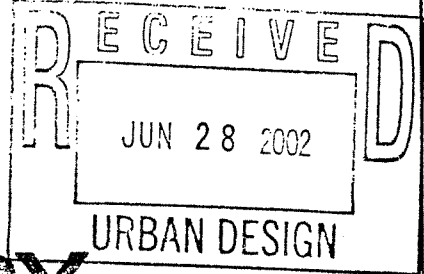


MACON-BIBB COUNTY ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



COPY

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING

HELD ON: MAY 29, 2002
HELD AT: HOLIDAY INN, ARKWRIGHT ROAD
 MACON, GEORGIA
PROJECT: FOREST HILL ROAD

Reported By: Patricia C. Ussery, CCR B-1238

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Claude Joiner Reporting Service, Inc.

1 MS. HIPPS: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.
2 My name is as Wilma Hipps. My associate over here in the
3 coral is Jan Moore and we're with the Gibraltar Group,
4 which is a company in Stone Mountain, Georgia that does
5 some to us interesting work. For example, we might be
6 retained by a hospital to conduct focus groups made up of
7 patients or to facilitate a dialogue between the
8 patients, the staff and management. We sometimes are
9 retained by neighborhood coalitions to facilitate their
10 dialogue with developers or local or state government.
11 Engineering firms frequently hire us to, if it's a long
12 project they bring us in as a neutral party to create
13 opportunities for the public to have input and to keep
14 the public informed.

15 We never take a project if we have any interest in
16 it at all, so we generally don't care one way or the
17 other about the outcome. In this instance, I have a dear
18 friend who lives in Macon, but as far as I know I've
19 never been on this road that is in question tonight.

20 We don't have very many rules, but a couple, and I
21 think it's probably unnecessary for me to even mention
22 them. But in a facilitated discussion such as this, we
23 can only have one person asking a question or commenting
24 at a time, and I would ask that you raise your and be
25 recognized. That will make it easier for everybody else

1 to hear what you have to say. It will be make it easier
2 for the court reporter to get down on the record the
3 comments that are being made and the questions that have
4 been asked.

5 When we have, when you all have decided that we're
6 done, and my role is to make sure that we're done by 6
7 o'clock, because that's when we're supposed to get out of
8 this room. When you all decide that we're done, if it's
9 5:40 and there are 20 minutes remaining, if anybody in
10 this audience has a question or comment that will be
11 fine. Otherwise, the resource people who are here have
12 offered to stay and meet with folks in the lobby who
13 would like to chat further.

14 I think Mr. Palladi of the Georgia Department of
15 Transportation has some remarks, but before he makes
16 those, I'd like for everybody around the table to tell
17 me, I can see who you are but who you represent. That
18 will kind of help me.

19 MS. HANBERRY: I'm Susan Hanberry and I'm
20 representing CAUTION Macon.

21 MR. SMITH: I'm Raymond Smith and I own the
22 corner building at Vineville and Forest Hill Road.

23 MS. HIPPS: Okay.

24 AUDIENCE: We're having trouble hearing. Could
25 they please speak louder.

1 MS. HIPPS: Well, if you all would try to speak
2 as loud as you can.

3 MR. RAULS: My name is T.J. Rauls and I own
4 Forest Pointe Apartments.

5 MS. BEELAND: My name is Jan Beeland and I
6 represent Macon Northside Hospital.

7 MR. PATTERSON: I'm Joe Patterson Jr. I'm an
8 attorney representing CAUTION Macon and the people who
9 live on Forsyth Hill Road.

10 MS. FRIED: I'm Patsy Fried and I live on Forest
11 Hill Road for the past 30 years, and I represent all of
12 the residents on Forest Hill Road.

13 MS. HIPPS: Well, you must have been born there.

14 MS. FRIED: Thank you so much.

15 MR. BOWERS: I'm Aaron Bowers and I'm representing
16 St. Francis Church.

17 MS. PETTIS: I'm Louise Pettis. I represent
18 Forest Hill United Methodist Church. I'm one of the
19 trustees.

20 MR. THORNTON: My name is Tim Thornton. I live on
21 Forest Hill Terrace, two doors off the project. And I
22 was asked to be here representing myself I suppose.

23 MS. HIPPS: Now did you say Tim or Timothy?

24 MR THORNTON: Tim.

25 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Israel?

1 MR. ISRAEL: I'm George Israel. I don't know who
2 I'm representing. I just got a letter asking me to be
3 here so I'm here. I grew up on Forest Hill Terrace so I
4 have interest in that regard.

5 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Palladi, I think, I know who you
6 are but maybe these folks don't.

7 MR. PALLADI: My name is Joe Palladi. I'm the
8 State Urban Design Engineer for the Georgia Department of
9 Transportation.

10 MR. OLMSTEAD: I'm Tommy Olmstead. I'm Chairman of
11 the Bibb County Commission.

12 MS. HIPPS: Now, resource people are here I am
13 told. I don't know who you are so I'm just going to ask
14 you to raise your hands as I call your agency, please.
15 Federal Highway Administration?

16 MR. GRANGER: David Granger with the Federal
17 Highway Administration.

18 MS. ALLEN: I'm Katie Allen with Federal Highway.

19 MS. HIPPS: We probably won't ask everybody to
20 say their name because I think maybe DOT has got a lot of
21 people here. Georgia Department of Transportation?
22 (Hands raised). Okay. County government? (Hands
23 raised). City of Macon? (Hands raised). Consultants?
24 to the city and county? (Hands raised). So those are
25 the people that hopefully will have the information that

1 will, that can respond to your questions, if you have
2 any, and who have the information that you will want.

3 As soon as Mr. Palladi makes the little presentation
4 than I understand he wants to make, we'll just go
5 straight to questions. Obviously this probably has been
6 talked about for a long time so I'm sure that you have
7 questions. I hope so. If not, I'm certain some of these
8 folks do. So, Mr. Palladi.

9 MR. PALLADI: Thank you. Again, to try to
10 structure the meeting a little bit, we'd like to hear
11 from the people around the table first. And if time
12 permits, we'll take questions from the floor.

13 But to preview a little bit on the history of the
14 project. You probably well know it, but we'll go over it
15 just everyone understands what the history is. In
16 February of 1982 the Forest Hill Road/Forsyth Road
17 corridor study was prepared by the Macon Metropolitan
18 Planning Organization, and the MATS Policy Committee
19 adopted the study. The projects were included in the
20 fiscal year 1983 to 1987 Transportation Improvement Plan,
21 so this project is not new. In October 1983 the
22 construction work program included a widening and
23 reconstruction project on Forest Hill Road from Overlook
24 to Wimbish. July of 1990, the project was placed on hold
25 within two years of being added to the construction work

1 program pending implementation of the recommended
2 connector road between Forest Hill and Forsyth. December
3 of 1990, the Department sends a letter to Charter Medical
4 to confirm right-of-way dedication and setbacks. This
5 had been approved by the Macon Planning and Zoning
6 Commission to expand their campus. December of '94, the
7 2015 Transportation Plan was adopted by Macon. It was
8 recommended widening of Forest Hill Road from Forsyth to
9 Wimbish and Wimbish to Northside Drive. In February of
10 1995, the memo from Planning and Programming, that is the
11 Georgia DOT, requesting the southern terminus be shifted
12 from Overlook to Forsyth Road. April 1995, the
13 construction work program, that's the Georgia DOT
14 official program, revised to reflect the new project
15 limits, Forsyth Road to Wimbish Road. The revised
16 project limits were included in the adopted 2015
17 transportation plan and voter-approved a SPLOST. August
18 1995, Forest Hill from Wimbish to Northside Drive was
19 added again to the construction work program. Let me
20 explain again what the construction work program is.
21 It's a five-year program of active projects in design
22 going to construction subject to the approval of the
23 plans, and the major point, the approval of the
24 environmental document. December of 1998, the Department
25 approves the three-lane section on Wimbish to Northside.

1 Now I have to remind you also that originally in the
2 plan this was scheduled for a four-lane, and in doing the
3 traffic studies by the consultant it was decided that a
4 three-lane section would suffice. The MATS 2025 plan was
5 reaffirmed, the 2015 plan was recommending widening
6 Forest Hill to four lanes from Forsyth Road to Wimbish
7 and three lanes from Wimbish to Northside Drive. And in
8 July 2001 the office of Planning again reviewed traffic
9 volumes and projections in response to comments and
10 questions that were a part of the public meeting and
11 other correspondences that we received in light of the
12 public meeting and from concerned citizens.

13 So, again, as you can see, the project is not new.
14 It's been contemplated for many years. A lot of times
15 you say that I want to widen Road A from B to C and
16 everybody has an idea. Well, that sounds like a good
17 idea. Then it comes to me and my designers, and that's
18 when we give it dimension because when you say widen Road
19 A from B to C, everybody in this room has a different
20 idea of what should be done. Do you add lanes? Do you
21 add turn lanes? What kind of shoulder do you put on the
22 road? Do you put sidewalks? No sidewalks? Wide
23 sidewalks? Differing points of view. So in reviewing
24 the project and coordinating with the local government
25 and listening to the people and the coordination that

1 they went through through not only the planning process
2 but some of the design process, this design that I have
3 on the boards behind me. This is the public hearing
4 display. There has been no changes made to the plan yet
5 subject to holding this meeting. And we want to get
6 feedback and input from the committee and others as to
7 what is the desires of the community.

8 Now with the Citizens Advisory Committee we listen
9 and we do what we can do to address the need and purpose,
10 to address the desires of the community, to address the
11 requirements of the NEPA, the National Environmental
12 Protection Act, for the environmental document, which
13 protects not only the natural environment but the man-
14 made environment. We're here to talk about the design.
15 We're not here to talk about the planning process. As I
16 read off, you can see that there has been many years
17 involved in the planning process of an alleged, or a
18 possible improvement to this corridor.

19 I think everybody in this room, or hope that
20 everybody in this room is familiar with the project, and
21 if you're not, we'll go over it very quickly. The
22 southern portion from Vineville up to Wimbish is proposed
23 to be a four-lane section. That's four 12-foot lanes
24 divided by a 20-foot raised 6 inches grassed or landscape
25 median. The shoulders are 12-foot urban shoulders, curb

1 and gutter, proposed with 5-foot sidewalks to promote
2 walking, pedestrian exercise, whatever use that you'd
3 like to use the sidewalks for. This is not a part of the
4 Macon bicycle plan so no bicycle facility is proposed in
5 this corridor. The project because of the median would
6 have median openings at Vineville, at Ridge Avenue with
7 the only restriction of turning being the northbound left
8 which is restricted today and access to the Forest Pointe
9 Apartments, the access to the hospital and a median
10 opening at Wimbish at which time the median is played out
11 into the northern project.

12 The northern project is a three-lane project.
13 Thirteen-foot lanes with a 14-foot center turn lane. We
14 don't need median openings. It does include sidewalks on
15 one side. There is a beaten path along portions of this
16 road indicating that there is somebody out there walking
17 along this road. The reason, you're going to say, well,
18 why don't you do the three-lane down here because you're
19 proposing it up here, and we'll get into some of your
20 specific questions about traffic, but the main reason is
21 that as traffic approaches Wimbish going north you have
22 in the vicinity of I believe it's 28,000 vehicles
23 proposed, projected in the design year for this project.
24 When you reach Wimbish, you have a sizable reduction in
25 traffic, around 5,000 vehicles, which left off of

1 Wimbish. Now, this is two-way traffic, not all going
2 northbound or all going southbound. It's both north and
3 southbound traffic, average daily traffic. And because
4 of the reduction at Wimbish, the traffic reduces in the
5 projections that allows for three-lane section. That's
6 why the concepts are different, or the stretches of road
7 are proposed to be different.

8 The one option that we have that we've proposed is
9 how we treat these two streets: Overlook and The Prado.
10 One way, which is shown on the upper display, is cul-de-
11 sac them. With the median there the access could only be
12 right in and right out. The location of these streets in
13 respect to the intersections would not allow full access
14 left turns in or left turns out. The other alternative
15 that we're proposing is to leave them open, right in
16 right out because of the median. If you want to get in,
17 you come along pull in or you can pull out, you go to the
18 next median opening, you wait for the protected movement
19 and you can make a U-turn. One comment I regularly get
20 is, oh, that's a dangerous U-turn. Notice the word,
21 "protected". The use of arrows for the left-hand turn
22 movement, the specific phase for turning vehicles can be
23 utilized to protect those turning vehicles from any
24 oncoming traffic. That oncoming traffic would see a red
25 ball, a red light. I try to speak, again, sometimes I

1 slip into engineerese and I'll try to speak English with
2 you as we talk about this.

3 Again, anyone that lives along here that would have
4 a driveway that would come out to a median would make a
5 right turn out of their driveway, go down, make a U-turn
6 and come back. And, yes, it has certain, it does take
7 you out of a direct path, but the median functions as a
8 safety device. It separates opposite flows of traffic.
9 It provides a place for signage. It is actually a
10 traffic calming device because it complements or allows
11 for traffic to progress in a more uniform fashion.

12 It does not promote speeding as some people will
13 allege. Because, again, what is proposed is a progression
14 of signals such that as you if you accelerate at a
15 reasonable rate of speed and you travel the speed limit
16 then as you approach the next intersection the light
17 would turn green. If you don't do that, if you start off
18 accelerate above a standard and you travel over the speed
19 limit, you will stop at the next traffic signal. It does
20 not exactly promote somebody to run and gun and stop and
21 run and gun and stop. Again, trying to regulate the
22 speed as best we can with the traffic signals.

23 And then the most important thing, and one of the
24 more important things that a median provides is a refuge
25 for pedestrians. As you walk across the street with a

1 median, the median turns the street into two one-way
2 streets. Now, as we, we would promote people crossing at
3 the crosswalks. And if you've ever been in any city,
4 anywhere I've ever gone, people sometimes don't do that.
5 They cross mid-block because I want to go there, not
6 realizing what jeopardy they place themselves in. By
7 saying that it promotes pedestrian, a pedestrian can walk
8 to the median, stop, they look left before they cross,
9 they see the coast is clear, they get to the median, they
10 look right and the coast is clear, and they walk out and
11 finish their trip across the street. These have been
12 proven to reduce accident rates by 50 percent, not only
13 for pedestrians but for vehicles. Studies have shown
14 that. Studies, recent studies, have also shown that the
15 median does not cause economic harm to businesses or to
16 neighborhoods established along them. A study was done
17 by Texas Transportation Institute in Texas changing
18 multi-lane sections raising up with medians.

19 Again, the research, what we use as design criteria
20 is not frivolous. It is not arbitrary. It comes from
21 years of established research and implementation and
22 observations of the operations of those implementations
23 to insure user's safety. And when I say, "user", I'm
24 just not talking about cars, I'm talking about
25 pedestrians, I'm talking about bicyclists, even though

1 there's no bicycle lanes. We're talking about safety
2 here. There's one thing I will not build or design and
3 that's an unsafe road, period. And what we have proposed
4 includes safety devices, safety in the design for
5 implementation.

6 MS. HIPPS: Okay.

7 MR. ISRAEL: Let me ask a question.

8 MR. PALLADI: Okay.

9 MR. ISRAEL: You said at Wimbish Road it was
10 reduced by 5,000 or to 5,000?

11 MR. PALLADI: By 5,000.

12 MR. ISRAEL: So from --

13 MR. PALLADI: From 28 down into the mid 20's. The
14 design year traffic goes up to 28,000 and would be
15 reduced by 5,000 down to the low 20's.

16 MS. HIPPS: Does anybody else have a question?

17 MR. PATTERSON: I have a question.

18 MS. HIPPS: Yes, sir.

19 MR. PATTERSON: I'll just remain seated. Mr.
20 Palladi, I called you on the telephone the other day
21 asking you to put two people on this committee. You have
22 15 when you could put 25. Now I've been in the legal
23 profession about 56 years. I'm not an engineer and I
24 don't know the terminology. Education requires
25 vocabulary. But when you get into the law I know a

1 little bit about that. But I don't know engineering and
2 we wanted somebody on here that could make sure from an
3 engineering point of view. And I just wanted to know why
4 you wouldn't put somebody on who knows about that. On
5 this program, I would like to know whether you and the
6 Commissioner, did you pick these people? Because what
7 we're concerned here is Forest Hill Road, you've got one
8 individual on Forest Hill Road. This is this lady right
9 here. You've got four individuals that are homeowners,
10 and you've got 11 individuals that's either concerned
11 with religion, business or consumption, one of the two.
12 You haven't got an authority --

13 MS. HIPPS: Excuse me just one minute, sir. Let
14 me ask one question of this group. Is this of interest
15 to all of you or would you like for that to be discussed
16 later because it's your agenda.

17 MR. THORNTON: I would say that the panel is what it
18 is. We're all here, dressed up and ready to party.

19 MR. HIPPS: All right. Oh, I didn't dress up for
20 the occasion. All right, Mr. Patterson, yes, sir, go
21 ahead.

22 MR. PATTERSON: I don't want you to think I'm trying
23 to be insulting.

24 MR. PALLADI: No, sir. It's a fair and valid
25 question.

1 MR. PATTERSON: That's just my personality. Because
2 I don't want to offend anybody. Everybody has different
3 ideas. Everybody has a way of the thinking things.

4 MR. ISRAEL: You stated it very simply.

5 MR. PATTERSON: I don't want to offend anybody.

6 MR. PALLADI: No, sir. I appreciate the energy
7 that you put into it because it's a good question.

8 MR. PATTERSON: Well, I'm really concerned, you know,
9 if you want to know the truth about it, it won't affect
10 me. I'm concerned about the other individual, and I
11 don't know how far I can go with this, so you stop me or
12 somebody else stop me. I have lots of things here that I
13 would anticipate saying. I may be out of order, so
14 please --

15 MR. PALLADI: Can I answer one question at the
16 time? Would that help?

17 MR. PATTERSON: Sure.

18 MR. PALLADI: The question is why didn't we add
19 people? Is that --

20 MR. PATTERSON: I'm sorry?

21 MR. PALLADI: -- the question? Why did we not add
22 additional folks to the committee?

23 MR. PATTERSON: I also told you this: You could add
24 two and take two of the real estate people off and put
25 somebody on Forest Hill Road.

1 MR. PALLADI: That's correct.

2 MR. PATTERSON: You see, what I'm concerned with here
3 is you've got individuals that don't live on Forest Hill
4 Road. The people on Forest Hill Road is the ones that's
5 going to suffer pollution, automobile wrecks, loud noise
6 and big trucks I'm assuming that if we go through with
7 the thing. Of course, we don't need it in the first
8 place. Not only that, but if you keep it at two lanes
9 like it is, understanding now that some improvements can
10 be made, there's no questions about that, but if you
11 leave the two lanes, and the reason for that is this: If
12 you leave it to two lanes, the people from other than
13 Forest Hill Road or contiguous intersections will go to
14 where five and six lanes like Northside Drive or
15 something of that nature. But if you put it there,
16 you've got through a community, a well-established
17 community, a roadway that's as wide as Northside Drive
18 and Riverside Drive. What's the purpose for that?

19 MR. PALLADI: Are you done with the question?

20 MR. PATTERSON: Yes, sir. Answer that please.

21 MR. PALLADI: Okay. Thank you. The first question
22 was why did I not add additional representation to the
23 committee, and correct me if I'm wrong, if I've misstated
24 your question or series of questions that you asked.

25 MR. PATTERSON: I want you to do the same thing with

1 me.

2 MR. PALLADI: I will. The reason was is that we
3 thought we had a cross section, and we still feel we have
4 a cross-section of people that utilize the corridor.
5 While people are affected on Forest Hill, the roads that
6 lead to Forest Hill are also affected. The people that
7 pass through the area are also affected by the decisions
8 that were made.

9 MR. PATTERSON: Nobody is affected -- excuse me. I'm
10 sorry. Go ahead.

11 MR. PALLADI: Everyone is affected, whether it's --

12 MR. PATTERSON: No, sir. I disagree with that
13 altogether.

14 MR. PALLADI: -- by property acquisition --

15 MS. HIPPS: One person at a time please. Let him
16 finish before you speak, as he did for you.

17 MR. PALLADI: All people are affected that utilize
18 the corridor, whether you live here or you pass through
19 here. Again, through the planning model it came out that
20 a need existed on Forest Hill Road. We're responding to
21 the need that was determined locally through the planning
22 process of the need to widen Forest Hill Road.

23 Why did I not add additional people, because I
24 thought I had a good cross section and that we wanted a
25 meaningful group where people were given adequate time to

1 ask questions. The more people you have, the more
2 questions that will be redundant occur, and we wanted to
3 keep the group organized so that all could hear the
4 response.

5 The question, the second question I heard, and
6 correct me if I'm wrong, is why is it not being left as a
7 two-lane facility with some improvements? Is that a
8 correct paraphrase?

9 MR. PATTERSON: Yes, sir.

10 MR. PALLADI: The reason being is that through the
11 planning process, and again the planning process is, uses
12 traffic between intersections sort of like to delay
13 between intersections. And in the planning process it
14 was determined that without improvements the future
15 traffic would cause a less than desirable level of
16 service. Operations, the delay that would be caused by
17 increased traffic and the left turning movements made out
18 of a single lane existing today would create additional
19 delays not only for the residents but also for people
20 that pass through the area and pass to the area. The
21 residents also have guests, they have family that visit,
22 et cetera. You also have hospitals and apartments and
23 items that are higher density and higher usage at
24 different times of the day that would be affected by the
25 congestion. Through the planning process, again, it was

1 denoted that a four-lane section was desired. Now,
2 that's the legs between the intersections.

3 My job is then to look at the intersections and how
4 they operate and how safely or fluidly they can or could
5 or should operate. And we did that, and that's where we
6 started seeing that additional laneage was needed beyond
7 the single lane in each direction. We examined a three
8 lane section for the entire length. From the comments
9 that we received, from input that we received from the
10 local government, we examined a three-lane section, that
11 being one lane in each direction continuous throughout
12 the project with exclusive left turn lanes at the street
13 intersections.

14 What we found was the level of service was not
15 adequate in the design year. And if I did put a single
16 turn lane in at the street intersections, that the
17 mainline queues, the storage required and putting in some
18 singalized intersections to promote these left-hand turns
19 or to allow left-hand turns to be made safely, that the
20 through queue distances would increase. That's the
21 traffic that would be wanting just to pass through the
22 area the backup at each signal, at each intersection,
23 would increase in length. What that would do would
24 require the left turn lanes to become longer so that a
25 person that's waiting in traffic could get in the left

1 turn lane and make a left turn at the next possible
2 signal without having to wait for the through traffic to
3 clear and then finally get into the left turn lane. We
4 looked at that and again it did not provide us with an
5 acceptable level of service.

6 We also saw that the taper lanes for some of the
7 intersections, that being the length it took to develop
8 the left turn lane to provide an adequately long left
9 hand turn lane based on the through backup of traffic at
10 these signals and the extended left turn lane that's
11 required and the taper it would take to taper back to the
12 existing width that many of those tapers would overlap
13 with the previous intersection. What we call that is
14 hour glassing where you widen at the intersection, you
15 narrow it down, you widen back out at the next
16 intersection, you narrow it down and you widen back out.
17 We looked at that for both not only the two-lane section
18 but the four-lane section. And in the four-lane section
19 it was even more of an overlap of tapers because of that,
20 obviously because of that additional width.

21 The reason that the laneage is what it is is it came
22 through the planning process, we confirmed it in the
23 design process looking at the intersections, so not only
24 looking at the legs between the intersections, but we're
25 looking at the operation of each intersection and saw

1 that the overlap, or the congestion, was unacceptable for
2 the operations in the corridor.

3 MS. HIPPS: Yes, ma'am.

4 MR. PATTERSON: I still --

5 MS. HIPPS: Listen, one of the other rules is
6 that I'll recognize you again after somebody who has not
7 asked a question gets to ask one. I always recognize a
8 new speaker. Yes, ma'am, Ms. Hanberry?

9 MS. HANBERRY: Just a quick comment and a question
10 and maybe another comment. The traffic volumes that you
11 told us, 28,000 cars, that's under a build scenario,
12 correct:

13 MR. PALLADI: That is correct.

14 MS. HANBERRY: And do you have a quick, I don't need
15 a 30-minute answer, but just a quick answer for what the
16 traffic volume would be under a no build?

17 MR. SHEETS: What?

18 MS. HANBERRY: If you don't do the project.

19 MS. HIPPS: Just a little bit louder for the
20 court reporter.

21 MR. TUSSING: That's 18 to 19 thousand between
22 Wimbish and Vineville.

23 MS. HANBERRY: Okay. So 18 to 19 thousand if you
24 don't build it --

25 MR. RYLE: I think you're talking about two

1 different things.

2 MS. HANBERRY: If you do build it, it's 28,000?

3 MR. PALLADI: The 28,000 is the traffic regardless
4 of the design.

5 MS. HANBERRY: Wait. Wait. Wait. No. I asked one
6 simple question.

7 MR. PALLADI: Right, and I gave you one simple
8 answer.

9 MS. HANBERRY: Under no build what's the traffic
10 projection?

11 MR. PALLADI: The no build is still 28,000

12 MS. HANBERRY: No, it's not, not according to your
13 models, and I have those figures. And that was one quick
14 question because under no build the traffic volumes are
15 much lower.

16 I also, I understand where Mr. Patterson is coming
17 from. As I understand it, this meeting was convened at
18 the request of the Federal Highway Administration to
19 address residents' concerns, and close to 300 people
20 attended the public hearing, and most of those people,
21 and lots of them are in this room, were very distressed
22 about the project. So it appears that the residents'
23 concerns are not adequately represented on here. And I
24 did not see on the list the City engineer on the list, or
25 the Mayor on the list, and other City representation.

1 Most of this road is in the city. That's just a comment.

2 Now, just a couple of things. When you were talking
3 about the planning process, I have the long-range
4 transportation plan, the 2025 Plan, which incidentally
5 was not passed by the Citizens Advisory Committee of the
6 Macon Area Transportation Study, so this was passed
7 without citizen approval. And it, right in here it lists
8 a number of projects: Edgewood Avenue, Forest Hill
9 widening, I-75/Forsyth/Hardeman/Georgia Avenue
10 interchange modifications, Pio Nono widening, South
11 Downtown Connector, Vineville Avenue widening. And right
12 below this it says that there was no significant
13 differences in performances one way or the other
14 systemwide if these projects were not done. So if this
15 project doesn't happen, our long-range transportation
16 plan says that it's not going to affect the system.

17 Now, one of the things that I think the citizens are
18 concerned about and one of the reasons why this meeting
19 is taking place and one of the things that NEPA says we
20 must do is to take into account the values of the
21 community. We can deal with the lower level of service
22 on this road if it protects our neighborhoods. And we
23 don't have to (audience interruption).

24 Now, from the minutes of a meeting that was held at
25 the Georgia Department of Transportation, the question

1 was asked as to the level of service of each of the
2 alternatives. Mr. Johnson, I'll find out which Mr.
3 Johnson that is, he said that the design alternative for
4 a three-lane on Forest Hill Road would operate at a Level
5 of Service C, the four-lane would operate at a Level of
6 Service B, and for those of you who don't know, these are
7 how fast you can move on the road. And there are plenty
8 of roads in Georgia that have a lower level of service
9 that have chosen to protect the neighborhood. One of
10 them is East Paces Ferry in Atlanta. The reason that's a
11 two-lane road that carries 30,000 cars a day is because
12 of who lives on it. The Governor and some of the
13 wealthiest people in the state. We don't deserve any
14 less than they do. If our values are to protect the
15 neighborhood, we don't need an over-designed and over-
16 built project. And your own documents say that we can
17 handle the traffic.

18 Now, I'm not saying we don't need intersection
19 improvements. Most of the accidents on this road are
20 rear-end collisions, probably because of intersections.
21 And it makes sense to do that. It does not make sense to
22 three-lane an entire section. It's not going to increase
23 the level of service because you're not adding capacity
24 with that third lane. But if you put the intersection
25 improvements where they're needed and leave it a two-lane

1 road, we can handle it.

2 The other problem we have in our system is that we
3 don't have any kind of solution for Vineville, and if
4 you're increasing the amount of traffic by 10,000 cars
5 and day in the build scenario, then we have a bigger
6 problem on Vineville. And right now we have no solution
7 to that. And until that can be solved, we shouldn't do
8 anything to this road. This is not a pressing need in
9 our community. Thank you. (Audience interruption).

10 MS. HIPPS: I am authorized to turn out the
11 lights and clear the room if there are responses from
12 people who are not up here until you are called on, and
13 that includes applause. Please respect the process.
14 Does anybody have anything that they'd like to add to
15 what Ms. Hanberry said or to supplement it? (Hand
16 raised). Yes, Mr. --

17 MR. BOWERS: Bowers.

18 MS. HIPPS: -- Bowers?

19 MR. BOWERS: I haven't.....

20 MR. PALLADI: Can I respond to the comments or
21 questions?

22 MS. HIPPS: Oh, yeah. I didn't realize that you
23 were prepared to respond.

24 MR. PALLADI: Yes, I am.

25 MS. HIPPS: All right.

1 MR. PALLADI: Again, the volumes come from the
2 planning model, and, Don, if you'd like to talk about the
3 modeling that was done with the no build.

4 MR. TUSSING: Yeah. In the document that Susan was
5 referring to, there was an alternative run done where
6 they took out the projects and the project that they took
7 out was not the entire segment of Forest Hill, it was the
8 segment between Wimbish and Northside. That is correct,
9 I believe.

10 MS. HANBERRY: Okay. I don't know. It may have
11 said that.

12 MR. TUSSING: Yeah, I think so, because Tom and I
13 talked about that at the last meeting. So that was the
14 only clarification I wanted to make.

15 MS. HIPPS: You all, the court reporter is having
16 a hard time hearing you.

17 MS. HANBERRY: Did you run a model without the other
18 segment, too?

19 MS. HIPPS: If you all could speak up for the
20 court reporter's benefit.

21 MR. TUSSING: Pardon?

22 MS. HANBERRY: Did you run a model without the
23 segment from Wimbish to --

24 MR. TUSSING: I did that at Tom's request, yes.

25 MS. HANBERRY: And what was that?

1 MR. TUSSING: But the discussion in the long-range
2 transportation plan, the only segment on Forest Hill that
3 was included was from Wimbish to Northside Drive.

4 MR. PALLADI: The citizens' concerns. I tried to
5 jot down as you went the things. Citizens' concerns,
6 they mean a lot to us at DOT, not only to Federal Highway
7 and not only to the citizens. I've done numerous citizen
8 involvement meetings in Macon predominantly for the
9 interstates, but we have done it for other projects, and
10 we will continue to do that to ensure that the citizens
11 are heard from. But, unfortunately, sometimes these are
12 not votes that we go through, that the good of the
13 general public, not only the residents, has to be
14 weighed. While the impact to the neighborhood is a heavy
15 weight that has to be determined, measured, defined, but
16 it also has to look at the general characteristics of
17 flow in the corridor, around the corridor, et cetera.

18 Traffic is like a tube of toothpaste. This is
19 unscientific. I press the tube of toothpaste, what
20 happens elsewhere in the tube, it goes somewhere else.
21 It goes somewhere else in the tube or it shoots out the
22 end. We're seeing growth through the traffic modeling,
23 and that's, where does the traffic go? The local
24 authorities have decided through the planning process
25 that this is one of the areas where increasing traffic

1 will occur. The lower level of service that you're
2 willing to accept, some people may not be willing to
3 accept it. Those people destined for the hospital or to
4 some of the other businesses or some of the other
5 apartments or some of the other homes may not share your
6 direct concern.

7 Level of service is not based on speed. It's a
8 measurement of delay. Read your capacity manual. Level
9 of service is based on seconds of delay that a driver
10 will encounter at a stop condition or at any restriction
11 in flow. It does measure a calculable running speed, but
12 level of service is measured by delay. You said that the
13 level of service on the three-lane was a C and the level
14 of service on the four-lane was a B. That is correct,
15 north of Wimbish, and that's why the Department has
16 agreed with the local authorities to narrow the original
17 four-lane section north of Wimbish to three lanes. In an
18 urban area Level of Service D is acceptable, but with D
19 comes some congestion. A is free flow, B is slight
20 restriction, C is more restriction, D you're getting in
21 congestion.

22 East Paces Ferry Road in Atlanta, I drive it not
23 regularly but I've driven it. A lot of stop and go on
24 that road. The City of Atlanta has not felt it necessary
25 to add it to their transportation plan. That's why a

1 project hasn't been done. It's never been in the
2 regional transportation plan. It cannot then go to the
3 transportation improvement plan. Again, the terminology,
4 the regional transportation plan is the 25-year plan.
5 It's everything you, that people want to see in the next
6 25 years. I have trouble sometimes seeing till tomorrow.
7 Lord knows looking 25 years out. If I could see
8 tomorrow, I would know six good lottery numbers to win
9 the lottery, but I don't. So we must then base it, the
10 growth based on past and present growth and what they
11 feel is the future growth of the area. Again, East Paces
12 Ferry is not in the regional transportation plan.

13 Rear-end collisions, yes. They're caused by stop
14 and go traffic. And the third lane does not add
15 capacity, that's correct. That's a correct statement.
16 But it does get the turning movement out of the through
17 lane that allows traffic to proceed on to the next
18 driveway or the next intersection or the next roadway
19 destination. It's not capacity, that's correct. In
20 Atlanta, under air quality restrictions, I can add turn
21 lanes, but I cannot add through lanes, because through
22 lanes are viewed as capacity. But the turn lane does
23 free up the through or the right turn movement that can
24 be made further down the roadway.

25 And then no solution for Vineville, that's correct.

1 It's a tough nut to crack because of the history, because
2 of the businesses, because of the politics that you
3 alluded to on East Paces Ferry Road also, et cetera. But
4 traffic is increasing on Vineville. It has increased
5 much higher than when I was here, when I designed the Pio
6 Nono project. Yes, I had a previous life as an actual
7 designer, and I did the Pio Nono project, the five-lane
8 project. The one north up through Vineville. And I met
9 with neighborhoods much like yours that said, no. And we
10 were able to reach a consensus of what needed to be done.
11 Going back to citizens' concerns, that's why we're here.

12 MS. HIPPS: All right, we're ready for Mr.
13 Bowers.

14 MR. BOWERS: Did you say that --

15 MS. HIPPS: Speak up, sir, if you can.

16 MR. BOWERS: Did you say that this project was
17 actually first conceived, was that in 1984 you said?

18 MR. PALLADI: 1982 it started with a study, and the
19 construction work program included it in 1983.

20 MR. BOWERS: What was the reason for this in 1982?
21 Was it low level of service then or visionary?

22 MR. RYLE: It was primarily because of
23 development that had been taking place on Forest Hill
24 Road. Just before that, if you remember the apartments
25 were built in that curve and then the other apartments

1 were built next to the church. Then the hospital came
2 shortly thereafter. And we knew that there was a
3 propensity for a lot of development in that area. If you
4 look at the tax maps back when that development was done
5 of those areas, we acquired or made them give us
6 additional right-of-way. We have about 100 feet of
7 right-of-way in that turn. So we knew something had to
8 be done. Joe Wetherington was the City Engineer then,
9 and I was fairly new to the process. And the reason I
10 know this is because he and I walked and took a look at
11 it. And there were many discussions with Urban Design at
12 Georgia DOT, and rural design. We had both a rural
13 section that had no curbs and gutters and ditches and
14 what have you and urban design sections where we had the
15 ditches and culverts to catch the drainage and what have
16 you. And I think as Mr. Clay will tell you it's a big
17 drainage problem there where Wimbish comes in to Forest
18 Hill Road. So we had the development momentum going on
19 in that area. We knew it was developing. The models
20 were starting to show us that the traffic was growing and
21 it would be a problem, particularly from Wimbish to the
22 Forsyth Road section, so we added it to the program very
23 early on.

24 MR. BOWERS: I'm not an engineer and I don't know
25 very much about this stuff at all, but does it mean

1 anything that we originally started to think about doing
2 this in 1982 and we didn't do anything, and now it's
3 2002, 20 years later, yet the level of service is still
4 adequate there? Does that mean anything?

5 MR. RYLE: I don't know that it's still
6 adequate. If you go through there at peak periods, at
7 any of the stop lights, Wimbish in any direction, you
8 have a large backup of traffic. Trying to get through
9 that area at peak periods of time, and I try to do it
10 daily because I go play golf out that way and I recognize
11 it daily, there's a lot more traffic and a lot more delay,
12 and a lot lower level of service today than it was back
13 in the early days of '82 and '83.

14 MS. HIPPS: Yes, sir. Mr. Smith?

15 MR. SMITH: How much of the traffic count
16 projections that you're making are contingent upon, if
17 any, the crosstown connector that was proposed to come
18 through, what is that, Lake Street or Park?

19 MR. PALLADI: The traffic that comes from the
20 model, we use the modeling traffic and it looks at the
21 whole network and any improvement that's contained in
22 that transportation plan. From that we also do
23 intersection counts and then refer those counts, expand
24 those counts, based upon the growth. It's like
25 amortizing money. There's a certain growth rate. And,

1 again, that can be a point of contention. What is the
2 growth rate. And that's one of the contentions on this
3 corridor. But we've looked at those traffic and we feel
4 very comfortable that the applicable growth rate has been
5 applied to the network of traffic and then to project it
6 into the future.

7 MR. SMITH: And that's under the assumption that
8 that road will be built out?

9 MR. PALLADI: Any corridor that is included in your
10 regional transportation plan will be built, yes, sir, any
11 corridor.

12 MR. QUEEN: You're talking about the Jones County
13 cross county connector?

14 MR. SMITH: I'm talking about the road that's
15 going to connect --

16 MS. HANBERRY: No, he's talking about the Northwest
17 Parkway.

18 MR. QUEEN: Oh, you're talking Northwest Parkway.

19 MR. SMITH: Yeah, the Northwest Parkway.

20 MR. PALLADI: Again, the network traffic is
21 utilized.

22 MR. SMITH: So it assumes that that -- So when
23 you don't build this out but you build what I believe is
24 a four-lane divided highway coming into Forsyth on the
25 other side, from the Mall across, what happens to Forest

1 Hill if you don't build this out but you build the other
2 side?

3 MR. PALLADI: Again, the traffic will be delivered,
4 if I understand your question, the traffic will be
5 delivered to this area, and if no improvements will be
6 made, then the level of service will degrade to an
7 unreasonable level.

8 MR. SMITH: Because I tend to agree with a lot of
9 things being said here about the issue of not having a
10 need right now, but I have great concern that we bring
11 this highway across the tracks and butt it into Forest
12 Hill and don't do anything to Forest Hill and expect
13 there to be any kind of motion going down that road.

14 MR. PALLADI: Again, it's based on the network.

15 MS. HIPPS: Yes, ma'am.

16 MS. HANBERRY: Just a couple of things. First of
17 all --

18 AUDIENCE: Susan, would you stand up. I think
19 people are having trouble hearing you.

20 MS. HANBERRY: I think Mr. Bowers made a real
21 interesting point that we keep hearing about growth, and
22 in the last 20 years the growth rate, and I've looked at
23 the traffic counts, and I have a graph of it here, is
24 pretty much flat on Forest Hill Road. Now, there is also
25 this phenomenon called induced traffic, and this is so

1 counter-intuitive it's kind of hard to figure out because
2 you'd think that if you widen a road it makes the traffic
3 less, but that's not what happens. If you widen the
4 road, more people use it. It's called induced traffic,
5 and it's a well understood engineering phenomenon.
6 Probably the most egregious example of that happened in
7 New York City in 1936 when they built the Tribro
8 (phonetically) bridge that they said would solve all of
9 New York City's traffic woes, and a month later they had
10 the worst traffic jam in the history of New York City.
11 And it's one of the problems that they're having in
12 Atlanta.

13 If there's a no build, we're not going to see that
14 huge increase in traffic. But once again, this gets back
15 to values. If we're willing to put up with a little bit
16 of delay at peak hours, and we should not build roads for
17 peak hour traffic, particularly roads in neighborhood,
18 and you're seeing, this is a community value. We're
19 willing to put up with the delay to save our
20 neighborhoods. And it's not going to have that much more
21 traffic if we don't build the wide road. We can handle
22 the safety issues by creating intersection improvements.
23 You don't have to do the full three lanes. And there are
24 certainly some intersections that need to be improved.

25 We should look at putting a multi-use path in the

1 existing right-of-way, not a five-foot sidewalk, a multi-
2 use path. I think we need to establish that as a
3 community value now. We talked about it yesterday in our
4 comments on our TIP, our transportation improvement plan,
5 within the upcoming year.

6 But, again, I think this needs to be said. It is a
7 community value to save our neighborhoods. If we're
8 willing to put up with the delay, there is no big huge
9 plan that says it has to be done. And that's what this
10 process is supposed to show. You can have all the
11 engineering models you want, it's the people that live
12 here and the people that use the road, and if we say we
13 want to preserve our neighborhoods and we want to
14 preserve the businesses that are there, then that's what
15 we need to do, not build a big wide road.

16 MS. HIPPS: Okay. Anybody else? Apartments?
17 Yes, ma'am.

18 MS. FRIED: Have they ever thought about
19 roundabouts? Wouldn't that be a solution at some of
20 these bigger intersections and entrances to apartments?

21 MR. PALLADI: We have looked at roundabouts, and
22 we've used them very sparingly when the traffic is quite
23 lower than the 28,000. The 28,000 is the main line. It
24 does not include the intersection traffic. We have
25 looked at them. We feel that they will not work in this

1 application.

2 MS. HIPPS: Yes, sir.

3 MR. PALLADI: Again, we're looking 25 years out.
4 Five years to construct, 20 years for the life of the
5 project. It's not wait until it gets so insurmountable
6 you go out there and fix it. We're trying to anticipate
7 the growth, anticipate the needs, and provide a safer
8 facility in the meantime.

9 MS. FRIED: Well, like Susan said, there has not
10 been much growth on Forest Hill Road lately. I mean...

11 MS. HIPPS: Yes, sir, and talk real loud for the
12 court reporter. You're a lawyer. You know how that
13 works.

14 MR. PATTERSON: I just want to make this statement in
15 connection with what Susan has said. You talk about the
16 increase of traffic on Forest Hill Road. It would have
17 to come from areas beyond where, as I see it, Northside
18 Drive intersects. There is no land available, so far as
19 I know, for construction of new home sites whatsoever. I
20 am aware there is one section this side of where Wimbish
21 intersects where they are building some houses. I haven't
22 seen them because you can't see them from the highway.
23 But I don't know how many it is. The point I'm trying to
24 make is this: When we talk about an increase in traffic,
25 it's got to come from a source other than Forest Hill.

1 I've been living where I live for 39 years, and I've
2 never had any problem. I live six houses off of Forest
3 Hill on The Prado, and I've never had over 20 or 25
4 seconds coming out. This is true in the morning. When
5 we'll say the school bus, school is in session and the
6 bus is coming down there, you have a delay. And this is
7 true sometimes the lights at Vineville and Ridge are not
8 synchronized and you have traffic backed up there. But
9 my observation all that there is is only let's say when
10 people are either going to work in the morning and school
11 time and then in the afternoon when people are going
12 home.

13 So what I'm trying to say here is that this increase
14 in traffic is not on Forest Hill Road by virtue of
15 residents. They're there. But you have beyond that
16 point traffic that comes in. That's the reason that I
17 would think, just common sense, I may be all wrong, that
18 leaving it two lanes, those people that are coming from a
19 distance let's say north of Forest Hill Road, they would
20 take Northside Drive or Riverside Drive. That would be
21 the alternative route to go to we'll say the Mall, if the
22 project was to go to the Mall. And that connection, in
23 my opinion, they do have a new subdivision over there
24 with lots of buildings that's onto Log Cabin Drive, and
25 lots of them, some of the people go on that, I think it's

1 called Presidential area, isn't that right, something
2 like that, it has taken lots of traffic away from the
3 mall.

4 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Israel?

5 MR. ISRAEL: I've heard this part. I would like
6 to hear some conversation, some data, some statistics, I
7 know I live on Albermarle, and there are folks that live
8 on Riverdale, Albermarle and Belvedere --

9 AUDIENCE: Belvedere.

10 MR. ISRAEL: -- that have already experienced
11 increased traffic. And when they cut the road through
12 Stinsonville and paved it a number of years ago, there
13 used to be not any traffic, it has created a design line
14 through that neighborhood over to Captain Kell, and you
15 get more traffic, too, probably. But if the cul de sacs
16 occur, or if there's restricted left turn lanes into that
17 area, it's going to create more traffic back down Ridge
18 to access back to this area. Have any models been done?

19 MR. PALLADI: Not a micro-model that I know of.
20 But, again, the overall modeling and the overall network
21 has been looked at and the projects have been programmed
22 to address the needs of those areas.

23 MR. ISRAEL: I'm not sure what that means.

24 (**REPORTER'S NOTE: Inaudible section here. Several people
25 talking at once.**)

1 MS. HIPPS: What do you mean, Mr. Palladi?

2 MR. PALLADI: It has not been, the cul de sacs, the
3 affects of the cul de sacs have not been modeled. What
4 we heard from,--

5 MR. ISRAEL: Okay.

6 MR. PALLADI: -- some of the people was I'm getting
7 cut-through traffic now. And keep in mind what cut-
8 through traffic can be. In Atlanta I've had
9 neighborhoods that have two ways in, and the person that
10 was the fourth house in accused the person in the fifth
11 house in of being cut-through traffic because he could
12 have gone a mile out of his way going out the other
13 entrance to get out to the main highway or main roadway,
14 main collector, than go by his house. Again, cut-through
15 traffic has many definitions. And, so, the comments that
16 we received were about 60/40, 50/50 that either wanted a
17 cul de sac or wanted a right in/right out if the project
18 went forward. And, again, no decision has been made at
19 this point in time as to which way to go. We were hoping
20 that we would hear some feedback today.

21 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Israel, does that answer your
22 question?

23 MR. ISRAEL: Yeah. Can I state an opinion?

24 MS. HIPPS: Go right ahead.

25 MR. ISRAEL: Without the modeling, I think to put

1 in the cul de sacs would create a tremendous amount of
2 traffic on fairly narrow streets that were never designed
3 to handle it. They are right now at a 25 mile an hour
4 speed limit and it's not unusual, I've not clocked them,
5 that cars travel 30 to 35 at times. It's been bad enough
6 the police department put a radar to flash their speed up
7 to them on Riverdale two weeks ago. But I would be
8 concerned about what that does to the change in the
9 traffic patterns. I think that --

10 MR. PALLADI: That's been -- excuse me. I'm sorry.
11 I didn't mean to interrupt.

12 MR. ISRAEL: That's okay.

13 MR. PALLADI: That's been expressed, and also the
14 response time for emergency vehicles, a concern for that
15 was also expressed at the public meeting.

16 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Thornton?

17 MR. THORNTON: Again, I live two doors off of Forest
18 Hill Road, about midway of the project.

19 MR. ISRAEL: He lives right by my mama.

20 MS. HIPPS: By your mama, oh, well now.

21 MR. THORNTON: To me, I don't have a lot of, I do
22 have some engineering background, but I'm not a traffic
23 designer or traffic engineer. A lot of this technical
24 jargon is beyond me, but the road is very dangerous
25 today. I drive it many times a day, coming and going,

1 and my wife's been in an accident. We've lost a dear
2 pet, we've lost a friend and neighbor, and it's extremely
3 dangerous in certain sections of the road right now
4 today. I think it's great to preserve the neighborhood,
5 and I get the feeling that I'm in the minority here, but
6 I think it's just as important to talk about preserving
7 pets and family members. It's a dangerous road.

8 We moved there in '92, and my casual observation is
9 the stacking time, particularly from Wimbish back to
10 Vineville, typically I'm coming home between 5:00 and 6
11 O'clock, and it takes me as long to get from Vineville to
12 Forest Hill Terrace as it does to get from my office
13 downtown to Forest Hill Road, and that's coming out
14 Vineville Avenue in 5 O'clock traffic. It's taken me
15 just as long to get that last half a mile as it does that
16 first three miles. A lot of times I cut through Mr.
17 Patterson's neighborhood to bypass some of the stacking.
18 So with all due respect --

19 (**REPORTER'S NOTE: Several people talking at once. Inaudible
20 section.**)

21 MR. PATTERSON: Well, let me --

22 MS. HIPPS: Wait just a minute. She was ahead of
23 you, Mr. Patterson.

24 MS. HANBERRY: One of the things that our community
25 has invested a lot of money is a traffic --

1 AUDIENCE: Susan, they can't hear you.

2 MS. HANBERRY: -- management center that's supposed
3 to coordinate all the signals, and I think that that's
4 probably one of the first things we should have done here
5 was do a signalization study. And some of the reason why
6 the stacking happens is that the traffic signals aren't
7 properly aligned to each other. That's not the right
8 word, but interconnected --

9 MALE VOICE: Synchronized.

10 MS. HANBERRY: Synchronized, yes. And we will have
11 the capacity to do that there, and I think that's one of
12 the things. One other thing about safety. Anytime you
13 increase speed, you increase the danger of an accident.
14 If you have an accident at 25 or 35 miles an hour, you're
15 going to have a fender/bender. If you have an accident
16 at 45, 50 or 60, which is what traffic moves at on
17 Forsyth Road and Zebulon Road, you're going to have
18 deaths. I've lost two neighbors on Forsyth Road at one
19 intersection after it was widened. It's also one of
20 these counter-intuitive things. If you slow the traffic
21 down, you can actually move more cars through that given
22 space in a given amount of time because they can follow
23 closer together and it's safer for them to. So if we
24 widen this thing out and set a speed limit of 45 miles an
25 hour, not only are we going to have more dangerous

1 accidents, but we're also not going to be able to move as
2 many cars through there in a given amount of time. And
3 that, again, speaks to not that you don't need to do some
4 improvements, and I think there are some that need to be
5 done, but four-laning that top section isn't going to do
6 it. And synchronizing the traffic signals can really do
7 a lot to stop some of the stacking. And, again, East
8 Paces Ferry, that road carries over 30,000 cars a day,
9 and there is some delay at peak hours, but it is very
10 well signalized and the intersections are very well
11 controlled, and we have the ability to do that now. It's
12 just not completely on line. I think Mr. Wikle knows
13 that.

14 MR. PALLADI: Again, our traffic modeling for the
15 project included inter-connection and progression through
16 the intersection.

17 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Patterson?

18 MR. PATTERSON: You know, I've always tried to help
19 people and I want to make this comment concerning the cul
20 de sac at The Prado. From the area around Stinsonville,
21 which is I reckon it would be east, there's 20 streets
22 over there between there and Pierce Avenue. That doesn't
23 include the streets that connect to or enter into or
24 connect with Pierce Avenue. My point is this. Dealing
25 with, as Mr. Israel stated earlier, lots of people, they

1 have to park on the street at night and in the daytime.
2 I travel that myself quite a bit. If two cars appear,
3 somebody has to get to the side and wait for a car to
4 pass. The point I'm trying to make is if they cul de sac
5 over there, just as Mr. Thornton said a few minutes ago,
6 all that traffic from those 20 streets, assuming they're
7 going to the Mall, they have only two routes to go, go
8 east and hit Pio Nono and go down, or they have to come
9 through Stinsonville and go down the three, one of the
10 three streets, Belvedere, Albermarle and Riverdale. And
11 then what they do is they exit at Ridge Avenue. That's
12 putting a greater burden on Ridge Avenue and then to
13 Vineville Avenue. And I know my good friend wants to cul
14 de sac Overlook Avenue over there, but you know there's
15 only nine houses over there up to the point where Bonita
16 Place comes in. On The Prado there's 27 houses. We have
17 mothers with children walking their children down the
18 street down there during the daytime and the little boys
19 and girls riding their bicycles down the street. That's
20 the reason I'm just interested in trying to save them.
21 There's a multitude of them going through there unless
22 they're going all the way around Pierce Avenue and they'd
23 go out through Pio Nono Avenue and then down Eisenhower
24 Parkway or some of those places over there. So it looks
25 like from just a common sense viewpoint it would not be

1 better if those two streets were cul de sacs in that
2 situation. And, of course, it won't bother me. I'm just
3 concerned about the street that he lives on plus the
4 other streets because I know with cars parked on both
5 sides --

6 AUDIENCE: What's your question?

7 MR. PATTERSON: What was that?

8 MS. HIPPS: No, sir. No, sir. We talk among
9 ourselves. We do not engage the audience.

10 MR. PATTERSON: I thought a fellow said something.

11 MS. HIPPS: But I don't care. If they're not a
12 part of this group, I'm not allowed to recognize them.

13 MR. PATTERSON: Okay.

14 MS. HIPPS: They can have their say-so
15 afterwards.

16 MR. PATTERSON: Oh, sure. I thought somebody wanted
17 to speak.

18 MS. HIPPS: I saw you nodding your head during
19 his comments. Do you have something that you'd like to
20 add, Ms. Fried, to what Mr. Patterson said?

21 MS. FRIED: I agree with him. Ridge Avenue, most
22 of these streets are going to be a mess. It's really
23 going to be terrible if you cul de sac them.

24 MS. HIPPS: How about you, ma'am, no comment?

25 MS. BEELAND: (Indicating negatively).

1 MR. PATTERSON: I would like to make one other
2 comment.

3 MR. PALLADI: Could I inquire, Mr. Patterson,
4 before you go any further, are you saying that you're
5 against the cul de sacs or for the cul de sacs?

6 MR. PATTERSON: No, I'm against them.

7 MR. PALLADI: Okay.

8 MR. PATTERSON: The reason why I was trying to
9 explain that I'm against them, as far as I'm concerned,
10 personally it doesn't make any difference to me, but it's
11 the benefit of other people that live on the other
12 streets that I'm primarily concerned with and those who
13 come through there, the way they have to go. For
14 instance, if they're coming from the Episcopal Church on
15 Overlook there, on Forest Hill Road. They've got to come
16 through there. They'd have to hit Ridge Avenue and come
17 back.

18 MR. PALLADI: I understand. I just wanted to
19 clarify that. You sort of argued both points, and I just
20 wanted to understand what stance you were taking.

21 MR. PATTERSON: I'm sorry?

22 MR. PALLADI: You were arguing both, you were sort
23 of giving me ammunition on both sides and I was unclear.

24 MR. PATTERSON: I thought I made myself clear that I
25 was opposed, and I was trying to tell you the reason why.

1 MR. ISRAEL: He brings up --

2 MS. HIPPS: Yes, Mr. Israel.

3 MR. ISRAEL: He brings up a point. There are a
4 number of women with small children, some in strollers,
5 that walk around from Overlook and The Prado and there is
6 no sidewalk in that section. I have followed some. I
7 don't know what this presentation plan is going to do,
8 but it's of concern. And I'm talking out of both sides
9 of my mouth now, but those issues have got to be some
10 counter balancing issues anyway, but there will be
11 traffic that will out of exasperation back up from Forest
12 Hill up all the way around almost to Northside's
13 entrance. You'll see them when they take a left they
14 just zoom, zoom, zoom, zoom, zoom, car after car. If you
15 follow them, they get on up there. And I have seen, you
16 know, when they come around there's traffic there on
17 Overlook, and if somebody is pushing a baby carriage,
18 it's a harrowing revelation.

19 MR. PALLADI: The folks are concentrating on making
20 the left turn, not what's out there on the road.

21 MR. ISRAEL: Yeah, they are. And they do
22 sometimes, I don't know how much of that is frustration
23 due to the backup, I'm sure it is, but I was wondering,
24 though, what has been the progressive successive traffic
25 counts here? Frankly, I was aware, I knew when we put

1 this on, I'm probably the one you all ought to lynch
2 because I chaired the Macon Area Transportation Committee
3 when this was named as a project, but most of it, as you
4 said, was the development that was being seen out here
5 where we are right now and along Northside. But what has
6 been the increase in traffic counts since then, and is
7 that a trend for the future? I'm wondering is it going
8 to get worse? Is it as bad as it's going to get? And is
9 this really going to solve the problem?

10 MS. HIPPS: Technical person? Who has an answer
11 for that?

12 MS. HANBERRY: I have the historic. And there's a
13 difference in the build and no build. You know, if you
14 build it, there are a lot more cars. Mr. Palladi said
15 that. If you don't build it, 18,000.

16 MR. ISRAEL: Well, the thing I worry about,
17 though, is there is land out north, and it's going to be
18 developed. Some of it is already been cleared. This
19 will be impacted even when you've got Bass Road at I-75
20 because Forest Hill comes into --

21 MR. PALLADI: Wesleyan.

22 MR. ISRAEL: -- Wesleyan, Wesleyan over back to
23 Jackson Highway and Riverside Drive, but then you're
24 going to create this back over to Bass. Now, that's
25 going to be the next big development in my opinion. So

1 what and where are the traffic lines, where are the
2 design lines going to be with that particular
3 development?

4 MR. RYLE: We've got that on a, Don put that
5 together and we can get it up on the machine over here if
6 you like. Talking about traffic counts, if you look,
7 it's kind of leveled out on Forest Hill Road, and that's
8 about the time Northside Drive was built. But Northside
9 Drive now is getting up to where it's getting at or maybe
10 above design capacity. I know when you all were doing
11 it, Joe, you all had to make some improvements to it, so
12 once development takes place then people are going to get
13 frustrated with Northside Drive and they're going to take
14 the shortest point between, you know --

15 MR. ISRAEL: Right. And that's what she's saying.

16 MR. RYLE: And if you don't --

17 MS. HANBERRY: And if you don't and you leave it as
18 a neighborhood street, they find another place to go.
19 You know, it kind of works like a wetland, if you slow
20 down the traffic and you spread it out, and then that
21 really goes back to the community values. I was glad to
22 hear Mr. Palladi mention Pio Nono because I remember when
23 Pio Nono was two lanes, and it was a nice neighborhood.
24 And once it was widened to four lanes, you kept seeing
25 houses are abandoned, they're pushed down, there are a

1 lot of vacant lots on there, and little by little by
2 little it goes commercial. In fact, Mr. Olmstead at a
3 meeting made that statement in my hearing that he guessed
4 Forest Hill Road would go commercial, and that's another
5 thing we need to talk about. Do we want to change the
6 nature of the neighborhood because that's what happens
7 when you have a four-lane road. It's what happened on
8 Vineville. Little by little it changes from residential
9 to commercial, and that's going to happen on this road if
10 it's widened. If it's the community value to keep it a
11 neighborhood on both sides of the road and behind, then
12 that needs to be weighed heavily in this decision.

13 MS. HIPPS: You all let me say something real
14 quickly. I'm just told that there's a gentleman back
15 here in a pink shirt and a red striped tie who came in
16 the place of his father who is supposed to be sitting at
17 this table. So, sir, I did not want to deprive you of
18 the opportunity of representing your father to the
19 fullest extent if you would like to.

20 MR. JONES: I appreciate it, and I'm sorry for my
21 tardiness. I have been in the back listening.

22 MS. HIPPS: Well, come sit at the table if you'd
23 like. There's a chair right there by Tim. That works.
24 Okay. Let me know if you have something you'd like to
25 ask or say.

1 MR. JONES: If I may make two quick comments
2 while Vernon is keying that up. I may have missed this.
3 The Northside Drive work that's already been in place,
4 how does it tie in with this development? It just seems
5 to me that traffic is, it's already backed up whether we
6 like it or not. How does that mesh with this project?

7 MR. PALLADI: Again, the Northside Drive project
8 came through the planning process and the design process
9 was part of the regional transportation plan. The
10 network of improvements that were contemplated back when
11 we designed and implemented Northside Drive, that's how
12 it's meshed in.

13 MR. JONES: Well, I guess what I'm saying is when
14 you were considering the Northside Drive, was the Forest
15 Hill Road factored in there at all as far as what you
16 were looking at?

17 MR. PALLADI: Yes. It was a part of the regional
18 transportation plan, and they have a modeling device that
19 looks out 25 years and looks at how does the network of
20 roadways operate. So, yes, it was.

21 MR. JONES: When you look at extremes, let's take
22 the decision is made to leave Forest Hill as it is today,
23 what impact does that have on what you've already done on
24 Northside Drive?

25 MR. PALLADI: Northside Drive, other than the

1 intersection at Forest Hill, I don't think will be
2 affected. Again, taking into account other improvements
3 that are proposed in the area, but you would, you could
4 have, again, we designed that project for 25 years in the
5 future just like this one. So for a period of time it
6 will operate satisfactorily. Then it could begin to
7 degrade, depending on the growth pattern, the zoning. We
8 do not, the Department does not do land use. It is a
9 local issue. And based on the growth in the corridor or
10 development that has occurred, in Atlanta we're having a
11 lot of in-fill (phonetically) development where larger
12 lots are being subdivided into multi-family enclaves.
13 Not buildings, not apartments, some of them are
14 apartments, but on five acres they're building six,
15 seven, eight houses. Again, land use can change, but
16 it's regulated by the local government.

17 What I see is possibly the intersection of Forest
18 Hill and Northside could become a little more congested,
19 but that would be years in the future, and that would be
20 because of demand of people wanting to go down Forest
21 Hill to access points south.

22 MS. HIPPS: Sir, do you mind telling us who you
23 are?

24 MR. JONES: Yes, ma'am. My name is Dwight Jones.

25 MS. HIPPS: Dwight Jones. And your daddy, I

1 presume, is Mr. Jones as well?

2 MR. JONES: Right.

3 MS. HIPPS: And you're here in his stead?

4 MR. JONES: I am.

5 MS. HIPPS: Now, Susan just mentioned one thing
6 that probably everybody in this room except Jan Moore and
7 me is aware of, and that is that the Mayor has joined us.
8 Mr. Mayor, I did not know who you were --

9 MAYOR ELLIS: That's quite okay.

10 MS. HIPPS: -- and I apologize, but I'm from
11 Stone Mountain.

12 MAYOR ELLIS: That's quite okay. Well, shame on
13 you, Wilma.

14 MS. HIPPS: And I apologize. I'm mortified.
15 Yes, sir.

16 MR. RAULS: When you were saying about, let's
17 see, the speed of traffic, I was concerned about it. Can
18 you quantify the speed of traffic running from Wimbish
19 Road on Forest Hill to Vineville at a peak period of
20 time? Can you say it's four minutes or seven minutes,
21 and that's too long to drive this mile? I mean have you
22 got some type of the way of telling me? Tim was saying,
23 Tim Thornton was saying that it takes a long time for him
24 to go by there, but it seems like to me that there must
25 be some way to handle this as not a totally objective

1 thing but a quantifiable issue.

2 MR. PALLADI: Good point. The level of service
3 definitions take into account the operating speed, and
4 the primary influence on a portion of roadway is not only
5 the laneage, how many cars can you pass per lane. By the
6 capacity, it's 2,000 vehicles per lane per hour,
7 unobstructed, no turning movements, no stops, no starts.
8 When you start injecting turning movements or green time,
9 yellow time, red time into the different movements by
10 just creating a two-way traffic signal with no turning
11 movements at all at a traffic signal, just passing
12 through, two-dimensional, you reduce that capacity down
13 into the 1,000 vehicles per lane or corridor.

14 MR. RAULS: But you're saying that you can't
15 quantify it.

16 MR. PALLADI: I can quantify it. I have not
17 quantified the travel time because level of service is
18 not based on travel time. We could do that. I can't do
19 it right this minute. But the delay occurring at an
20 intersection is an average delay. That means that some
21 people may not have any delay, other people may have
22 twice as much delay. The delay per operation at a
23 particular intersection bases on a level of service. A
24 delay of, this is from memory now, but I've done it
25 enough I should remember, I believe it's from 28 to 45

1 seconds per car per signal is Level of Service D. That's
2 where it starts to break down. From 45 to I believe it's
3 90 seconds, it is E, and then beyond that, it may not be
4 as high as 90, but beyond that is F.

5 MALE VOICE: Eighty.

6 MR. PALLADI: Eighty, okay.

7 MR. RAULS: To me that's where you should have
8 started with your analysis was to quantify the need.

9 MR. PALLADI: Well, we quantified the need by
10 volume and delay, not directly by travel time.

11 MR. SMITH: So what was the letter for this
12 section?

13 MR. PALLADI: For the section from Wimbish, again,
14 with a no build, future no build, the delay at Ridge
15 Avenue intersection is 218 seconds.

16 MR. RAULS: Is that good or bad?

17 MS. HANBERRY: Do they have a --

18 MR. PALLADI: 218 seconds, that's almost four
19 minutes per car.

20 MS. HANBERRY: Is that with a volume --

21 MR. PALLADI: That's with the --

22 MS. HANBERRY: -- of 28,000?

23 MS. HIPPS: Wait a minute, folks. We're losing
24 it right in here. You asked, I believe one of you, about
25 a letter level?

1 MR. SMITH: Yeah. He had explained about Service
2 Level D and Service Level E. I would say that 200
3 seconds doesn't have a letter because it's that far off
4 the chart.

5 MR. PALLADI: Yeah. I mean if it falls off the
6 chart, it's considered a Level F. I mean an F is an F.
7 You know, it's not like grade school where you get an F+
8 or an F-. It's bad.

9 MS. HIPPS: Susan is next.

10 MS. HANBERRY: But that's just not exactly correct.
11 If you do a no build and you have 18,000 cars a day, you
12 aren't going to have a level of service -- You might at
13 some point --

14 MR. PALLADI: Okay. And I'll come back to you --

15 MS. HANBERRY: -- intersections. But if you have --

16 MR. PALLADI: -- with where are those cars going to
17 go?

18 MS. HIPPS: One person at a time, please.

19 AUDIENCE: Let her finish.

20 MS. HANBERRY: This is from the models. If you do a
21 no build on the bottom part from Northside to Wimbish,
22 you'll have a Level of Service of C. If you have a build
23 scenario, I think that's correct from the model, and Tom
24 Scholl has the models for that. And if you build, it
25 will go down to a Level of Service D, so you're actually

1 decreasing the level of service by building it there, and
2 that came from the models from the software from DOT.

3 Now, you have, and I believe that, and Tom can
4 correct me if I'm wrong, from Wimbish to Vineville, if
5 you have a no build, you stay at a Level of Service of D,
6 and if you build, I think it goes down to a Level of
7 Service of D or C. But you aren't going to have, on the
8 model, and this is your own modeling, if you build, with
9 the induced traffic you're going to decrease the level of
10 service on the lower part of Forest Hill Road. Now, I'm
11 not making that up. So if you're saying that the level
12 of service is going to be so low and you're, and that's a
13 no build with 28,000 cars a day, you have to do a no
14 build with the traffic that's projected with the no
15 build, which is 18,000 cars a day. And I'm sorry if this
16 is --

17 MR. PALLADI: True. But the question is as the
18 city grows, as the region grows, as the area grows, then
19 where will that traffic go, to what other streets will be
20 impacted or affected by the growth of the traffic. What
21 you're proposing is a zero growth everywhere. You just
22 want it to go somewhere else to somebody else's location
23 in somebody else's neighborhood.

24 MS. HANBERRY: That's not reflecting zero growth.
25 And as a matter of fact --

1 MR. PALLADI: Okay. But where does the increased
2 traffic go?

3 MS. HANBERRY: -- right now we do have zero growth.

4 MS. HIPPS: One at a time, folks. The court
5 reporter can't hear both of you --

6 MS. HANBERRY: I'm sorry. So this --

7 MS. HIPPS: -- simultaneously..

8 MR. PALLADI: So where does the traffic go?

9 MS. HANBERRY: It will go on the other roads that
10 it's always gone on. You have a five-lane road on
11 Northside Drive, and that's being pushed all the way
12 through. Some of this traffic on the modeling will go
13 onto I-75 if they want to go to other places. Now, I-75
14 is a great place to dump traffic. Vineville is not a
15 good place to dump traffic. I-75 is being widened and
16 it's designed to carry huge volumes of traffic. But
17 there are other ways to get there. Now, right now we
18 aren't showing growth in Macon, so, but we don't need to
19 argue that. We haven't in a long time.

20 MR. PALLADI: But, again, the traffic --

21 MS. HANBERRY: I'm not saying --

22 MS. HIPPS: One at a time, please.

23 MS. HANBERRY: -- that there's no growth. This is
24 the modeling with a growth rate in the modeling.

25 MS. HIPPS: Now you can go.

1 MR. PALLADI: Okay.

2 MR. TUSSING: The regional model does have certain
3 limitations. First of all, when you load up with 18 or
4 19 thousand vehicles per day on a two-lane section which
5 is loaded with the no build between Wimbish and
6 Vineville, the regional model does not show the amount of
7 that traffic that is forced to go through neighborhoods.
8 When you get to that 18,000, right now consider this,
9 you're at 12 to 13 thousand on that section and at times
10 it's very difficult. You add another 5, you know 4 to 6
11 thousand on there, depending on how many are going
12 through there, you know, you have created a problem. So
13 the regional model does not show growth going through the
14 neighborhood. The regional model forces the traffic onto
15 the existing system that's on the network. We do not
16 show subdivision streets and such, and the model doesn't
17 show how much traffic will be forced down Overlook and
18 down Ridge Avenue and such. I mean it's just not capable
19 of that.

20 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Rauls?

21 MR. RAULS: I had asked about your ability to
22 quantify the need, and you said that there is a way to do
23 that. I was simply going to say, too, that right now
24 anyone driving there at 5 O'clock in the afternoon can
25 tell that there is a real need between Wimbish Road and

1 Vineville for more lanes. I mean if you deny that, we're
2 just not facing reality. But I just wanted to know if
3 you, as an engineer, in your own language, could
4 determine that or not.

5 MR. PALLADI: Again, through the intersection
6 capacity, we determined that delay would increase with no
7 improvement, and that with the improvements we're
8 proposing, it would provide a reasonable level of service
9 and not induce excess speeds.

10 MR. RAULS: But you're saying there's a need now?

11 MR. PALLADI: I'm saying that I designed for 25
12 years in the future. Our level of service, we also look
13 at the level of service when we think the project is
14 going to be built.

15 MR. RAULS: Okay.

16 MR. PALLADI: And the existing conditions we're
17 getting pretty much D's and C's and one B on the
18 intersections we looked at: Vineville, Wimbish, Lokchapee
19 and Old Lundy.

20 MR. ISRAEL: Lokchapee.

21 MR. PALLADI: Lokchapee, I'm sorry. I'm a
22 relocated Yankee, so bear with me. And that's in 2002.
23 The Lokchapee/Old Lundy Drive does not have a level of
24 service. They're offset intersections. One of them is
25 at a very bad skew. The build out on the base year 2004

1 traffic, the level of service goes to A's, B's and C's,
2 except for the morning peak at Vineville. It remains at
3 a D. It was a D and because of the turning movements, et
4 cetera, the increase that we expect, even up to 2004
5 there is a small increase in delay in 2004 compared to
6 2002, three seconds difference. I'm not going to give
7 you all the decimal points.

8 But when we go to that same model with the design
9 year traffic, the 2024 traffic, then all the
10 intersections are B's, are C's or better, except for
11 Vineville, and as stated by Susan earlier, there is an
12 issue of capacity and of operation on Vineville, and that
13 level of service is an E. Without improvements, further
14 improvements on Vineville, it will be very difficult to
15 improve that level of service. And it's a very difficult
16 project, and we've had numerous public meetings that
17 nothing has been resolved from.

18 MR. RAULS: Your engineers have told me that
19 taking out the curve, the sharp curve in the road that
20 it's a hazard now, but that this will improve safety. Is
21 that true?

22 MR. PALLADI: You do not regulate speeds by
23 horizontal alignment.

24 MR. RAULS: What does that mean?

25 MR. PALLADI: What that means is that, have you

1 ever driven a sports car? You tend to see what this baby
2 will do type of thing, even though you may do it once in
3 a while versus every day. Again, the horizontal
4 alignment should not be used to regulate speed. What the
5 horizontal alignment regulates, or allows to happen, is
6 acceptable horizontal sight distance, the ability to see
7 from the steering wheel forward to vehicles coming the
8 other way, vehicles that are entering or exiting the
9 roadway at streets or at driveways, et cetera. 'That's
10 what horizontal sight distance is.

11 Also, you have some vertical roll in this road as we
12 go. That's called vertical sight distance. Again, slow
13 me down if I'm losing you. How can you see over that
14 hill? And in some cases, yes, Susan, it does help
15 control speed because some people don't feel comfortable.
16 Other people feel comfortable, or confident maybe, or
17 foolish enough, to go at an unreasonable speed and that's
18 where some of your accidents come from, because they're
19 moving too fast, cannot react and break in time to stop
20 for that stopped car that's trying to make a left or
21 coming onto the roadway.

22 MS. HIPPS: I've got you, Susan.

23 MR. PALLADI: So as part of the improvements for
24 this facility is to upgrade both the horizontal and
25 vertical alignment to provide those sight distances for

1 the posted speed limit and the design speed.

2 MR. RAULS: And it will be more safe.

3 MS. HIPPS: All right. Susan has another
4 question.

5 MS. HANBERRY: Well, a comment first of all. In the
6 environmental assessment, it was stated that --

7 MR. PALLADI: The draft environmental assessment.
8 Excuse me.

9 MS. HANBERRY: Pardon me?

10 MR. PALLADI: The draft environmental assessment.

11 MS. HANBERRY: In the draft environmental
12 assessment, yes, it was stated that the accident rate on
13 this road was 20 percent higher than normal, and Mr.
14 Keifler (phonetically) has since corrected that, and
15 actually the accident rate on this road is 10 percent
16 lower than comparable roads in the state.

17 Now, the other thing that happens, and some of what
18 Mr. Palladi said, I do want to just take issue with. One
19 of the definitions of traffic calming is using the
20 geometry of the road to slow people down. You will never
21 make a road safe enough for a drunken teenager. There's
22 just no way to do it. And reasonable drivers, which is
23 most of us, drive at the speed at which they feel safe.
24 And sometimes the geometry of the road slows down the
25 traffic. And you can see it perfectly on Zebulon Road.

1 Zebulon Road has huge, wide, straight lanes, and people
2 drive 75 miles an hour on that road. They drive 60
3 through the school zone. I go that way to work every
4 morning and it's appalling. If you keep the lanes a
5 little bit narrower, and I'm not saying that some of
6 those curves aren't a little bit too curvy, but some of
7 that you don't need to just scrape flat and make straight
8 because you are making a more dangerous road.

9 And if you increase the speed to 45 miles an hour,
10 not only are you increasing the speed through a
11 neighborhood, but you're also increasing the severity of
12 the accidents. And, you know, you can see that happen
13 over and over again. There were lots of fender benders
14 on Forsyth Road until it was widened, and now there are
15 deaths on Forsyth Road. And I think that the critical,
16 in my reading of these kinds of studies, the critical
17 speed is 35 miles an hour. Once you get it over 35 miles
18 an hour, you start to have serious injuries. So you
19 don't want to make it too straight and you don't want to
20 make it too wide either.

21 The other thing that happens, and there are a couple
22 other environmental issues with this. Number one, we are
23 right on the eve of non-attainment. We're adding
24 capacity on this road and we're going to increase the
25 traffic on this road. That does place a burden on the

1 community. When you put curb and gutter, you're also not
2 allowing that water to sink in and disperse through the
3 water table, you're pumping it right down to the river.
4 And we have a serious problem with water quality in our
5 streams in Bibb County. We have TMDL's, which are total
6 maximum daily loads, for all kinds of things on most of
7 our streams, so I think that also needs to be factored
8 in. When you curb and gutter, you don't allow the water
9 to sink in.

10 And I think it's much more neighborhood friendly to
11 put swales. You can plant trees in them, particularly if
12 you're putting a multi-use path on the other side of
13 those trees. You're also placing a barrier between the
14 pedestrians and the roadway. DOT likes to put sidewalks
15 right next to the roadway contiguous with them, which
16 doesn't help pedestrians at all.

17 MR. PALLADI: You haven't seen our revised
18 standard, have you?

19 MS. HANBERRY: Well, I haven't. I didn't say
20 anything other than you like to because that's all I've
21 seen in the past, so I think that's a correct statement.

22 MR. PALLADI: Again, the accident rate, and we've
23 checked in the environmental document, shows that the
24 accident rate in 1997, again, we deal in rates as to
25 addressing the issue of volumes, the number of accidents,

1 the length of the project, is 591 with a statewide
2 accident rate for a comparable type of facility of 552.
3 And whatever 40 over 600 is is what we have in the
4 document.

5 MS. HANBERRY: But Mr. Keifler corrected that in a
6 comment, so what's in the document --

7 MR. PALLADI: I'm just telling you what's in the
8 document.

9 MS. HANBERRY: And I'm telling you what Mr. Keifler
10 --

11 MS. HIPPS: One at a time, please.

12 MR. PALLADI: I will go back and as a part of the
13 final document we'll address that. The 1998 accident
14 rate was 593 with a 525 statewide average, so whatever 70
15 over 600 is is the difference, or increase above
16 statewide average. In 1999 the accident rate was 592.
17 Pretty consistent, 591, 593, 592, a very consistent
18 accident rate. The accident rate, and I do not have the
19 statewide in 1999. They're still doing the rest of the
20 roads in the state and it's not available, but we're
21 seeing that overall our accident rates have been going
22 down based on safer designs for the traveling public.

23 The, you brought up another issue and it escapes me
24 right now. But the, let me go back to the accident rate.
25 The question is is what is an acceptable accident rate?

1 Do you want to be average like the rest of the state or
2 do you want to be more safe than the rest of the state,
3 or do you want to be more unsafe. Again, I will not
4 build an unsafe facility.

5 The other issue was speed. Now, I know CAUTION, and
6 this is going to be seem like a ludicrous statement that
7 I'm going to make so I'm going to tell you that it's
8 ludicrous before I make it. So if we're interested in
9 slowing down people, why don't we remove the asphalt or
10 the concrete that they ride on and make them ride on
11 stone roads. The speed is what the person will drive.
12 It is not caused by the design. I can have the
13 straightest road, the flattest road, and it doesn't cause
14 me to drive 90 miles per hour, 40 miles per hour, 20
15 miles per hour. My foot, my reaction, the person is the
16 cause of the speed. I agree with your statement, the
17 accident rates are lower at lower speeds. That's
18 reasonable and it's been proven out.

19 The question is is what is going to be the enforced
20 speed and the regulated speed on this facility? I can
21 help regulate it by progression, by setting the signals
22 in such an order to address the people and time it in
23 such a way that you proceed through the corridor at a
24 reasonable acceleration and a safe speed. But I can't
25 sit in everybody's car and remind them that they're going

1 too fast for conditions. What we're talking about is the
2 ability to move traffic in the area.

3 MS. HIPPS: Susan?

4 MS. HANBERRY: A couple of things.

5 MR. PALLADI: The representative from OEL, who is
6 involved with the document and reviewed the document --

7 MS. HIPPS: OEL, what is that?

8 MR. PALLADI: Office of Environment and Location,
9 excuse me. I deal with a lot of acronyms, so please stop
10 me. He doesn't know anything about the changes in the
11 accident rate. Again, he's responsible for reviewing the
12 accuracy of the document before it's submitted to the
13 Federal Highway. He has not heard a statement from Mr.
14 Keifler or seen a study that reinforces your statement.
15 Again, I'm not here to debate it. What that accident
16 rate is will be placed in the document because our charge
17 is to provide the honest truth in the documents to weigh
18 out the effects.

19 The sidewalks are now offset from the curb. Now,
20 they may not be as offset as you like, but you just made
21 a very strong statement towards rural design, a slope
22 design, a sloped shoulder versus an urban shoulder. In
23 looking at the footprint of what we now design to, what's
24 called clear zone, an area that is allowed for somebody
25 to leave the road and recover and come back on the

1 roadway is substantially larger than the 12-foot shoulder
2 that we're talking about in an urban section, utilizing a
3 barrier curb, a 6-inch high curb.

4 As to the drainage, yes, we do collect drainage. We
5 collect it in the system, but we dump it out as to where
6 it collects now. We do not divert water to other water
7 sheds. We also during construction construct sediment
8 basins along the course of the project to ensure that we
9 trap, not only using straw bales and silt fence and other
10 methods, but that we trap it in the same location as
11 clean water, or as clean as possible water. You have
12 erosion out there right now that's occurring from the
13 runoff, peak runoff if you have a downpour. You have
14 some erosion. And we try to regulate that. And we're
15 regulated on erosion on EPD now in that we have to do a
16 separate set of plans that are signed off by our chief
17 engineer to address those erosion issues. Again, we do
18 not divert water from one water shed to another. The
19 area of the slopes will still drain downward or upward
20 to, well, it won't drain upward, will drain downward to
21 where they drain today except for some elevation changes
22 in the roadway based on the horizontal and vertical sight
23 distance changes that we'll make to regulate the
24 alignment.

25 MS. HIPPS: Susan?

1 MS. HANBERRY: First of all, I'm not talking about
2 diverting the water. I'm talking about concentrating it
3 and not allowing it to sink into the ground. And this is
4 a well-accepted problem with the TMDL's.

5 MR. PALLADI: But --

6 MS. HANBERRY: Wait a minute. Let me finish.

7 MS. HIPPS: What's TMDL?

8 MS. HANBERRY: Total maximum daily load. It's
9 measurements that the State does about pollution in the
10 water.

11 MR. PALLADI: That's correct.

12 MS. HANBERRY: Number two, I have a letter right
13 here from Department of Transportation, signed by a Mr.
14 Keifler, and I'll just read the pertinent paragraph out
15 of it. We have revisited the accident rate calculations
16 reported in the environmental assessment and found that
17 some accidents adjacent to the project were mistakenly
18 included in the totals. The EA will be revised to
19 reflect the correct conditions. The following is a brief
20 summary of the revised accident data. In 1998, the last
21 year that the State completed accident data for
22 comparison, the accident rate, 51 accidents for Forest
23 Hill Road, was 20 percent lower than the statewide
24 average. So it was --

25 MR. PALLADI: We'll look at it.

1 MS. HANBERRY: So this was a correction from Mr.
2 Keifler. So we're not saying that we don't need to
3 reduce accidents, but to have reported in the EA that
4 it's 20 percent over when, in fact, it's 20 percent under
5 the rate, it's a problem.

6 I've forgotten my other question. Oh, geometry.
7 And I guess this is a philosophical problem with the DOT.
8 I'm not stating anything that has not been widely
9 published in all kinds of design journals and design
10 books that the geometry of the road does affect the
11 speed. Not only that, common sense tells you, you all
12 know people drive fast on Zebulon Road. And it also
13 places a big burden on our overworked police departments
14 to have to sit there and try to slow down speeders when
15 it can be done by geometry. Now, and this may just be a
16 philosophical difference. When the rest of the country
17 is understanding that you can calm traffic with the
18 geometry of the road and the State DOT doesn't want to
19 recognize it. But I think maybe, and this is part of the
20 community frustration that we see around here, and we've
21 had lots of community frustration, that we want to see
22 better roads and different roads designed for our
23 community. We need to slow down traffic. We don't need
24 to build 13-foot straight wide lanes because people will
25 drive too fast. They will drive at the speed at which

1 they feel comfortable. So you don't build an interstate
2 through a neighborhood. Use the geometry to slow them
3 down. They go slower on Overlook when there are cars
4 parked on both sides than if it's wide and clear. One of
5 the reasons why traffic moves faster on Ridge is because
6 it's wide.

7 MR. ISRAEL: Teenagers don't, but most people do.

8 MS. HANBERRY: And, you know, it does, it tells you,
9 it tells your eyes that it's safe. Some of the safest
10 intersections are not the ones that have been designed
11 like Pio Nono where you have multi-lanes that are
12 designed by AASHTO engineering standards, that's an
13 engineering standards book. But some of the safest
14 intersections are the ones that look dangerous because
15 people slow down. But you can slow traffic with
16 geometry, and we want to see that here. You know, it's
17 not right to say that you're going to expect the police
18 department to enforce the speed limit. They can't be
19 everywhere all the time. They have other and more
20 important things to do. And if you can slow them down
21 with geometry, by golly, we need to do it. And that's a
22 value that we would like to see incorporated in the plans
23 here.

24 MS. HIPPS: Folks, we have about three more
25 minutes. Is anybody here from Jordan, Jones & Goulding?

1 MALE VOICE: I'm here.

2 MS. HIPPS: Well, your company brought us in, and
3 my instructions were very specific, that this room had to
4 be broken down and returned to its original condition by
5 after 6:00. It's not paid for for a minute longer. So
6 I want to make sure that everybody at this table before
7 we adjourn to let folks talk one-on-one out in the lobby,
8 that everybody has had a chance to make a final
9 summation.

10 MR. SMITH: This is a final comment that really
11 doesn't have a whole lot to do with this, but I just want
12 to compliment Mr. Palladi. I know that you have right
13 now a thankless job, okay. And I think that you have
14 handled your questions eloquently and I want to thank you
15 for it.

16 MS. HIPPS: Well, I think Mr. Palladi doesn't
17 hear that a lot.

18 MR. PALLADI: I do get thanks from my wife when I
19 bring my paycheck home, what it is is what it is. But I
20 appreciate that. Again, I take this very seriously in
21 every aspect.

22 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Rauls?

23 MR. RAULS: I would like to state an opinion. I
24 am against you allowing dangerous geometry in order to
25 slow traffic down. That makes no sense to me.

1 MS. HIPPS: Yes, ma'am, Jan?

2 MS. BEELAND: No comment.

3 MS. HIPPS: No comment, okay. This is the last
4 chance. Yes, sir. I'll bet you've got some.

5 MR. PATTERSON: Mr. Palladi, I want to tell you this
6 in your favor. You said you never design an unsafe road.
7 I'll agree with that. The roads have never caused an
8 accident.

9 MR. PALLADI: There are some unsafe situations.

10 MR. PATTERSON: I don't like to talk about this in
11 public, but I've had the opportunity to defend drivers,
12 and I know what causes accidents, because they're
13 violating some rule. In order to be going 50 miles an
14 hour, you've got to be so many feet back. And if you're
15 too close and you can't stop, you're going to hit them in
16 the rear end.

17 That's one thing. There's another thing that I want
18 to read to you. According to a report issued by the
19 Surface Transportation Policy project, death attributed
20 to aggressive driving (not counting alcohol and drug
21 related types) Macon has far higher rates of aggressive
22 driving deaths per 100,000 than Columbus or Savannah.
23 Higher than congested roads in Atlanta, and much higher
24 than, can you believe it, New York City. I've seen a lot
25 of them in this city, believe me.

1 MS. HIPPS: Do you think I can get home safely?

2 MR. PATTERSON: I don't know. It all depends on
3 who's in back of you.

4 MS. HIPPS: Well, at least I'm out headed toward
5 Atlanta. Is that it, sir?

6 MR. PATTERSON: That's it.

7 MS. HIPPS: Okay. Patsy?

8 MR. FRIED: I want to --

9 MS. HIPPS: Why did you look surprised when he
10 said, yes?

11 MS. FRIED: Because I thought he was going to go
12 on and on.

13 MS. HIPPS: Has he done that before?

14 MS. FRIED: I've known him for a long time
15 (inaudible at this point due to audience laughter). But
16 I would like to have more options as to what we can do on
17 Forest Hill Road. And Mr. Van Etheridge said that if the
18 neighborhood doesn't want it, we won't build it, and I've
19 got news for you, the neighborhood doesn't want it.

20 (**REPORTER'S NOTE: Audience interruption**)

21 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Jones? Remember, whatever you
22 say is going to get attributed to your daddy.

23 MR. JONES: Okay. Well, good. I appreciate
24 that. This really a procedural question for Mr. Palladi,
25 and that is certainly as I've understood and listened

1 today and heard what you have up here on this board
2 represents what you think is the best option, but I also
3 heard you say that there's nothing in stone at this
4 point. Procedurally from this point, will you develop
5 some different concepts given the input that you've
6 gotten here today?

7 MR. PALLADI: I can modify these, but it's not
8 going to be appreciably different because of the traffic
9 projections and the level of service. Some issues that
10 we can look at are improvements as to the pedestrian
11 features. If Macon-Bibb County wants to add a bicycle
12 facility or mixed use path to their transportation plan
13 for this area, again, we will consider it.

14 Lane widths, some of the lane width issues that you
15 brought up, not just number of lanes, but you brought up
16 lane use issues, we'll look at that as to be able to
17 maybe narrow the lanes from 12-foot lanes in the 4-lane
18 section down to 11-foot.

19 We'll look at, again, we still, I'm hearing right
20 in/right out at the cul de sac streets, which gives some
21 flexibility as to ingress and egress.

22 Overall, we went back and looked very hard at the
23 traffic model. We looked very hard at the traffic
24 modeling for the project, the design traffic, and we feel
25 very comfortable with what we brought here today. It's

1 not appreciably different from what we used in the EA,
2 but, again, the EA will be updated for what our findings
3 are.

4 There was one other issue. Again, under the guise
5 of context sensitive design, of what I call CSD, again, I
6 deal a lot in acronyms, but I also call CSD common sense
7 design, of looking at what works and what doesn't work.
8 That AASHTO, American Association of State Highway and
9 Transportation Officials, AASHTO, is our design
10 guideline, and when I deviate from the flexibility that
11 AASHTO provides, there's nothing etched in stone that
12 says thou shalt do this in AASHTO. But in looking at the
13 flexibility that it can provide and the flexibility that
14 I am held liable to, the standard, and Mr. Patterson, I
15 hope you can agree that, accept this, since you have
16 tried some accidents, but not only the liability that I'm
17 susceptible to, the Department is susceptible to, but the
18 liability of the State Highway Engineer and Chief
19 Engineer, that has to sign the plans, that we will weigh
20 the decisions very heavily as to how we can regulate
21 alignment, both horizontally and vertically, but use
22 established design guidelines.

23 If you're not aware, the new Green Book is out. It
24 has some large changes in it. And we'll look at that
25 once the department adopts that as our design standards.

1 Right now we're dealing with the old. But we will look
2 at all the issues that have been brought up today and
3 develop those into the project concept and into the final
4 environmental document.

5 MS. HIPPS: Yes, sir. Do you have something to
6 add?

7 MR. BOWERS: Just for the record, it's really the
8 feeling of the leadership of St. Francis Church that this
9 project as it is proposed is probably going to create
10 more problems than it solves, and that if, indeed, there
11 is any benefit from this, those benefits would be vastly
12 outweighed by the harm that will be done to the
13 neighborhood in general and to the residents in
14 particular.

15 MS. HIPPS: Yes, ma'am.

16 MS. PETTIS: I came to listen and learn, and I
17 have.

18 MS. HIPPS: Yes, sir, do you have something to
19 add to sum up?

20 MR. THORNTON: With all due respect to Susan as far
21 as her comments about the neighborhood and despite the
22 sentiment of some of the other neighbors, there's two
23 neighborhoods there. There's one on each side of Forest
24 Hill Road. Forest Hill Road today with the open ditches
25 and the volume of the traffic and the speed of that

1 traffic, it's a barrier. I've known Ms. Fried since I
2 was a small child, and her family and kids. There's two
3 houses between us, but there's also Forest Hill Road
4 between us, and we might as well live five miles apart.
5 It's a barrier. Traffic, that particular stretch the
6 speed limit is 45, long downgrades, and it moves very
7 easily at upwards of 50 miles an hour down through there,
8 and at times it's downright dangerous to cross there. We
9 don't see them enough because it's really a barrier.
10 It's a neighborhood on one side and a neighborhood on the
11 other.

12 MR. HIPPS: The former Honorable, does that now
13 mean that you're the Dishonorable?

14 MR. ISRAEL: Well, all I can say is I did my part
15 growing up on Forest Hill Road because Tommy Chapman and
16 a bunch of us tried to pull up every surveying stake out
17 there for every apartment that came through there. But
18 in spite of the growth, I recognize having grown up there
19 since the '50's that it's changed. Traffic was slower.
20 It used to be gravel. So progress comes, I guess, with
21 some price. I'm glad it's no longer a five-lane. The
22 first time I heard, that was there, and I congratulate
23 whoever did it. I don't know how much of the problem is
24 south of Wimbish, and from Wimbish to Lundy, I don't know
25 if the problem is Wimbish, and I look at this and if this

1 is correct, I see traffic flopping over and maybe going
2 over to hit Wimbish over to Riverside, but I would think,
3 I know we've got a problem at Wimbish and Forest Hill.
4 There's a problem at Ridge and Forest Hill. You've got
5 to be an idiot to sit and wait. I waited eight minutes
6 on Wimbish the other day. I don't know what the hold-up
7 was, but eight minutes on Wimbish to get out onto Forest
8 Hill Road. And then you have a three or four minute wait
9 at Ridge and then another three or four minute wait at
10 Vineville. And it's more than just an irritant to me.
11 It becomes difficult. I see that causing frustration for
12 people. It then causes them to cut through The Prado and
13 cut through right by Lee's house, and that's a racetrack
14 coming around that corner, and something needs to be done
15 to relieve that. I would be opposed to the cul de sacs,
16 but I understand and recognize that if you do it right in
17 and right out that may be a better compromise. Certainly
18 we don't want the three streets that I live on, which is
19 Albermarle, Riverdale and Belvedere, we do not want that
20 to become a thoroughfare. It is not wide enough. Cars
21 cannot, if cars park on both sides, there's not enough
22 room for two cars to pass. So we would prefer that not
23 happen.

24 And I think in closing I'd just like to say anything
25 that can be done to reduce the impact, narrow lanes, we

1 did that on Vineville with the Vineville widening.
2 Another thing is we do need to widen from Pio Nono to
3 Forest Hill, or Forsyth. That's been on the
4 transportation planning document since before this was
5 put on there. It's just something that needs to be done.

6 MS. HIPPS: All right, you two Honorables, do
7 either one of you two have anything to say? Mr. Mayor,
8 I'm so sorry I didn't know who you were.

9 MAYOR ELLIS: That's quite all right. I'm here to
10 listen and learn as well. I'm sure you'll be safe going
11 back.

12 MS. HIPPS: Mr. Chairman?

13 CHAIRMAN OLMSTEAD: Well, I came here to learn.
14 And I think that the only comment I have is several years
15 ago there was a sales tax passed, and it was recognized
16 Forest Hill Road needed some improvements, and it was put
17 on the list, and the people in the Macon and Bibb County
18 voted. That 1 percent sales tax is the reason we're
19 here. Otherwise we hadn't have been here. By the way,
20 you mentioned about '82/83. The reason that didn't go
21 forward is we didn't have any money, so when we finally
22 got the money it started going forward.

23 And I'd like to correct, I believe, I don't
24 remember, yes, Forest Hill is probably going to go
25 commercial. It's already started. But it's going to go

1 out. It's going to go out where past Northside Drive,
2 and that's where I think my comment was made.

3 I don't know what needs to be done. I do see some
4 corrections that's been made that's needed. The
5 intersection of the school, which I think is such a
6 dangerous place. The one exit here and right up the, 10
7 yards up is another exit, and they bump into each other,
8 and this would be straightened out. Down at Wimbish,
9 that intersection at Wimbish, so there are some good
10 things about this road, I think, that really need to be
11 done.

12 But other than that, I've just enjoyed listening to
13 everybody's comments, and that's my comment.

14 MS. HIPPS: I'd like to thank everyone for your
15 courtesy to me, but even more so your courtesy to each
16 other. The formal part of the meeting is adjourned. You
17 all are welcome to tackle these folks out in the lobby.
18 But I want this client of mine to keep using us, and they
19 call on us a lot to facilitate for them, so I'm going to
20 do what they said. Thank you all for coming.

21 (MEETING ADJOURNED)
22
23
24
25

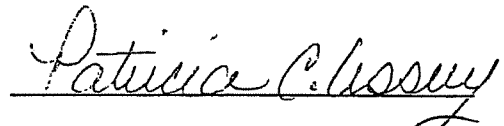
1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 STATE OF GEORGIA

3 COUNTY OF BIBB.

4 I hereby certify that the within and foregoing record is
5 a true, complete and correct transcript of the proceeding
6 taken by me on the 29th day of May, 2002.

7 This 20th day of June, 2002.

8
9
10 
11
12 Certificate No. B-1238