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GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE OF PLANNING

TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING:

RE: TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT ACT OF 2010

(House Bill 277)

Georgia Mountains Region

Regional Transportation Roundtable #1

Lumpkin County Community Center

Dahlonega, Georgia

January 5, 2011 - 5:00 PM

* * * * *

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Advanced Reporters & Associates
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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2
3 MR. LUMAS: Ladies and gentlemen, we thank
4 you for coming. But seriously, if you're
5 preparing a meal or whatever, continue doing
6 that.

7 On behalf of my Chairman sitting in the
8 back of the room, David Stovall, Chairman of our
9 Board, our Council. And David is, um, at this
10 point he's the second longest serving chairman
11 of our Georgia Mountain Regional Commission.
12 We're excited to have him with us tonight.
13 Thank y'all.

14 We're actually going to take just a minute
15 and introduce everybody, and I am stalling
16 because we had to have one conference group that
17 has not given me a name yet to serve. We're
18 ready, we're going to start over here on this
19 side.

20 Let me tell you how this is going to work
21 tonight. We're going to do just a quick
22 introduction, not like we did in our last
23 meeting; basically your name, where you're from.
24 Don't go through all your grandkids; those are
25 other meetings, not this one. Just your name

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and who you represent will be fine.

Audience, we're also going to ask you to do the same thing. So those of you in the audience, be prepared so that they know who is behind them. Maybe they'll know their name.

We'll start up at the front. If you will, just introduce yourself.

MR. LUMAS: I'm Danny Lumas. I'm with the Georgia Mountain Regional Commission as Executive Director, and in about two months I start my seventh year there. So I'm excited to have finished almost six years there.

We'll start here and run around the table.

MS. DEWBERRY: Deborah Dewberry, associated with Dillard & Associates.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: There's no sounds, we can't hear anything. Speak up a little.

MS. LOVELL: Peggy Lovell, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission.

COURT REPORTER: Janice Coe, court reporter.

MR. LUMAS: She will be taking down everything that's said.

MR. DALTON: Milton Dalton, Banks County.

MR. NEACE: Jerry Neace, City of Baldwin.

1 MR. BERG: I'm Mike Berg, Chairman of
2 Dawson County.

3 MR. BYRD: Calvin Byrd, City of
4 Dawsonville.

5 MR. TAM: Brian Tam, County Board of
6 Commissioners, Forsyth County.

7 MR. GRAVITT: Ford Gravitt, Mayor of City
8 of Cumming.

9 MR. LITTLE: Harris Little, City of
10 Carnesville.

11 MR. ELROD: Sam Elrod for Franklin County.

12 MR. JAMES: Sonny James, Chairman,
13 Habersham County Commission.

14 MS. BRUNER: Ruth Bruner, Mayor of
15 Gainesville.

16 MR. RABER: John Raber, Chairman, Lumpkin
17 County Commission, with a cookie in my mouth,
18 excuse me.

19 MR. McCULLOUGH: Gary McCullough, Mayor of
20 Dahlonega, and I got nine grandkids.

21 MR. DARNELL: Butch Darnell, Rabun County
22 Chairman.

23 MR. ROBINSON: Bill Robinson, Mayor of
24 City of Dillard.

25 MR. HUDGINS: J. B. Hudgins, Stephens

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County Commission.

MS. ENGLISH: Janice English, Mayor of Toccoa.

MR. KENDALL: Bill kendall, Commissioner of Towns County.

MS. MATHIS: Barbara Mathis, Mayor of Hiawassee.

MR. PARIS: Lamar Paris, Union County Commissioner.

MR. CONLEY: Jim Conley, Mayor of Blairsville. I've got nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

MR. McCULLOUGH: You're older than I am.

MR. TURNER: Travis Turner. White County, Chairman, Board of Commissioners. I have two children and no grandchildren, I hope.

MR. LUMAS: We told them not to do that.

MR. STANLEY: Don Stanley, Mayor of City of Cleveland.

MR. ROGERS: Carl Rogers, State Representative, Hall County.

MR. LONG: Todd Long, DOT.

MR. DILLARD: Morris Dillard with DOT team.

MR. ROGERS: And Scott Rogers, Gainesville

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Times.

MR. GUNSEK: Jerry Gunsek with WDUN.

MR. GAINES: Jeff Gaines with the Times.

MR. LUMAS: You got published in the Valdosta Times with the article about Georgia Mountains. My counterpart down there was totally irritated that it wasn't about him. I'm glad.

MR. HAZELL: Adam Hazell, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission.

MS. HARMON: Stephanie Harmon, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission.

MS. BEADY: Sarahbeth Beady, Disability Resources.

MR. MCGAREY: Bob McGarey, (inaudible).

MR. APPLING: Gary Appling, Voluntary Advocate.

MS. APPLING: Beth Appling, I'm with him.

MS. PEOPLES: Nancy Peoples, I'm with the civic center.

MR. RAINES: Bob Raines, City of Hiawassee.

MR. STANCIL: Rick Stancil, City of Hiawassee.

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MR. LEDFORD: Jim Ledford, County Administrator.

MR. YAMALA: Srikamphn Yamala with the Gainesville MPO?

MR. PAGENT: Kyle Pagent, City of Gainesville.

MR. BROWN: Stan Brown, City of Oakwood.

MR. COSTING: Tim Costing, Georgia DOT.

MS. JONES: Faith Jones, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission.

MS. WATERS: Jessica Waters, Toccoa Record.

MS. HALL: Sharon Hall, CNI. I'm sorry, Dawson community.

MS. ROBINSON: Carol Robinson, married to Bill Robinson.

MR. KREAGER: Paul Kreager, member of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Council.

MR. GILL: James G. Gill, Gainesville.

MS. WILLS: Kay Wills, Association (Inaudible) Department of Community Affairs.

MR. WADE: Will Wade, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission.

1 MR. LUMAS: Also served on our region.
2 MR. WALKER: Steve Walker, Georgia DOT.
3 MR. SMITH: Greg Smith.
4 MR. MERRITT: Tim Merritt, Forsyth County.
5 MR. HART: Tim Hart, Stephens County.
6 MR. STOVALL: David Stovall, Georgia
7 Mountains Regional.
8 MR. NORTON: Sam Norton, I'm a cook.
9 (Laughter)
10 MR. NORTON: City Council of City of
11 Dahlonega, Georgia.
12 MR. LUMAS: He is also our vice chairman.
13 MR. LEWIS: Bill Lewis, City Manager here.
14 MR. MORRIS: Billy Morris, Franklin County
15 Manager.
16 MR. PRESCOTT: I'm Ralph Prescott; I only
17 have three grandchildren but they're pretty
18 ones.
19 MR. SCARBOROUGH: Dean Scarborough,
20 Stephens County Commissioner.
21 MR. LUMAS: He's outgoing chairman.
22 MR. DEAN: Andrew Dean, Georgia DOT.
23 MR. FOWLER: Matthew Fowler, Georgia DOT.
24 MR. TURVEY: Brandon Turvey, DOT.
25 MR. MAHONEY: Robert Mahoney, Georgia DOT.

1 MR. FOLEY: Kyle Foley, Georgia DOT.

2 MR. GOOCH: I'm Steve Gooch, DOT for two
3 more days. Then I start something else, State
4 Senate starting Monday.

5 MR. LUMAS: There's Margaret Ballard, the
6 Mayor of Cornelia. Margaret, they did have a
7 meeting before you got here. Margaret got into
8 the ice because she went through Hiawassee to
9 come down.

10 We're glad y'all are here on behalf of our
11 region. We thank you for coming. We don't
12 expect really bad weather, but we do hear that
13 some of the mountains are starting to ice over a
14 little bit. Keep that in mind as we try to run
15 our meeting tonight. You heard from Todd just a
16 minute ago, now you're going to hear his
17 presentation. Some of you have already heard
18 it. This is a brief presentation, typically
19 runs about 30 minutes, but Todd is going to
20 shorten it, so there will be plenty of room for
21 questions.

22 MR. LONG: Thank you, Danny. Glad to be
23 here tonight. It's good to be back up in north
24 Georgia again, and see a lot of familiar faces
25 on the roundtable that I worked with here in

1 Gainesville. Steven Todd -- and Steve Gooch
2 back there, y'all are losing someone in two days
3 that has represented a lot of the -- you didn't
4 represent all the region but a lot of the
5 region, and represented very well. We hate to
6 lose him.

7 What I'm going do tonight really is go
8 through a quick agenda of what we're going to do
9 tonight, a little bit of the Bill highlights.
10 We're going to be working with the facilitator
11 to walk us through some of the processes. We
12 did welcome introductions already.

13 Quick overview of the Bill itself, when we
14 talk about recommended guidelines, how this
15 group will operate, how you will organize and
16 structure yourself. Then we'll have discussion
17 about election of a chairman. You guys have
18 done a lot of groundwork in preparation. I want
19 to thank you, Danny.

20 We have 12 regions in this state. This is
21 the seventh meeting we've had. Some regions are
22 prepared, some regions aren't. You guys have
23 done a lot of pre-work, and I appreciate that,
24 making these roundtable meetings go well, I
25 appreciate that. Then we're going to talk about

1 the criteria, review and approval of the
2 criteria, the criteria in the discussion. Then
3 we'll finish up tonight with what the next steps
4 are in the process.

5 In front of you is a notebook. And this
6 notebook has pretty much everything that you
7 need tonight in it. It includes a copy of the
8 Bill, the timeline, Roundtable members, budding
9 projections, criteria, FAQ questions, and in
10 response some of the criteria we had at the very
11 beginning. This will be a good resource to you,
12 and I encourage you to take notes, fill it up.
13 use this as a reference material as we go down
14 the process.

15 We're embarking on a really exciting time,
16 in my opinion. This is very long process,
17 culminating in a vote not until 2012, but we're
18 very excited, very front steps of the process.
19 I think working together we can make this thing
20 very much a big success. I want to know if we
21 can sell it, as a group, if it will pass the
22 voters all across the State. But certainly we
23 have an opportunity right here in northeast
24 Georgia, north side of the State, I think, to
25 really push this and pass it, because you guys

1 have a lot of projects and a lot of needs with
2 not a lot of money.

3 Let's go to the next slide here. Quick
4 overview, just a reminder now. There are people
5 on this Roundtable that have seen this
6 presentation before. I'm going to go quickly,
7 but there's some of you that really don't quite
8 understand the Bill. The reason I know this is
9 I get calls from you. I get questions. That's
10 not quite how the Bill is structured. So it's
11 always good to kind of remind ourselves, make
12 sure we're on the same page as we get started.

13 (Overview of House Bill 277.)

14 MR. LONG: Next slide. Okay. The next
15 section we'll be talking about is guidelines.
16 But before we do that, I want to pause for a
17 second. Are there any questions you have about
18 the Bill itself that you don't feel like have
19 been answered? All right?

20 MR. GRAVITT: I believe the Bill calls for
21 10 percent, if we get a passed Bill, if the
22 voters pass it, it's 10 percent?

23 MR. LONG: The match?

24 MR. GRAVITT: The local money, the
25 matching money; if we don't, it's 50 percent?

1 MR. LONG: No, it's 10 percent if the
2 voters vote yes. If the voters vote no, it's 30
3 percent. If this body votes not to even take it
4 past this body, then it stops here, because it
5 can stop in this room in October, then the match
6 is 50 percent.

7 MR. GRAVITT: I just wanted to clarify
8 that because it is a little confusing. And the
9 50 percent is based on the allocation that the
10 Georgia DOT wants to allocate to City of Canton?

11 MR. LONG: It's not want to allocate, it's
12 what we do allocate by formula.

13 MR. GRAVITT: Which is usually not much.

14 MR. LONG: Well, the law actually lays out
15 that there's a formula that you get a certain
16 amount, so the City of Cumming gets X number of
17 dollars.

18 MR. RABER: Based on road mile.

19 MR. LONG: Road miles and population.

20 MR. RABER: Who did you say did that?

21 MR. LONG: The Lieutenant Governor and
22 the Speaker of the House. Speaker gets 3.2, and
23 the Lieutenant Governor gets 2.

24 MR. RABER: I thought you said this ended
25 it --

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MR. LONG: No, that's not true.

MR. ROGERS: Todd, the only thing I think people need to know is a definition of lane miles as far as the Department is concerned. I think that would be helpful to the average person.

MR. LONG: There's been a lot of curiosity about, you know, Mayor Gravitt, you've got most of your road is a four lane, not all of them, but almost all of them, but you're only getting credit for a center line lane mile in the formula. So a four lane road is the same as a two lane road. That's in the Bill. There's a lot of cities where complaining about a lot of their roads, over time they've been widened, so the Bill spells out the center line lane miles, paved and unpaved. So you may get a county like, I'll give an example, Bullock County has almost 600 miles of dirt road. I don't think we have any counties in north Georgia in that realm, to be honest with you. So they actually, their formula amount is quite large.

MR. RABER: If we could pass it and go ten years and want to redo the Bill, but it's the best we got right now.

1 MR. ROGERS: It took us five years to get
2 this. I would recommend we work together and
3 drop all the boundaries and make it work.

4 MR. GRAVITT: I agree.

5 MR. LONG: Well, good. Next I'd like to
6 introduce Morris Dillard. Morris Dillard
7 introduced himself as part of the DOT family,
8 but he is -- I consider him part of the family.
9 Morris has been working with us on these
10 roundtables. We have to have two different
11 facilitators. Morris comes to us with a long
12 history of transportation. I actually worked
13 with Morris Dillard during the Olympics. He's
14 going to facilitate our discussion on the
15 guidelines, and ultimately the criteria as well.

16 Welcome Morris.

17 MR. DILLARD: Thanks, Todd. I have four
18 children. I have eight grandchildren, I have
19 one great grandchild, and I have a broken knee.

20 MR. McCULLOUGH: Do those go together?

21 MR. DILLARD: They don't go together, but
22 they're all relevant.

23 Thank you. I am delighted to be here, and
24 I'm excited about this project. For the first
25 time I believe we are going to have some

1 significant money to make a major investment in
2 the State's transportation infrastructure. At
3 least the Legislature has given us the
4 opportunity to do that.

5 Look in your table, transportation
6 roundtable guidelines. We're going to start
7 with that document. It's a document that was
8 included in the package that Todd mailed out to
9 you on the 9th of November. I'm sure you've had
10 a chance to look it over. It's formatted a
11 little bit differently here, but it's the same
12 content. Its purpose is to provide a set of
13 guidelines that we will follow, that you will
14 follow, in your meetings and in the meetings of
15 the Executive Committee once it's up and
16 running.

17 Let me start by asking if there are any
18 questions about these recommended guidelines?
19 Do you feel comfortable with them? Is there
20 anything you want to change? At the end of the
21 day they will be the guidelines that you will
22 follow, not Todd, not me. So you need to be
23 very comfortable with them.

24 The legislation, on the question of
25 electing a chairman for the roundtable, the

1 legislation does not require you to do that. We
2 think it's a great idea to do that, and thus it
3 was recommended in the guidelines, that you
4 elect by majority vote a chairman of this body.
5 And we are going to do that in a few minutes, as
6 soon as you signal that you are comfortable with
7 the guidelines themselves, or if you want to
8 make some changes.

9 MR. LUMAS: Morris, if I may add for the
10 record, they were also handed a copy of these
11 guidelines two weeks ago when we had our
12 preliminary meeting.

13 MR. DILLARD: Thanks. Are there any
14 questions about anything to the guidelines?
15 Would you like to adopt them? Can I get a show
16 of hands those who feel comfortable with them?

17 MR. GRAVITT: So moved.

18 MR. RABER: Second.

19 MR. DILLARD: All those who favor raise
20 your hand.

21 Are you getting the names, by the way?

22 COURT REPORTER: She's been very helpful.
23 But it would be helpful if they would give their
24 names; some people are not saying who they are.

25 MR. DILLARD: It would be helpful to the

1 court reporter if you would announce yourself
2 when you speak.

3 MR. LONG: Let me make an announcement
4 about that. In the Bill, some of you probably
5 read the entire Bill. There's actually a clause
6 in there that says that I have to give a report
7 to the General Assembly about all these
8 meetings. Well, in my mind, a report is going
9 to be that court reporter's transcript, so it is
10 very important that you, on the roundtable, that
11 you say your name before you make a comment, and
12 that helps her out. And she's getting I guess a
13 little bit. It just helps me to inform our
14 General Assembly what's going on in the
15 roundtable meeting.

16 MR. DILLARD: Okay. The first action is
17 election of a chairman for the roundtable. Do
18 you have a preferred --

19 MS. BRUNER: Ruth Bruner. No, we said we
20 were going to elect a chairman from the
21 committee so we know who is eligible or not.

22 MR. DILLARD: The eligible members for the
23 chairmanship are sitting at the roundtable.

24 MS. BRUNER: I understand that, but we
25 said we wouldn't put it on there that he is a

1 member --

2 MR. LUMAS: This is for chairman of the
3 Board not for the Executive Committee.

4 MS. BRUNER: Oh, okay.

5 MR. DILLARD: Do you have a preferred
6 method of doing it, or would you just like to
7 nominate?

8 MR. GRAVITT: I think probably, as we
9 discussed at the December 20th meeting, and by
10 the -- by the way, I'm Mayor Gravitt from
11 Cumming -- and we discussed that it's going to
12 take a lot of time, it's going to have a lot of
13 meetings, so the ones that would like to maybe
14 serve as chairman maybe raise your hands and see
15 who is eligible to serve. Some people I know
16 wouldn't have the time.

17 MR. DILLARD: Well, the law requires the
18 roundtable to meet a minimum of two times. And
19 this is one of the meetings. You may meet as
20 often as you feel the need to meet. But you
21 don't have to meet but twice. You have to meet
22 here to organize and set your guidelines, and
23 then you meet later in the fall or either next
24 fall to vote on the recommended projects.

25 MR. GRAVITT: My thought process was if we

1 believe in this project, which I'm 100 percent
2 in support of, that we need to go to the various
3 counties throughout the region and sell this
4 project, because obviously right now it may not
5 pass. But we need to work on selling this
6 project.

7 MR. DILLARD: Okay. I agree with that.
8 But the selling of the projects will come later.
9 We're trying to get to the point of selecting
10 the projects, that's where we are now. We are
11 in that phase.

12 MR. JAMES: Sonny James, Habersham County.
13 Are we talking about electing a chairman for the
14 roundtable and a chairman eventually for the
15 Executive Committee, or just one?

16 MR. DILLARD: We're talking about a
17 chairman for the roundtable; just one.

18 MR. JAMES: And the overall scheme --

19 MR. LONG: For now. But you may like to
20 have a chairman of the Executive Committee as
21 well. This discussion here is just the chairman
22 of this group.

23 MR. BERG: I'm Mike Berg. I'll make the
24 nomination Lamar Paris.

25 MR. GRAVITT: I second Lamar.

1 MR. DILLARD: Could you sit as chairman of
2 the roundtable?

3 MR. RABER: Make a motion to close it.

4 MR. DILLARD: Call for the question. All
5 those in favor signify by saying ayes.

6 You're it. You're it.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. PARIS: Now that it's done, you should
9 know that I don't know anything about Robert's
10 Rules.

11 MR. DILLARD: That's a good thing. The
12 next action, you have to elect five members to
13 an Executive Committee, which is composed by
14 eight members, plus three members from the
15 General Assembly. Two of those members from the
16 General Assembly are appointed by the Chairman
17 of the House Transportation Committee, and one
18 is appointed by the Chairman of the Senate
19 Transportation Committee. So the task before us
20 now is to elect five members of the Executive
21 Committee. We understand you have done a lot of
22 work on that so far. And that's a good thing.
23 That's a very good thing, that you have
24 considered a lot of factors and you have come up
25 with a number of nominees to serve. And I

1 believe they are -- they are on the board. Four
2 of them are on the board. And with a fifth one
3 here -- can you put it on the board? You can't
4 put it on the board?

5 WADE: No.

6 MR. DILLARD: Stan "Butch" Darnell from
7 Rabun County. Stan Darnell for the A subregion.

8 MR. LUMAS: Danny Lumas. For the record,
9 at the meeting on the 20th we decided what the
10 breakdown would be. We knew that Hall County
11 being the largest would get one vote, Forsyth
12 being the second largest would get one vote, and
13 then the rest of the other 11 would be divided
14 into some portion of a four, four, three. And
15 this Board is -- this group is the one who made
16 the decision that the colored ones you see here,
17 Stephens, Banks, Franklin, and Hart would be one
18 group; Habersham, Towns, and Union would be
19 another; Dawson, Lumpkin, and White would be the
20 third.

21 And Morris, that's the way that that was
22 determined, not by us, but by these folks.

23 MR. DILLARD: Thank you, Danny.

24 Would you like to vote on them
25 individually, or would you like to vote on them

1 all at once? Mr. Chairman, would you call?

2 MR. PARIS: Sure. All in favor of the
3 group that's submitted, please raise your right
4 hands. All opposed, same sign. Motion carried.

5 MR. DILLARD: Okay. That's done.

6 I wonder if we have our Executive
7 Committee. This is easy. Let's see, the next
8 item --

9 MR. NEACE: Jerry Neace. Let met ask one
10 question. Who --

11 MR. LUMAS: Do you have a map on there,
12 and if you'll put --

13 MR. DILLARD: If you'll write the name of
14 Chairman Darnell at the top, you will have the
15 complete -- you will have the five members of
16 the Executive Committee. If you join by the
17 legislators. The question was asked if we
18 elected the Chairman of the Executive Committee
19 here? You don't have to. What is your
20 pleasure?

21 MR. LUMAS: If I may interject. You
22 talked about in the last meeting one of two
23 processes. The chairman could come from those
24 five, or the chairman could come as a nonvoting
25 member from any one of the 27. Now I encourage

1 you, as the law says, that we not have two
2 people from the same county, because you've got
3 13 counties and you have five, maybe six
4 positions. If you go with six and the chairman
5 is an at large person, if you will, that person
6 does not have a vote. He could still be heard,
7 but you don't have a vote. Is that right?

8 MR. HUNTER: Travis Hunter, White County.
9 May I try to understand, if a chairman is chosen
10 from this five, from the five, that chairman
11 will have a vote?

12 MR. DILLARD: That is correct.

13 MR. HUNTER: I'd like to have Tom and Ruth
14 -- I'd like to have Ruth Bruner as the chairman.

15 And I'd rather have someone in the group,
16 I think it's less confusion, because this thing
17 is going to be complicated enough. The more
18 people you ask in a small group the more
19 convoluted it becomes.

20 MR. LONG: Morris, go to chairman.

21 MR. DILLARD: Mr. Chairman?

22 MR. PARIS: If it is an option for six,
23 shouldn't we at least vote to see if we want
24 five or the nonperson would be, let's choose
25 that.

1 MR. DILLARD: I think that's --

2 MR. PARIS: If we vote on chairman first,
3 we're not giving the group an opportunity to
4 vote.

5 MR. DILLARD: I would remind you that the
6 guidelines you just adopted that the chairman of
7 the roundtable, this is your member of the
8 Executive Committee.

9 MR. PARIS: Don't know where to go.

10 MR. DILLARD: You don't have to go.
11 You're calling for a vote on whether --

12 MR. PARIS: Yeah, I think we should call
13 for a vote first on -- let me just do it. Well,
14 let's do discussion real quick. Just anybody
15 that's just got a comment you prefer, or we're
16 going to vote on it, but if you have a
17 discussion as to why we should do one or the
18 other. We already heard from Tom. Any reason
19 why we should look at six, or five? Remember,
20 now, the six is not a member of the executive
21 committee, and the five is a voting member of
22 the Executive Committee.

23 MS. BALLARD: Margaret Ballard, City of
24 Cornelia. I think we should use six on the
25 committee only because that person will

1 represent another area of the region where you
2 are trying to pull people from, and it will just
3 give you, um, more coverage.

4 MR. GRAVITT: Mayor of Cumming. I look at
5 it a little different. I think that six person,
6 even though it's a nonvoting, can work with all
7 the other five on the board to accomplish the
8 goal, to help do that. There may be some
9 friction, and as Danny alluded to, it will be
10 hard meetings and hard decisions, and that non-
11 voting member can work between that.

12 MS. BALLARD: Make a motion.

13 MR. DALTON: Second.

14 MR. PARIS: Hang on just a second. Let me
15 call for a motion first. I'm going to ask first
16 that we have a motion to vote on whether or not
17 we're going to have a sixth person as nonvoting
18 member, and if we vote for that, then that's
19 what it will be. If we vote against that, then
20 it will automatically mean that we don't have
21 that sixth person, and the chairman will be
22 chosen off of the five members. Does that make
23 sense to everybody?

24 MR. RABER: Five or six.

25 MR. PARIS: But we're going to make a

1 motion now for the six. Let's vote on the six.
2 That way we'll know if we're going to go with
3 six or we're going to go with five.

4 MR. CONLEY: I'll make that motion.

5 MR. PARIS: I like to have the motion
6 before I get the motion.

7 MS. BALLARD: I make the motion to six.

8 MR. DALTON: I second.

9 MR. PARIS: So we have a motion to
10 second, and this vote is for we want to have a
11 sixth person who will be a nonvoting member of
12 the Executive Committee. All in favor, raise
13 your right hands. All opposed, raise your right
14 hand.

15 Motion is carried, and we will have a
16 sixth member who will be nonvoting.

17 Now, if we're ready to talk about who that
18 person will be.

19 MR. LONG: You can run it. You have run
20 it. Go ahead and do that.

21 MR. PARIS: Okay. I think, um, let's just
22 accept nominations from the floor of people who
23 would like to be that sixth person. Let's see
24 what we got here?

25 Hang on just a minute.

1 MR. BERG: That was my nomination, John
2 Raber.

3 MR. CONLEY: Jim Conley, the Mayor of
4 Blairsville, I'd like to nominate Sonny James.

5 MR. OLIVER: Tom Oliver, seconded.

6 MR. PARIS: Any other names?

7 MR. DALTON: Milton Dalton, nomination
8 cease.

9 MR. PARIS: All in favor, right hands?
10 You two gentlemen want to step out, just so that
11 we --

12 MR. RABER: Can't we just drop our head?

13 MR. PARIS: Y'all step out.

14 MR. RABER: We're taking cookies out
15 there.

16 (Two nominees exit room.)

17 MR. PARIS: John Raber is Lumpkin County,
18 Sonny James is Habersham County.

19 Okay. I guess, one, simply if you're in
20 favor of John Raber, please raise your right
21 hand. Hold them up. Okay.

22 If you're in favor of Sonny James, raise
23 your right hand.

24 Okay. We have got 13, Sonny James then
25 will be the nonvoting chairman of the Executive

1 Committee.

2 Okay. Are we through with our part of the
3 business?

4 MR. LONG: Yes.

5 MR. PARIS: Turn it back over.

6 MR. DILLARD: You need a break? Can we
7 keep going?

8 MR. PARIS: I think we can keep going.

9 MR. DILLARD: Then Todd is back on to talk
10 about the criteria.

11 (Two nominees return to room.)

12 MR. PARIS: We had a close vote. Sonny is
13 the member of the Committee. Very close vote.

14 MR. LUMAS: If I may report to you and the
15 chairman that right now we have 25 or 26 of our
16 members that didn't arrive tonight.

17 MR. LONG: Who are we missing?

18 MR. LUMAS: There's an empty chair, you
19 can figure it out.

20 MR. LONG: Let's talk about the criteria a
21 little bit. Let me give you a little
22 background.

23 As we develop the criteria, next slide,
24 this is a compass, something as a guidepost,
25 going down the path. We started the process

1 over a year ago with the process called IT3. It
2 is really basically a business plan.

3 MR. DILLARD: Excuse me, to the -- it's
4 tab 8.

5 MR. LONG: A business plan for the State
6 of Georgia. We've done long range planning a
7 lot for the State in the past. We never made
8 out a true business plan that said, if you
9 invest this money in transportation, you will
10 get this kind of return. And we discovered,
11 which some of us knew already, if you do invest
12 in transportation, or public works in general,
13 you get a return on investment. That return on
14 investment is quite large. A lot of states are
15 recognizing that if you invest in waste water,
16 reservoirs, water and sewer, whatever it is,
17 just as part of public works, you actually in
18 the long run receive dividends, and
19 transportation is no exception. So under Bill
20 200 which was passed several years ago, they
21 directed the State of Georgia to pass and create
22 a statewide transportation plan. That plan lays
23 out principles that are used to develop and
24 draft criteria. Next slide.

25 So as we went through this, any sales tax,

1 SPLOST for schools, whether it's a SPLOST that
2 we're doing for regional sales tax, whatever it
3 may be, you've got to lay out what your
4 performance goals are. Well, our performance
5 goals are sort of simple. Number one, the
6 projects we choose need to support economic
7 growth and competitiveness. If we want to keep
8 jobs in Georgia, if we want to gain jobs in
9 Georgia, we've got to invest in projects that
10 make sense to make that happen.

11 Now, we've done a good job in the past.
12 We invested a pretty good transportation network
13 in the State. The problem is we really haven't
14 invested in the last 20 years. Think about it.
15 Atlanta has got a great airport, Savannah has
16 got the world's best and busiest airport. It's
17 got a bridge system, a lot of y'all travel. But
18 we still have a great system in place. We have
19 got a pretty good system of four lane roads. So
20 we've got some things we've done well. The
21 problem is we just stopped investing the last 15
22 or 20 years at a level needed to sustain the
23 growth we had in Georgia. So that's number one,
24 You want to be competitive.

25 Number 2, you want to ensure safety and

1 security. Safety is going to be number one. We
2 want to build roads that are safe, we want to
3 make sure that our public is well served in that
4 regard.

5 Number 3, we want to maximize the assets
6 we do have. Now, resurfacing a county road with
7 your discretionary money is taking care of an
8 asset you have. We have a tendency to do what?
9 We pave a road in 1970, and we won't touch it
10 for 40 years. What happens to that road? It
11 falls apart. You're not maximizing the assets.
12 If you did a good job of keeping them resurfaced
13 on a periodic basis, you're making the most of
14 your asset, one example. So we've got to make
15 use at maximizing our assets. In Atlanta,
16 maximizing our using our HERO trucks, right?
17 You have an asset, 400, that is really crowded,
18 but you want to maximize what you have, and you
19 put cameras up there and HEROES to clear
20 accidents out of the way sooner. That's just
21 one example.

22 Minimize the effects of environment.
23 So, particularly in north Georgia, you've got a
24 lot of sensitive areas. When you do all these
25 infrastructure improvements, you've got to make

1 sure that you do it consistent with the
2 environment.

3 So the goals are there. Your outcomes are
4 real simple, guys. Projects you have you choose
5 on this list, ultimately to have value to the
6 public; and number 2, the products have to be
7 delivered; and number 3, the products have to be
8 projects that the people want.

9 Let's say that again. These are
10 ultimately the vote by the public dictates what
11 the end result is. Right? If we have a bunch
12 of projects we think are good but the public
13 doesn't think are good, and you get a no vote,
14 where does that get you? Back to ground zero;
15 right? So you've got to make sure that you're
16 doing that in concert with what the public
17 wants.

18 All right. Guiding principle. We're
19 going to focus a lot on delivery, we're going to
20 focus on projects already from some existing
21 plans that are out there today. Most of the
22 counties in north Georgia have plans of your
23 own. I can't think of maybe one or two.
24 Technically you're supposed to have a planning,
25 transportation element. We've got obviously a

1 boatload of projects in our program already.
2 Two of your counties, you've got Hall County
3 sitting here with MPO, they have to have a plan
4 by Federal law. Forsyth County, part of the
5 region, they have to have a plan as part of the
6 law as well.

7 So you don't just make up projects out of
8 the blue. Investments need to be consistent
9 with the completed goals as we mentioned above.

10 Let's talk about a little bit, let's focus
11 on construction. We know we can't just
12 immediately every project on the list be
13 construction projects. We know that some
14 projects will be, but there needs to be a focus
15 on projects that can be delivered in the first
16 part of this sales tax.

17 Now, we're not going to -- we don't know
18 how the sales tax is going to play out as far as
19 bonding and all those kind of activities. But
20 in a sense, though, you need to have projects
21 that you think you can get really in the first
22 60 percent of this. That will probably play out
23 in the ten year period so you're sure of
24 delivery.

25 Delivery, guys, there are 100 hurdles in

1 the way of delivering a product. I did that for
2 part of my career. And there's a roadblock
3 every step of the way. You've got to make sure
4 that you can deliver the project. Pick projects
5 that you know you can deliver.

6 I want to point out something also, when
7 we do have a project on the list, we must
8 demonstrate full funding for all phases of that
9 project. Let's pick a project. If you have a
10 quarter X, and we're going to say we're going to
11 give 30 million to that project, but that
12 project actually costs 50 million. We've got to
13 identify that other 20 million. It may come
14 from federal funds or local SPLOST funds, but
15 you've got to specify where it's going to come
16 from to complete that project.

17 All right. Next slide. These are the
18 categories, we really struggled a little bit.
19 We broke the categories up into about six or
20 seven different areas. The first is roadway
21 capital. These include new roads, widenings,
22 interchanges, interstate improvements, bridges,
23 economic development corridors. And these
24 projects tend to serve employment centers or
25 activity centers. You can think of quick off

1 the top of your head, U.S. 129, 400. There's a
2 whole host of them here in this region.

3 Roadway and bridge maintenance. Well,
4 remember, guys, we're talking about the right
5 side of that sheet I showed you earlier. This
6 is the 75 percent, the maintenance activities on
7 that side need to be maintenance on corridors
8 that are more regional in nature, not fixing a
9 county road in Union County. Right? So these
10 need to be on state routes, based on PACES, and
11 bridge maintenance. You have a very elaborate
12 and very detailed rating system of our bridges
13 in the state, as you know. You get those all
14 the time.

15 Safety and traffic operations. Guys, this
16 is an area, this is a vote getter. Y'all know
17 that on your regular SPLOST. People like
18 intersection improvements, they like projects
19 they can look at and feel and touch. These
20 safety projects are certainly key. If you ever
21 go back and read the Governor's Highway Safety
22 Manual you'll see a whole host of types of
23 projects that fall in this category. These are
24 projects that reduce fatalities, injuries. And
25 then traffic operations. We have Incident

1 Management Program on 400, obviously 985 runs
2 through your district up through Hall County and
3 becomes 365, so these are improvement level
4 service.

5 All right. Freight and Logistics.
6 Now, roadway projects sometimes refer to
7 intertwine, and in your area, of course 985 is
8 Habersham up 441, but it's also Rabun County as
9 well, so it fits both columns, freight and
10 logistics. But that lays out what our key
11 corridors are across the state, 441 is obviously
12 is one of the corridors, enhances the flow of
13 freight by truck, or rail for that matter. And
14 then we want to, in access of port, you guys
15 don't have a port in north Georgia, but you
16 would be surprised by the economic impact the
17 port has. North Georgia actually needs the
18 Savannah coastal region to pass this regional
19 sales tax, because you can make improvements in
20 that port, but ultimately it will feed into jobs
21 in the north part of the state.

22 Aviation. How many airports have we got
23 in this region, Danny, do you know?

24 MR. LUMAS: Nine, I think.

25 MR. LONG: Well, you can make aviation

1 improvements with that. I'm not sure it's going
2 to be top sellers with the public, but certainly
3 there is a need. If you're recruiting a big
4 company to come in, they don't drive here,
5 though, do they? They fly here. They need to
6 fly into airports that could handle the
7 capacity. Runways, navigational aids. Bike and
8 pedestrian, I think a small portion of the money
9 is going to these are projects that,
10 particularly on the regional sides, you can use
11 all the specialties you want, sidewalks, but on
12 the regional side, these need to be conducting
13 employment centers and activity centers in your
14 region as well. Think about something your
15 activity centers, connecting sidewalks, and if
16 you've got a bus system in Gainesville, you want
17 to provide sidewalks that makes it more
18 accessible of where the route is going. Right?

19 Transit. It does have the option. In
20 this district you've got several transit
21 counties right now. But a lot of other
22 counties -- do you know how many counties have
23 transit systems with van, van pools and such?
24 I would say probably most of you guys do.

25 So you're allowed to use this for doing

1 activities. We want you to focus in obviously
2 maintaining what you have first, but making sure
3 there's a wide range of expenditures on capital.

4 Next slide. Now, we broke it down really
5 basically in different percentages. You may
6 quickly add up, these particular percentages
7 don't add up. We gave wide ranges. Ultimately,
8 the bottom line, whatever percent you put in all
9 the categories have people, what, 100 percent.
10 But we allow you to go up to 70 percent per
11 roadway capital. And then if you take 0 to 10
12 for roadway maintenance, wide range for safety
13 and traffic operations, freight logistics, so
14 you could essentially spend a bulk of your money
15 through three or four categories and not spend
16 any at all in other categories. It gives you
17 that flexibility as to where you want to go.

18 Okay. These are criteria to be used in
19 project selection. I will use the criteria that
20 you adopt to help give you the products that are
21 unconstrained and that we use as a guide. It's
22 your guidepost. It's your compass.

23 Next slide. Okay. Now, I'm going to turn
24 it back over to Morris for discussion. If you
25 want to make changes or you want to comment on

1 what you think about the criteria, whether you
2 like it or don't like it, ultimately we'll need
3 our chairman here to call for a vote.

4 MR. DILLARD: These are Todd's criteria.
5 He's come up with -- he's come up with after
6 thoroughly considering a number of factors. But
7 they are, at the end of day, these are the
8 criteria which the Legislation requires him to
9 submit to you. As he said, when we leave this
10 place tonight, the criteria are going to be your
11 criteria. And the projects that the Executive
12 Committee, working with the planning director,
13 selects to bring back to you for final action,
14 will be based on your criteria. Questions?

15 MR. PARIS: I've got one not as chairman
16 but just as one of the members.

17 MR. DILLARD: Right.

18 MR. PARIS: I've spoken to a couple of
19 folks about it, but we've got an issue in Union
20 County. Hall County and the hospital in
21 Gainesville is our main medical thoroughfare.
22 We've got 515, but we really don't have a
23 hospital that way, so we've got our major
24 hospital in Gainesville, which is where all of
25 our emergency services go. So I'm not aware of

1 any pre-done plans that call for any passing
2 lane or improvement pull-offs or anything on 129
3 going over the mountain, which would include the
4 Union County side and the Lumpkin County side.
5 So realizing that not knowing how we're all
6 going to come out with projects, if we were to
7 end up where we didn't have much projects but
8 this is something we had an opportunity to get,
9 we would like to have an opportunity that
10 passing lanes would be considered, or improving
11 existing passing lanes or pull-off lanes would
12 be considered a possibility. And under the way
13 these criteria are written, it says projects
14 from existing plans or studies, and I'm not
15 aware we have these on these particular things,
16 because there wasn't any money available so
17 there wasn't any use mentioning it, and nobody
18 really cares about it. So how would we handle
19 that, Todd?

20 MR. LONG: Well --

21 MR. PARIS: Other than that part of it, it
22 follows every other criteria that this mentions.

23 MR. LONG: I would think you would have
24 a deliverability issue. I don't think you could
25 get it done very easily. But you mention

1 pull-outs and things along those lines which
2 could be done. That's a good question.

3 MR. JAMES: Could you say for safety?

4 MR. LONG: You probably could lump it into
5 the safety, that's probably a good point.

6 MR. KENDALL: And going over to White
7 County.

8 MR. PARIS: Towns County has got the same
9 problem. I don't think we're talking about a
10 full passing lane all the way, but we happen to
11 have a five mile stretch currently that if you
12 get behind something, you're pretty well stuck.
13 So it's a minor deal in the scope of things, but
14 even pull-offs would be great.

15 MR. LONG: Let me ask you this: Is that
16 the only kind of exception to the rule? Because
17 what we could do, I could have our staff, we're
18 not delivering the list today until the summer,
19 which means we could do an analysis, all right,
20 and we could do a study. Remember, it says from
21 existing plans or studies, and we could do a
22 study that will ultimately identify that. I
23 could assign Matthew Fowler back here -- raise
24 your hand, Matthew. He could identify that. He
25 could work with Todd McGuffey and his staff,

1 unless there's other I'm not thinking of.

2 MR. RABER: John Raber. Does it not come
3 under traffic safety?

4 MR. PARIS: I don't know if you have to
5 have every one of these; I assume all of these
6 had to play into it.

7 MR. DILLARD: You're concerned about the
8 existing.

9 MR. PARIS: Yeah, the fact that there are
10 no existing plans.

11 MR. DILLARD: I think you got your answer.

12 MR. PARIS: If that works.

13 MR. DILLARD: I mean, he's the director,
14 he just gave you an answer.

15 MR. LONG: If that would satisfy you.

16 MR. PARIS: It would satisfy me.

17 MR. LONG: You can do what you want to
18 about the line about existing plans, but the
19 reason it's there is to protect the group and
20 protect the process, because we're going to get
21 a thousand suggestions for projects, and if you
22 haven't -- that process hasn't been listed
23 somewhere, somehow, you don't need that
24 presented to the group.

25 I do have that control, as not taking all

1 the suggestions from the cities and counties,
2 say if a County gave me a project to do, you
3 know, four lane road that's virtually
4 impossible, I'm not going to include that on the
5 draft on this list. But it does protect the
6 process. It gives me a starting point is what
7 it does.

8 On your situation I think the pull-outs
9 and things like that, clearly, I think we're
10 covered when I think about safety. The bigger
11 projects that we identify, some bigger projects,
12 we'll think about that.

13 Lamar actually sent this to me. It is a
14 concern. I've driven that route many times
15 myself, and if you get behind somebody, it takes
16 forever. Passing on that is not really a good
17 option.

18 MR. DILLARD: Okay.

19 MR. LUMAS: Let's also keep in mind, I
20 think the folks from Franklin around there would
21 agree, we're in the process of building a large
22 hospital over on 85 and 17, and if there --
23 maybe your staff needs to at least look at that
24 area. I don't think it's by any means the same
25 situation as Blood Mountain, but there are some

1 of those situations around there.

2 MR. JAMES: Or you could use Habersham if
3 you wanted to.

4 MR. DILLARD: Any other question or
5 comment?

6 MR. LONG: Let me address, we have a
7 person in the crowd who wants to give some
8 insight. It's for our chairman to decide --

9 MR. PARIS: According to what I read
10 earlier, I think it would be fine to spend a
11 reasonable time, ten minutes.

12 MR. LONG: I'm talking about right now.

13 MR. PARIS: Yeah, right now.

14 MR. LONG: That's fine.

15 MR. PARIS: Yeah, that's fine.

16 MR. LONG: It's up to you.

17 MR. HAZELL: Adam Hazell, Planning
18 Director. And to both touch on what Mr. Long
19 was talking about with respect to conference of
20 plans, in the idea of having an existing plan,
21 yes, transportation is a requirement within
22 local plans per State law. However,
23 traditionally, especially for rural communities,
24 it is not given the level of detail they might
25 have that you would consider a defined project

1 list beyond the things they know at hand. It a
2 would be cost prohibitive, they couldn't. The
3 minimum is designed for the ease of that planned
4 process. But the element is there. What we
5 have started to prescribe to our local
6 governments and what we're going to be helping
7 them with after we get this criteria list is
8 that as you go through this process over the
9 next few months of trying to identify a very
10 defined project list for your community, we will
11 help you put that into your comprehensive plan
12 through the regular amendment process, so that
13 hopefully by August or very shortly thereafter,
14 you will have that incorporated into your
15 comprehensive plan, not only having gone through
16 this public input process for idea of
17 transportation, but see how it interacts with
18 the rest of your comprehensive plan.

19 So that's our goal is that as you turn in
20 the list of this roundtable, everybody will have
21 that incorporated into their comprehensive
22 plans as well.

23 MR. DILLARD: Okay. Thank you. Thank
24 you. Any other questions or comments about the
25 criteria?

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Mr. Chairman?

MR. PARIS: We have a -- go ahead.

MR. APPLING: I have a general question for all of you. I'm the volunteer advocate, and I know this is not something y'all have thought too much about, because I've not seen anywhere on the paperwork or anything, crossing the street for a handicap person. I just want y'all to consider that when you update roads and so forth, curb cuts. You know, put in sidewalks, fix what's there.

MR. PARIS: Where are you from, sir?

MR. APPLING: Right here in Dahlonga.

MR. PARIS: Your name?

MR. APPLING: Gary Appling.

MR. LONG: It's a broad category in the safety that covers that, as well as our roadway, pedestrian access, we've updated a lot of those. So, yes, those are certainly eligible and certainly warranted.

MR. DILLARD: Any other questions from the roundtable? Comments?

MR. PARIS: At the risk of giving Carl a heart attack, one more issue.

MR. DILLARD: He has a strong heart.

1 MR. PARIS: It's what counties come up
2 with like our SPLOST project, which means we're
3 doing them six years, this is a ten year plan,
4 and we find out sometimes if we let voters vote
5 on projects, and then sometimes two, three, four
6 years down the road and we find out, we
7 determine that project may not be needed any
8 longer but there's a new project come up, but
9 there's no mechanism to do it, and so we have
10 counties now that are stuck with money in an
11 account for a project that they no longer need
12 and they don't have the legal ability to
13 transfer that to a new project. So is there
14 anything today then to address that?

15 MR. LONG: No. Our reading of the Bill,
16 there's not. I get the same problem we run
17 into on SPLOST. I don't really have a good
18 answer other than you're supposed to build
19 the project on the list that you presented to
20 the voters. That's what the Bill says, you're
21 pretty much stuck with that project.

22 MR. JORDAN: David Jordan, Mayor of
23 Royston. What happens if the funding, let's
24 suppose prices go up, costs go up and there's
25 not enough money to finish that project, what

1 happens to the money that was identified for
2 that project? Would it go back to the taxpayers
3 in some way would it go back to state funding?
4 What happens to that money?

5 MR. LONG: If there's not enough money for
6 the projects?

7 MR. JORDAN: Well, I mean, if the tax is
8 collected for that project, ten years down the
9 road that road wasn't built but was identified
10 that could be completed and for whatever reason
11 it's not, what happens?

12 MR. LONG: Well, there's some provisions
13 in the law, you've got a copy of it, that
14 basically say you've got to build the projects
15 that's on the list. If you build the projects
16 on the list and there's money left over, then
17 that money gets redistributed to the cities and
18 counties by discretionary formula. If you get
19 to the end of the list, go down the list and you
20 run out of money, what you've got to do actually
21 is scale back the project. There's no provision
22 in the Bill the way it's written to not build
23 the project.

24 That's one comment we got from people,
25 what happens if you've gotten projects on the

1 list and you get through nine-and-a-half of
2 them.

3 MR. GRAVITT: That's the same thing with
4 SPLOST. If the money don't come in to build
5 projects that's voted on, you don't build them.

6 MR. JORDAN: But that money gets rolled
7 back into the millage.

8 MR. PARIS: What he's saying is not in the
9 law on this thing, and what he's saying, if even
10 my question, if that's not part of the law,
11 there's nothing we can really do about it.
12 Would that be accurate? So we could do a lot of
13 what ifs. And I think again, hopefully none of
14 those come to fruition and we'll collect more
15 money than we're planning on.

16 MR. LUMAS: On the 20th we handed you the
17 criteria as a draft criteria. What you've seen
18 tonight is a little bit different, and this is
19 back in -- we had taken the one from State and
20 done a little bit of tweaking. What is in your
21 notebook and what you saw tonight is the same
22 thing.

23 You don't have a copy of that other one in
24 front of you, but you got a copy of the 20th,
25 this is the one we're talking about because we

1 had tweaked some of the percentages around.

2 Morris and I discussed --

3 MS. BRUNER: Morris -- Ruth Bruner, Mayor
4 of Gainesville. I don't have a problem with the
5 target investment. But are some regions, that
6 something that people have changed at all is to
7 suggest percentages for the different things,
8 you know, more.

9 MR. DILLARD: There have been a few
10 changes, but surprisingly, not a lot.

11 MR. BRUNER: I don't think.

12 MR. DILLARD: There have been a few.

13 MR. LONG: Let me give you a little
14 insight. Now, let's just say at the end of day
15 the roadway comes out to be 69.5. That's great.
16 What if the roadway comes out to be 71? So
17 what? These are criteria that uses a guidepost
18 and a compass, and they're not hard and fast
19 rules of percentages. You've got to have a
20 starting point. If you're going to do a SPLOST
21 in your county, I've got a SPLOST in the county
22 I live in, you don't start out by just rattling
23 off a thousand projects. You come up with a
24 game plan. We think we're going to spend this
25 percent on the jail, we think we're going to

1 spend this percentage on libraries, this percent
2 is going to go toward transportation. You start
3 out with a guide.

4 MS. BRUNER: But you could have 8 percent
5 for aviation and 7 percent for bike and
6 pedestrian if you want; right?

7 MR. LONG: At the end of the day this
8 group decides. The way the Bill is written,
9 you can do that, yes.

10 MR. DILLARD: I would remind you, as Todd
11 said before, you take final action on the list.
12 You will get an updated estimate of the revenue
13 that will be produced by a 1 percent tax in this
14 region, and that the list, the cost of the list
15 has to equal that current estimate.

16 MR. LITTLE: Harris Little, Mayor of
17 Carnesville. I think, Todd, you spoke of this
18 earlier, but I want to get clarification. When
19 you look at investment targets as dollar amounts
20 out of SPLOST, there's nothing to preclude those
21 dollars to be used.

22 MR. LONG: Actually it was on one of my
23 slides. I didn't say it, but certainly you can
24 use your local discretionary money, you can use
25 your retail money to match --

1 MR. LITTLE: I'm just thinking about
2 aviation. You could use that, even if you put a
3 little money towards some aviation you could
4 really expand.

5 MR. LONG: Yeah, a million dollars in
6 aviation could go a long ways. I agree totally.

7 Certainly think about your bigger
8 projects. U.S. 129, those are very expensive
9 crossing the lake. Why not match it with
10 Federal money where you can?

11 Now, let's be honest, though, the Federal
12 share of money, one reason, the reason we're
13 here today, guys, is because the revenue stream
14 for our traditional transportation funding is in
15 bad shape. State motor fuel tax and the federal
16 gas tax is how we pay for transportation
17 projects. The reason is we're driving less,
18 basically the bigger mile traveled by Americans,
19 and the other thing is we're driving more fuel
20 efficient cars.

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Some of us.

22 MR. LONG: I gave this example to some of
23 you guys recently. I drove a Silverado truck
24 for 20 years, and I got 16 miles per gallon, and
25 last March I bought my dad's Toyota; not a

1 truck, a car. I miss my truck. I get 24 miles
2 per gallon. My personal contribution, because I
3 didn't change my trip, my personal contribution
4 to the infrastructure just went down 33 percent.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm taking up the slack;
6 I get about eight miles a gallon.

7 MR. LONG: If we go to \$4 a gallon gas,
8 people will do whatever, drive less. We'll see
9 part of our gas tax is based on a percentage of
10 the gas tax, only part of it is. The problem is
11 people drive less, that bump goes away. So
12 raising the gas tax, why don't you just do that?
13 The problem is you can raise the gas tax -- and
14 there's a lot of blood and sweat to go into
15 raising the gas tax, and it will be on his neck
16 probably. The problem is in five or ten years
17 what you've done raising the gas tax may just be
18 a wash. So long-term, the sales tax option was
19 the more sustainable way to go. So that's what
20 groveling with this for two or three sections,
21 and this is what they came up with. I believe
22 the sales tax is the way to go.

23 I want to mention to you, you read
24 articles and people say this, that, and the
25 other, when I go speak on national scene

1 conferences, people are lined up to find out
2 what Georgia is doing. They want to know what
3 we're doing, because they want to do it in their
4 state, because they're about to die. These
5 other states that are totally run on gas tax and
6 their gas tax any of it goes back to a
7 percentage of the price of gas. So they are
8 sunk, so they want to know exactly what we did
9 and how we did it.

10 MR. OLIVER: What percentage of our --
11 what percentage goes to the gas and what
12 percentage goes back to the general funds?

13 MR. LONG: Well, right now effective
14 January 1st, the gas tax is a 7-and-a-half cents
15 per gallon in the state, plus a 4 percent sales
16 tax. Of the 4 percent, 3 percent, which
17 equates, by the way, to about 7-and-a-half cents
18 as well, we're paying just over 15 cents a
19 gallon towards transportation. But about really
20 2 percent, or two pennies per gallon go to the
21 general funds. Out of the general funds, let's
22 be fair, we can't fund, we're funding roads and
23 bridges by constitution only. So you know when
24 you have a project, you know who pays the match?
25 You do; right? So we can't match in our motor

1 projection, we can't match transit projects. So
2 any match for those types of -- any match for
3 roads has to come from the general funds anyway.
4 So to say how much is going toward
5 transportation, yes, certainly some of it is
6 going to general.

7 MR. DARNELL: In your discretionary, has
8 there ever been any consideration that in the
9 north Georgia counties that the population as
10 much as doubles about six or eight months out of
11 the year. There's no accounting for any of
12 those people.

13 MR. LONG: It's based on the census.

14 MR. DARNELL: Yeah, they're there for the
15 census, but they're there only six or eight
16 months out of the year.

17 MR. PARIS: Same in our counties.

18 MR. ROBINSON: And when you do your
19 mileage.

20 MR. LONG: The goal was to make this as
21 similar as to the old LARP program as possible.
22 It just included county and city/state programs,
23 did not include state routes and interstates.
24 So you bring up a good issue, but I don't have
25 an answer to that.

1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you repeat the issue
2 that he raised, please?

3 MR. LONG: It's just the fact that U.S.
4 Census is how we base our population, and there
5 are people basically living in Rabun County that
6 aren't counted toward population.

7 MR. DILLARD: Population almost doubles.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Bill Robinson. The town I
9 live in, that's where they measure, the formula
10 they got, we get very little money because of
11 the population and the mileage, but we have got,
12 the next door city to us has the same
13 population but a lot more miles, and they get
14 about five times the allotment that we get.
15 We've got about 70 businesses, and they have
16 two.

17 MR. LONG: The formula is based on
18 population and lane miles, but it's weighted far
19 more heavily on lane miles. It's one-fifth
20 population, and four-fifths lane miles. So if
21 you just happen to live in a city that has more
22 lane miles than population, that's the way it
23 is. That's in the Bill, that's in Georgia
24 law, so it's not something we can change.

25 Now, I want to say this, because I, the

1 Senate Bill 200, several years ago gave the
2 Director of Planning the right to set the
3 formula on the elevated program. So I actually
4 changed the formula. So on the elevated program
5 it is not one-fifth/four-fifths, it is
6 one-third/two-thirds. So I gave more credit to
7 the population than previous because of that
8 very reason.

9 Mr. Chairman?

10 MR. PARIS: Okay. Are we ready to vote
11 for the regional criteria?

12 MR. DILLARD: Yes, sir.

13 MR. PARIS: Any other comments from the
14 floor? If not, could I hear a motion to adopt
15 the regional?

16 MR. McCULLOUGH: Gary McCullough. We
17 accept the criteria as presented.

18 MS. BRUNER: I motion to second.

19 MR. PARIS: Motion to second. Any final
20 discussion? Hearing none, we'll ask for a vote.
21 All in favor, say aye -- check that. Raise your
22 right hand. Be consistent. All opposed, raise
23 your right hand, same sign? Motion passed.

24 MR. LONG: All right. Well,
25 congratulations, you've accomplished the

1 election of a chairman, election of roundtable
2 Executive Committee, and a chairman for that.
3 You've also approved your criteria, so you are
4 technically finished with the first roundtable
5 meeting.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. LONG: The way the Bill is written,
8 you do want to have two meetings. Your next
9 meeting is in October; right? You may have
10 meetings during the summer, but it is not truly
11 kick-started until the Executive Committee meets
12 this summer. Between now and the next few
13 months, probably March or April, that's when I'm
14 going to be accepting projects from local
15 governments. Now, when we started this process,
16 we said we need the regional commissions to help
17 us out on logistics and meeting location, help
18 with the mayor selections from the counties.
19 We're going to provide you guidance, a form,
20 basically it will be a piece of paper. If
21 you've got a project you want to submit, it will
22 have all the information you submit on there.
23 You submit that, and Danny, he's not doing any
24 analysis on it from a transportation strategy
25 standpoint, he'll allow us to do that. He's

1 making sure all the I's are dotted and T's are
2 crossed.

3 We'll give you guys answers in a couple of
4 weeks. Our plan right now is we have another
5 roundtable meeting, we have the next five, and I
6 think over the next two weeks we have we're
7 done. So hold on to your projects for the time
8 being, and certainly I'm going to be looking at
9 those. And just remember, I can't, every
10 project you submit to me is not a project that's
11 going to end up on the draft list. I run it
12 through the criteria, we'll make a decision
13 about whether it's worthwhile or not. You have
14 a lot of benefit here because you sat through
15 presentations, you know what we're looking for.
16 Remember, there are 225 other cities in this
17 region that doesn't have that insight. Right?
18 You've got county commission chairs here
19 tonight. You're going with lots of ideas and
20 thoughts, you'll have to help us. Remember,
21 this is the criteria. Remind them over and over
22 again.

23 All right. So list of projects. February
24 and May we'll be rating the projects. I'm
25 required, actually, when I submit the list to

1 give the public benefit of the project. That's
2 required in the law. And I'll be doing that and
3 ultimately by May of this year we'll have the
4 unconstrained list, the Executive Committees
5 will meet in the summer. Ultimately the
6 constrained list will be developed, and by
7 August 19, that will be when this group
8 reconvenes.

9 It does call for two public hearings by
10 the Executive Committee, and that's going to be
11 helping you guys out, letting you know what
12 people think about the projects. Okay. Now, it
13 just says the minimum of two. You're welcome to
14 have more, you're welcome to have as many as you
15 want to, but minimum required is two. A lot of
16 people give you input, and ultimately after
17 October 19th, that's when the clock is really
18 going to run for us. Right? You've got from
19 October until the vote the following summer.
20 Right now the vote, it is not in July.
21 Everybody thinks it's July, it's actually August
22 the 19th -- August 21st. That's the next
23 general election. That will be the period of
24 time where we'll get the Chambers of Commerce
25 involved and groups like that on marketing, the

1 list, the whole concept to the voters.

2 All right. Any questions? If you want to
3 call me, a lot of y'all know my number already,
4 you know I take your calls, I'll listen to you,
5 answer as many questions as you have. So feel
6 free to write my number down and call me.

7 MR. LUMAS: Todd, we were still making
8 presentations to assist you guys. All you've
9 got to do is call Adam. I think we've got one
10 in Dawson County next week in Chamber of
11 Commerce.

12 If you've got a city meeting that you want
13 to put together, if you'll just call our office,
14 talk with Adam or Stephanie, we'll be happy to
15 come out and do the full presentation, or a five
16 minutes, whichever one you want.

17 MR. LONG: Use your resources you've got.
18 If these guys can help you out, give you a
19 perspective from the State, they give you a
20 perspective, let them be a resource to you.
21 Your president of ACGC is actually here, he's
22 chairman, he's president. What else do you do?

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He plays a lot of golf.

24 MR. LONG: All right. Any questions?

25 MR. GRAVITT: Ford Gravitt. As you

1 indicated, two meetings for the purpose of
2 selling this SPLOST or for the Executive
3 Committee, I think we need to hold a meeting in
4 every one of the districts that we have an
5 executive member from. That's five. As you
6 indicated, hold as many as you want, but I think
7 we need to -- we need to, you know, let people
8 know about the sales tax, because probably some
9 of the people won't want it on their ballot, but
10 I think we need to talk about it.

11 MR. LONG: The public meeting is about the
12 list itself, and then you've got the campaign
13 after you decide to go to that next step. But
14 every -- the 12 regions, every region is doing
15 that.

16 MR. RABER: I agree with the Mayor. I had
17 a graduate public relations class, and I think
18 the most striking statement is the public does
19 not buy or support anything that they do not
20 understand. And we have to make them understand
21 it.

22 MR. LONG: All right. I've got one
23 request. They requested that the five members
24 of the Executive Committee, six now, right,
25 unofficial, to come over here for a photo op.

1 All right.

2 If we could, I want to thank you, our
3 reporter, and Peggy Lovell for spotting who is
4 who out there for them, appreciate y'all being
5 here.

6 And I'm going to say the obvious, but
7 taking into chairman's privilege, we know how
8 critical it is, this is going to require more
9 working together between counties and cities
10 than has ever been done in the history of the
11 State of Georgia. Not only do we have to work
12 among ourselves, we do have all the other cities
13 and all the other commissioners, so it is going
14 to be critical that we work together. So I
15 don't think people need to worry about whose
16 project, who's got the most project, we got to
17 look at this in the end that is fair for
18 everybody and it suits what's best for our
19 region. I think as long as we go into it with
20 that, I think we'll come out with a victory next
21 year in August.

22 Do I hear a motion to adjourn?

23 MR. TURNER: Motion to adjourn.

24 MR. RABER: Let me say one thing on behalf
25 of Dahlonega, thanks for coming, please come

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back often and spend a lot.
(Proceedings concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF GEORGIA:

COUNTY OF TOWNS:

I hereby certify the foregoing transcript was taken down, as stated in the caption, and the questions and answers thereto were reduced to typewriting under my direction; that the foregoing pages 2 through 65 represent a true, correct, and complete transcription of the evidence given upon said hearing, and I further certify that I am not of kin or counsel to the parties in the case; nor am I in anywise interested in the result of said case.

This, the 2nd day of February, 2010.

Janice M. Coe, B-1168
Certified Court Reporter
And Notary Public
My Commission Expires:
September 19, 2012.