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5 COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,

6 joint with

7 COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

8 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

9 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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14 INTERVIEW OF: NINA ALBERT

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18 Thursday, April 11, 2024

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20 Washington, D.C.

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23 The interview in the above matter was held in room 2237, Rayburn House Office

24 Building, commencing at 10:01 a.m.

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1 Appearances:

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5 For the COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY:

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7 [REDACTED] SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISER

8 [REDACTED] DIGITAL DIRECTOR

9 [REDACTED] CHIEF COUNSEL FOR OVERSIGHT

10 [REDACTED] SENIOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

11 [REDACTED] PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

12 [REDACTED] PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

13 [REDACTED] MINORITY OVERSIGHT COUNSEL

14 [REDACTED] MINORITY OVERSIGHT COUNSEL

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16 For the COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM:

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18 [REDACTED] CHIEF OVERSIGHT COUNSEL

19 [REDACTED] SENIOR ADVISOR

20 [REDACTED] SENIOR ADVISOR

21 [REDACTED] MINORITY SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE RANKING MEMBER

22 [REDACTED] MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL

23 [REDACTED] MINORITY DEPUTY CHIEF OVERSIGHT COUNSEL

24

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1 For NINA ALBERT:

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3 KEVIN MCCART

4 MARY MALONEY

5 Squire Patton Boggs

6 2550 M Street NW

7 Washington, D.C. 20037

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1 [REDACTED] We'll go on the record. Good morning.

2 This is a transcribed interview of Ms. Nina Albert. Chairman Jordan and
3 Chairman Comer have requested this interview as part of the committee's oversight of
4 the Federal Bureau of Investigation and General Services Administration.

5 Would the witness please state your name for the record.

6 Ms. Albert. Nina Albert.

7 [REDACTED] And you're accompanied today by personal counsel. Could the
8 personal counsel please state your name for the record.

9 Mr. McCart. Kevin McCart.

10 Ms. Maloney. Mary Maloney.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you. On behalf of the committees, I want to thank you for
12 appearing here today to answer our questions. The chairmen also appreciate your
13 willingness to appear voluntarily.

14 My name is [REDACTED] and I'm with Chairman Jordan's staff. I'll now have
15 everyone else here in the room from the committees introduce themselves as well.

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with Chairman Jordan's staff.

17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with Chairman Jordan's staff.

18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with Chairman Comer.

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also with Chairman Comer.

20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also with Chairman Comer.

21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Ranking Member Nadler.

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] House Judiciary Committee, minority staff.

23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] House Oversight, Democratic side.

24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] House Oversight, Democratic side.

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] House Oversight Committee, Democratic side.

1 [REDACTED] Chairman Jordan.

2 [REDACTED] Chairman Jordan.

3 [REDACTED] I'd like to now go over the ground rules and guidelines that we will
4 follow during today's interview. Our questioning will proceed in rounds. The majority
5 will ask questions first for one hour, and then the minority will have an opportunity to ask
6 questions for an equal period of time, if they choose.

7 We will alternate back and forth until there are no more questions, and the
8 interview is over. Typically, we take a short break at the end of each hour, but if you
9 would like to take a break apart from that, please just let us know.

10 As you can see, there is an official court reporter taking down everything we say to
11 make a written record, and we ask that you give verbal responses to all questions.

12 Do you understand that?

13 Ms. Albert. Yes.

14 [REDACTED] So the court reporter can take down a clear record, we will do our
15 best to limit the number of people directing questions at you during any given hour to
16 just those people on the staff whose turn it is. Please try and speak clearly so the court
17 reporter can understand and so the folks down at the end of the table can hear you as
18 well.

19 It is important that we don't talk over one another or interrupt each other if we
20 can help it, and that goes for everybody present at today's interview. We want you to
21 answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner as possible, so we will
22 take our time.

23 If you have any questions or if you do not understand one of our questions, please
24 let us know. Our questions will cover a wide range of topics, so if you need clarification
25 at any point, just say so. If you honestly don't know the answer to a question or do not

1 remember, it is best not to guess.

2 Please give us your best recollection, and it is okay to tell us if you learned
3 information from someone else. Just indicate how you came to know the information.
4 If there are things you don't know or can't remember, just say so, and please inform us
5 who, to the best of your knowledge, might be able to provide a more complete answer to
6 the question.

7 You should also understand that, although this interview is not under oath, by law
8 you are required to answer questions from Congress truthfully.

9 Do you understand that?

10 Ms. Albert. Yes.

11 [REDACTED] This also applies to questions posed by congressional staff in an
12 interview.

13 Do you understand this?

14 Ms. Albert. Yes.

15 [REDACTED] Witnesses that knowingly provide false testimony could be subject
16 to criminal prosecution for perjury or for making false statements under 18 U.S.C., section
17 1001.

18 Do you understand this?

19 Ms. Albert. Yes.

20 [REDACTED] Is there any reason you are unable to provide truthful answers to
21 today's questions?

22 Ms. Albert. No.

23 [REDACTED] Finally, I'd like to make note that the content of what we discuss
24 here today is confidential. We ask that you not speak about what we discuss in this
25 interview to any outside individuals to preserve the integrity of our investigation.

1 For the same reason, the marked exhibits that we will use today will remain with
2 the court reporters to go in the official transcript, and any copies of those exhibits will be
3 returned to us when we wrap up.

4 That's the end of my preamble. Is there anything my colleagues from minority
5 would like to add?

6 [REDACTED] I'd just like to thank the witness for appearing voluntarily for the
7 interview.

8 [REDACTED] I just want to put on the record, I know that the -- this voluntary
9 interview is being videotaped and just want to put on the record the agreement between
10 the majority and the minority that the minority will have the ability to review the tape
11 and that, if the majority at any time decides to release the video or any portion of the
12 video, the minority will have access to the full video for at least one week before the
13 public release of any part of it.

14 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

15 Do you have an opening statement or have any remarks you'd like to make,
16 Mr. McCart?

17 Mr. McCart. No.

18 [REDACTED] Okay. The clock now reads 10:05. We'll start the first hour of
19 questioning, and I'll turn it over to my colleague.

20 EXAMINATION

21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q Thank you for being here again. Again, my name is [REDACTED] with Chairman
23 Jordan's staff, and I'll be leading this first round of questions.

24 To start off, can you describe your educational background?

25 A Sure. I have a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Tufts

1 University. I also have an Army ROTC commission. And then I have two master's
2 degrees, both from the University of North Carolina; one in regional -- city and regional
3 planning, and the other one is a master's in business administration.

4 Q Great. And where do you currently work?

5 A I currently work for the District of Columbia Government.

6 Q And what is your title there?

7 A I'm the deputy mayor for planning and economic development.

8 [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED] I'm so sorry. Could you speak up a little bit?

9 [REDACTED] Oh, yes. Sorry. I forget the room is a little bigger.

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q And when did your appointment start?

12 A My appointment to the current position that I'm in?

13 Q Yes, correct.

14 A October 16th of 2023.

15 Q And when were you confirmed as deputy mayor?

16 A I was confirmed February -- I can't remember the exact date, but it was early
17 February of 2024.

18 Q And can you describe your roles and responsibilities as deputy mayor?

19 A Sure. I have oversight and responsibility for coordination and management
20 of four agencies within what we call the cluster. That includes the Office of Planning, it
21 includes the Department of Small & Local Business Development, the Office of Cable
22 Television, Film, Media and Entertainment, and also one more. I'm just blanking on
23 what the last one is.

24 And then coordination across a number of different affiliated but independent
25 agencies, all in service of promoting economic development for the District of Columbia,

1 providing jobs for the residents of the District of Columbia, and generating revenue for
2 the District of Columbia.

3 Q And who is your direct supervisor?

4 A My direct supervisor is the city administrator, Kevin Donahue.

5 Q And how many people directly report to you?

6 A Directly report to me is approximately eight or nine.

7 Q And have you previously held any other positions with the D.C. government?

8 A I have. I've had three other positions in the D.C. government. I first
9 started working for the D.C. government -- it's a little complicated.

10 I was working for a redevelopment authority that was independent of the D.C.
11 government starting in 2006, and then that independent authority was dissolved, and I
12 was absorbed, if you will, into the D.C. government in 2007.

13 Q Okay.

14 A I worked at that time for this office, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for
15 Planning and Economic Development. After 4 years in that office, I moved to the District
16 Department of the Environment. That's what it was called at the time.

17 And then, for about 3 months, I worked for the Office of Planning before I decided
18 to leave the D.C. government. And this is in 2012.

19 Q Okay. And what was your role when you previously worked for Planning
20 and Economic Development?

21 A I was a project manager for a project that many in the D.C. area know now
22 called The Wharf. I also then, once that project was completed, managed a portfolio of
23 projects along the Anacostia that included Hill East, Poplar Point. Those are the other
24 two -- and Kingman Island and some other assets, all along the Anacostia.

25 Q And when did you start working in the General Services Administration?

1 A I began with GSA July 6th of 2021.

2 Q And that is when you started your role as Commissioner of the Public
3 Buildings Service at GSA?

4 A Correct.

5 Q And was this position a political appointment?

6 A It is, yes.

7 Q And who are you appointed by?

8 A Well, the political appointments are appointed by the President, so
9 President Joe Biden.

10 Q Thank you. And can you describe what your roles and responsibilities were
11 in this position?

12 A Sure. So the Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service is the senior
13 most person responsible for the Public Buildings Service, which comprises about 5,500
14 employees. It also is nationwide, includes facilities in, you know, six U.S. territories.

15 All of the functions of that organization fell under my responsibility and purview
16 and oversight, including design, construction, planning, leasing, dispositions, you know,
17 the full breadth of what the Public Buildings Service does for the U.S. Federal
18 Government.

19 Q Okay. And can you describe what the organizational chart of your office
20 was like?

21 A Sure. So, within what we called the front office, which is my personal
22 office, I had a chief of staff, I had an executive assistant. There is a deputy commissioner
23 that is a career deputy commissioner. And then, within also the -- the headquarters
24 function or the central office of the Public Buildings Service, there are assistant
25 commissioners. So one that specialized in portfolio management, one that specialized

1 in leasing, another in architecture, another in procurement, if you will, or acquisitions is
2 the terminology that we use -- or that the GSA uses. And there's probably another.

3 I can't remember exactly, but those were the people who were, sort of,
4 management of the front office, and each of those assistant commissioners had
5 organizations varying in size between 17 people to as many as, I think, 150 people,
6 depending on which organization it was.

7 Q Was your office located at GSA Headquarters?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. And who was your direct supervisor?

10 A The Administrator of GSA, Robin Carnahan.

11 Q And how many people directly reported to you in this role?

12 A Directly reported to me, again, the assistant commissioners, the deputy
13 commissioner. So I would say, approximately -- again, I'm sorry, I don't remember all
14 the exact assistant commissioners, but I'd say seven.

15 Q Okay. And how often did you visit sites, buildings, and locations under your
16 responsibility?

17 A Visited pretty regularly, actually. I came into the GSA during COVID, so
18 there was restriction on travel for some time. But, as soon as those restrictions were
19 lifted, then I made it a point to travel, to visit teams all across the country.

20 At minimum, I would travel every six weeks. And then, as you know, there were
21 different events or different requirements, then I would travel on a, you know, special or
22 case-by-case basis.

23 Q Was that travel local, or was it around the country?

24 A Both.

25 Q Okay.

1 A Locally, I traveled more frequently because it was easier to access, obviously.
2 Also, the National Capital Region has, approximately, I think it's 28 percent of the
3 GSA's -- or the Public Buildings Service entire portfolio.

4 So I did take time while we were on travel restrictions to go and visit locally when I
5 could.

6 Q And how often did you interact with the Administrator?

7 A The Administrator and I had a standing meeting. I would say, at minimum,
8 we met every other week, but more frequently than that. We started at approximately
9 the same time at GSA, and so we took time at the -- you know, throughout to get to know
10 each other and become familiar with the issues of the agency.

11 Q And, during your tenure at GSA, did you ever participate in any performance
12 reviews?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Did you generally receive good markings on these reviews?

15 A Yes.

16 Q And when did you leave GSA?

17 A I left October 12, 2023.

18 Q And have you held any other positions at GSA?

19 A No.

20 Q And, during your time at GSA, how often did you interact with other Federal
21 agencies?

22 A Fairly frequently. Every site visit that I would do -- again, this is on a
23 six-week cycle or so -- I would make it a point to meet with an agency when I was doing
24 site visits.

25 Q Which agencies would you meet with?

1 A It depended. So it wasn't selective. If I would go to Los Angeles, for
2 example, I would meet with the judiciary, actually, the courthouses and Federal judges,
3 because there was a major building there. The Social Security Administration.
4 Anyway, any of the agencies that -- United States Department of Agriculture.

5 I would meet with whichever agencies had a major concentration and presence in
6 that region or in that city.

7 Q And, during your time at GSA, how often did you interact with White House
8 officials?

9 A I would interact from time to time with the Domestic Policy Council. I
10 would say, in total, during a two-year period, I would guess no more than 10 times.

11 Q And with whom would you interact with at the White House?

12 A It was -- there was a -- actually, there were two groups. I was part of the
13 White House Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander working group as a senior
14 executive that is of that descent, so that -- and I went to two meetings or three meetings.

15 And then, with the Domestic Policy Council, I attended a couple meetings online,
16 and that was the Urban Equity Group, and also there was a -- maybe a housing product
17 council of some sort.

18 Q And -- were you going to say something?

19 A No. Just real estate-related -- councils that had interest in Federal real
20 estate.

21 Q Okay. And now moving into your tenure at WMATA, where did you work
22 before your political appointment as PBS commissioner?

23 A I worked at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, otherwise
24 known as WMATA.

25 Q And what was your position at WMATA?

1 A I started out as the director of real estate, and by the time I left WMATA, I
2 was the vice president of real estate and parking.

3 Q And when did you start this position?

4 A Which?

5 Q Vice president of real estate.

6 A I don't remember the exact date that I was promoted. Probably -- I don't
7 want to guess. I'll have to take a look. It blends together to me.

8 Q And what about your director role?

9 A I started at WMATA as a director, I can't remember the exact month, but it
10 was in 2016.

11 Q And can you describe your roles and responsibilities in your position as vice
12 president of real estate and parking?

13 A Sure. So I was responsible for the real estate holdings that WMATA has.
14 That includes property that WMATA owns. It includes easements and rights-of-way
15 along the tracks, much like a railroad company. And so just managing all of that,
16 overseeing people that manage our real estate.

17 I also was responsible for any leasing activity, disposition activity, as well as what
18 we call public/private partnerships or transit-oriented development activity.

19 And then -- sorry. One more thing. And I acquired a portfolio or a portfolio
20 was moved from one office into mine for parking, the parking portfolio.

21 Q And that happened later on?

22 A That happened when I was promoted to be the vice president of real estate
23 and parking.

24 Q Okay. And can you also describe what your organizational chart of your
25 office was like for the vice president role?

1 A Sure. I had a senior manager of -- I can't remember what her title is, but
2 she was responsible, basically, for leasing and operational management. There was a
3 second direct report who was responsible for what we call joint development or
4 transit-oriented development. And there was a third direct report who was responsible
5 for what we call station planning. So three direct reports.

6 Q And who was your direct supervisor?

7 A It was the CFO of WMATA.

8 Q And what's his or her name?

9 A At the time it was Dennis Anosike, and he was my direct supervisor for the
10 tenure that I was at Metro.

11 Q And who was the general manager of WMATA during your time there?

12 A A gentleman by the name of Paul Wiedefeld.

13 Q And then what about the CEO?

14 A There is no CEO.

15 Q Okay. That would be the general manager?

16 A Correct. The general manager is the most highest ranking -- he's the
17 person responsible for Metro.

18 Q Okay. And how often did you interact with him?

19 A With the general manager?

20 Q Yes.

21 A I would interact with the general manager when there was something within
22 my portfolio that required board approval. So board meetings -- I can't remember the
23 frequency, but I would present in front of the board on average over the 5-year period
24 maybe three to four times a year.

25 And then I would also interact more frequently with the general manager when

1 WMATA at that time was doing its own headquarters consolidation.

2 Q Uh-huh.

3 A And that project required briefings to the board more frequently because it
4 was of significant interest to the board and so, for a defined period of time, maybe 6
5 months, would meet on a monthly basis.

6 Q Okay. And why did you leave WMATA?

7 A I was approached and invited to put an application in for the position of the
8 PBS commissioner. So I applied, and I left WMATA when I was offered the position as
9 commissioner.

10 Q And, during your time at WMATA, was the decision made to end use or the
11 sale of the Greenbelt facility for the FBI Headquarters project?

12 A I'm sorry; can you repeat the question?

13 Q Yes. For the FBI Headquarters project and during your time at WMATA,
14 was the decision made to end use and sell the Greenbelt facility?

15 A To end use? I'm not sure I understand.

16 Q I guess, just to sell the Greenbelt facility.

17 A Well, at the time that I was at WMATA, there was a developer that WMATA
18 had partnered with. The term of the agreement is a joint development agreement
19 where WMATA would have ground leased the property to the developer, and so we call
20 that a disposition. It's not a sale. That's what was in place when I was at WMATA.

21 Q And did you play any role in this disposition?

22 A Well, the -- I mean, yes. I was the vice president of real estate and parking.
23 So I oversaw, you know, the team that played an active role in the disposition. So, yeah,
24 I mean, I had some oversight role.

25 Q Okay. Was it mainly your team working on that, and then you would just

1 supervise, and they would report back to you?

2 A Correct.

3 Q Okay. And, in your capacity as vice president of real estate and parking, did
4 you ever have any conversations with private or public entities to sell the Greenbelt site
5 location?

6 A So, again, the term that we used, because it wasn't a sale, is a disposition of
7 property. So I met with -- I mean, it was an active joint development agreement, and I
8 met from time to time with the developer, who was our partner. I also met from time
9 to time with representatives from Prince George's County about the project.

10 Q And when did these conversations, roughly, take place?

11 A I couldn't tell you specifically. But the -- we had a joint development
12 agreement, an active joint development agreement, during the -- during the term that I
13 was at Metro.

14 Q Okay. And do you know when this joint development agreement began?

15 A It's a very old joint development agreement, so I don't have the exact date,
16 but I believe that when I came in, it was probably 17 years --

17 Q Okay.

18 A -- in process. Again, I don't remember the exact timing, but it was
19 longstanding.

20 Q And at any point did you speak with anyone at GSA about the Greenbelt
21 property?

22 A I did not have direct conversations with the GSA about the Greenbelt
23 property. There was a meeting that the GSA had requested of all the people who
24 owned land to meet with the -- it was a different situation back then. This was under
25 the 2014 procurement process where the GSA was selecting a developer team

1 independently of the property where the -- where, you know, the site is being considered.

2 And so the GSA had asked every single property owner that was in -- that had one
3 of the selected sites to be available to the developers so that the developers could
4 understand the sites.

5 Q Okay. And what -- what did those discussions involve specifically?

6 A I don't remember exactly. Very often many questions that -- or, sorry.

7 The discussion, if I remember, that the developers asked were primarily around
8 transit operations, because it's a requirement of WMATA to keep transit operations
9 available during construction. So there were logistical questions, questions about the
10 site. I mean, those were typically the types of questions that were being asked.

11 Q Okay. And, before your work with WMATA, GSA, and D.C. mayor's office,
12 what other positions have you held?

13 A Uh-huh. I worked for Walmart as a director of public affairs between the
14 time that I left D.C. government and before I worked for WMATA. I've also started my
15 career in the Army. I was a first lieutenant. After the Army, I returned to the United
16 States, got my advanced degrees, worked after I graduated for a private real estate
17 developer in Seattle and was responsible for both business development, as well as
18 project management. We specialized in health care development.

19 And, let's see. Oh, I worked for another developer in Seattle. I also worked for
20 an architecture company doing business with them, and all of this is kind of in the
21 business development realm. And that's it. Came to D.C.

22 Q And how long were you in the Army for?

23 A I was in the Army for Active Duty for 3 years, active National Guard for 1
24 year, inactive reserve for 4 years.

25 Q And then, after you left the Army, you got your advanced degrees and have

1 had careers in urban planning and development.

2 What is your main motivation for being in this career path?

3 A Well, I am very motivated and passionate about high-quality communities
4 and efficiency, candidly. I have spent my career moving between the public and the
5 private sector because I think it's fascinating to understand the perspective of each side.
6 And, over the course of my career, I've developed an expertise in public/private
7 partnerships as a result.

8 Q Thank you. And when did you learn that you would participate in the FBI
9 Headquarters project?

10 A Well, from the onset of my appointment as the commissioner, I understood
11 that it was likely that I was going to be -- have a role in the FBI Headquarters selection.
12 I'm trying to remember exact dates, but at some point Congress directed GSA to select
13 among the three sites that had been referenced in, I think it's a 2017 prospectus
14 document, and that is what kicked off the beginning of the process. And so that's when
15 I became involved, if you will.

16 Q Okay. So it wasn't a surprise to you that when you started your role as PBS
17 commissioner, you wouldn't -- you knew you -- you anticipated that you would be in the
18 FBI Headquarters project in some capacity?

19 A Correct.

20 Q And what was the depth of your understanding about your involvement with
21 the Headquarters project? Did you know you would have minimal involvement or high
22 involvement?

23 A I didn't know at the onset what level of involvement I would have. I
24 anticipated, because it was, basically, written in a limited authorization letter, that it
25 could be significant involvement.

1 Q And did you know that you would eventually serve as the site selection
2 authority?

3 A I did not.

4 Q Okay. And so, going back to the limited authorization, and that is -- that's
5 referring to the July 6, 2021, memorandum from the Administrator, correct?

6 A Correct.

7 Q Can you describe what you understood the limited authorizations to mean?

8 A Sure. It was an evaluation of whether or not there was a conflict of
9 interest, either real or perceived, for my involvement in the FBI Headquarters decision
10 given that my prior role was being the vice president of real estate for Metro. And that,
11 you know, it was possible that the Greenbelt site would be among the sites.

12 So, primarily, it was an evaluation of any conflict of interest and a determination
13 that there was not a conflict of interest. The other thing that I understood from that
14 document -- there were two other things -- was that my involvement in the FBI
15 Headquarters site selection site -- or site selection decision could be significant and that
16 the Administrator -- the limited authorization was that, because of my prior role at
17 WMATA, that the matter that I was authorized to participate in was the FBI Headquarter
18 site selection and that any other matter that WMATA was involved in would need to be
19 assessed by the Administrator.

20 Q Okay. And did you eventually get full authorization to participate in the FBI
21 Headquarters project?

22 A That's -- I had full authorization to participate in the FBI Headquarters
23 project. That's what the authorization says.

24 Q Okay.

25 A There were no other matters that arose that involved WMATA that required

1 any additional evaluation --

2 Q Okay.

3 A -- of my participation.

4 Q And, at the onset of your role as PBS commissioner and you know that
5 you're going to get involved with the FBI Headquarters project in some capacity, did you
6 have any concerns about participating in the process given your most recent employment
7 with WMATA?

8 A I did not.

9 Q Did anyone at GSA raise any concerns to you about your involvement?

10 A They did not.

11 Q Did any other Federal agency raise any concerns to you about your
12 involvement?

13 A They did not.

14 Q And did anyone at WMATA raise any concerns to you about your
15 involvement?

16 A No.

17 Q And when did you learn that you would serve as the site selection authority
18 for the FBI Headquarters project?

19 A I can't remember the exact date, but it was in between the first amendment
20 to the site selection plan and the second amendment to the site selection plan, which was
21 in approximately July of 2023.

22 Q And, to your knowledge, why were you selected?

23 A I believe I was selected because of my experience in real estate, my
24 experience specifically in this region, and because of the significance and scale of this
25 project, that it would require the senior most person in the organization with real estate

1 experience to be involved in.

2 Q And who asked you to serve as the site selection authority?

3 A The Administrator asked me to.

4 Q And how did that conversation go?

5 A It was -- I can't remember, honestly, the exact details of the conversation,
6 but it was a request whether or not I'd be willing to serve, and I accepted.

7 Q Was it a phone call, an in-person meeting?

8 A I really don't remember. We were working in a hybrid capacity at that
9 time. And so, you know, the form of meeting, I don't remember.

10 Q And did you eventually receive a memo or other formal written notification
11 about your assignment as site selection authority?

12 A No.

13 [REDACTED] You mentioned a moment ago about the -- I'm not going to get your
14 exact words correctly, but the size and scope of this particular thing.

15 Is there something that made this one different than other site selections and
16 buildings and things that occur at GSA on a regular basis?

17 Ms. Albert. I mean, this project just in sheer scope is anywhere between, you
18 know, 2 and a half to a \$4 billion project. That is atypical. I mean, it's a very significant
19 project.

20 The other notable thing about this particular site selection is that the
21 decisionmaking had been going on for over a decade and --

22 [REDACTED] Can you kind of tell us a little more about that; going on for a decade,
23 what does that mean?

24 Ms. Albert. Well, I was not at GSA at the time that the FBI site selection
25 or -- sorry, the Headquarters project was developed. But I believe, as early as 2011,

1 there were reports that started to emerge about the need for a new Headquarters site.

2 There had been a very significant RFP that had been issued, significant resources
3 by private parties involved. So that's what I mean. Just there's a long history on this
4 project. So not only was the actual scale of the project, from a cost perspective
5 significant, but the history on this project, in particular, is also longstanding.

6

BY [REDACTED]

7 Q And what duties and responsibilities did you have as site selection authority?

8 A So the site selection plan outlines my specific roles and responsibilities.

9 But the bottom line is that I was responsible for making the decision for the selection of
10 the site for which the FBI Headquarters would go.

11 Q And did anyone raise concerns to you or your supervisors about your
12 designation as site selection authority when you found out you would be site selection
13 authority?

14 A Nobody raised any concerns to me, and I can't speak to anybody -- I mean,
15 any concerns that were raised to anybody else.

16 Q And were you in charge of selecting the site selection team?

17 A Was I in charge of it? I wouldn't characterize it that way. I was aware of
18 who the site selection team or -- would be, yes. But the team -- there's, again, a long
19 history of this project, so there's a team that was in place prior to my even joining GSA.

20 Q Okay. And was the team comprised of both FBI and GSA officials?

21 A There was a team on the FBI -- for the FBI, and there was a team for the GSA.
22 I'm not sure what you mean by officials, but, yes, there were career staff from both
23 agencies that have been involved in this project for many years.

24 Q I guess I'm just trying to get an understanding of, like, who on the FBI and
25 GSA was involved.

1 So were there senior leadership from FBI involved and then GSA senior leadership
2 involved?

3 A Can you specify, involved in what? Because there's a number of people --

4 Q Right.

5 A -- that have been involved in this project for many years.

6 Q So a senior leadership managing the Headquarters project and kind of
7 reporting findings or, I guess, meetings that occurred and reporting down to site selection
8 team members or -- I'm just trying to understand the structure of --

9 A Okay.

10 Q -- how the FBI and GSA relationship was.

11 A Okay. If I may? There are project staff on both -- for both agencies.
12 The -- those are technical people who are experienced in developing real estate. As you
13 can imagine, the FBI has a significant real estate portfolio across the country, and so
14 there's professional staff that -- or, sorry, career staff that manages that. Same thing
15 with GSA. So that is the technical team.

16 The site selection panel is three people. And those are, again, career staff; one
17 from the FBI, two from the GSA. Throughout the process -- and I don't mean the site
18 selection process. I mean in general -- for a project of this size -- I can't speak for the
19 FBI. I can only speak for GSA -- I would want to know what the status of the project was,
20 the evaluation -- or not the evaluation, but the -- yeah. I mean, I just would keep up
21 from time to time what the status of the project was.

22 I don't want to assume for the FBI, but -- you know, what their management
23 structure is.

24 Q Okay. And were there other site selection authorities before you?

25 A On?

1 Q For the Headquarters project.

2 A Yes. During the last procurement, there was a site selection authority.

3 Q Do you know how many site selection authorities there were?

4 A I think there was only one, but you would need to ask GSA to confirm. But
5 I'm aware of one other site selection process.

6 Q Do you know who the -- who that site selection authority was?

7 A I do.

8 Q Okay. Can you share their name?

9 A It was the deputy commissioner for the Public Buildings Service at the time.

10 Q And was this site selection authority a career or political appointee?

11 A In 2014? The deputy commissioner position, as it is now, is a career
12 position.

13 Q Okay. And do you think the change in, I guess, practice of being a career or
14 political appointee was appropriate in this circumstance?

15 A I don't think that the site selection authority, the nature of political
16 appointee versus career was a deciding factor. I think the deciding factor in my being
17 the site selection authority had to do with my experience in real estate, my experience in
18 the region, and the significance of this particular decision.

19 Q And did you ever learn why the other site selection authority was replaced
20 or changed?

21 A What do you mean "the other"?

22 Q The one you mentioned, the deputy -- the previous --

23 A Well, the -- I don't -- I don't know about changed in 2014, which is many
24 years ago. That deputy commissioner was the site selection authority, and that -- I don't
25 know how that decision was made.

1 Q Okay.

2 A Obviously, that's about 9 years ago. And so just different set of
3 circumstances.

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q So is it your understanding that the site selection authority previous to you,
6 the last time there was one, was in this greater process but not in this -- in the current
7 panel that you were a part of?

8 A Correct. The -- the 2014 site selection decision and that site selection
9 authority at that time was not involved in the 2023 site selection decision. That's
10 correct.

11 Q Okay. And so would GSA or you consider those as -- while part of the larger
12 process of picking an FBI Headquarters, but separate things that occurred at different
13 times? Like, were they all one big, long site selection panel or process, or were they
14 multiple processes over a given period of time for the same end result? What's the
15 goal?

16 A Oh, there were -- so these are two distinct site selection decisions. So, in
17 2014, it was a very different set of circumstances than in 2023.

18 The site selection panel at that time was picking from, if I recall correctly, a
19 number of different sites. And then they were whittling it down to three. Also, there
20 was what they call an exchange. That was the terms of the site selection decision is that
21 they would sell the J. Edgar Hoover Building, they were looking for a developer who could
22 to take the proceeds of that to reinvest wherever the new site was to be located.

23 All of that was terminated. That site selection process was terminated, I believe,
24 in either -- 2015.

25 Q Okay.

1 A So this process was directed by Congress that GSA would select among three
2 sites. And so -- and there was no exchange involved in this process. So it was a
3 different set of circumstances. A new panel was set up, and a new site selection
4 authority determined.

5 [REDACTED] Okay.

6 Mr. McCart. [REDACTED] could we have one second?

7 [REDACTED] We can go off the record.

8 [Discussion off the record.]

9 [REDACTED] We can go back on the record.

10 Mr. McCart. I think, [REDACTED] maybe just to clarify a point on this.

11 [REDACTED] Okay.

12 Mr. McCart. I think you all are getting at, I think, Ms. Albert is talking about the
13 two different processes. I think there was a prior site selection authority under the
14 second system that she was discussing, which is --

15 Ms. Albert. Yeah. So, sorry.

16 [REDACTED] No worries.

17 Ms. Albert. This site selection period in 2023, there was a site selection authority
18 that was named -- that was different than myself under amendment one. And then, as I
19 said, I was approached and asked if I would be willing to serve as the site selection
20 authority. And so I accepted, and that change was made at the publication of
21 amendment two of the site selection plan.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q Okay. So did you approve the second amendment of the site selection
24 plan?

25 A I mean, I don't know that I technically approved it, but yes. I reviewed it

1 and accepted it, and it was published.

2 Q Okay. And then the previous site selection authority preceding you signed
3 off on the amendment one plan. Is that correct?

4 A That's a good question. I don't know the answer to that. But, yes, it was
5 published by GSA, and so it represented GSA's site selection plan.

6 Q Okay.

7 [REDACTED] And who was the site selection authority under amendment one?

8 Ms. Albert. I believe it was the regional commissioner for the National Capital
9 Region.

10 [REDACTED] And do you know their name?

11 Ms. Albert. It's Melanie Gilbert.

12 [REDACTED] Thank you.

13 BY [REDACTED]

14 Q And I just wanted to go back to the two different site selection processes.

15 So the one in 2014 was more of a, I guess, down-select of a bunch of sites, and
16 then they had to choose to -- they had to choose three sites, and then what you were a
17 part of was choosing one from the three sites, correct?

18 Mr. McCart. Just to -- I mean, given that Ms. Albert joined GSA in 2021, I mean, I
19 think questions about the logistics of the first site selection probably -- I mean, she's,
20 obviously, giving the background that she understands, but I think anything, sort of,
21 definitive about that process is probably best directed to the agency than to her given
22 that was, you know, 7 years before she joined.

23 [REDACTED] That's fair. I'm just trying to understand.

24 Mr. McCart. No, no. I understand. No, no. I just -- I just want to make sure
25 that, like -- you know, I think she's trying to give that -- but, like, it's certainly not the

1 definitive version since she wasn't there.

2 [REDACTED] We understand. That would be Ms. Albert's understanding during
3 her time of the previous stuff.

4 Ms. Albert. I believe that the intention of the 2014 site selection process was to
5 reach a decision on a final site, but the -- but the process was terminated prior to that
6 final decision being made.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q Okay. And, outside of your involvement with the FBI Headquarters project,
9 how often did you interact with the FBI?

10 A I sat in on a couple meetings with the FBI. There's something at GSA -- that
11 GSA leads for multiple law enforcement agencies called the community of practice for law
12 enforcement. So I would sit in on a couple of those meetings.

13 Given, again, the size and scope of the FBI's portfolio across the country, there
14 was an FBI-specific meeting that GSA -- a standing meeting that GSA held. And,
15 depending on the issue or what was being discussed, I would sit in and attend and listen
16 to those meetings.

17 As I said, when I did visits across the country, if there was a major FBI facility or
18 project, then I would meet with the local FBI team there.

19 Q Okay. Did your involvement or interaction with the FBI increase when you
20 worked on the FBI Headquarters project?

21 A Well, again, the FBI is not a monolith. But there was a team of people
22 who -- from the FBI who worked on the site selection process, and I interfaced with them
23 pretty regularly --

24 Q And --

25 A -- you know, as the project evolved.

1 Q By regularly, how -- how would you characterize that?

2 A Well, I can't remember exact dates, but in spring of 2022, after Congress
3 directed GSA to select among the three sites, you know, we would have a stand-up
4 meeting to understand what the next steps were going to be. At that point -- that was
5 pretty early on -- the project teams would be the ones meeting. I wouldn't be as
6 involved.

7 As you know, the site selection plan started to come together, then I -- you know,
8 my attention would be more required, and my oversight -- you know, we were starting to
9 ramp up. So I would, you know, participate in those meetings, make sure that I
10 understood what was happening.

11 Q And, going into the decisionmaking, when -- do you know when the site
12 selection panel convened for its first time to talk about their decision?

13 A It was in -- it was in July -- sorry -- in the latter part of July of 2023.

14 Q Okay.

15 [REDACTED] And when was the -- to your knowledge, the panel selected?

16 Ms. Albert. Well, the -- I don't remember if there were changes to the panel
17 between the first publication of the site selection plan, the amendment -- I don't believe
18 there were any changes between the site selection plan and amendment number one to
19 the panel. I can't recall if there was a change in panel participants or a refinement of
20 panel participants between amendment one and amendment two.

21 [REDACTED] But the panel would have been selected with -- there would have
22 been a panel selected with amendment one -- or with plan one -- excuse me. The first
23 publication of the plan, that would coincide with having a panel as well?

24 Ms. Albert. Correct.

25 [REDACTED] Okay.

1 BY [REDACTED]

2 Q And, during this meeting at the end of July, did they -- did the panel reach a
3 decision on which site to choose for the FBI Headquarters project?

4 A So the panel was not charged with making a decision. They were charged
5 with reaching a consensus recommendation so that I could have the benefit of their
6 evaluation when I made my decision.

7 Q And what did the panel -- what site did the panel recommend?

8 A The panel recommended the Springfield site.

9 Q And that was the -- that recommendation was the result of this meeting in
10 July, to your knowledge?

11 A Correct.

12 Q And, earlier this week, the committee conducted a transcribed interview
13 with one of the panel members and -- Shannon Parry, and she mentioned that you called
14 for a back-check meeting shortly after the panel reached a consensus.

15 Can you -- do you recall requesting this back-check meeting?

16 A Well, I wouldn't characterize it as a back-check meeting. The day that the
17 panel convened, what was scheduled was a morning meeting, a break for lunch, and an
18 afternoon meeting. And that was just to hold time on the calendar for the panelists and
19 everybody, you know, so that there was adequate time given to this project.

20 The panel reached a consensus during the morning session, so we were scheduled
21 for lunch. And I suggested that we convene again just to make sure that there weren't
22 any -- I mean, this is a significant decision for the FBI, for the American people. So I
23 suggested that we take the break, come back, see if there was any more discussion
24 merited. That's it.

25 [REDACTED] And was there any discussion merited?

1 Ms. Albert. I believe that I had a question for the panel and that the general
2 counsel also had an independent question for the panel. They responded and
3 considered my question, and then we concluded the meeting. So there was some
4 discussion, but not significant discussion.

5 [REDACTED] How long do you -- would you characterize that that discussion went
6 on, to your best recollection?

7 Ms. Albert. Under half an hour.

8 BY [REDACTED]

9 Q And who was all in attendance for this meeting? Was it just the panel and
10 yourself?

11 A No. It was the same group of people that was in attendance of the
12 morning meeting. So there were the panelists that were in the meeting, myself, the
13 contracting officer. There were technical advisers from both the FBI and GSA that were
14 in attendance, and the general counsel.

15 BY [REDACTED]

16 Q And would you -- what would you classify, just for our purposes, as -- we're
17 using a lot of terms. I want to make sure we're using them correctly.

18 Oh, look, there's the panel, which are the three members. You're the site
19 selection authority, as well as your other role at GSA. All of the technical advisers, all of
20 those folks that are working on this project.

21 What are they a part of? Like, what are -- what would they be called --

22 A Oh --

23 Q -- like as a collective.

24 A I think we called them in the site selection plan technical advisers.

25 Q But they're not a part of the panel, but they're a part of the --

1 A Correct.

2 Q -- site selection process.

3 Are all of these different folks that work together to help provide the information,
4 all the stuff that they give to the panelists, they're just a part of the site selection team
5 that's working on this particular one or --

6 A I would say that they're advisers who were available to the panel if the panel
7 had any questions during their discussion.

8 Q Okay.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Can you go more indepth about the question that you had during this
11 meeting?

12 A Sure. I asked -- I can't remember the specific question that I had, but it
13 related to how the panel processed criteria four.

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q And what was criteria four?

16 A Criteria four was advancing sustainability and equity.

17 Q And what does that mean to you in this context?

18 A Could you be more specific?

19 Q Criteria four, what did it mean to GSA in -- if it was put in as a criteria, what
20 does that mean?

21 A The site selection plan is quite specific about what they -- what the plan
22 asked us to evaluate both in terms of site sustainability, as well as advancing equity. So
23 what I understood from the site selection plan -- and I would, you know, want to refer to
24 it in detail, but in terms of site sustainability, making sure that the site had minimum
25 impact based on a variety of different climate risks and disaster risk, as well as didn't

1 unduly impact, you know, natural environment.

2 As it pertained to advancing equity, that was about could the investment by the
3 Federal Government in this campus serve to uplift communities that had been
4 underinvested in historically.

5 BY [REDACTED]

6 Q So can you recall what decision -- not the decision -- recommendation that
7 the panel made that caused you to have this question?

1 [11:00 a.m.]

2 Ms. Albert. There were many data points to consider under this particular
3 criteria. And. In the sites, both the panel's site -- consensus report as well as my own
4 decision document goes into this criteria significantly, because of how many data points
5 there were to consider.

6 So I don't remember my exact question, but there's a balancing act to do when
7 you're considering a lot of volume of information. And I think I was asking about how
8 they prioritized or thought about, you know, these different data points.

9

BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Ms. Albert, who asked you or approached you to be the site selection
11 authority? Do you remember who that person was and when that conversation
12 occurred?

13 A I don't remember an exact date of when that conversation occurred. It was
14 before the site selection amendment was made in July. And, in terms of who
15 approached me, to the best of my recollection, it was the Administrator.

16 Q And at that time, did the Administrator explain why she wanted you to
17 consider becoming the site selection authority for the FBI Headquarters project?

18 A Again, I can't remember the exact conversation. It was not a long
19 conversation. I think I had anticipated from day one that I could be significantly
20 involved. And so it didn't merit a lot of discussion, but I believe that it was based on the
21 level of scrutiny that this project would get, that we anticipated it would get, and the
22 magnitude of the investment by the American taxpayer in this project and my specific
23 knowledge of real estate in the greater Washington area that I was asked to be the site
24 selection authority. But -- anyway, that's my understanding.

25 Q When that conversation took place, when the Administrator asked you to

1 consider becoming the site selection authority, did you immediately agree to become the
2 site selection authority or did you take that back to consider it for a period of time, if you
3 remember?

4 A I agreed during the course of that conversation.

5 Q And that would have been in approximately July of 2023, before --

6 A Yes, June or July. I really can't remember the specific date. Yeah. But it
7 was in that timeframe.

8 BY [REDACTED]

9 Q Hi, Ms. Albert.

10 Who is Brett Prather and what was his role at GSA when you were there during
11 the Biden administration?

12 A Brett Prather at the time that I was there was the chief of staff to the -- to
13 GSA, for GSA, to the Administrator, and as he is still.

14 Q And, as Public Buildings Commissioner, what was your reporting relationship
15 to him?

16 A So I reported directly to the Administrator, but, obviously, the chief of staff
17 role is aware of and, you know, has a management role of the agency across both
18 services, Public Buildings Service, as well as the Federal Acquisition Service.

19 Q And did you have frequent dealings with him and concerning -- what were
20 they concerning?

21 A You know, I testified before Congress multiple times. So, as the chief of
22 staff, he was responsible for, you know, thinking about those kinds of issues. Or, if there
23 were major decisions that were being -- you know, that were vested in me to make in the
24 Public Buildings Service, it's important when you're running an organization of this size to
25 socialize those.

1 And so, you know, I would make sure that he understood where I was coming
2 from, and I would also discuss those with the Administrator. And meetings that I had
3 with the Administrator, very often the chief of staff would attend those meetings.

4 Q Did you discuss the FBI Headquarters project with him or your role as site
5 selection authority?

6 A I did. Yeah. I mean, he was part of those discussions, yes.

7 Q Did he ever indicate that GSA leadership anticipated a particular outcome
8 would result from the site selection process?

9 A He did not, no.

10 Q Do you know if he had any discussions with anyone -- did he mention having
11 any discussions with anyone in the White House about the site selection?

12 A He did not mention that to me, no.

13 Q And did he ever indicate that there were any individuals working in the
14 White House who had any expectations about what that outcome would be?

15 A He did not.

16 Q Do you know how many times your predecessor served as a site selection
17 authority? That would have been Dan Mathews?

18 A Dan Mathews? I don't know.

19 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record.

20 [Recess.]

21 [REDACTED] All right, we'll go back on the record. The time is 11:18.

22 EXAMINATION

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q Ms. Albert, first and foremost, I want to thank you for your willingness to
25 appear voluntarily before these committees today.

1 And I'd like to circle back quickly to your employment background. Can you
2 remind me when you were first hired to work with WMATA?

3 A I was hired in 2016 to work at WMATA.

4 Q And approximately how long did you work with WMATA?

5 A Approximately 5 years.

6 Q Five years, okay. And, through your work with WMATA, is it fair to say that
7 you developed a general knowledge of the National Capital Region?

8 A It furthered my knowledge of the National Capital Region. It is one of the
9 few regional organizations in this region.

10 Q Okay. And I guess, based on the entirety of your career and your
11 experience, including your work at WMATA, is it fair to say that you developed a
12 knowledge of the real estate landscape in the National Capital Region?

13 A I did. So there are three things in my career that have informed my
14 knowledge of this region's real estate economy. The first is my time at the D.C.
15 government. Second is my time at Walmart, because I was operating in this region,
16 advancing Walmart's real estate investment priorities. And then third was at WMATA.

17 Q And, just to sum that up, based on those three roles that you held in these
18 organizations, again, you developed a pretty indepth knowledge of the real estate
19 economy, as you put it, in the National Capital Region?

20 A Correct.

21 Q And I know we discussed this in the last hour, but can you remind me again
22 when you were first appointed to GSA?

23 A I was appointed July 6 of 2021.

24 Q And this was discussed briefly, and I'd like to dive into it a little bit more.
25 But, upon your appointment to GSA, Administrator Carnahan issued a limited

1 authorization for you to participate in the FBI Headquarters site selection project. Is
2 that right?

3 A Correct.

4 [REDACTED] And I'd like to enter into the record what will be marked as exhibit 1,
5 which is a memorandum dated July 6, 2021, from GSA Administrator Carnahan to Nina
6 Albert.

7 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1

8 was marked for identification.]

9

BY [REDACTED]

10 Q The subject of this memorandum is "Limited Authorization Pursuant to 5
11 CFR, Section 2635.502(d), to Participate in GSA Matters Related to the Federal Bureau of
12 Investigation Headquarters Project and the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority."

13 Now, Ms. Albert have you seen this document before?

14 A I have.

15 Q And, generally speaking, what is this document?

16 A This document is an analysis or -- an analysis of the ethics review as well as
17 conflict of interest review by GSA about my -- about whether or not I could participate in
18 the FBI Headquarters project, given that my previous job had been at WMATA, as well as
19 a decision by the Administrator as to whether or not I could participate. And it states
20 that I can.

21 Q Okay. And, for clarity, in this memorandum, Administrator Carnahan
22 undertakes an analysis into whether your prior work for WMATA may have affected your
23 impartiality with the FBI Headquarters site selection. Is that accurate?

24 A Correct.

25 Q And I know you just mentioned this, but for one more time, what did this

1 memorandum ultimately conclude?

2 A It concluded that -- two things, that -- well, first of all, it concluded that I was
3 authorized, as PBS commissioner, to participate in the FBI Headquarters project.

4 It also concluded that there was not a conflict. Let me see. Hold on. Anyway,
5 and it concluded that I was -- that I was authorized to participate in this project.

6 Q Okay. And, in reaching those conclusions, this memorandum undertakes
7 an analysis into whether your prior work with WMATA violated laws governing ethics. Is
8 that right?

9 A Correct.

10 Q And, in addition to that, in this memorandum Administrator Carnahan
11 analyzes a host of other factors, including the nature of the relationship involved, the
12 effect of the resolution of the matters that would have upon financial interests that you
13 may hold. We see the sensitivity of the matters, the difficulty in reassigning the matters
14 to another employee.

15 All of that determined that you were authorized to participate in this FBI selection
16 process, correct?

17 A Correct.

18 Q And that -- strike that.

19 So, given this memorandum, is it fair to say that GSA was aware of your prior work
20 with WMATA?

21 A Yes, they were aware.

22 Q Did you disclose to GSA upon your appointment that you previously worked
23 for WMATA, or were they previously aware of that?

24 A They were previously aware of that.

25 Q But you weren't trying to keep it a secret in any respect?

1 A No, I was not.

2 Q Is it fair to say that your prior work with WMATA was widely publicized, it
3 was common knowledge among I guess people who live in D.C.?

4 A My role at WMATA was well-known. I spoke publicly on various multiple
5 occasions in my role as vice president of real estate for WMATA. And so -- it was on my
6 resume that I submitted in my application for this position. I had no intent of hiding my
7 role at WMATA.

8 Q Fair enough.

9 Is it fair to say that GSA undertook this analysis because it wanted to do its due
10 diligence with your background because you worked with WMATA prior to coming to
11 GSA?

12 A I could not characterize how GSA evaluated my time at WMATA other than
13 what is provided here.

14 Q Okay. I want to shift quickly --

15 BY [REDACTED]

16 Q I just wanted to ask a couple questions on that, Ms. Albert.

17 When you joined GSA, did GSA issue a -- do you remember GSA issuing a press
18 release announcing your appointment?

19 A They did.

20 Q And that press release included the fact that your prior role was as vice
21 president of real estate and parking at WMATA. Is that correct?

22 A Correct.

23 Q And then, on exhibit 1, Commissioner Carnahan's decision, the third
24 paragraph on page 1, the last sentence reads, "In deciding to authorize your participation
25 as described herein, I am confident and fully expect that any decisions you advise or make

1 will be guided by what is best for the FBI, GSA, the Federal Government, and taxpayers."

2 Do you see that?

3 A Correct. Yes, I do.

4 Q And, Ms. Albert, was it, in fact, the fact -- was it, in fact, the case that all the
5 decisions you advised or made were, in fact, guided by what is best for the FBI, GSA, the
6 Federal Government and taxpayers?

7 A Yes. My decisions were guided by those.

8

BY [REDACTED]

9 Q So I'd like to turn to the J. Edgar Hoover Building in particular. And my
10 understanding is FBI has been operating out of the Hoover Building since 1974. Is that
11 accurate?

12 A Yes, that's approximately -- I don't remember the exact date, but yes.

13 Q To your knowledge, what is the current condition of the J. Edgar Hoover
14 Building?

15 A As I understand it, there is a net that is suspended to capture any falling
16 concrete off of the J. Edgar Hoover Building.

17 It's also my understanding that, given the age of the building, it no longer meets
18 the functional or operational requirements of the FBI.

19 And then, thirdly, I've toured the J. Edgar Hoover Building and have seen what we
20 call the building systems, the guts of the building, and they are from that era, 1970.
21 These are the power, you know, systems, the HVAC systems, all these things, which are at
22 the end of their useful life.

23 Q Approximately how long has the Hoover Building been exhibiting these signs
24 of deterioration or, as you said, you know, approached the end of its use, of its life?

25 A I couldn't answer that except to say that there is a 2011 report that was

1 published that documents what the findings and the condition of the building was.

2 Q Great. And I'll represent to you that was a report published by the
3 Government Accountability Office, also known as GAO. And, for the record, that report
4 is GAO-17-783T.

5 Now, Ms. Albert, again, you spoke about this in the last hour, but GSA began
6 searching for a new FBI Headquarters in 2013. Is that right?

7 A I believe that that's correct.

8 Q And, as you said earlier, that makes -- strike that.

9 As you said earlier, that means this process has been proceeding for over a
10 decade, correct?

11 A Well, the desire to find a new site for the FBI Headquarters has been
12 proceeding for that long. I would suggest -- or that was a separate process. It was
13 terminated. And then this was a process that was designed to reach a decision on which
14 site the FBI Headquarters would go to.

15 Q Fair enough. I guess a better way to phrase this is, through iterations of
16 different site selection processes, GSA has been evaluating sites for a new FBI
17 Headquarters since 2013. Is that right?

18 A Correct.

19 Q And, to your knowledge, has the FBI been part of the selection process since
20 2013?

21 A I could not confirm that. I believe they have been part of the process, but I
22 know that they were part of the process during -- during the site selection process that I
23 have been involved in, that I was involved in.

24 Q Do you have any reason to disagree, based on your experience in the latest
25 site selection process, that the FBI was not involved in the original site selection process

1 dating back to 2013?

2 A No, I believe that they were.

3 Q So, speaking I guess strictly during your time with GSA, would you agree that
4 GSA worked with S -- excuse me.

5 Would you agree that the GSA worked with the FBI to identify the FBI's needs and
6 requirements in a new Headquarters building?

7 A The word "requirements" has specific meaning in my world. And so the FBI
8 and GSA did not develop updated requirements during the process that I was involved in.

9 Your broader question of GSA and FBI working together to identify a new site that
10 would meet the needs of the FBI, yes, we worked together.

11 Q Okay.

12 A I just -- yeah.

13 Q Fair enough. So, striking the word "requirements," GSA worked with FBI, as
14 you just mentioned, to identify the needs of the FBI and the preferences that they had in
15 a new Headquarters. Is that right?

16 A Correct.

17 Q And, during your involvement with this process, has the FBI been able to
18 communicate with GSA about their preferences for a new Headquarters if they, in fact,
19 change at any point?

20 A Can you rephrase?

21 Q Sure. The better question is, during your involvement with the site
22 selection process, was there an open line of communication between the FBI and GSA
23 regarding this project?

24 A There was.

25 Q And, in your opinion, if at any time FBI expressed concerns or had

1 comments, did they have the ability to convey those to GSA?

2 A They did.

3 Q So we just touched on this briefly, but my understanding is that, in 2013 and
4 2014, GSA concluded a process that ultimately identified three sites for further review for
5 the FBI Headquarters, and I believe you called this whittling down. Is that right?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And the three sites selected during this 2013-2014 process or, again, the
8 whittling down, are the same three sites that the selection panel evaluated in 2023. Is
9 that right?

10 A Correct.

11 Q To be clear, the choosing of the three sites in 2013 and 2014 predated your
12 hiring at WMATA. Is that right?

13 A Correct.

14 Q And you didn't choose the three sites which the site selection panel would
15 consider in 2023, correct?

16 A I did not.

17 Q And all of these three sites that were originally identified in 2014 had been
18 previously determined to meet all of FBI's needs. Is that right?

19 A As far as I understand, yes.

20 Q Ms. Albert, can you remind me when you were first appointed as site
21 selection authority for this project?

22 A I can't remember exact dates, but it was in the late June to early -- or July
23 timeframe.

24 Q Okay. And, prior to your appointment in the late June and July 2023
25 timeframe, were you involved with the site selection process at all?

1 A Yes, I was.

2 Q And what was your involvement?

3 A My involvement was in an oversight capacity. And, for example, as the
4 instructions by Congress were to make a decision on which of these three sites were to be
5 chosen or that GSA was instructed to choose from among these three sites, I, you know,
6 would be involved in sort of critical meetings. Noting not all the meetings, but at, you
7 know, critical times where decisions were being made I would be involved.

8 Q So is it fair to say, upon your appointment as site selection authority in late
9 June-July 2023, you were already well-versed in the details of this project?

10 A Correct.

11 Q And you were versed in the status of the project upon your appointment as
12 site selection authority?

13 A Correct.

14 Q And, colloquially speaking, you weren't walking into this position blind,
15 right?

16 A Correct.

17 Q Now, as site selection authority, you were tasked with choosing a site that
18 was most advantageous to the United States. Is that right?

19 A Correct. Well, to the FBI, the United States, the American taxpayer, yes.

20 Q And your duties as site selection authority were governed by the site
21 selection plans that were discussed in the last hour. Is that right?

22 A Correct.

23 Q The site selection plans also governed the site selection panel's roles, right?

24 A Yes.

25 Q And it governed the advisers to the site selection panel in their roles as well?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Now, my understanding in reading the site selection plan is the panel was
3 tasked with evaluating the three sites, using the five criteria outlined in the July 2023 site
4 selection plan, and assigning different colors to those different subcriteria. Is that right?

5 A Correct.

6 Q And the evaluations and recommendations provided by the panel were
7 ultimately intended to inform and guide the site selection authority. Is that right?

8 A Correct.

9 Q Put another way, the panel was designed to assist the site selection panel in
10 reaching her decision?

11 A Yeah. It was a group of people who were independently looking at the
12 data and information, applying their best judgment, reaching a consensus among the
13 three of them and providing a recommendation to me, as the site selection authority.
14 That is correct.

15 Q And I just want to run through the different iterations of the site selection
16 plan very quickly.

17 My understanding is there were three iterations of the site selection plan dating
18 from September 2022 to July 2023. Is that accurate?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Now, the first site selection plan, as I just mentioned, was published in
21 September of 2022. Does that sound right?

22 A Yes, it does.

23 Q And there was an administrative update made to that initial site selection
24 plan that was published in November of 2022, right?

25 A Correct.

1 Q And that was the first amended site selection plan, correct?

2 A Yes, correct.

3 Q And, following the publishing of this first amended site selection plan, a third
4 site selection plan and final site selection plan was published in July of 2023, correct?

5 A Correct.

6 Q And that, ultimately, the July 2023 plan, is what governed your role and the
7 panel's role in conducting the respective recommendation and decision?

8 A Yes.

9 Q To your knowledge, did the FBI have an opportunity to offer input before
10 each iteration of the site selection plans were published?

11 A I know that GSA shared the site selection plan with each iteration for the FBI.
12 I can -- my recollection is really focused on the second amendment more than my
13 recollection on the initial and then the first amendment.

14 And, yeah, the FBI was informed prior to its publication, to its ultimate, you know,
15 final publication.

16 Q Do you have any reason to believe that that process was different with the
17 publishing of the first site selection plan?

18 A I don't have a reason to believe that it was different, no.

19 Q And, as we just established, to your knowledge, there was always an open
20 line of communication between FBI and GSA?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Now, I'm just going to represent to you that page 12 of the first site selection
23 plan, as we mentioned, published in September of 2022, states clearly, quote, "The site
24 selection authority will use the evaluation report developed by the panel to help guide
25 and inform a decision as to which property is in the best interest of the United States;

1 however, the selection official is vested with the discretion to fully evaluate all attributes
2 of the site and select the site which is truly most advantageous to the Government,
3 regardless of the recommendation of the panel," end quote.

4 Does that language match your understanding of the roles of the panel and the
5 site selection authority?

6 A It does.

7 Q You just mentioned that you have some I guess knowledge of the process,
8 starting with the second iteration of the site selection plan.

9 In your recollection, is the language that I just read to you that was reflected in
10 the first selection plan also mentioned in the second site selection plan?

11 A I believe so, yes.

12 Q And, again, I'll represent to you that the language is included, and it is
13 exactly the same as it's mentioned in the first one.

14 And, similarly, the third and final site selection plan that was published in July of
15 2023 had similar language with small tweaks. And it says, quote, "The site selection
16 authority will use the evaluation report developed by the site selection panel to help
17 guide and inform a final decision as to which property is in the best interests of the
18 United States. However, the site selection authority is vested with the discretion to fully
19 evaluate all attributes of the site and select the site which is truly most advantageous to
20 the government, regardless of the recommendation provided by the panel." And that's
21 noted on page 13.

22 Now, Ms. Albert, throughout the iterations of this site selection plan, is it fair to
23 say that the role of the site selection authority was clear and unambiguous?

24 A Yes.

25 Q And it, for practical purpose, remained unchanged through all three

1 iterations of the site selection plan?

2 A As far as I remember, yes.

3 Q Similarly, the role of the site selection panel in helping to guide and inform
4 the site selection authority, remained consistent as well through all three iterations of the
5 site selection plan?

6 A Correct.

7 Q So, given that language, when individuals and stakeholders state that you,
8 quote/unquote, overturned or overruled the panel's decision, that's not an accurate
9 statement, is it?

10 A That is not an accurate statement.

11 Q And why isn't that an accurate statement?

12 A Because the site selection panel was not vested with the authority to make a
13 decision, and so they did not. And, in fact, the consensus report reiterates that, that
14 that was their understanding of what their role was.

15 And so there could not be an overturning of a decision because they didn't have a
16 decision to make. They had a recommendation to share, and I took that
17 recommendation very seriously.

18 Q And, in fact, in your site selection decision, you write that you heavily
19 reviewed and relied on the consensus report. Is that accurate?

20 A It is.

21 [REDACTED] I turn it over to my colleague.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q And apologies in advance if I ask some repetitive questions. I know this is a
24 very long and complicated process, so I just want to make sure we all understand and are
25 operating from the same facts.

1 So the 2013-2014 sort of site selection process that we discussed earlier, you
2 weren't involved in that. That predated your time at GSA, correct?

3 A Correct.

4 Q And that also -- that site selection process between FBI and GSA worked to
5 evaluate dozens of sites across the National Capital Region. And, from that process,
6 three sites were selected: The Greenbelt, Maryland, site; the Springfield site in Virginia;
7 and the Landover site in Maryland.

8 And these are the three sites that, fast-forward a couple of years later, in 2022,
9 Congress directs GSA to select from, correct?

10 A Correct.

11 Q Okay. And so, in your site selection decision document, on page 3, you say
12 that the FBI -- that all three of these sites were identified because they all met the
13 baseline requirements of the FBI.

14 Does that sound right to you?

15 A Correct.

16 Q Okay.

17 So there's this 2013-2014 process. I think earlier you mentioned that it was
18 terminated at some point. And my understanding is that GSA announced its
19 termination July of 2017.

20 Does that sound about right?

21 A That does sound right, yes.

22 Q Okay.

23 And that was during the Trump administration, correct?

24 A That is correct.

25 Q And, at the time the site selection process for new FBI Headquarters was

1 terminated in 2017, FBI's Headquarters was located on Penn Ave, correct?

2 A And it is still, yes.

3 Q And, at that time, then-President Trump, through his business entities,
4 operated a hotel on Penn Ave right across the street from the FBI Headquarters. Is that
5 correct?

6 A As far as I understand, yes.

7 Q Thank you.

8 So, in this sort of second iteration of a site selection process that kind of gets
9 kicked off in 2022, why did it restart then?

10 A I think the needs for the FBI to move out of the J. Edgar Hoover Building had
11 been well-documented and well-understood. So the need to find a new Headquarters
12 location remained.

13 And, rather than -- I mean, and Congress directed GSA to restart the site selection
14 process or decision, but, specifically, rather than starting from scratch, meaning to
15 restart, you know, from a broad geography again, GSA was directed to choose from only
16 among the three sites that were cited in the 2017 prospectus.

17 Q Okay. That's right. I guess Congress is what kind of triggers the restart or
18 this sort of iteration of the site selection process with the passage of the Consolidated
19 Appropriations Act of 2022.

20 A In this particular case, yes.

21 Q And they direct GSA to, quote, "select a site from one of the three sites listed
22 in the GSA fiscal year 2017 PNCR-FBI-NCR17 prospectus. "

23 A Correct.

24 Q So that kind of triggers this new round of activity, and you guys are going
25 back and looking at these three sites, per Congress' direction.

1 Did you or anybody at GSA go back to determine whether these three sites were
2 still viable? I mean, like, had somebody else bought them or moved or had the sites
3 changed in a fundamental way?

4 A Correct. That was the very first thing that GSA did.

5 Q Okay.

6 [REDACTED] And what was the determination?

7 Ms. Albert. The determination was that all three sites were viable, and that
8 meant that they were still available for acquisition, if you will. That was the primary
9 determinant. There might have been some others, yeah.

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q And the FBI was aware of this process?

12 A They were, yes, again, to my understanding.

13 Q Okay. And so let me just make sure -- all right.

14 So we've talked a little bit about the site selection plan, right? And so, for people
15 who are not as acquainted with this sort of process, can you just kind of tell us what a site
16 selection plan is?

17 A Sure. So site selection plans are written for -- or developed when there is
18 going to be a competitive process for selecting a site, whether it's a leased site or an
19 acquisition of a new site.

20 They are tailor written to the circumstance, so -- you know, because every building
21 decision, geography, you know, conditions are slightly different.

22 And so a site selection plan is written. The panelists or the people participating
23 in the site selection process as well as the naming of a site selection authority is
24 identified, and there's sort of basic ground rules, if you will, that are provided.

25 Q And so would it be fair to kind of colloquially describe them as like rules of

1 the road that sort of outline the process --

2 A Uh-huh.

3 Q -- for the decision?

4 A Yeah. So site selections don't fall under the Federal acquisition regulations,
5 because it's a different type of process. And so a site selection plan becomes that
6 guiding document for the panelists and the, you know, site selection authority to follow.

7 Q Great. Okay. And so -- let's see.

8 The first site selection plan I think we established maybe the last hour in here was
9 September 2022. And then the final one is July 2023, right? So that's the operative
10 one that we're talking about here.

11 And, according to the site selection plan, it describes your responsibility as site
12 selection authority in section II as determining, quote, "which site is most advantageous
13 to the United States."

14 Is that what you did, Ms. Albert?

15 A I took that responsibility very seriously, and I believe that I did that, yes.

16 Q Okay. And, realizing that it's very difficult to sum up like a 38-page site
17 selection decision document, can you kind of briefly explain first which site you selected
18 and maybe why that site was most advantageous to the United States?

19 A Sure. First of all, as you stated, all three sites from the onset were
20 determined to be viable. I went into this process really focused on the site selection
21 criteria. The mandate that GSA had put forward for this process was to be fair and
22 transparent.

23 I knew that, you know, there were only three sites to evaluate. So it was very
24 focused. And my goal was to identify the best site or the most advantageous site across
25 five criteria.

1 In terms of -- so, basically four out of the five criteria, Greenbelt was the strongest
2 site, and that's why I suggested -- or decided that Greenbelt or selected Greenbelt as that
3 that is most advantageous to the government.

4 Q Okay. And, again, reading from your site selection decision document, you
5 say that the Greenbelt site broadly provides the greatest schedule certainty at the lowest
6 cost to taxpayers; the Greenbelt site was most transit-accessible; it represented the
7 greatest opportunity for the government to positively impact the region.

8 Is that correct?

9 A That is correct, yes.

10 Q Okay. And, just to make sure I understand correctly, among the three sites,
11 the Greenbelt site was the least expensive on the cost criteria?

12 A It was, yes -- or it is, yeah.

13 Q Was it even close?

14 A Well, it was what I call materially different. So, yeah, Greenbelt was ranked
15 the most advantageous in terms of cost by myself and also by the panel compared to the
16 other two sites, yes.

17 Q Yeah. I think the Greenbelt site was like half the cost, roughly, of the
18 Springfield site. Does that sound about right?

19 A That sounds about right.

20 Q And then the Landover site I think was well over.

21 A Correct.

22 Q Okay. All right.

23 So you selected the Greenbelt site. Did you endeavor to explain why you
24 selected the Greenbelt site?

25 A I think I explained it in a close to 40-page site selection decision document.

1 I thoroughly documented my approach and explained why I evaluated each subcriteria as
2 I did, why I selected the overarching rating of each criteria, and, when I differed from the
3 panel, why my evaluation differed, yes.

4 And then I did have an opportunity to explain my decision to the FBI prior to GSA's
5 publishing the decision.

6 Q Okay. And so did you, in making your decision, rely on the panel's
7 recommendation report and their evaluation?

8 A I very -- I mean, I was very familiar. I read thoroughly their
9 recommendation and, you know, took it into great consideration, yes.

10 Q Okay. And the site selection plan says that the site selection authority will,
11 quote, "use the evaluation report developed by the site selection panel to help guide and
12 inform a final decision as to which property is in the best interest of the United States;
13 however, the site selection authority is vested with the discretion to fully evaluate all
14 attributes of the sites and select the site which is truly most advantageous to the
15 Government, regardless of the recommendation provided by the panel."

16 Does that sound right?

17 A That does, yes.

18 Q And did you use the report developed by the site selection panel to help
19 guide and inform your final decision?

20 A I did.

21 Q Okay. And so you stated in your site selection decision most advantageous
22 site -- I'm a broken record today -- but did you arrive at your decision for any reason other
23 than the reasons you offered in your site selection decision document?

24 A No. The document, the site selection decision document is an accurate
25 reflection of how I came to the decision that I did. It's a full and accurate explanation of

1 how I came to this decision.

2 Q So there weren't any secret reasons that you came to this decision?

3 A No.

4 Q And just to be -- oh, sorry, strike that.

5 BY [REDACTED]

6 Q Did you feel it was important to detail your rationale completely in your
7 decision?

8 A I thought it was incredibly important.

9 Q Why is that?

10 A Because this is a project that has been longstanding, that has the interest of
11 this region. It has the interest of the FBI. And I thought that, for those reasons, it was
12 important to fully explain, be completely transparent about how I came to my decision.

13 [REDACTED] Okay. I think that might be it.

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q So, Ms. Albert, I'd like to return back to the day the panel reached its
16 consensus. And, as you recalled in the past hour, that was July 31st, 2023. Does that
17 sound right?

18 A That sounds right, yes.

19 Q And the way you described it is the panel reached its consensus in the
20 morning, broke for lunch, came back after lunch, and you convened this meeting with
21 them.

22 Is that accurate?

23 A Yeah. The meeting was already planned, a morning session and an
24 afternoon session. And, when the panel completed their deliberations in the morning, I
25 suggested that, you know, just -- this is a big decision for, you know -- this process is a big

1 deal.

2 And so I thought it merited taking the break and seeing if there was any
3 outstanding conversation or, you know, that we might want to reconvene and get back
4 together in the afternoon, yes.

5 Q And was it your intent during that meeting to influence the panel to change
6 their recommendation?

7 A It was not my intent to do that, no.

8 Q And did they, in fact, change their recommendation or any of their
9 evaluation on the subcriteria following this meeting?

10 A It did -- nothing changed.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you.

12 BY [REDACTED]

13 Q So, just to be very clear, the panel had already arrived at their consensus
14 ratings prior to this afternoon backtracking then, correct?

15 A Uh-huh.

16 Q Okay.

17 [REDACTED] Is that a yes?

18 Ms. Albert. That's a yes.

19 I had one question. I asked the panel. They thought about it, considered it,
20 and then we concluded the meeting.

21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q And I mean you said I think in the first hour that this was a project that was
23 significant in size and scope. I think you said both cost but also the history here.

24 So is it fair to say that you wanted to make sure that you knew -- that you were
25 able to take full advantage of the panel's evaluation and their understanding of the sites

1 and ratings and that sort of thing?

2 A Yes. I mean, the -- it's very important in projects like this to hear what the
3 discussion is. And so I took all of that incredibly seriously, both the written consensus
4 report as well as any discussion that was had during the panel deliberation.

5 [REDACTED] All right, we'll go off the record.

6 [Recess.]

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q So can you kind of talk to us about -- so, during your career, and we'll do
9 specifically to your career in the region --

10 A Okay.

11 Q -- how often have you been a part of acquiring property for your employer?

12 A I have -- oh, boy. When I was at -- specifically acquiring property? I
13 mean --

14 Q It can be just like number of times, not necessarily where you were.

15 A Okay. I don't know. A handful.

16 Q But you have -- in your previous jobs, you have acquired property for --

17 A I have.

18 Q -- an entity you were working for?

19 A Yes.

20 Q And, when you did that, what did you look for?

21 A Well, it would depend on the circumstance. If we were looking for an
22 operating facility or function, it would -- you would look for that the site could
23 accommodate the operations, that it was suitable to the operations.

24 In other cases, we were looking for strategic proximities. So it would depend on
25 what the situation was.

1 Q And then, during that process, how often, whether connected to those
2 acquisitions or separately from those acquisitions, during your career, have you been a
3 part of construction?

4 A Well, I personally have -- I'm not a construction administrator or somebody
5 with a construction background. Obviously, I'm a mechanical engineer, so there are
6 certain principles that you understand.

7 But the teams that I would lead would have construction background. So, in my
8 career, maybe a handful of times I was overseeing an actual development project myself.

9 Q And what in those experiences was the, you know, say from your skills and
10 experience of managing those teams, things like that, what was, you know, the top two
11 most important things when you guys were doing that development?

12 A Schedule and budget.

13 Q And, with that, how familiar are you with -- or how familiar in those roles
14 were you with the actual budgeting of construction?

15 A I mean, it's all relative, because there are people who are experts, and I am
16 not an expert in construction. But, I mean, I would review project budgets from time to
17 time. This is not --

18 Q You have a familiarity with --

19 A I have familiarity. I am not an expert in construction.

20 Q And then, moving on just a little bit to -- we talked a lot about -- in the last 2
21 hours about the criteria of the site selection plan for the new location for the FBI
22 Headquarters.

23 And those, all those iterations then landed on the third one, which is what the site
24 selection panel used to determine --

25 A I'm sorry; on the third what?

1 Q The third iteration of the site selection plan. So I believe that would be
2 amendment two --

3 A Yes, sorry.

4 Q -- if I'm saying it correctly.

5 And that amendment two had five areas of criteria that they had to select from.
6 Who -- specifically to amendment two, because the other ones aren't relevant because
7 we have amendment two to go from, who actually picked those five criteria or what team
8 of people or how did those five criteria come to be?

9 A So those five criteria were actually consistent with the initial site selection
10 plan. So there wasn't a lot of -- the criteria themselves had been developed and
11 consistent from the first time that the site selection plan was published through
12 amendment one through amendment two.

13 I believe, to the best of my recollection, that the site selection criteria were
14 initially developed by the project team that included both GSA and FBI.

15 Q And, generally speaking, when -- did those criteria follow -- not the criteria
16 specifically but the types of criteria, the areas, follow a normal site selection plan that
17 would be considered by GSA and whatever counterpart they're working on for a
18 particular project?

19 A Yes. When I saw the criteria, I was not surprised by any of them. I mean,
20 they fall in the realm of what site selection decisions consider.

21 Q In speaking of the realm of what site selections consider, is there a reason
22 that the cost of construction was not taken into account for a criteria? We understand
23 it was not one of the criteria, but why would that not be important to that process?

24 A In this particular process, and I can't speak to others, because, again, every
25 site selection is a little bit different. But, in this particular decision or plan, advance

1 design had not been done. That's usually when a construction budget is developed is
2 after there's advance design. And so that could not come into play in this particular
3 decision.

4 Also, the assumption was that the cost of building a level five facility, whether it's
5 on site A, B, or C, was going to be very similar. So there was sort of a normalizing of
6 what the vertical construction for the campus would be.

7 The cost criteria in this site selection plan really addresses more acquisition, onsite
8 and offsite improvements. So it was the preparation of the site.

9 Q And so the general assumption was that, no matter what facility was
10 picked -- or, excuse me, not facility, location was picked, that the general cost, because of
11 what was going there for this, the FBI and what it entails and needs, was going to not
12 really matter locationwise?

13 A It was going to be largely similar --

14 Q Okay.

15 A -- irrespective of the location.

16 Q And we've talked a lot in the last hour regarding the cost of that Greenbelt
17 was the least expensive property.

18 From your understanding, assumptions, all of that, no matter which of the three
19 where chosen, that your recollection is that it was going to be a very similar cost?
20 Obviously, costs change all the time, but the initial design, all of that wasn't going to
21 change based on which location was chosen?

22 A The construction cost, what we call vertical development of the buildings,
23 was going to be largely similar, regardless of which site it was.

24 Construction costs do change the farther or the more time is added to a project.
25 So the longer it takes to get in the ground, the more there is cost volatility for

1 construction. Does that make sense?

2 Q It makes total sense. Can you kind of tell us how that factor would play
3 into the three situations we're -- or three locations we're talking about?

4 A Yeah. So there's a relationship between project schedule and cost. The
5 site selection plan is very clear as to how to treat schedule and how to treat cost and how
6 to evaluate them.

7 But, in general, if schedule slips for a project -- and I evaluated what the impact of
8 schedule -- what the risk to project schedule slippage was in my evaluation criteria
9 three -- there could be a cost impact for the project.

10 Q And what -- let's talk a little bit about that criteria three and your evaluation.
11 What led you to those realizations when you were looking at that that Greenbelt would
12 be the best of those three options?

13 A I, in fact, did not rate Greenbelt the best of the three. I tied Greenbelt with
14 Springfield. And so the site selection decision document is my accurate and complete
15 documentation of why I selected that or why I made that decision to tie them, with both
16 blue.

17 Q And then --

18

BY [REDACTED]

19 Q I think some followup questions I have from [REDACTED] questioning is that it's
20 our understanding that the Greenbelt site was located on wetlands.

21 And you mentioned earlier that vertical development starting on, say, wetlands, it
22 would seem like it would be -- it would be a longer process to start that development on
23 that land. Was that taken into consideration?

24 A I want to clarify. So the Greenbelt site is a large site, and there are -- a
25 portion of the site has wetlands on it.

1 The information that was provided to me as well as to the panel identified an area
2 called the buildable area, and the buildable area was outside of where the identified
3 wetlands are.

4 And so I was evaluating the buildable area, because that's what's relevant to being
5 able to deliver the campus.

6 [REDACTED] Thank you.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q And, if recollection serves me correctly, the buildable area for Greenbelt was
9 smaller than the other two buildable areas. Is that correct?

10 A Again, yes, it was. But I'll also -- I just happen to remember these numbers,
11 actually --

12 Q Absolutely.

13 A -- because I -- you know, in preparation for today.

14 I believe that the buildable area for Greenbelt was something like 11.26 acres, and
15 the buildable area for Springfield was 12-point-something acres.

16 So it was smaller, in fact, empirically, but not marginally smaller or not materially
17 smaller.

18 BY [REDACTED]

19 Q And [REDACTED] mentioned the question earlier, but the topic of the project team
20 of GSA and FBI came up.

21 Who do you recall being on this project team for GSA?

22 A I will ask and defer to GSA, because GSA has policies about, you know, when
23 they name or share that information. So if I could just ask you to ask GSA for that.

24 Q And when did the site selection panel release its recommendation report?
25 Do you recall that?

1 A It was toward the end of July, I believe. I can't remember the exact date.

2 Q Does it sound correct that they achieved a consensus on July 31st?

3 A You mean the report or the discussion?

4 Q The consensus discussion.

5 A Yeah. I can't -- so I remember that the site selection plan amendment two
6 was published, and then fairly quickly thereafter the panel was convened. Probably a
7 week thereafter, the discussion was held.

8 And I can't remember the exact timeframe, but within maybe a week or two the
9 consensus report was published. So I can't remember exact dates, but once the site
10 selection plan was issued then things ramped up pretty quickly in terms of the convening
11 and the processing of the recommendation.

12 Q Does August 8th, 2023, sound correct?

13 A Yeah. That's probably correct, yes.

1 [12:31 p.m.]

2

BY [REDACTED]

3

Q And when did you review the panel's recommendation report?

4

A As soon as it was given to me.

5

Q Which was that day?

6

A It was provided over email, you know. If it was on August 8th, I reviewed it

7

that day.

8

Q Okay. And did you have -- as part of your role as site selection authority,

9

did you have to approve the panel's recommendation report?

10

A No.

11

Q Okay. Do you know when folks at the FBI received a copy of the

12

pre-decisional recommendation report?

13

A I can't remember exactly, but I believe that they received it together with my

14

site selection decision, at least that's when I recall transmitting that.

15

Q Okay.

16

A Yeah.

17

[REDACTED] So they would have -- to your recollection, would have been

18

transmitted to FBI at the same time? They would have received both sets?

19

Ms. Albert. Correct. At least --

20

[REDACTED] To the best of your knowledge?

21

Ms. Albert. -- to the best of my knowledge or how I was involved, that's what I

22

saw. Yeah.

23

BY [REDACTED]

24

Q And then, is it correct that you submitted your site selection decision report

25

on September 30th, 2023?

1 A That sounds right.

2 Q And did you release a pre-decisional report prior to this final draft?

3 A Well, I would characterize it a little bit differently. I had prepared what I
4 called a final draft, unsigned, to -- and I transmitted that to the FBI.

5 Q And when did you finish that draft of the report?

6 A That was probably in August -- I know it was in August. Whether it was
7 mid- or late August, I'm not positive.

8 Q And when the FBI received this copy of the report, did they have any
9 feedback on it?

10 A The process was that when I transmitted the report, we immediately set up
11 a meeting with -- as, in fact, the site selection plan references, setting up a meeting with
12 senior staff. So we set up that meeting, and I went and briefed senior staff on the
13 contents of the report and how I came to the decision.

14 Q And when did this briefing occur?

15 A Again, that would have been toward the end of August, or, you know -- I
16 don't remember. It was after I transmitted my final draft of the report.

17 Q And during this briefing, did you only discuss your decision, or did you also
18 discuss the panel's recommendation report, too?

19 A I -- to the best of my recollection, I primarily discussed my decision. I do
20 believe that there were some questions about the panel report, and so I answered them.

21 And by the way, in that -- in that final draft, I had a very -- I mean, it was an
22 identical methodology that I used when I had a different conclusion or evaluation than
23 the panel's. I called that out and explained myself.

24 Q And did you get a sense from the FBI team during this briefing that they
25 were confused about how the panel came to one decision choosing the Greenbelt

1 site -- or recommending the Greenbelt site and -- or not the Greenbelt site -- the
2 Springfield site, and then you decided to choose the Greenbelt site?

3 A I wouldn't characterize the exchange as one around confusion. The group
4 of people that I was briefing are very senior within the FBI, and they were asking
5 questions.

6 Q Was FBI Director Christopher Wray present at that meeting?

7 A He was not.

8 Q What about the deputy director, Paul Abbate?

9 A I don't -- sorry, what was his name?

10 Q Paul Abbate.

11 A I don't believe so, no. That's not a name I recollect.

12 Q And where did this briefing occur?

13 A At the FBI Headquarters on Pennsylvania Avenue.

14 Q And to your knowledge or, I guess, your impression of the briefing and
15 everyone's reactions, did you get a sense that the FBI had any concerns about your
16 decision?

17 A I didn't get a sense that they had concerns about my decision. I had -- they
18 had questions because at that time, the report -- you know, they felt that certain areas
19 could be explained better, and that's kind of the feedback that they gave to me.

20 Q Uh-huh. And what did you do to account for this feedback that they gave
21 you?

22 A Well, I took it to heart. I didn't change in any of the -- my ratings either in
23 the sub-criteria level or at the overall criteria level, but I did try and take their feedback in
24 the areas that they thought could be clarified and improved and tried to explain it in a
25 way that was more accessible to a broader audience.

1 Q So did you make these -- this feedback from the FBI, did you add this
2 feedback or change some sentences that you had in your report that you had drafted
3 before the final draft was issued on the 30th of September?

4 A Yeah.

5 Q And at any point before, during, or after this briefing, did you get the sense
6 that the FBI did not want its headquarters in Greenbelt?

7 A I couldn't characterize, you know, what the FBI -- I mean, there were
8 multiple people around the table. There was not, sort of, a sense of one thing or
9 another. There were various questions, and rightfully so.

10 It was an important decision for the FBI, and I sort of absorbed the questions as
11 the team wanting to thoroughly understand how I came to the decision because,
12 ultimately, they would also need to own and explain the decision to their employees.

13

BY [REDACTED]

14 Q I know we've referred to it a few times. I'd like to file as exhibit 2 the Site
15 Selection Plan Amendment 2 for your reference.

16

[Albert Exhibit No. 2

17

was marked for identification.]

18

BY [REDACTED]

19 Q So is it accurate to say that within the required criteria, that each had
20 sub-criteria to be considered, and for at least the -- excluding the cost criteria, which was
21 cumulative, the first four criteria had sub-criteria that were of equal importance within
22 each criteria? Is that -- is that accurate?

23

24 A The -- yes. There are four sub-criteria -- or there were four criteria that had
25 sub-criteria in it. And the site selection plan instructs the panel to weight the
sub-criteria of equal importance. That's correct.

1 Q I'd also like to file the site selection decision document as exhibit 3.

2 [Albert Exhibit No. 3

3 was marked for identification.]

4

BY [REDACTED]

5 Q So I wanted to ask a point of clarification. So for -- looking at exhibit 2, the
6 first exhibit I filed, on page 9 at the top, for sub-criteria 2(c) related to accessibility to bus
7 line stops, in the top of page 9, it indicates that the government's preference is for a site
8 that has as many bus line stops within the immediate vicinity of the site as possible.

9 Referring to exhibit 3, the site selection decision, at page 22 at the very bottom
10 paragraph of the page, you explain why you reached a different decision related to the
11 color ratings for the Springfield and Greenbelt sites than the site selection panel's
12 consensus. Is that -- is that accurate?

13 A Correct.

14 Q At the bottom of page 22, your decision indicates -- and I'm going to quote
15 from it -- "As explained above, I determined that the differences in transportation access
16 between Springfield and Greenbelt was not marginal due to favorable walking distance of
17 the Greenbelt site to Metro and commuter rail, the more frequently used forms of
18 transit, and because all three sites have close cumulative proximity to all three
19 commercial airports."

20 Does the use of the phrase, "the more frequently used forms of transit" to
21 describe the access to rail, Metro and commuter rail, indicate that those two sub-criteria
22 were given higher importance than sub-criteria 2(c) related to access to bus lines, or can
23 you explain what you meant by -- by noting that those rails were more frequently used?

24 A Sure. I don't believe that I gave any one criteria undue weight, and that I
25 treated all criteria the same. For sub-criteria 2(c), I rated all three sites identically to

1 how the panel evaluated it as well. So just kind of want to put that in context.

2 For this criteria, 3, transportation, it had four sub-criteria. The one sub-criteria
3 that I rated differently than the panel's was sub-criteria 2(d), about proximity to airports.
4 And so, because my rating, or evaluation, of that sub-criteria was different, I went into
5 the process of assigning an overall rating for criteria 2 with a different set of
6 considerations than the panel did.

7 So, for example, the panel for criteria 2, transportation, went into their consensus
8 discussion for the overall rating with -- and I can't remember exactly, but I believe it's two
9 greens and two blues for Springfield -- let me try and look and not guess.

10 Mr. McCart. Do you all have the recommendations?

11 [REDACTED] I can file that as exhibit 4 --

12 Ms. Albert. Okay.

13 [REDACTED] -- the site selection panel recommendation report, if that would be
14 helpful.

15 Ms. Albert. Thank you. Okay.

16 [Albert Exhibit No. 4
17 was marked for identification.]

18 BY [REDACTED]

19 Q Page 15.

20 A Page 15, correct, of the consensus report.

21 So the panel for Springfield had assigned two greens and two blues. That's
22 similar to how I had rated Springfield.

23 Greenbelt, they had -- the panel had assigned two blues and a green for criteria a,
24 b, and c. I also evaluated the sub-criteria similarly or identically. Two blues and a
25 green for sub-criteria a, b, and c. I differed on the rating of criteria 2(d), and whereby

1 the panel rated Greenbelt as yellow, least advantageous to the government, I rated
2 Greenbelt as green, second-most advantageous to the government.

3 So when I went in -- so the panel had a different set of comparisons to make when
4 they were making their overall criteria evaluation -- yeah -- for criteria 2 than I had. So I
5 had, going into the overall rating, basically a tie between Greenbelt and Springfield.
6 Two blues and two greens for Greenbelt and then reversed order for Springfield, two
7 blues and two greens.

8 Where Greenbelt was strongest, meaning where they rated blue, was for
9 transportation access with rail and commuter rail. Where Springfield was strongest was
10 bus line access and proximity to commercial airport.

11 So when I took a step back to understand which site was most advantageous to
12 the government, from a transportation perspective, the question was what advantages
13 the people of the FBI the most? Is it the proximity of a site to an airport and to bus
14 lines, or is it the proximity of a site to VRE -- or commuter rail -- sorry -- and Metro. And
15 that's when I started to try and understand which relative -- which site relatively served
16 the needs of the FBI best from a transportation perspective.

17 Q So you would characterize the decision you made with respect to the
18 transportation criteria number 2 overall as having -- the difference between your decision
19 and the panel's recommendation had more to do with your evaluation of the 2(d),
20 commercial airports, than it did any difference of opinion you may have had related to
21 accessibility to bus lines? Is that accurate?

22 A Yeah. It evolved differently because going into the overall criteria rating,
23 we were dealing with a different set of sub-criteria ratings --

24 Q Okay.

25 A -- if that makes sense. And -- and my decision process was a different

1 decision process at this point than what the panel was facing because I, in essence, had a
2 tie between Springfield and Greenbelt. Each had two blues, each had two greens.

3 The question was, is that a material difference, or should they get the same
4 weight because, going in, there's a mathematical tie. And so that's the evaluation that I
5 had to make that was, I think, a different process than what the panel was evaluating.

6 Q Would it be an accurate characterization to say that the use of the words
7 "the more frequently used forms of transit" describing Metro commuter rail was a
8 tie-breaker --

9 A Yes.

10 Q -- in that decision?

11 A Yes, that's accurate.

12 Q Did you observe the morning meeting of the panel's reaching consensus on
13 July 31st?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Do you remember specifically with criteria 2, related to transportation
16 access, whether there was significant discussion or debate among the panel related to
17 the sub-criteria in criteria number 2 related to transportation access?

18 A I don't recall a significant conversation, again, because the panel had taken,
19 you know, an approach -- I mean, their approach was very, you know, sort of
20 straightforward. They, you know, evaluated 2(d) differently, and so the discussion was
21 just a very different discussion. And I totally understood how they came to the
22 ratings -- the overall rating that they did.

23 Q Taking a step back, can you describe logistically how each panel member
24 indicated their independent recommendation to the rest of the panel members, and then
25 how the panel reached consensus specifically on transportation criteria?

1 A I really -- I don't recall that. I mean, I don't have that specific a memory of
2 the discussions.

3 Q Okay.

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q I just want to make sure I am understanding all of this correctly.

6 So with the criteria that you took your review from, their recommendation took
7 that, used the same criteria that they used, all of those things, I think, we're all tracking
8 that, but -- my colleague just talked about.

9 So the real distinct, if I'm to understand correctly, tie-breaking or decision point
10 between your ratings and their ratings that helped you make a different decision than
11 theirs had to come to -- came to transportation?

12 A Well, vis-à-vis transportation -- I mean, there were a couple other criteria as
13 well. But vis-à-vis transportation, you know, the -- well, first of all, the decision
14 document does outline, like, how I came to that decision.

15 Q Right.

16 A But -- I'm sorry. What was the question again?

17 Q So you definitely had differences within the other categories, but you had a
18 tie in your decision --

19 A In this one, for 2.

20 Q For 2. Well, you had a tie with the colors for the two with the other
21 criteria --

22 A Which the panel did not.

23 Q Which the panel did not?

24 A Right.

25 Q But your conclusion of criteria 2, which you came to with a color rating of

1 criteria 2, may then put Greenbelt ahead in your ratings?

2 A Correct.

3 Q So it's fair -- would it be fair to say that transportation was a large decision
4 point for you that changed --

5 Mr. McCart. Just to clarify, you're saying that put Springfield ahead in category
6 2, or you're saying the change in category 2 put Springfield ahead in the overall
7 constellation of -- Greenbelt, I'm sorry.

8 [REDACTED] That's what I'm getting to.

9 Mr. McCart. He's saying overall, he's changing this one sub-criteria. What
10 changed the entire report?

11 Ms. Albert. Well, I don't know that it changed the entire report. I took each
12 sub-criteria independently. I evaluated each criteria independently. And at the end of
13 evaluating each criteria, at the end of the report, I looked at the sum total of what each of
14 the independent criteria ratings were to come up with an overall decision.

15 [REDACTED] Okay.

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q So after you had the briefing with the FBI, did any concerns from senior
18 leadership at the FBI or people working on the FBI Headquarters team bring up any
19 concerns about your decision?

20 A There was a letter that was transmitted from the FBI to, I believe it was the
21 Administrator, and that letter was shared with me, yes.

22 Q Do you recall who wrote that letter?

23 A I believe it was Brian.

24 Q Turner?

25 A Turner, yes.

1 Q I would like to enter that exhibit into the record as exhibit no. 5.

2 [Albert Exhibit No. 5

3 was marked for identification.]

4

BY [REDACTED]

5 Q Let me know when you've had sufficient time to review.

6 A Okay. I mean, I haven't read it in detail, but skimmed it.

7 Q All right. On the second page of the memorandum, paragraph 3, it says, "In
8 assigning an overall rating for criteria 3, the SSD report essentially dismisses any
9 distinction in size, geometry, or the existence of wetlands limiting expansion. Simply
10 stating that prior evaluations found all three sites capable of handling FBI growth,
11 effectively negating the purpose of the sub-criteria. Stated another way, the panel
12 found the differences in size and geometry significant, so significant that it resulted in a
13 green overall rating for Greenbelt, yet in the SSD it is not being afforded the same weight
14 as the other criteria."

15 A So -- yes. Okay.

16 Q And according to -- according to the -- to Brian Turner, you relied more
17 heavily on certain criteria than others.

18 Do you believe that you held each criteria of equal importance in your --

19 A I do.

20 Q -- analysis?

21 And what is your reaction to his conclusion here?

22 A Well, I don't agree with it. I mean, I evaluated each sub-criteria on its
23 merits for criteria 3 and all the other criteria, and there's a judgment call to be made
24 when -- especially when you're evaluating risk for a project. And the site selection
25 decision document, I think, clearly articulates what my assessment was. And I do not

1 agree that I was choosing one criteria over another.

2 And, in fact, for criteria 3, I rated both Greenbelt and Springfield equally.

3 Q And then turning to page 4 --

4 A Okay.

5 Mr. McCart. One second.

6 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record.

7 [REDACTED] We'll go back on the record.

8 BY [REDACTED]

9 Q So page 4 of the memorandum, the second paragraph, which states:

10 "Compounding these concerns is GSA's decision to change the SSA late in the process.
11 From a fairness and perception of bias perspective, the SSA's deviations from the panel's
12 recommendation were decidedly in favor of a site owned by the Washington
13 Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, WMATA, the SSA's prior employer. Given the SSA's
14 prior employment, the reversal of the panel's recommendation creates the potential for a
15 perception of bias or lack of objectivity, which was a nonissue for much of the life span of
16 this project until GSA made the decision to change the SSA in July 2023 from the career
17 National Capital Regional commissioner role to the politically appointed Public Buildings
18 Service commissioner role."

19 What is your reaction to the statement that there was a reversal of the panel's
20 recommendation report creating a potential conflict or bias?

21 A I don't agree with that.

22 Q And why not?

23 A One, I don't believe that the characterization of my reversing anything is
24 accurate. The panel was charged with making a recommendation, but it was my
25 decision, my responsibility -- which I took, by the way, incredibly seriously given the

1 importance of this project -- to make the decision. So that's number one.

2 The second thing is that, you know, the discussion about my prior employer and
3 the role that that had an impact or bearing that that had on this decision was established
4 from the day that I started at GSA as not being a conflict. And at the time that this site
5 selection decision was underway, I had not been in WMATA's employment for 18 months.

6 So even the -- I forgot what it's called, but there's sort of a one-year period that
7 usually you get past through -- I mean, that you get through so that -- that establishes
8 that you're outside of the window of influence. And I was far outside of that, even
9 though from day one I was authorized to participate in this project.

10 Q So do you feel like Brian Turner, speaking on behalf of the FBI, brought up
11 your prior employment very late in the game, in the decision?

12 A The first time that we heard that this was a concern was when we received
13 this -- I say "we," meaning the GSA -- received this -- this memo.

14 [REDACTED] So just for clarification's sake, to your knowledge, at your time at GSA,
15 the FBI did not bring the concern to either you or to your superiors, to your knowledge,
16 until after the decision was made?

17 Ms. Albert. That's correct. I was not aware of any concern expressed by
18 anybody at the FBI about my involvement in this project until this memo.

19 BY [REDACTED]

20 Q So you were unaware of any informal communications happening between,
21 say, Brian Turner or -- and someone with GSA -- someone working for GSA about their
22 concerns? You were unaware of that?

23 A Correct. I was unaware of that.

24 Q And you didn't know about these concerns until this memorandum was
25 issued to GSA?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Okay.

3 BY [REDACTED]

4 Q And we talked earlier about kind of the magnitude of this particular decision,
5 both because of what it was, the timing that it took to get to -- the timing gone into trying
6 to find a location in many iterations of site selection panels and discussions and laws and
7 all the different things that went in over that period of time. I think -- and so it's been
8 well-established that that was a -- it was a very big decision that the GSA was going to be
9 making. Whether the documents from GSA or from the -- if everyone concluded that
10 there was no conflict.

11 Is the perception of conflict in this particular large decision not relevant in that
12 concern from the FBI?

13 A Well, I don't believe that there's a perception of conflict. WMATA is a
14 tri-jurisdictional entity. It represents and is funded by the State of Virginia, State of
15 Maryland, Federal Government, Washington, D.C. And so, anything that would benefit
16 WMATA would benefit the region.

17 And I personally have a track record of public service that dates many years, and I
18 don't believe that there had been a concern from the day that I started of either
19 perception or real conflict of interest. So I don't know. I guess I don't agree that
20 there's a perception of conflict.

21 Q Okay. And do you -- so until today, do you still believe that your selection
22 of Greenbelt, while different than the recommendation from the panel of Springfield was
23 still the best decision --

24 A I do.

25 Q -- given the information you had?

1 A I do.

2 Q And did you have any information that you reviewed that the panel did not,
3 to your knowledge?

4 A Yeah. There are a few items that I reviewed that the panel didn't, that the
5 panel wasn't, frankly, allowed to per the site selection plan. I referenced in the site
6 selection decision document when I turned to other sources.

7 And so, for example -- let me see. For the transportation criteria, just in terms of
8 understanding how important or unimportant the walking distance or relevant the
9 walking distance from a station is towards transit access, I referenced -- this is on page 17,
10 I footnoted what I referenced.

11 Also on page 18, there are two regional organizations that, you know, are what
12 the whole region turned to for information and data sources. So I referenced some of
13 their documentation.

14 Again, my goal in doing -- in looking to these couple outside sources -- oh, on page
15 20 I cited -- you know, I was trying to assess, again, around transportation relative
16 importance or -- you know, or planning decisions around accessing commercial airports,
17 again, trying to -- when you're -- when you're making a decision like this, you're taking a
18 step back after you've done your evaluation and you're asking yourself, which site is
19 meeting the -- is meeting the intent of the criteria best? Which is most advantageous to
20 the government for transportation access?

21 And when you go in with equal options, and it's like two for one, two for the
22 other, you know, plus two for one site, plus two for the other, you have to start to think a
23 little more deeply about than which -- does that matter? Is it materially different, or is it
24 not materially different?

25 So that's why I started to look at other sources. But I cited in each case when I

1 looked at outside information.

2 Q So, understanding that and understanding that you've detailed in the report
3 what you used and why you used it, can you help us understand from your perspective
4 why the site selection panel wasn't allowed to review that information?

5 Because although a decision of this magnitude which we've established, wouldn't
6 it make sense that the group that's going to make a recommendation to the site selection
7 authority, whoever that is, is able to review all the relevant information that could help
8 them consider all the possible outcomes and the best decision?

9 A Well, for that, I would ask that you ask GSA. This site selection plan was
10 evaluated to make sure that this encompassed the best practices for site selection by GSA
11 or that GSA has for site selections.

12 I will say that as a site selection authority, you know, which is a leadership
13 decision or a decision, the idea is that you have a perspective of what ultimately meets
14 the overall needs of the government, of the agency, and of the American taxpayer. It
15 starts to pull in a broader context.

16 Q Let me ask this: If you at site selection authority did not review those other
17 information, those sources that you reviewed, do you think your decision would have
18 been different if you were not able to review that information?

19 A I don't.

20 Q So you still -- you believe that, even though you reference that information
21 in here as part of your decision, it wouldn't have changed your decision?

22 A No. I actually looked to this information to confirm what I believed, and I
23 wanted to double-check and make sure that I was correct. That's where the sourcing of
24 information came from.

25 My judgment prior to sourcing the information was that my -- I mean, my

1 application, my judgment led me to the same decision, and then I wanted to make sure
2 and confirm by -- you know, by saying, Okay, this is my judgment, is that appropriate and
3 correct? And that's why I would seek these other sources of information.

4 Q Okay. And with everything you've told us here today, the reports, the
5 differing things, there's been a -- you know, we just talked about a moment ago with the
6 letter from Mr. Turner that a lot of people saw a conflict, perception of a conflict. You
7 disagree with the perception of a conflict. We understand that.

8 Is there -- at any point in time, did you go into -- did you have a decision made
9 before you reviewed these information, or do you believe that you fully went in there
10 open-minded, looked at the three sites, looked at the information from the panel in your
11 own review of that document and came to this decision?

12 A I took this process incredibly seriously. I went into this process with the
13 site selection panel recommendation in hand, with the 600-plus pages of data and
14 documentation that the project team, the technical team had provided. I reviewed that
15 thoroughly.

16 I knew that the bar and that the scrutiny of this decision would be significant as
17 presented by our being here today.

18 Q Correct.

19 A And each decision that I made, I made with the principles that were set forth
20 before me, which was to be fair in evaluating each sub-criteria in developing a decision
21 for the criteria. And when tested, or -- again, there are many close calls in this. I even
22 reference that in my decision document. That was always my guiding principle. Is this
23 a fair application, and is this a reasonable judgment that I'm making about this, and I
24 believe that -- that in those cases they were.

25 So, yes. I went in with a pretty strict and kind of serious evaluation and tried to,

1 again, give great weight to what the panel provided and gave, used it as guidance. But I
2 had to test myself when I didn't agree with that guidance.

3 Q And do you feel -- or did you feel at any time that you had any
4 pressure -- outside pressure put on you or undue influence regarding your decision
5 before you made your decision?

6 A I do not feel that. I at no point was approached by anybody, and at no
7 point did I feel pressured.

8 Q And at any point -- so at any point you were not approached by anyone
9 outside of your -- the team, we'll call it, of folks that tried to ask you questions or have
10 conversations with you regarding this selection?

11 A I went and independently did my evaluation and made -- came to my
12 decision without any conversation with outside people.

13 [REDACTED] I would also like to enter another exhibit, which is an October 12,
14 2023, letter from FBI Director Wray to Administrator Carnahan as exhibit number 6.

15 [Albert Exhibit No. 6
16 was marked for identification.]

17 BY [REDACTED]

18 Q Have you reviewed this letter before?

19 A I have. By the way, the date of this letter is also the date of my last day at
20 GSA.

21 Q Let me know when you've had sufficient time to review.

22 A Okay.

23 [REDACTED] And you -- I just want to, for clarification purposes, October 12th was
24 your last day at GSA. So did you review this before you departed, or did you review it
25 outside of your official capacity at GSA?

1 Ms. Albert. I reviewed it outside of my official capacity at GSA.

2

BY [REDACTED]

3 Q Okay. I'll direct your attention to the last paragraph, second sentence on
4 the first page. It states: "The FBI does not question the SSA's authority to come to a
5 different conclusion than the panel. We do, however, have concerns regarding whether
6 this authority was appropriately exercised given the number of key areas of substantive
7 disagreement between the unanimous panel recommendation and the SSA.

8 "Moreover, every time the SSA disagreed with the panel's unanimous rating of the
9 Greenbelt site, the SSA increased the score for Greenbelt. By itself, this is not inherently
10 problematic if sufficient justification were provided to explain why these numerous
11 consistently one-directional changes were applied. However, first as noted, the
12 justifications offered for those changes have been both varied and insufficient.

13 "And second, as you know, the Greenbelt parcel of land is owned by the
14 Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, WMATA, which is the SSA's employer
15 until July 2nd, 2021."

16 What is your reaction to the FBI director bringing up the same concerns that Brian
17 Turner had once again after the decision has been made?

18 A I mean, I don't have a reaction, candidly. I know what my approach to
19 reviewing the criteria was. I believe that I was fair in my application, and I tried to be as
20 incredibly transparent as possible. I spent a lot of time writing the site selection
21 decision so that Mr. Wray, others in the FBI, the American public could understand how I
22 arrived there. And I stand by my decision.

23 Q And so is the FBI's assessment that every time you disagreed with the panel's
24 unanimous rating of the Greenbelt site that you increased the score for Greenbelt
25 correct? Do you think that's a fair characterization that they had?

1 A I would have to go and look section by section, but that probably is correct.
2 So for transportation access, it improved the Greenbelt rating. I can't
3 remember -- let's see. For criteria 3, I tied Greenbelt and Springfield. That's correct.

4 Q And why do you think that Director Wray continues to have these concerns
5 about your decision to choose Greenbelt?

6 A I can't speak for Director Wray.

7 Q And do you have any reaction about why this letter is also bringing up your
8 prior employment with WMATA as an issue causing a perception of conflict or a bias?

9 A I don't. The conflict evaluation was done on day one of my employment,
10 and it was conducted by GSA's general counsel as background, reviewed by the
11 Administrator. So I don't know why there is a continued conversation about conflict of
12 interest.

13 Q And did you get the sense that, once you made this decision to choose land
14 owned by WMATA with the Greenbelt site, that your prior employment would come up
15 publicly?

16 A To be honest, I didn't think it was going to be an issue. I know, as I
17 established, the region incredibly well. The proximity of the Springfield site to the
18 Franconia-Springfield Metro Station, you know, benefits WMATA as well. So I did not go
19 into this, especially since I had had the limited authorization from day one.

20 I had honestly moved on from that and just didn't really think about it that much.

21 Q And have you had any interactions with the FBI -- anyone in the FBI about
22 your decision after you left GSA?

23 A I have not, no.

24 Q Okay.

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q Do you believe that the letters from the FBI to GSA regarding your decision,
2 even though they cite their concerns about process, in and of themselves, reflect the FBI's
3 poor understanding of how this process played out and would work?

4 A I couldn't characterize whether -- you know, what the FBI's understanding
5 was. When I was employed by GSA, I was aware of one letter. It was Brian Turner's
6 letter.

7 You know, I read and reviewed that letter, and we responded to it, GSA responded
8 to it. And then I wasn't aware of any further discussion.

9 Q Would you agree that Director Wray's request to, quote, "rerun the site
10 selection decision process" would, in and of itself, be a severe deviation in process for
11 selecting a site for the government in this case?

12 A I would ask that you ask GSA, you know, what past practice or history is on
13 projects. I think that this particular project has had lots of iterations, so it's hard to say.

14 Q Given FBI's failure to raise these concerns until after the site selection
15 decision was in the works and given their behavior here, I mean, do you believe that the
16 FBI, in fact, wants there to be a different decision, notwithstanding the initial letter's
17 written words that they are enthusiastically committed to commencing irrespective of the
18 site that is selected?

19 A Honestly, I would feel uncomfortable trying to characterize the FBI. It's,
20 you know, a huge organization, and I just would feel uncomfortable trying to characterize
21 what their intent was.

22 Q Okay. Thank you.

23

BY [REDACTED]

24 Q So with these letters, did you -- do you ever get the sense that the FBI does
25 not want their Headquarters building located in Greenbelt?

1 A I mean, on the record, they've stated that -- I don't know where it was.
2 Actually, Mr. Turner's letter maybe -- that, you know, they enthusiastically commence the
3 next phase of the Headquarters project irrespective of the site that is selected.

4 So I can only, you know, take at their word what they're saying.

5 [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

6 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record.

7 [Recess.]

8 [REDACTED] We can go back on the record.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q So, Ms. Albert, in the last hour my colleagues were asking you about what
11 sort of additional information you may have considered in your decision.

12 First of all, did the site selection plan prohibit you from considering information
13 that wasn't considered by the panel?

14 A It did not. It explicitly cites that I may consider outside information.

15 Q Page 13, I believe, of the site selection plan. The site selection authority
16 may consider any and all information in making a decision, including the full record of the
17 site selection panel, but also information, data, or other materials not considered or
18 evaluated by the site selection panel.

19 Is that what you did?

20 A That's correct. I mean, just to clarify, I -- while I didn't have to do this, I did
21 follow the -- and stayed true to the site selection plan instructions. And only when there
22 was an important decision or difference did I seek to look at -- bring in other information.

23 Q And I think you said that you quoted or cited in your site selection decision
24 document, these instances where you brought in or considered some outside
25 information. Is that correct?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Okay. And so you cited all of the additional material in the site selection
3 decision document?

4 A I did.

5 Q Okay. Are there any other secret materials that you relied on that you
6 didn't cite in your site selection decision document?

7 A No.

8 Q And so -- I believe in FBI Director Wray's October 12th letter, which was
9 previously introduced by my colleagues as exhibit 6, the FBI Director says, essentially,
10 there's -- you didn't provide a sufficient explanation for areas where you came to a
11 different conclusion than the panel.

12 But your site selection decision document does explain every single decision and
13 every single place where you agreed with or disagreed with the panel, correct?

14 A I agree. Yes. I was very focused on making sure that this site selection
15 decision for this very important project was thorough, was transparent, and provided my
16 reasoning for the decisions that I made.

17 Q Okay. And so, again, not to put too fine of a point on it, but there aren't
18 any other reasons that you relied on for your decision that are not included in your site
19 selection document?

20 A That's correct. The site selection decision document is my full record of
21 how I came to the decisions that I did.

22 Q Okay. And I think you had said -- sorry. Strike that.

23 [REDACTED] I'll just note for the record, exhibit 6, the October 12th letter, 2023,
24 from Director Wray to Administrator Carnahan notes on the second page, third paragraph
25 down, quote, "To be clear, we're not suggesting a lack of integrity by the PBS

1 commissioner."

2 [REDACTED] That's you, right, not her?

3 Ms. Albert. That's correct. I was the PBS commissioner at the time.

4 [REDACTED] And I'd like to introduce an exhibit, a response to the FBI from the
5 GSA administrator dated September 29th, 2023. And in that letter was also the GSA's
6 response to the FBI's questions about the site selection process.

7 [REDACTED] This will be collective exhibit 7.

8 Can we go off the record, please.

9 [Discussion off the record.]

10 [REDACTED] We'll go back on the record.

11 [Albert Exhibit No. 7

12 was marked for identification.]

13 BY [REDACTED]

14 Q So, Ms. Albert, in front of you marked as exhibit 7, you have a letter from
15 GSA Administrator Carnahan dated September 29, 2023, to Chris Wray.

16 And is it your understanding that this letter was drafted in response to FBI
17 concerns about the process that they previously raised?

18 A Yes. This letter was drafted in response -- directly in response to Mr. Brian
19 Turner's letter. And the questions that are in bold in this second packet were the FBI's
20 questions --

21 Q Okay.

22 A -- to GSA.

23 Q And staying on the letter that Administrator Carnahan wrote, earlier you
24 discussed that at no point prior to the FBI raising the issue after the site selection decision
25 was issued, were you aware that they had concerns about your conflicts of interest. Is

1 that right?

2 A That's correct.

3 Q And in Administrator Carnahan's letter, she --

4 Mr. McCart. Alleged conflict of interest, right?

5 [REDACTED] Alleged conflict -- thank you so much. Alleged conflicts of interest.

6

BY [REDACTED]

7 Q In Administrator Carnahan's letter, she writes, quote, "After years of close
8 collaboration in partnership at every step between GSA and FBI, it is unfortunate at this
9 late stage that FBI is raising procedural objections to a plan that was jointly refined by our
10 teams and issued in July."

11 Do you agree with that statement?

12 A I agree with that.

13 Q And, similarly, if we look two paragraphs down, Administrator Carnahan
14 writes, quote, "Recognizing the high level of interest in this project, the GSA team, at my
15 direction, spent many months developing and refining a fair and transparent site
16 selection process grounded in the agency's best practices that incorporated feedback
17 from FBI and a wide range of stakeholders."

18 Do you agree with that statement?

19 A I do agree with that statement.

20

BY [REDACTED]

21 Q Okay. So to follow up on the alleged conflict of interest -- I just want to
22 again go back to when you first came to GSA -- you weren't hiding the fact that you
23 worked for WMATA, correct?

24 A Correct.

25 Q Okay. And you got the limited authorization on July 6, 2021, authorizing

1 you to participate in all FBI Headquarters projects -- sorry -- all FBI project matters where
2 WMATA may be involved, correct?

3 A Correct.

4 Q Did you give any of the sites preferential treatment because of your prior
5 work at WMATA?

6 A I did not.

7 Q Okay.

8 A I can -- I mean, I can say unequivocally on the record that I approached this
9 site selection decision with seriousness, going into the selection process with as much
10 fairness in applying the criteria, and complete impartiality. Frankly, I do not know why
11 there is either a perceived -- a perception of conflict of interest.

12 WMATA is a unique organization. It is not a for-profit organization. I had
13 nothing to gain either directly coming out of WMATA, or even 18 months later, when I
14 was undertaking this site selection decision, and so I personally don't understand, nor
15 agree, that there is either a real or perceived conflict of interest.

16 Q I know that you left GSA in October 2023, so this came a little bit after you,
17 but I'd like to introduce an exhibit, the November 3rd memo for Administrator Carnahan
18 from GSA's general counsel titled Legal Review of October 12th letter from the Federal
19 Bureau of Investigation regarding site selection process for new suburban headquarters
20 facility. And I just want to point out a couple of passages here.

21 [REDACTED] This will be exhibit 8.

22 [Albert Exhibit No. 8

23 was marked for identification.]

1 [1:45 p.m.]

2

BY [REDACTED]

3

Q So after the FBI raised concerns about the decision in the fall of 2023, GSA's

4

Office of General Counsel reviewed their allegations and determined that there were no

5

conflicts of interest in the decision. Is that correct?

6

A That is correct. Well, yeah.

7

Q So I'll go ahead and read from page 4, which says, "Our review did not find

8

any evidence of bias or any improper conflict in the record."

9

Is that consistent with your understanding?

10

A That is correct -- or that's consistent, yes.

11

Q Is it fair to say that your selection, your decision was based solely on which

12

site was most advantageous to the United States Government?

13

A Correct, per the criteria that I was designated to evaluate, yes.

14

BY [REDACTED]

15

Q So, Ms. Albert, to put a finer point on it, and my colleague sort of just walked

16

through this, when you were initially appointed as a commissioner at GSA, again, GSA

17

performed an independent analysis of your prior employment and whether there were

18

indications of impartiality or alleged conflicts of interest.

19

Is that fair to say?

20

A Yes.

21

Q And then after this process is done, you've issued your decision, the panel

22

has gone through their evaluation, GSA conducts a wholly separate analysis of your

23

perceived impartialities or alleged conflicts of interest again.

24

Isn't that right?

25

A That's what I understand from this letter, yes.

1 Q And, again, GSA reached the conclusion that as my colleague outlined, that
2 there -- your decision was not impacted by any improprieties or alleged conflicts of
3 interest. Is that right?

4 A That's their analysis. That's also my reality.

5 Q And finally, I think my Republican colleagues raised in the last hour, I think
6 they asked you, you know, what would be the impacts of rerunning this process.

7 I would just like to quote from this November 3rd legal review. GSA wrote on
8 the first page, quote, "Therefore, it is our conclusion that the Letter's request to appoint a
9 new site selection authority to re-run the site selection decision is not warranted and,
10 furthermore, would unnecessarily expose GSA and the site selection process to increased
11 legal, programmatic, and business risk."

12 Do you agree with that assessment?

13 A I do.

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q And so, just to run through one more time, you state in your site selection
16 decision you selected Greenbelt because it's the most advantageous to the government.

17 I'm going to ask you again, did you arrive at your decision because of political
18 influence?

19 A There was no political influence at any time during the site selection process,
20 and it did not factor into how I evaluated the sites or the decision that I came to.

21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q My colleague asked you, and you clarified it. You did not hide from GSA
23 that you had previously worked at WMATA, right?

24 A I had not.

25 Q But I also want to make clear that GSA also did not seek in any way to hide

1 that you had previously worked at WMATA.

2 Is that right?

3 A That's correct.

4 Q In fact, when they issued a press release announcing your appointment to
5 GSA, that press release specifically mentioned your previous employment at WMATA.

6 Is that correct?

7 A That is correct.

8 [Albert Exhibit No. 9
9 was marked for identification.]

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q Hello, Ms. Albert. My name, again, is [REDACTED] and I'm with the House
12 Judiciary Committee minority staff. Thank you again for being with us today. I just
13 have a few quick questions to wrap up.

14 So I'd like to introduce as exhibit 9 a letter that was sent by Members of Congress
15 to the Acting Inspector General of GSA on November 15th, 2023. I'm handing you two
16 copies.

17 So I'll direct you to the first sentence right under the greeting on this letter where
18 this letter requests, quote, "an immediate investigation into the serious concerns raised
19 by the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Christopher Wray, regarding the
20 site selection process for a new FBI Headquarters."

21 Did I read that correctly, Ms. Albert?

22 A Yes.

23 [Albert Exhibit No. 10
24 was marked for identification.]

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q Now I'd like to introduce as exhibit 10 a letter in response to that November
2 15th inquiry dated November 30th, 2023, from GSA's Office of Inspector General.

3 So I'll read from this letter under the greeting. "I have received your letter of
4 November 15, 2023, expressing your concerns about the General Services
5 Administration's site selection process for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI)
6 Headquarters site. My office is initiating an evaluation of GSA's selection of the site.
7 Our objective will be to assess the agency's process and procedures for the site selection
8 to relocate the FBI Headquarters. We intend to begin this work immediately and will
9 share with you and the relevant committees a copy of any report which may result from
10 this evaluation."

11 Did I read that correctly, Ms. Albert?

12 A I believe so, yes.

13 Q So, according to this correspondence, the GSA's Inspector General's Office
14 had opened a, quote, "evaluation of GSA's selection of the site," end quote, correct?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Ms. Albert, were you aware that this evaluation had been opened?

17 A I am aware that it's opened, yes.

18 Q Are you aware that this evaluation is currently ongoing?

19 A Yes, I believe that, that it is currently ongoing.

20 Q So this transcribed interview today, an investigation into the site selection
21 process, is taking place while the GSA's Office of Inspector General is in the middle of an
22 ongoing evaluation process regarding the site selection, and before the results of that
23 evaluation have been reached and released. Is that correct?

24 A I believe that that's correct, yes.

25 [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

1 BY [REDACTED]

2 Q And in addition to that, as we established earlier, the Office of General
3 Counsel at GSA, again, conducted their own independent review of the process and again
4 found no impropriety. Is that right?

5 A That is correct.

6 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record.

7 [Discussion off the record.]

8 [REDACTED] We'll go back on the record.

9 And just for the record, I'm going to acknowledge that while the committee is
10 aware, or the committees are aware of the ongoing review from GSA and the Inspector
11 General's Office that the committee doesn't wait for any outside agencies or government
12 to decide what we do or do not do in our investigations.

13 BY [REDACTED]

14 Q And then going to exhibit 8, which was the legal review of the October 12,
15 2023, letter from the FBI, I just want to ask some clarification questions.

16 By the time that this legal review came out and was issued on November 3rd, you
17 had already departed from GSA, correct?

18 A Correct.

19 Q And when was the first time that you reviewed this legal review?

20 A I reviewed it for the first time when these exhibits were shared with me by
21 my counsel.

22 Q Okay. So within the past month, you reviewed it?

23 A Correct.

24 Q And with the -- so now Greenbelt is selected. Do you know where in the
25 process I guess the site selection is? Like, what was the next step after the site was

1 picked?

2 A I don't know what the current status is. I've not spoken with anybody at
3 GSA or at WMATA or anywhere else about what the current status is. So I don't know
4 what that is. Yeah.

5 Q And I wanted to go back to your assignment as the site selection authority.
6 You started in June or July in that capacity of 2023, and then you made your decision
7 September 30, 2023, and then you departed on October 12, 2023.

8 Did you get the impression that they needed a decision quickly?

9 A No, I didn't have that. I knew that there had been a lot of preparation for
10 this site selection plan. There was a lot of consultation with both delegations from
11 Maryland and the State of Virginia -- I'm sorry, Commonwealth of Virginia, and so, a lot of
12 anticipation internally of being able to start the process.

13 And so once the site selection plan was published, the panel convened. Things
14 happened quite quickly after that.

15 Q I see. So when you became site selection authority, it was your impression
16 that you had to execute the decision and that was your main job?

17 A Yeah. That was my primary priority at that point, yes.

18 Q And why did you leave GSA so soon after making the decision?

19 A That was just a coincidence, candidly, and just a strange confluence of
20 timing. The site selection panel -- sorry, the site selection plan and process was
21 unfolding as we anticipated.

22 You know, once the plan was published, the panel would convene. They would
23 transmit the report. I would review it. I would submit my decision. That happened
24 under normal course.

25 The timing of my being made an offer to join the District of Columbia Government

1 just happened to occur during the same timeframe. And, you know, timing of when I
2 needed to start was decided so that I could start as expeditiously as possible.

3 Q So when you were applying or had the offer for the D.C. Government
4 position, were you still in the writing phase of the site selection report?

5 A I was not.

6 Q Okay. Did you already make the decision by then?

7 A Yeah. I had made the decision in the August timeframe. The D.C.
8 Government's process is quite long, and so I wasn't sure where I even was in the process.

9 And then it happened quite quickly. I received an offer letter in September. So
10 I had done the bulk of my work by that -- or a majority if not the final, what I considered
11 the final draft in August.

12 Q Okay. And when did you notify GSA that you were looking -- or that you
13 were probably going to take this position with D.C. Government?

14 A As soon as I received an offer letter, I immediately notified GSA.

15 Q And when did you receive that offer letter?

16 A I can't remember the exact date, but it was in late September.

17 Q And do you recall whether that was before or after the site selection
18 decision report came out?

19 A I don't recall. I mean, the site selection report had been finalized for some
20 time.

21 Q And was there any conflict with you writing the site selection decision report
22 while looking for another job?

23 A Not from my perspective. I wasn't actively looking for another job. This
24 was a unique opportunity. And when I was engaged in this process, I was wholly
25 focused on this process. And so there wasn't a conflict from my perspective, no.

1 BY [REDACTED]

2 Q All right. So we'll go through these very quickly. I think we've talked
3 about it a little bit just a moment ago, but I'm going to ask the question and have you
4 answer it.

5 Did you speak to anyone at GSA today regarding this interview?

6 A I did not.

7 Q Did you speak to anyone at FBI today regarding this -- at FBI regarding
8 today's interview?

9 A I have not.

10 Q Have you spoken to anyone at WMATA regarding today's interview?

11 A No.

12 Q And have you spoken to anyone at the White House regarding today's
13 interview?

14 A I have not. I'm sorry --

15 Mr. McCart. In terms of the GSA one, I think the way you asked it was did she
16 speak to anyone today about -- at GSA today about the interview.

17 [REDACTED] In preparation.

18 Mr. McCart. Right. I think what I would say is, did you speak to anyone
19 at -- anyone at GSA regarding the interview outside the presence of your counsel?

20 Ms. Albert. No.

21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q And I think that's a good characterization for all of those questions. So for
23 any of those, did you speak to them outside the presence of your counsel?

24 A No.

25 Q And have you been contacted by anyone else regarding interviews or

1 testimony regarding the GSA site selection panel?

2 A At any time?

3 Q At any time in the last -- since the decision was made and you departed
4 GSA?

5 A I've been contacted --

6 Mr. McCart. Do you mean like by the government?

7 [REDACTED] Government.

8 Ms. Albert. Oh, no. Okay, ask the question again.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Have any other committee or government entities reached out to you
11 requesting testimony or an interview regarding the site selection decision post your time
12 at GSA?

13 A Yes. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee had
14 requested me to participate in a hearing.

15 Q And did you participate in that hearing?

16 A I did not participate, no.

17 Q And you acknowledged earlier that you were aware of the, excuse me, GSA's
18 Inspector General inquiry that they are doing. Have you been contacted from them
19 regarding that?

20 A Can you hold for a minute.

21 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record for just a second.

22 [Discussion off the record.]

23 [REDACTED] We'll go back on the record.

24 Ms. Albert. So your question one more time?

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q You say that you are aware of the inquiry that GSA Inspector General is
2 doing.

3 A Yes.

4 Q Have you been contacted by them?

5 A I have not been.

6 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record for just a moment.

7 [Discussion off the record.]

8 [REDACTED] We'll go back on the record for just a moment.

9 That concludes today's transcribed interview. We greatly appreciate your
10 participation and willingness to come in and answer our questions, and thank you again
11 for your time.

12 Ms. Albert. Thank you so much.

13 [REDACTED] We'll go off the record.

14 [Whereupon, at 2:07 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

1 Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

2

3

4 I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the
5 answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

6

7

8

9

10

Witness Name

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Date

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