
2 Commission to think about -- and maybe with some
3 of our congressional representatives -- to think
4 about how we can be supportive to make sure good
5 planning at least is attempted, at least tries to
6 go into the decisionmaking.

7 And then, at the end of the day,
8 decisions at St. Elizabeths will be decided, how
9 St. Elizabeths is decided, by Congress and others
10 who are elected. But at least we can make sure
11 that the analysis and the thoughtfulness that I
12 think we bring to the site master planning, and
13 all of this, which I think is very helpful and
14 very supportive, you know, very helpful to
15 projects, could be done earlier. And it, then,
16 makes this process much easier, because, then, we
17 don't need to fight about, hopefully, things like
18 parking and trees as much. Or maybe we do; I
19 don't know.

20 But I just want to emphatically agree
21 and would love for the Commission maybe to think
22 about how we can support what you're doing, but

1 maybe even do more.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner Cash,
3 did you want to add anything?

4 COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes. So, I was
5 just going to say I'm surprised this didn't come
6 up. I thought that this is one of our third rail
7 issues, but it makes me think of the 60/40 issue
8 that's been something that we've been thinking
9 about a lot. And the District might not always
10 have the same feeling as some other places, but,
11 I mean, this is a big chunk of, actually,
12 manufacturing jobs, which I hadn't thought of it
13 until just now. The District was lambasted about
14 a week and a half ago for having a lack of
15 manufacturing jobs in the District, and here's
16 about 1,000 or 1200 of them that we're going to
17 send away.

18 But I think we also have to think
19 about when these decisions are made, and they
20 aren't done through a planning context, that we
21 end up with maybe not thinking it through the
22 best way, maybe running afoul of what at least

1 the current goal is of having 60 percent of the
2 workforce in the District.

3 And I also just want to say, because
4 I wouldn't want to put any of our congressional
5 folks on the spot, but, I mean, I was up on the
6 Hill for nine and a half years, five of those on
7 the Homeland Security Committee. I was there
8 when St. Elizabeths, when those kinds of
9 decisions were made. And I can just say, from a
10 very high level, I don't think that a lot of
11 those decisions about siting are really thought
12 through in a planning context. My guess would be
13 in the farm bill this was done. Somebody
14 probably reached out and said, oh, we have a
15 bunch of land and, yes, someone that wants to go
16 there.

17 And I think when these things happen,
18 when Congress does it and they aren't coming and
19 reaching out to us and getting that feedback,
20 that we end up in cases like this. Because I can
21 tell you, whenever we talked about siting things
22 when I was up on the Hill, even on the committee

1 of jurisdiction, these are not the kinds of
2 things that we were thinking about.

3 So, any outreach I think that we can
4 do in the future just to even engage better with
5 congressional committees that aren't our direct
6 contacts here, the Oversight and Homeland
7 Security Committees, I think that's just one of
8 those pieces that we're never going to be able to
9 get through when these things are legislated.

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: If there are no
11 further comments, I'd like to offer a few
12 comments and perhaps a request of the
13 Commissioners, because I think what you're
14 pointing out is there are different entry points
15 into these conversations. And I would love it if
16 you would send along to the staff ideas for how
17 we can enter those conversations.

18 I think it's really critical, the
19 conversation we just had about how we're truly
20 reinforcing policies that we put forward, that
21 our local and national entities put forward. So
22 I think that's a really important conversation.

1 I also was thinking and listening to
2 the testimony today and thinking about we're
3 looking at this particular building and its
4 impact in the context of BARC, but we really
5 don't know much about BARC. And I know there was
6 a request for an informational presentation, and
7 I'd like to formally request that USDA come to
8 the Commission and just tell us more about BARC.
9 What are the plans for BARC? What is the ongoing
10 thought for what's going to happen there?

11 We've heard about demolition of some
12 of the buildings, but it's hard for me to think
13 about the impact of this development on BARC
14 without knowing more about the bigger context.
15 So, I'd like to request that we have that before
16 we hear more about this particular project. I
17 think it will help us in our analysis.

18 And I know that's related to not just
19 the parking status and the environmental impacts
20 on the surface or structure parking, or the water
21 quality, what have you, but, really, it
22 reinforces the conversation we just had about

1 site selection.

2 So, if Marcel or the staff could make
3 that request and follow up, I would be very
4 appreciative.

5 So, if there are no further comments
6 or questions on this item, is there a motion to
7 approve the comments on the concept plans for
8 this project? Do you feel like you want to add
9 to the comments or, you know, with the idea of
10 having this informational presentation, so we
11 have more to respond to before they come back?
12 Or are the comments okay as they are?

13 Commissioner Cash, I see you raised
14 your hand.

15 COMMISSIONER CASH: I would move to
16 approve the comments.

17 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Is there a second?

18 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Second.

19 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Ms. Koster, can you
20 please confirm the motion and the second and take
21 the vote by roll call?

22 MS. KOSTER: Yes. The motion was made

1 by Commissioner Cash. I believe the second was
2 made by Commissioner Dixon.

3 And with that, Commissioner Trueblood?

4 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes.

5 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner McMahon?

6 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Yes.

7 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner May?

8 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes.

9 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Argo?

10 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Yes.

11 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner White?

12 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

13 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Wright?

14 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

15 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Dixon?

16 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes.

17 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Cash?

18 COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes.

19 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davis?

20 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I abstain.

21 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davenport?

22 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Abstain.

1 MS. KOSTER: Thank you.

2 With two abstentions and the rest
3 affirmed, the motion was carried.

4 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

5 Next on the open session is Agenda
6 Item 8B, approval of comments on the Concept
7 Master Plan for the U.S. National Arboretum Core
8 Framework Master Plan. And presenting will be
9 Mr. Webb.

10 Welcome.

11 MR. WEBB: Good afternoon, Vice-
12 Chairperson White. How are you?

13 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Good. Thank you.

14 MR. WEBB: Okay. Can you all see the
15 presentation and is my sound --

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes, it's good.

17 MR. WEBB: Fine. Okay. Thank you.

18 Good afternoon, Members of the
19 Commission. The United States Department of
20 Agriculture has submitted a Concept Core
21 Framework Master Plan for the United States
22 National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., for

1 Commission comment.

2 The National Arboretum is a 446-acre
3 research and education facility located 2 miles
4 from the U.S. Capitol in Northeast Washington.
5 The Arboretum is bordered by Bladensburg Road to
6 the west, New York Avenue to the north, M Street
7 to the south, and the Anacostia River to the
8 east. Currently, visitor entrances are located
9 on New York Avenue and on R Street.

10 The Commission reviewed the most
11 recent National Arboretum Master Plan in 2000,
12 followed by a Master Plan modification in 2007 to
13 reflect development of the China Garden Complex
14 and Anacostia waterfront access path, and
15 decorative security entrances to the Arboretum
16 from the Anacostia River.

17 Most recently, the Commission reviewed
18 a concept for new perimeter fencing and gates in
19 May of 2019. That project remains in development
20 and will return to the Commission for preliminary
21 and final reviews in the future.

22 Today, we are looking at the concept

1 for the Arboretum's new Master Plan. At the
2 concept review for a Master Plan, the Commission
3 should be focused on issues such as: is the
4 concept consistent with NCPC's Comprehensive Plan
5 and other policies? Is the concept appropriate
6 for the site, and are there any particular unique
7 or complex issues?

8 Before we look at the concept for the
9 new Master Plan, I would like to share with you
10 some background on the Arboretum and provide you
11 with a quick orientation of the facility,
12 including pointing out some key features and
13 projects recently reviewed by the Commission.

14 The 446-acre National Arboretum is the
15 premier horticulture research facility of the
16 United States Department of Agriculture.
17 Established by Congress in 1927, and opened to
18 the public in 1959, the Arboretum is known for
19 its extensive research and exquisite plant
20 exhibits. The Arboretum was listed in the
21 National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and
22 the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic

1 Sites in 1968.

2 Today, visitors to the Arboretum may
3 enter either through New York Avenue gate from
4 the north or the R Street gate from the west.
5 Currently, the larger visitor parking lots are
6 located adjacent to the entrance gates, shown
7 here circled in blue, with other parking
8 scattered within the facility, as indicated on
9 this site plan with a "P". Visitors also may
10 park in some areas along the roadways within the
11 Arboretum.

12 Close to the R Street gate entrance is
13 the main administration building complex, and
14 south of the administrative buildings are the
15 Capitol Columns, located in the Ellipse Meadow.
16 I'll note that the original columns were located
17 in the East Portico of the Capitol Building and
18 date to 1828. They were moved to the Arboretum
19 in 1984.

20 Here is the location for the proposed
21 China Garden Project that received final approval
22 by the Commission in December of 2016. And

1 finally, we have the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail
2 pedestrian bridge that the Commission provided
3 comments on for the concept design back in
4 December of 2017.

5 The Arboretum has been operating under
6 a Strategic Plan since 2013 that identified its
7 core values as discovery, connections,
8 sustainability, service, and access. The
9 Strategic Plan goals include:

10 Ensure the national relevance of the
11 Arboretum's research to the Agricultural Research
12 Service, other scientific institutions,
13 stakeholders, and the public;

14 Increase the public and stakeholders'
15 awareness of, and engagement with, the Arboretum
16 and its programs;

17 Enhance the visitors' experience of
18 the Arboretum;

19 And ensure the long-term
20 sustainability for the Arboretum.

21 These goals have informed the
22 Arboretum's Vision Statement for the Concept Core

1 Framework Master Plan. Therefore, we support the
2 stated vision, goals, and objectives from the
3 Concept Core Framework Master Plan to reposition
4 and redevelop the Arboretum's core landscape to
5 give great expression to its mission to connect
6 people to plants in one of the Capital's greatest
7 open spaces.

8 In addition, we support the intention
9 to enhance the visitor experience to the
10 Arboretum, public engagement of available
11 programs, and efforts to ensure the long-term
12 sustainability of the Arboretum. However, we
13 find that additional information is necessary for
14 NCPC's future review of the Draft Master Plan, as
15 well as individual site and building projects to
16 better understand the implication and impacts of
17 any proposed development.

18 Now let's look at the concept for the
19 new Master Plan. It includes changes for
20 vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the
21 Arboretum, as well as the construction of new
22 research buildings within the administrative

1 building complex.

2 The plan includes new, circular
3 vehicular patterns within the Arboretum based on
4 a tier system, with tier 1 consisting of a
5 primary drive from the proposed Bladensburg Road
6 gate leading to the campus arrival at the
7 building complex.

8 Tier 2 consists of a one-way
9 directional lane through the pastoral loop, which
10 would also allow for parallel parking on the
11 sides, and then a third tier consists of service
12 connectors, while the fourth tier is paved trails
13 open to service vehicles.

14 For your reference, here is an image
15 of a typical roadway found within the Arboretum
16 today. The plan includes removing 3.29 linear
17 miles of existing road, while 6.61 linear miles
18 of existing road will remain; 2.29 linear miles
19 of new roads are envisioned within this plan.

20 The concept continues to show a new
21 main entrance gate off of Bladensburg Road, which
22 was included in the 2000 Arboretum Master Plan.

1 Although not funded at this time, the new
2 entrance will create a more formal entry to the
3 Arboretum and is intended to shift traffic out of
4 the adjacent residual neighborhood. A curb cut
5 has already been constructed as part of the
6 improvements in the Bladensburg right-of-way.
7 Therefore, we support the Arboretum's continued
8 intent to construct a new main entrance at
9 Bladensburg Road, as reflected in the 2000 and
10 2007 plans, and the intention to close the public
11 vehicular access at the other entrances.

12 We note that a new pedestrian access
13 point is proposed along M Street on the south
14 side of the Arboretum, requiring additional
15 improvements within the District right-of-way to
16 make the gate accessible, as well as project
17 funding. The right-of-way for this section of M
18 Street is currently unimproved east of Maryland
19 Avenue, as shown in these photographs. It is
20 blocked off by Jersey barriers and would need to
21 be reopened, paved, and lit for bicycle and
22 pedestrian use.

1 Direct public access to the Arboretum,
2 previously available from this M Street gate, was
3 closed for operational reasons. Originally, this
4 location was viewed as convenient and highly
5 visible for traffic traveling along the
6 Baltimore-Washington Parkway, which was planned
7 along the west bank of the Anacostia River at the
8 time. Rather, New York Avenue developed as the
9 main vehicular route into the District from the
10 eastern suburbs, resulting in the diminished use
11 of this gate, based on its less convenient
12 location.

13 The interior stone gates at this
14 location were designed in an art deco style and
15 constructed in the early 1960s, as this had been
16 envisioned as the main vehicular entry into the
17 Arboretum. The reopening of this public
18 pedestrian gate would allow for better
19 neighborhood access to the Arboretum's many
20 amenities.

21 Therefore, we request that the
22 Arboretum coordinate with the District Department

1 of Transportation on proposed vehicular and
2 pedestrian and bicycle access points to the
3 Arboretum. And we recommend that they continue
4 to coordinate with the National Park Service in
5 identifying opportunities to connect the trail
6 network from Anacostia Park and the Kenilworth
7 Aquatic Gardens to the Arboretum and adjacent
8 neighborhoods.

9 The concept plan provides for
10 approximately 100 staff parking spaces with 180
11 visitor spaces at the administrative building
12 complex. Satellite lots would provide 135
13 additional parking spaces with 155 parallel
14 parking spaces along the interior roadways. The
15 site plan indicates a shuttle bus parking lot on
16 the north side of the Arboretum.

17 In regards to event parking at the
18 Arboretum, the concept proposes 320 spaces in the
19 meadow, with an additional 280 parallel parking
20 spaces. The total maximum parking spaces
21 included in this concept plan is 1,170. The
22 Applicant has stated that they do not intend to

1 increase parking over what was approved as part
2 of the previous Master Plan.

3 However, additional information will
4 be necessary to confirm the parking counts and
5 this approach. Therefore, we request, as part of
6 the Draft Master Plan submission, that the
7 Applicant should provide information on current
8 and future parking for employees, visitors, and
9 for special events along with the anticipated
10 changes in staffing over time.

11 The new Master Plan also includes the
12 construction of new research buildings within the
13 administrative building complex as well as
14 alterations to existing buildings and structures.
15 For reference, here is a photo of the
16 administration building today and a photo of the
17 cluster of greenhouses located near the
18 administrative building complex.

19 However, the concept plan is unclear
20 as to how many new buildings will be constructed
21 or how the existing buildings will be altered, as
22 envisioned in the Master Plan. Also, projects

1 that I had mentioned and already have received
2 Commission review and approval are not discussed
3 in this concept. As such, we request that the
4 Applicant provide the following as part of the
5 Draft Master Plan submission:

6 Identify the perimeter fencing and
7 gates project, which was reviewed as a concept by
8 the Commission in May of 2019, and the China
9 Garden Project, which received its final approval
10 by the Commission in December of 2016.

11 Also, we're asking the Applicant to
12 provide information on how many new buildings are
13 proposed under the Master Plan, as well as
14 alterations or demolitions of current buildings
15 and structures.

16 As I previously mentioned, the
17 Arboretum was listed in the National Register of
18 Historic Places in 1973 and is on the District of
19 Columbia's Inventory of Historic Sites, listed in
20 1968. We note that the Applicant has selected to
21 fulfill their Section 106 obligations under the
22 National Historic Preservation Act for each

1 individual project envisioned under this Core
2 Framework Master Plan. However, additional
3 information will be needed for the next review of
4 the Draft Master Plan on how historic resources
5 may be impacted by future projects, including the
6 proposed vehicular and pedestrian circulation
7 changes and alterations to existing buildings and
8 facilities.

9 In addition, we request that the
10 Applicant coordinate with the District of
11 Columbia State Historic Preservation Office to
12 identify potential adverse effects to historic
13 resources at the Arboretum, including any
14 archeological sites, by future projects
15 envisioned in the Master Plan.

16 Overall, the concept's goals are
17 consistent with the mission of the Arboretum and
18 will support continued visitor access to this
19 beautiful open space within the District.
20 Therefore, it is the Executive Director's
21 recommendation that the Commission comments
22 favorably on the overall approach presented in

1 the Concept Core Framework Master Plan.

2 And finally, we request the Applicant
3 to coordinate with the District Department of
4 Energy and Environment going forward regarding
5 strategies to address storm water and flooding in
6 a way that is compatible with the Arboretum's
7 mission and character.

8 As I've covered the rest of the
9 recommendations and requests in my presentation,
10 I'll conclude now, but I'm here to answer any
11 questions the Commission may have. And I'll note
12 that Dr. Richard Olsen with the U.S. National
13 Arboretum is also here to answer any questions
14 the Commission may have. Thank you.

15 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you, Mr.
16 Webb.

17 Are there any questions from the
18 Commissioners?

19 Commissioner Trueblood?

20 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes. I just
21 have a quick question, Mr. Webb. Can you pull up
22 the map that shows the connection with the

1 Anacostia waterfront trail across the bridge?
2 And I just want to ask if there's been any
3 thought or consideration around connection on the
4 west side. There is a trail that goes up to RFK,
5 but there's kind of a gap, and I just didn't know
6 if there's been a thought or if we need to be
7 engaged around connecting to that M
8 Street/Maryland Avenue area.

9 MR. WEBB: Let's see. Tony, if you
10 could pull up slide, I think it's 26, for
11 Commissioner Trueblood, I believe is the one he
12 has referenced.

13 I know Commissioner May, I think, can
14 address the conversations that have occurred
15 about those connections, but I think it would be
16 helpful if we could see the slide.

17 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes, there we
18 go. I was trying to quickly look. Because I
19 think, on the left side, you see the red, right?
20 You see it kind of go up RFK. I guess here it
21 goes all the way to Benning. You see the little
22 blue dot that connects to the east side of the

1 river, but there's a gap there. And I just
2 didn't know if there's been any thought about
3 going -- you know, some of that is the campus of
4 the Arboretum. So, I didn't know if that's been
5 considered or discussed at all. I wanted to ask
6 that.

7 MR. WEBB: Dr. Olsen and Commissioner
8 May also want to respond. Do you have anything
9 to add about discussions that have occurred with
10 the Arboretum and those connectivity points?

11 DR. OLSEN: Yes, thank you. That's a
12 good question, Commissioner.

13 I've seen a different map from DOT.
14 They have not discussed in detail with any plans
15 on north of Benning Road. That's actually mostly
16 National Park Service property and the Langston
17 Golf Course.

18 But the critical answer, actually,
19 relates to a slide that Lee showed with the
20 abandoned M Street right-of-way south of our
21 property. So, we're totally onboard with the
22 conversations with the city about how to get

1 people either through our property or through
2 there or with the Park Service. I think the real
3 trick is there's an opportunity with that
4 abandoned M Street right-of-way, that Maryland
5 Avenue right-of-way to work there.

6 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Thanks.

7 Yes, Commissioner May, do you have any
8 thoughts on this one?

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. I was also
10 texting one of my staff who may know more about
11 the broader trail network.

12 What I can say is that we are process
13 of dealing with the east side. We're now going
14 ahead with the design of that, of the trail
15 connection to the bridge. The bridge itself is
16 at about 70 percent construction -- I'm sorry --
17 70 percent design. So, that will go to
18 construction relatively soon.

19 And my question, actually, was going
20 to be, are we still thinking that there will be a
21 direct connection into the Arboretum? I know,
22 Dr. Olsen, we've met before and you've been very

1 supportive of making that trial connection from
2 the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail across the bridge,
3 and other complications when your gates are open,
4 and things like that.

5 But it's now shown, it wasn't shown in
6 the plans that we saw today for how to get from
7 the bridge up into the Arboretum, even though we
8 know there is an existing somewhat improved
9 roadway there.

10 DR. OLSEN: Yes, actually, the
11 resolution doesn't show, but that trail roadway
12 is still there. So, the trick, as you know,
13 there is, how do you get from, let's call it the
14 north bank of Hickey Run, to the south bank? And
15 we have a bridge on our property that is what DOT
16 or the city would like to use. And all of that I
17 think is possible. I've actually had some ideas,
18 but the crux of the matter becomes what comes
19 first. It's that Maryland/M Street dilapidated,
20 abandoned corridor that is going to be the piece
21 of the puzzle.

22 So, there are options there. I'm not

1 too particularly worried, and I'll be glad to
2 share those in discussions regarding that. But I
3 do believe there are multiple options that are
4 possible.

5 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Thanks. I
6 mean, I think that there was, with the Arboretum
7 bridge connection to the Anacostia Riverwalk
8 Trail on the east side, I think there has always
9 been an aspiration to have the connection into
10 the Arboretum, and then, the connection into the
11 neighborhood as well.

12 And if you know the topography in that
13 area, it's going to be a good, healthy climb to
14 get up to that point because you've got this --
15 you know, it's a real high point. That's one of
16 the great things about that intersection of
17 Maryland and M, is the view back to the city and
18 the view back to the dome. And it will be great
19 to have that become a well-used transit corridor
20 for cyclists and hikers, and such.

21 But I think, ultimately, the bridge is
22 getting very real very quickly, and we're going

1 to want to make sure that there is a connection
2 directly into the Arboretum, at least during the
3 hours when that's feasible from the Arboretum's
4 perspective.

5 DR. OLSEN: Yes, I shouldn't go on
6 record here maybe and get people excited, but,
7 you know, the issue is really, where would a
8 fence lie that could protect our property when we
9 need to --

10 COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

11 DR. OLSEN: -- but facilitate transit
12 through? And there's nothing that says we have
13 to have a fence on all of our property. There
14 are areas of the property that, if our fence got
15 moved back, that becomes more of a corridor that
16 we maintain, that is a total reasonable
17 possibility.

18 COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. Okay.

19 DR. OLSEN: Again, very exciting. I
20 just want to see things get done, and it's going
21 to help us out to address -- that bridge, I will
22 say, will help us get to the M Street answer.

1 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Thank you.

2 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Great. Any other
3 questions?

4 (No response.)

5 If not, I'll open up to the Commission
6 for discussion, and I'll start with Commissioner
7 McMahan, and then, go round robin using our
8 normal seating order. So, please keep your web
9 cams on for that discussion.

10 And Commissioner McMahan?

11 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Thank you.
12 Great presentation, a great facility, and an
13 important piece of the District of Columbia.

14 Having said that, I have no questions
15 on the presentation. Thank you.

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

17 Commissioner May, any further comment?

18 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. I'm sorry, I
19 actually had another question which I had
20 forgotten about. I was just curious about the
21 status of the China Garden. Because the last
22 time I had been there, I noticed --

1 DR. OLSEN: Yes, that's a good
2 question. Thanks for that answer, Commissioner
3 May, or question.

4 I would like to point out that the
5 plan actually accommodates for the China Garden.
6 We don't remove it. We don't necessarily
7 highlight it. As you know, it's been 23 years
8 since that was first mentioned and we still don't
9 have it. So, the idea of this Master Plan was
10 that it would work independent of whether the
11 China Garden gets built.

12 I am not the point person in ARS to
13 comment on the China Garden. I can direct you to
14 Dr. Simon Liu, the Acting Administrator of ARS,
15 but I can't comment.

16 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Well, I was
17 just curious because we had voted on it four or
18 five years ago, whenever it was, and I hadn't
19 seen any indication the times that I've been up
20 there that anything was happening. So, I don't
21 know when something might happen. But, yes, I
22 guess I'm glad that it's still allowed for.

1 In terms of comments, I am very glad
2 to see this again and see that there's an update
3 happening, and I hope we will be able to take
4 advantage of this moving forward to make sure
5 that the trail connections that we were just
6 discussing will actually happen.

7 I do have some questions. I'm a
8 little skeptical. I mean, I guess I don't fully
9 understand how transportation will work within
10 the Arboretum, when it happens. So, I look
11 forward to that being fleshed out a little bit
12 more.

13 Right now, there are a lot of roads
14 and there's a lot of parking, and it's spread out
15 so well, that you don't really get the sense that
16 there is that much. But there is some very large
17 parking lots there.

18 I'm a little skeptical of the notion
19 that some parking lots would go away; that
20 parallel parking along the existing roads will be
21 introduced as a way of allowing parking, but not
22 necessarily having large parking lots. I mean,

1 I'm not a big fan of large parking lots, but I'm
2 not necessarily a big fan of having long lines of
3 cars in that setting. And I think that, at least
4 one of the photographs that was in the
5 presentation that we had received in advance was
6 sort of telling the story of how it can be kind
7 of jarring to have a beautiful, lush forest on
8 one side, and then, just a line of cars on the
9 other. That's certainly something the Park
10 Service has to deal with in many circumstances
11 where we don't have enough parking, but I think
12 small, scattered lots along the way, as exists
13 right now, may be a good solution. But it does
14 sort of depend on the entire picture and how
15 people will get around, and how vehicles will be
16 parked.

17 Now I think I'm all in favor of some
18 of the features, like trying to finally get done
19 that new entrance on Bladensburg Road. I
20 frequently travel that road in all the time I've
21 lived on the east side of the city. So, like 35-
22 plus years I've lived over here and go out that

1 way on a somewhat frequent basis and have seen --
2 you know, I saw that entrance or the curb cut
3 being built with the roadway improvements and
4 have been longing for an entrance to happen there
5 because every time you go down whatever street
6 that is to the north where we enter now, it's
7 just -- yes, R Street, that's just not a great
8 way to get into it.

9 And I think I speak primarily from the
10 perspective of the people who live along that
11 street and deal with that, and deal with the
12 number of cars that come out there, particularly
13 during the heavy seasons, the azalea season, and
14 so on. It's a lot of vehicles on a very narrow
15 road. So, I look forward to seeing that.

16 And, of course, there's so many other
17 features of the Arboretum that I love. I mean, I
18 love the Bonsai Pavilion and the other modern
19 buildings on the campus. It's a great asset. I
20 look forward to it all being improved over time.

21 Thank you.

22 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thanks,

1 Commissioner May, and thanks for asking about the
2 China Garden. Perhaps Mr. Webb can request an
3 update for us, I think we're all eager to hear on
4 that moving forward.

5 MR. WEBB: Noted.

6 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

7 Commissioner Argo?

8 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Just a couple of
9 comments. First of all, I'd love a field trip.
10 Okay, I will just register that first.

11 Second, the only other thing that
12 jumped out for me, and, see, that's what happens
13 when I come behind Peter because he thinks of
14 everything, and so, all my stuff is already
15 covered, the few things that I have. But I had a
16 concern, also, hearing about parallel parking on
17 the roads, on the internal roads there, which, if
18 it has to happen, it has to happen. But I think
19 it's not necessarily obstructive, but certainly
20 would have an impact on -- I don't know whether
21 that's a viewshed, or what it is. Anyway, I'm
22 not going to say anything other than it doesn't

1 sound compatible with what we might want to be
2 doing at the Arboretum. That was really the only
3 other comment.

4 I'm serious when I say that about the
5 field trip. And I can also take myself out there
6 at some point, too. I haven't been in a long
7 time. And I think, for some of the things that
8 we're talking about, it would be useful.

9 Thank you,

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

11 Commissioner Wright? Commissioner
12 Wright?

13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Sorry, I have to
14 flip up my laptop.

15 I'm not going to add anything to what
16 Mr. May had to say. I agree. I think the
17 parking along the street is antithetical to the
18 whole idea. And, yes, it is a viewshed, Linda.
19 And it's not what ought to happen at the
20 Arboretum.

21 We fight this all the time on our
22 campuses because, if you're trying to make -- I

1 mean, if you're looking for -- oh, never mind;
2 I'm tired.

3 Nothing says this is not a pastoral
4 setting like a row of parked cars. And it's like
5 social trails; people will do that, just like
6 they'll walk wherever you don't want them to
7 walk, if you don't give them an alternative. So,
8 I think it's a completely legit comment.

9 And I have nothing further to add.

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

11 Commissioner Dixon?

12 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes, I appreciate
13 the presentation and would love a visit back. I
14 used to live about a block from there in the
15 apartment buildings behind it. So, I got a
16 chance to go off to, basically, a wonderful,
17 wonderful place.

18 The last time I asked about the
19 connection to the golf course, I think I was
20 referencing really the connection that we spoke
21 about today with the bridges and all. I think
22 it's just wonderful and I just look forward to

1 seeing it.

2 Thank you.

3 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

4 Commissioner Davis?

5 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I don't have any
6 additional comments. Thank you.

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner Cash?

8 COMMISSIONER CASH: No comments.

9 Thanks a lot for the presentation. It's exciting
10 to see the improvements that are coming down the
11 way.

12 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner
13 Davenport?

14 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Nothing to
15 add at this time. Thank you.

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner
17 Trueblood?

18 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Thanks.

19 I just want to agree that this is such
20 a draw for our city, our region, and our country.
21 And it's just such a wonderful place, as
22 Commissioner May notes, for residents, but also

1 for visitors. And so, it's good to see this
2 plan.

3 A couple of just small things and
4 agreements. No. 1, I just want to really
5 emphasize the staff report's recommendation of
6 working with SHPO early and often. They're nice
7 folks. They don't bite and they can help make
8 sure that your project is successful. I think
9 there may be times, I know, here where it
10 probably didn't happen as early as it should.

11 And so, I just think talking to us
12 early, especially given the archeological issues
13 -- for those that don't know, D.C., does have an
14 archeologist who works in our office. And it's
15 one of the coolest jobs, I think, in D.C.
16 Government, and so, obviously, for archeological
17 sites as well. So, I really just want to
18 strongly emphasize that piece, reemphasize what
19 was mentioned in the report,

20 Also, I'm very excited by this M
21 Street connection and the bridge. I would love
22 to see a little bit -- and I believe when we

1 actually talked about, when you came before us
2 with the previous fence, I believe, I remember
3 seeing somewhere a map that kind of showed that
4 connection. And I would love to see that
5 continue to be worked on, the connection from the
6 Anacostia Trail on the east side to the west
7 side, down to M Street, however we route it
8 around the city, back to Benning, back to RFK.

9 I will offer to help facilitate that
10 with DDOT. They're doing their moveDC Plan right
11 now. So, thinking about how this works, not only
12 to those two connection points through the site,
13 but around. I think, actually, I personally
14 believe that biking, cycling around the Arboretum
15 is one of the coolest experiences, in part,
16 because it's one of the few places to actually
17 get hills in the city. So, I want to offer that.

18 We have a group that's convened with
19 Office of Planning and the Department of Energy
20 and the Environment around the Anacostia
21 waterfront, and we may be able to help coordinate
22 that, especially if it implicates things like

1 D.C. Public Schools or others on I think whatever
2 that 26th Street is.

3 So, I want to make that offer, and we
4 would love to maybe talk to, bring the National
5 Park Service in as well to maybe coordinate more
6 broadly on that. I think it would just be a
7 really amazing piece to this already wonderful
8 project.

9 So, I want to say those, yes, and I
10 guess that's it. Just, as you come back, I would
11 love to see a little bit more of that
12 circulation, maybe both in regards to cars, as
13 Commissioner May, but also pedestrians and bikes.

14 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
15 Commissioner Trueblood.

16 I have to say, as always with this
17 Commission, I so appreciate the dialog that takes
18 place and the offer of support and collaboration.
19 Because I do think access and connectivity in and
20 among the site, or in the site, with its
21 neighbors, with the trail network, is really
22 critically important for that to be a viable

1 experience and a safe experience for people. So,
2 that's what I would like to add.

3 So, with that, is there a motion to
4 approve the comments on the Concept Master Plan?

5 COMMISSIONER DIXON: So moved.

6 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
7 Commissioner Dixon.

8 Is there a second?

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: Second.

10 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
11 Commissioner May.

12 Ms. Koster, can you please confirm the
13 motion and the second and take the vote by roll
14 call?

15 MS. KOSTER: Sure. The motion was by
16 Commissioner Dixon. The second was by
17 Commissioner May.

18 And with, Commissioner Trueblood?

19 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Yes.

20 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner McMahon?

21 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Yes.

22 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner May?

1 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes.

2 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Argo?

3 COMMISSIONER ARGO: Yes.

4 MS. KOSTER: Vice-Chair White?

5 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes.

6 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Wright?

7 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

8 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Dixon?

9 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes.

10 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Cash?

11 COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes.

12 MS. KOSTER: Commissioner Davis?

13 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Abstain.

14 MS. KOSTER: And Commissioner

15 Davenport?

16 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Abstain.

17 MS. KOSTER: All right. Two

18 abstentions and the rest affirmative. So, the

19 motion carries.

20 Information Presentation

21 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

22 So, that covers our action items. And

1 now, we have our final Agenda Item No. 9A, which
2 is an information presentation on transportation
3 data and COVID-19, which I know everyone will be
4 fascinated to learn more about, as we all
5 experience changes in our world.

6 And, Ms. Johanna McCrehan will be
7 introducing the project, followed by a
8 presentation given by Timothy Canan from the
9 Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

10 So, thank you.

11 MS. MCCREHAN: Thank you very much.
12 Can I just quickly confirm you can hear and see
13 the presentation?

14 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Yes. Thank you.

15 MS. MCCREHAN: Great. Great.

16 Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm
17 here to introduce the Metropolitan Washington
18 Council Governments to provide an information
19 presentation on transportation data and COVID-19.

20 But, before jumping to that
21 presentation, I wanted to quickly provide this
22 timeline related to our Comprehensive Plan

1 elements and their updates.

2 As you may recall, the transportation
3 element and addendum were adopted in July of
4 2020. We also created a new Transportation
5 Management Plan Monitoring Program for applicants
6 and continue to work on that agency outreach.

7 Last month, the Commission decided to
8 delay the federal workplace element update in
9 order to study the potential long-term impacts of
10 federal workplace post-pandemic.

11 Today, Tim Canan from COG will share
12 a multisector snapshot of regional health,
13 economy, transportation, and environmental
14 impacts. This is not intended to predict future
15 changes, but to provide an overview of what has
16 occurred since the start of the pandemic.

17 Many of the federal elements of the
18 Comprehensive Plan, in one way or another, may be
19 impacted by the pandemic. And so, we continue to
20 work with COG to follow these data assessments of
21 the pandemic and provide applicable updates to
22 policies within the federal elements of the

1 Comprehensive Plan.

2 With that, I'd like to transition to
3 Tim's presentation. Tim is the Director of
4 Planning, Data, and Research for the National
5 Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at
6 the Metropolitan Washington council of
7 Governments. He has more than 30 years of
8 experience in land use, transportation, and
9 environmental planning, public engagement,
10 research, and policy analysis.

11 Before rejoining COG in 2017, Mr.
12 Canan held prior posts in the private sector
13 managing a national practice for environmental
14 planning as well as previous engagements at COG,
15 Loudoun County, and Arlington County, conducting
16 local and regional land use and transportation
17 planning research.

18 I will also be available at the end of
19 Tim's presentation to answer any questions the
20 Commission may have about NCPC's work to date.

21 And with that, I will pass it to Tim.

22 Thank you.

1 MR. CANAN: Thank you, Johanna, and
2 thank you for having me, Members of the
3 Commission. It's great to be here.

4 Next slide, please.

5 If I could just give a quick overview
6 of the organization where I work, the
7 Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments,
8 for those who don't know, is a membership
9 association of all the local governments in the
10 Washington Region. We bring together leaders to
11 discuss major issues concerning a regional matter
12 within the District of Columbia, suburban
13 Maryland, and northern Virginia. And our
14 membership comprises more than 300 elected
15 officials from 22 local governments. You will
16 notice our map that indicates the COG membership
17 area is a little bit different than the typical
18 National Capital Region map you may be more
19 familiar with in a lot of your NCPC deliberations
20 here.

21 Next slide, please.

22 The National Capital Region

1 Transportation Planning Board is housed at COG,
2 and it is the federally designated metropolitan
3 planning organization for the region. We play an
4 important role and forum for transportation
5 planning and we prepare long-range transportation
6 plans and programs that are required in order for
7 federal aid/transportation funds to flow to and
8 through Metropolitan Washington.

9 Next slide, please.

10 So, a little bit about what we have
11 been doing to take a look at the impacts of COVID
12 on the region. Since the pandemic broke a year
13 ago here within the Washington Region, numerous
14 actions have been taken by all levels of
15 government and businesses to contain the pandemic
16 spread of COVID-19 and to mitigate the threat to
17 personal health. And these actions have resulted
18 in constrained ability to move around the region
19 and to conduct socioeconomic activities
20 throughout the region.

21 So, we at COG have taken from various
22 departments here within the Council of

1 Governments or are working together to develop a
2 snapshot summary of what we can observe as far as
3 the impacts go in the Washington Region. We
4 thought it was important to take a multisectoral
5 approach at these impacts, so we can understand
6 the broader context in which they're occurring.
7 These sectors include health, the economy,
8 transportation, and the environment.

9 Next slide, please.

10 This snapshot will provide -- really,
11 it's a summary of the impacts. And it's really,
12 while they are empirical, they are intended to
13 provide a general contextual understanding of the
14 impacts, and they are not yet intended to be a
15 deep dive, because a lot of the data that we're
16 using for this are just data that are readily
17 available and off the shelf that we can get into.

18 There will be a significant lag in
19 terms of the data that become available for what
20 is occurring during the pandemic period. And as
21 that more detailed data become available, we will
22 intend to take a deeper dive into that.

1 But, for now, what we're doing is
2 taking a look at the data, and we're trying to
3 understand what has occurred or what is occurring
4 and what we're observing in the region. And as
5 Johanna said, this is not intended to be a
6 predictive effort in terms of where is the
7 direction that we're going.

8 I do have a few slides that I'll be
9 showing that are perceptions of survey
10 respondents that are their ideas of the direction
11 we might be going, but, again, these are just
12 survey results. This is really intended to be a
13 snapshot of what we're observing of the impacts.
14 We're really looking at near-term activities.
15 Again, these are the short-term data that are
16 available, and as more data become available,
17 we'll be taking that deeper dive.

18 Next slide, please.

19 So, the first sector is health. This
20 is a rather complex chart, but, very quickly, the
21 area chart that is pink shows the number of cases
22 in the Washington Region from March 2020 to about

1 March of this year. And on the right side, it
2 shows the number of deaths. And it shows, I
3 think, what we already know intuitively, but I
4 think it's interesting to point out some certain
5 differences here.

6 Within the red chart that shows the
7 number of cases, we start to see the spike of
8 cases that occurred last spring, when the region
9 shut down. And then, we saw it leveling off to
10 more of a straight line throughout the summer
11 into the fall.

12 And then, we heard, of course,
13 throughout the news of this massive spike in the
14 number of cases. I'm not sure that people
15 appreciated how much bigger that spike was in
16 terms of the number of cases in this region than
17 what actually occurred in the very beginning.
18 So, it's very notable.

19 Similarly, in terms of death, we saw
20 a very similar pattern. However, we are seeing
21 an uptick in the number of deaths with respect to
22 the number of cases. That is very concerning.

1 Next slide, please.

2 So, what kind of impact has that had
3 on this region? This chart shows the number of
4 jobs in the Washington area between January of
5 2019 through January 2021, a two-year period, by
6 month. And as you can see, from January of 2019
7 up to about March of 2020, our region typically
8 hosted about 3.3 million jobs, give or take. And
9 between March and April of 2020, there was nearly
10 380,000 decrease in the number of jobs in one
11 month within the Washington Region. And over
12 time since then, we have recovered somewhat,
13 adding about 148,000 jobs back. But, as you can
14 see, we're still far lower than that straight-
15 line trend that we had been enjoying before the
16 pandemic broke.

17 Next slide, please.

18 So, as a result, this slide shows
19 unemployment rates in the Washington area, and
20 then, compares it to national unemployment rates
21 as well. The top line, the black line, shows the
22 unemployment rates for the country, and the

1 bottom line, the blue line, shows unemployment
2 rates for the Washington Region.

3 And typically, the Washington Region
4 enjoys a comparatively healthier labor market in
5 the region compared to the country as a whole.
6 We typically have lower unemployment rates
7 compared to the nation as a whole. And even
8 during the pandemic period, this was true.

9 But, if you see the slope of that
10 black line from March to April 2020, how steep it
11 is, with the national unemployment rate
12 increasing to 14.7 percent, and in the Washington
13 Region that increased to just under 10 percent.
14 So, while we were certainly feeling it here, it's
15 really important to understand the context in
16 which this is happening throughout the country,
17 and certainly throughout the world.

18 Next slide, please.

19 In terms of the sectors that have been
20 hit the most, this slide shows job decreases, job
21 comparisons between January 2021, this year, to
22 January of 2020 of last year, just before the

1 shutdown began. The darker lines show actual
2 employment sectors. The lighter lines are
3 subsectors within some of those larger sectors.

4 And what jumps out right away is the
5 incredible hit that the leisure and hospitality
6 sector has sustained over this past year, being
7 hit hardest of all the sectors. I will point out
8 that there is a slight increase in federal
9 employment between January 2021 and January 2020,
10 and we believe that that is a result of seasonal
11 Census workers that were still working to
12 implement the 2020 Census.

13 Next slide, please.

14 Looking at the 10 largest metros in
15 the nation, of which we are one, it's important
16 to look at this context because we are the sixth
17 largest, I believe, in terms of population.
18 However, the number of jobs that we had decrease
19 from us were actually, comparatively, less than
20 some of these other large metropolitan areas.
21 And certainly, you would expect some of the very
22 large metropolitan areas, such as Chicago, Los

1 Angeles, and New York, to sustain job losses that
2 are greater just because of the magnitude of
3 their economies. We did incur job losses that
4 were a little bit mitigated compared to some of
5 our, up here, metropolitan areas in the country.

6 Next slide, please.

7 And in terms of office space within
8 this region, which is a very important driver for
9 our economy, comparing the District of Columbia,
10 suburban Maryland, and northern Virginia
11 submarkets, between the fourth quarter 2019 and
12 the fourth quarter 2020, the lighter blue line
13 shows the vacancy rates for the fourth quarter of
14 2019, and the darker line underneath it shows for
15 the same period of a year later, just this past
16 year. And you can see that the vacancy rates
17 have gone up in the office market in this region,
18 which has some implications for us to consider.
19 Similarly, on the next slide, our retail space
20 has experienced the same type of vacancy
21 increases throughout the region.

22 Next slide, please.

1 An important measure that we look at
2 our economic activity in this region is air
3 travel. We have three large commercial airports
4 in this region: BWI, Reagan National, and
5 Washington Dulles. We collect data from all
6 three airports and track the number of
7 enplanements or people boarding an airplane at
8 each of these three airports.

9 And the blue line shows enplanements
10 by month for 2019. The orange line shows for
11 2020. And you can see that there was quite the
12 dropoff in enplanements between March and April
13 of last year, consistent with a lot of the other
14 data that I have shown. And there has been a
15 slight, but only modest, recovery during that
16 time and air travel is still down significantly
17 compared to pre-pandemic levels.

18 Next slide, please.

19 We did have a survey during the
20 pandemic period. Every year our organization's
21 Commuter Connections Program conducts a survey of
22 its employers that participate in this program,

1 which is intended to try to encourage, to support
2 employers to incentivize their workforce to use a
3 form to get to work other than the single-
4 occupant vehicle.

5 And while the response rate wasn't
6 that great for this particular survey, because I
7 think they had other things that were important
8 at the time that we asked them, what is notable,
9 that 96 percent of all those employers that we
10 surveyed indicated that they completely shut down
11 or they reduced significantly their onsite
12 operations, either completely or partially, since
13 the pandemic began. So, that's 96 percent of our
14 employers had a smaller presence in their offices
15 during the pandemic.

16 Next slide, please.

17 This is part of the same survey. We
18 asked them, well, what are your plans for after
19 the pandemic? And more than half said that,
20 while they will continue to offer teleworking,
21 they do not see them going back to the level of
22 low teleworking that they were experiencing

1 before the pandemic. So, there's this perception
2 among the employers that we asked at the time
3 that teleworking will probably have a stronger
4 foothold in this region, even after the pandemic.

5 Next slide, please.

6 The Transportation Planning Board
7 conducted a survey last fall in support of its
8 update of its long-range transportation plan,
9 Visualize 2045. And we asked area residents how
10 their daily travel habits have changed since the
11 beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sixty-six
12 percent, two-thirds, said that their daily travel
13 has changed a lot, and another 20 percent said
14 some. What's almost notable is only 6 percent of
15 our total universe that we asked said that their
16 daily travel habits really have been unaffected
17 by the COVID-19 pandemic.

18 Next slide, please.

19 So, we asked the same of people, what
20 their intentions or what their hope would be.
21 Given the choice to return to a work location
22 once the pandemic is over, would you prefer to:

1 return to the work location full time, telework
2 full time, or telework some days and commute to
3 work some days? Those who wanted to telework
4 full time was 26 percent, or a quarter of those
5 who were surveyed. And then, another two-thirds,
6 65 percent, said that they wanted to telework
7 some days and commute to work locations some
8 other days. Only 9 percent wanted to return to
9 their work location full time.

10 Next slide, please.

11 This same survey, we asked about what
12 their commute mode of choice that they use at
13 least one day a week before, during, and after
14 the pandemic. And this chart, while there's lot
15 of bars there, groups the individuals travel
16 modes by personal vehicle, Metrorail,
17 telecommuting, and so on.

18 The darker blue line shows the pre-
19 pandemic level. The orange line shows what has
20 occurred during the pandemic. And then, that
21 lighter blue line is their expectations for
22 travel, for commute travel, once the pandemic is

1 over.

2 And I will call your attention to
3 telecommuting, which is the third group of bars
4 on that chart, where telecommuters, 16 percent
5 would telecommute at least one day a week. That
6 went up to 60 percent during the pandemic, with
7 an expectation, or perhaps an aspiration, from
8 the residents that that would only decrease back
9 down to 33 percent once the pandemic is over,
10 nowhere close to the pre-pandemic levels.

11 Next slide, please.

12 In terms of actual travel impacts that
13 we've observed in the region, this chart shows
14 the amount of travel that has decreased over the
15 month, to the equivalent in 2020. The first two
16 are January and February. That compares total
17 travel in the region compared to the same month a
18 year ago.

19 And we saw that we were traveling in
20 January and February of 2020 at greater levels
21 than we were this same time a year ago, and then,
22 as the pandemic hit, travel decreased by nearly

1 50 percent in April, with a slow, but steady
2 increase in improvement over time. And then, we
3 saw that trend begin to reverse again in November
4 and December, which also matches the number of
5 cases that I showed you early in this
6 presentation and how the number of cases started
7 going up again.

8 We do have other slides about this I'm
9 not going to show, but we did break this down to
10 our subareas from the regional core, which is the
11 District of Columbia, Arlington County, and the
12 City of Alexandria; the inner suburbs, which are
13 our big Beltway-oriented communities of Fairfax
14 County, Montgomery County, Prince George's
15 County, and the municipalities and the
16 independent cities in those areas; and then, the
17 other counties, that outer ring of jurisdiction
18 that comprise our planning area.

19 And we saw that the travel decreased
20 the most in the central core of the region and
21 recovered the least in the central core of the
22 region. But in the outer suburbs, we are already

1 back to 85 percent of travel to pre-pandemic
2 conditions. So, we saw a lot of recovery in
3 travel in the outer parts of the jurisdiction,
4 which anybody who lives and works within the
5 central core probably does not get out to the
6 outer portions of the jurisdictions of the
7 region, and probably doesn't have the opportunity
8 to observe that, but there are traffic hot spots
9 in these areas.

10 Next slide, please.

11 Similarly with public transportation,
12 we saw a huge decrease in Metrorail and Metrobus
13 ridership between March and April, and then, a
14 very slow flat line during that time period.
15 It's very tricky to interpret ridership data
16 compared to highway volumes because decreases in
17 ridership on public transportation can be both a
18 reflection of decreased demand for travel, which
19 is certainly the case on highway travel, but it
20 also reflects decreased supply in terms of
21 service cuts that may have been implemented by
22 transit providers in the region, Metrorail and

1 Metrobus. Buses may have come less frequently to
2 somebody.

3 So, somebody who relies on Metrobus to
4 get to work, but depends on more frequent service
5 to get them to work that would make it more
6 convenient, it may have become less convenient
7 during that time. So, although Metrobus was
8 still available, and somebody may still have
9 wanted to take Metrobus, it just may not have
10 been a viable option for them, not just from
11 public health concerns that they may have had,
12 but also because of service cuts that may have
13 occurred.

14 Next slide, please.

15 We also took a look at our local
16 transit providers, our local jurisdictions that
17 provided bus services, commuter rail, Metrobus,
18 looked at them all to see how their ridership was
19 occurring relative to expected levels when
20 there's not a pandemic. And we saw that the
21 biggest decreases occurred in those commuter-
22 oriented services, such as the Loudoun commuter

1 bus, all of the commuter rail, the D.C.
2 Circulator. A lot of those really accommodate
3 work-related travel.

4 Some of the other bus systems, the
5 Loudoun local bus, the Fairfax Connector,
6 Frederick Transit, while they were operating at
7 lower levels than what they were experiencing
8 before the pandemic, the decreases were must less
9 because there was still a lot of non-work travel
10 that was demanded and expected and needed for a
11 lot of people in those communities.

12 Next slide, please.

13 Roadway speeds. There's four lines
14 here. They're very much the same. So, I'm not
15 going to get into the variations, other than that
16 they show auto and truck travel during the a.m.
17 and p.m. peak. And this matches very well with
18 the statistics we're tracking. From January of
19 2020 to March 2020, they were pretty much at even
20 speeds on the interstates. And speeds went up
21 dramatically once the pandemic hit and the
22 roadways cleared out because of decreased travel.

1 And then, we saw a lot of sustained
2 increased speeds on these facilities during this
3 time period, which has implications for safety as
4 well as travel time.

5 Next slide, please.

6 This next slide shows safety
7 incidents. And each bar includes three
8 indicators. The dark blue portion of each bar at
9 the top is major incidents. The medium-tone blue
10 portion of each bar in the middle is intermediate
11 incidents. And then, the bottom part of each
12 bar, which is lighter blue, is the minor
13 incidents.

14 And I do want to call your attention
15 to April 2020, when the pandemic, and then, the
16 shutdown really went into full effect. And we do
17 see the overall size of that bar did decrease, as
18 you might expect. But what actually decreased
19 was the minor incidents. We still had this
20 pretty much similar number of intermediate and
21 major incidents occurring in the region. So,
22 that has some important implications for safety

1 in the region.

2 The next slide drills down a little
3 bit on that. This is preliminary data, and we
4 only have it for northern Virginia. We don't
5 have it yet for the District of Columbia or
6 suburban Maryland. But the top two lines compare
7 serious injury crashes in 2019 to 2020. The gold
8 line is the 2019 serious injury crashes, and the
9 darker line are 2020 serious injury crashes. And
10 we're very pleased to see that there were fewer
11 serious injury crashes in 2020 compared to 2019,
12 ostensibly, hopefully, because there were lower
13 volumes during that time period.

14 What's very concerning, however, are
15 the bottom two lines. 2019 fatal crashes are
16 shown by the blue line, and 2020 fatal crashes
17 are shown by the orange line. And if you look on
18 a month-to-month basis, there really was very
19 little change, if not no change, between 2019 and
20 2020 in terms of fatal crashes, even though we
21 experienced such decreases in traffic volumes in
22 the region. So, that has very important safety

1 implications.

2 And one thing I will say about all of
3 the decreased travel in the region, and an
4 important context to remember, is that the
5 decreased travel in the region is not necessarily
6 just a function of people like myself, who was
7 very fortunate to be able to work for an employer
8 that did the kind of work that would allow me to
9 do my work from home, and not require me to go to
10 my office, but a lot of the decreases in travel
11 also reflect the fact that a lot of people lost
12 their jobs. And that human element is something
13 that we can't forget, both in terms of job loss
14 in the region and the economic impacts, and how
15 that has affected households and communities, and
16 certainly, as it affects safety as well. There's
17 lots of different things to look at.

18 Next slide, please.

19 And so, that was sobering. So, I'll
20 give a little better news. In terms of the
21 environmental sector, comparing 2019 to 2020, we
22 saw far fewer unhealthy days in the region in

1 2020 compared to 2019. And a lot of that was
2 driven not only by reduced travel, but also other
3 sectors that we do track in terms of pollutants
4 that go into the air in our region.

5 The next slide is an interesting
6 visualization of a similar type of indicator, but
7 it includes more criteria pollutants than just
8 PM2.5. It also shows NOx and all the criteria
9 pollutants that we track.

10 From 2011 to 2020, you can see that
11 the bars near the top for those earlier years
12 have a lot more reds and oranges, indicating the
13 poorer healthy days and fewer greens. And over
14 time, we're getting better over time with some of
15 our emissions, but look at 2020. We saw a lot
16 of, quote-unquote, "green," or healthy days, in
17 comparison to previous years. So, that's a
18 positive benefit that we've been able to enjoy
19 during this pandemic period.

20 Next slide, please.

21 In tracking how much of the reduction
22 each of the contributing sectors make, we do

1 estimate that transportation has resulted in 40
2 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions;
3 electricity is about 8 percent reduction in
4 greenhouse gas emissions, and aviation is 65
5 percent average reduction in aviation and
6 greenhouse gas. And that, of course, will be
7 borne out by that slide I showed earlier that
8 showed the really significant decrease in
9 enplanements in the region.

10 Next slide, please.

11 So, I've done blasting you with all
12 the data slides. And this is, again, a program
13 that we're working. A lot of my colleagues are
14 collaborating to pull these slides together. I
15 have the privilege of presenting a lot of other
16 people's hard work, but I do want to recognize
17 that it's just not me doing this.

18 We'll continue to update these slides.
19 And as we're able to take deeper dives as more
20 data become available, we will continue to inform
21 our boards and committees and subcommittees, as
22 well as external stakeholders and interested

1 organizations. So, if there's ever a time that
2 you want me to come back, I'll be happy to do
3 that in the future.

4 But this concludes my presentation,
5 and I'll be happy to answer any questions along
6 with Johanna.

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Well, thank you so
8 much, Mr. Canan, for this presentation. Very
9 thorough.

10 Ms. McCrehan, do you have anything you
11 want to add before we open it up for discussion?

12 MS. MCCREHAN: I do not. Please go
13 ahead. Thank you.

14 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

15 Well, I will start with Commissioner
16 Dixon, and then, we'll go in for a round-robin
17 format using our normal seating order.

18 So, Commissioner Dixon?

19 COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes. First of
20 all, thank you for the voluminous and interesting
21 data. COG is up to it. It's work. I had the
22 honor of serving for two terms as the Chairman of

1 COG many years ago before I think some of you
2 guys were born. But I just think it's very
3 important that you do what you do.

4 I do want to point out, though, that
5 the statistics that we offer sort of mask out
6 some of the more challenged communities because
7 it's very wholesome, some promising numbers that
8 you look at, but it doesn't really drill down on
9 areas that are hit hardest. The good stuff sort
10 of covers up some of the real problem areas. And
11 I know you probably know that. It's too bad at
12 some point we don't burn it down into that level
13 to see what that's about.

14 But thank you for what you've done and
15 keep up the good work. And COG is good. Thank
16 you.

17 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

18 Commissioner Cash?

19 COMMISSIONER CASH: Yes, I just want
20 to thank you for the presentation. I think it
21 was very informative.

22 And I'll just say, anecdotally, I

1 still walk from the 14th Street Corridor, from
2 the Wilson Building here downtown about 10 blocks
3 north. And it was definitely a stark change last
4 March where it was crickets and you could just
5 walk back and forth. But I've really got to say
6 in the last few months it's starting to feel like
7 pre-pandemic already, as some of these workers
8 have started coming back, and you wonder when the
9 traffic control officers will be back out there.
10 So, it will be very interesting to see how this
11 pans out and what the mix of commercial and
12 office, and all that, will look like in the
13 future. But I'll definitely miss having the
14 streets to myself as a pedestrian going forward.

15 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner Davis?

16 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Thanks for the
17 presentation. I don't have any questions.

18 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner
19 Davenport?

20 COMMISSIONER DAVENPORT: Thank you so
21 much for this presentation. It's really
22 fascinating and definitely something that our

1 office is looking at, as we're looking to get the
2 federal government to sort of wrap its arms
3 around the best practices and lessons learned in
4 the federal telework program, as it has been
5 forced to expand exponentially and, essentially,
6 overnight erase all those traditional supervisory
7 and technology barriers that we've had to
8 expanding telework participation in the federal
9 government.

10 I wonder if you could talk a little
11 bit more about -- I mean, all of us in the
12 region, definitely those of us who commute into
13 D.C. from Virginia, are familiar with that thing
14 we look forward to every year, and not the cherry
15 blossoms, but the August commute. And I wonder,
16 as folks go back to work and we start to see
17 telework levels at which we've been seeking or
18 we've been striving for for years, to realize
19 year-round August-level commute patterns, is that
20 something we can hope for, as telework gets more
21 and more baked into federal agency or local
22 employer work flexibility plans? Or will we see

1 sort of a comparable level of maybe bailout from
2 public transit, in the wake of a pandemic that
3 will mitigate some of those anti-congestion
4 gains?

5 Thank you.

6 MR. CANAN: This is what I will offer,
7 an answer that really -- well, the response is I
8 don't know. And I think that so many of us don't
9 know yet, and that those are the questions that
10 are being asked at this time.

11 This presentation really was intended
12 to inform our situational understanding of what
13 has been and is occurring, to really better
14 prepare ourselves for what scenario might play
15 out in the future. But it's just difficult to
16 understand exactly what direction that we are
17 going to go in. And if anybody does know, I
18 really want to know the answer to that as well.

19 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

20 Commissioner Trueblood?

21 COMMISSIONER TRUEBLOOD: Thank you for
22 the presentation. Maybe you don't know this, but

1 I mention the COG maybe every meeting and at
2 least every other meeting. So, hopefully, I feel
3 like that is part of my job here. But I really
4 appreciate the work.

5 And I think a couple of things for us
6 to think about as a Commission, discussions about
7 the future of the federal workforce in relation
8 to this. It's interesting, your survey asks
9 about employers. Well, the federal government is
10 a major employer and will have decisions to make
11 about what the future of the workforce is,
12 telework, as mentioned by Commissioner Davenport,
13 but also work spaces and footprints. You know,
14 GSA I know will be working on these issues.

15 And that plays out as we think about
16 our workplace element; also, a number of
17 connections with our transportation element,
18 which I know we recently did. But I think this
19 data is quite helpful for that.

20 I also would just highlight the
21 incredibly important nexus between transportation
22 and climate around climate goals; that both are

1 embodied at the Metropolitan Washington Council
2 of Governments, at the Transportation Planning
3 Board, at the federal government as well. So,
4 these come together when we think about things
5 like siting that we discussed, but also parking
6 and transportation options.

7 I just saw, for example, another
8 example. Delegate Eleanor Norton Holmes just
9 sent a press release supporting the Southwest
10 Ecodistrict, and starting thinking about what
11 that might be as it relates to transportation is
12 important.

13 And then, finally, as we know, there
14 are not going to be as many people in our
15 downtown core 40 hours a week. They're not going
16 to be forced to go there. But what is the future
17 of central Washington? That, I think, has a
18 nexus with a whole bunch of work that we're
19 doing, but also the NCPC is doing around things
20 like Pennsylvania Avenue. And so, I think this
21 has a nexus with that, especially when we see the
22 amount of transportation that has been reduced in

1 the core and that may not be coming back in the
2 same way that it is in the suburbs.

3 So, I think there's a lot for us to
4 digest, a lot that kind of is connected with the
5 work of NCPC and with the work that we're doing
6 in the Office of Planning.

7 And I just appreciate the information.
8 So, thank you.

9 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

10 Commissioner McMahon?

11 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Thanks.

12 Important presentation. I appreciate it.

13 Certainly, Mr. Trueblood has got a lot
14 of great comments about what the future looks
15 like and what we do with this information. Very
16 specifically, looking at it from my day job here,
17 one of my concerns, as we look, is, how do we
18 make people feel comfortable about using mass
19 transit again? That's my biggest challenge.
20 More people will come back to work than are there
21 today. We know that's going to happen. In that
22 process, how do we convince them, through our

1 actions and the work we take working with our
2 mass transit providers, that, hey, it is actually
3 safe to ride a bus, ride a train? It's good to
4 come back and do that, and then, start working on
5 some of those environmental issues and energy
6 issues we just talked about.

7 But thanks for the report.

8 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

9 Commissioner May?

10 COMMISSIONER MAY: I appreciate
11 getting the report and getting some real data on
12 this, instead of just hearing anecdotally or the
13 selective data that we get in various news
14 reports. So, getting a full picture was very
15 informative. So, thank you very much.

16 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Commissioner Argo?

17 COMMISSIONER ARGO: I appreciate the
18 report. I was thinking about similar things this
19 morning. I filled up my car -- I won't tell you
20 what kind of car I have -- this morning with gas,
21 and I could not remember the last time I had been
22 to a gas station. I mean, that's a good thing.

1 And I think we've all had our own
2 personal experiences with how the pandemic has
3 affected the way we move, the people we see, how
4 we get there. And I appreciate seeing a lot of
5 that represented in the data that you shared with
6 us. Thank you for your work.

7 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you.

8 And Commissioner Wright?

9 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: First of all,
10 Tim, I wanted to say hello. I thought I
11 recognized the voice and I missed your name, and
12 I had no idea you were at the COG. So, hello.

13 MR. CANAN: Hello, Commissioner
14 Wright.

15 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I have a
16 question or two questions. One, I didn't see
17 this in my packet, if it was in there. And I
18 would like to get a copy, as I'm sure a lot of us
19 would, of this deck. If we could get that, that
20 would be great.

21 Because, yes, GSA is actively engaged
22 in trying to figure out what the after-times look

1 like from a portfolio perspective, as is every
2 commercial real estate developer everywhere, to
3 figure out what happens next.

4 And I was curious about the size of
5 the survey. How many people did you interview
6 about the teleworking and commuting patterns?

7 MR. CANAN: I don't have -- it was a
8 significantly, sufficiently large sample where it
9 was statistically significant at the regional
10 level, as well as several subregional levels, but
11 not quite down to every single individual
12 jurisdiction. But I can find the actual number
13 for you and follow up. I will be happy to do
14 that. But I can say that it was sufficiently
15 large to be statistically significant.

16 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay. Good.
17 Because I think others have already commented on
18 this. We have little slices of data, but this is
19 the biggest, this is the most comprehensive
20 dataset that I've seen. And it's good to have it
21 from an objective third party because every AE
22 firm in the country is cranking out a slide deck

1 every other week suggesting that they've got --
2 you know, I've said this before -- they have the
3 magic beans and they know or a crystal ball, and
4 unlike the rest of us, can see into the future.

5 I mean, so we're grabbing little legit
6 pieces from here and there, but a big picture
7 like this, and very specific to our region and
8 not generic, will be super-helpful.

9 If you could look that up for me, I
10 would really appreciate it because I think we
11 could really use this.

12 MR. CANAN: I will provide it to
13 Johanna, and then, staff can pass it back to you
14 in short order.

15 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Great. Thank
16 you.

17 MS. MCCREHAN: Perfect.

18 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Thank you,
19 Commissioner Wright.

20 And I'm so pleased that you asked for
21 a copy because that was something that I was
22 going to ask for as well. I think it's really

1 instructive to hear the questions and to hear
2 directly from the folks who are using different
3 modes of transportation.

4 I was particularly intrigued with your
5 slide that showed how people use different modes
6 before, during, and what they think they will do
7 afterwards. And I was curious, if you could go
8 back to that slide easily, the one about bikes?
9 I noticed that that had an uptick of people
10 thinking they would ride their bikes more after
11 the pandemic. And I was just curious of what you
12 had learned about that. Do you think it's
13 because people discovered they could ride their
14 bicycles during the pandemic and get to work?
15 That was just very interesting to me. What this
16 shows is that more people will ride the bikes
17 after.

18 MR. CANAN: That caught our attention,
19 too, and we're trying to better understand what
20 that means, too. But there is the feeling that
21 people not only just discovered riding their
22 bikes, but also discovered how nice it is not to

1 always be driving their car.

2 (Laughter.)

3 And they have discovered their bikes
4 as a recreational and personal activity, as
5 opposed to a commute activity, and then, may
6 realize that they can now use the exact
7 transportation modes to help get them to and from
8 work as well, in addition to the extra time that
9 many people have been able to enjoy sort of to
10 ride their bikes during this period.

11 VICE-CHAIR WHITE: Well, I think it's
12 really fascinating, especially with the
13 introduction of e-bikes and different cities are
14 grappling with where e-bikes are allowed to be
15 used, particularly on trail systems.

16 So, given our constant battle on
17 looking at transportation management plans and
18 parking ratios, I think having regular check-ins
19 with you, as you continue to track this data,
20 would be really helpful to us.

21 So, thank you for being here today.
22 This was incredibly valuable information.

1 And are there any other additional
2 comments or questions for Mr. Canan or Ms.
3 McCrehan?

4 (No response.)

5 Hearing none, I want to thank you
6 both. This was really useful and you kept
7 everyone's rapt attention, as the last agenda
8 item. So, even more impressive. So, thank you
9 for that.

10 This concludes our open session
11 agenda. The Commission will meet again on
12 Thursday, May 6th, at 1:00 p.m.

13 So, if there is no other business to
14 be brought before the Commission, the open
15 session is now adjourned.

16 So, thanks, everyone, and I hope you
17 have a wonderful Easter weekend.

18 (Whereupon, at 4:44 p.m., the open
19 session of the Commission was adjourned.)
20
21
22

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Date: 04-01-21

Place: teleconference

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