Part 1.- The main information that I was able to learn from the first interview can be grouped in the following categories:

Main Philosophy or working guidelines of N.C.P.C.:

The planning activities of the N.C.P.C. are based in the laws and regulations of the legal system in the U.S., and on the general guidelines from the Federal Government. This agency is in charge ofevaluating and forecasting all the projects and issues related with the federal government's guidelines and objectives for the metropolitan area of the National Capital. Their main points of study are related to the characteristics of the Federal work force, the Federal facilities, the Historic Preservation of the existing federal buildings, the Urban Design image of the city and enviromental qualities of the area.

The N.C.P.C. is not concerned with the planning activities that can be done at the local level and that concentrate with community, education, health, or zoning issues.

Main Depatments or Divisions within N.C.P.C.:

Review Division.-

This division is in charge of evaluating and approving or rejecting the different proposals or projects submitted by other federal agencies and that affect the physical characteristics of the Nationl Capital. This division works in a 30-day review process that matches the new proposals to the existing information and objectives of the N.C.P.C. in order to asses its validity with regard of the objectives/guidelines of the plan for the National Capital.

Long Range Planning Division.-

This division is in charge of the actual planning process of the N.C.P.C., they analize the information on the Federal resources such as: Number and state of Federal buildings, transportation characteristics of the area, distribution of Federal employees, etc., and project the future strategies that the N.C.P.C. should follow in order to direct and advice on the growth and development of the Federal government impact in the region, and in order to direct it in the most efficient way.

Planning Services Division.-

This division is in charge of the planning aspects that require a more specific or particular expertise in certain areas. A good example of this divisions line of work is for example the study of all the issues that relate to the problems of transportation in the National Capital.

Current statuts of available information at N.C.P.C.:

Databases-- Ad-hoc organization in the process of creating a common database

Technology-- The insatation of a network has been finalized, in the process of training users.

Maps-- Current use of cartography that is continuously updated , litle use of digital information due to lack of human and technical resources.

MAIN FUTURE GOALS:

To be able to incorporate data : Databases, and geographical (digital) data, in order to provide a faster response and more in depth study of the proposed projects sent to them by the other agencies.

To allow people to share a common database that is consistent and valid for all the different studies.

PART 2.- Resources, Names to follow up

The first interview provided little additional information in this area. We were onmly able to talk to a group of people that provided a very specific and unfortunatelly narrow description of the present situation at the agency.

I need to find out more information in this area. Pherhaps it would be advisable to ask more questions regarding this subject in the next interview.

PART 3.- Suggestions for Next Interview:

I think that next interview should be more carefully planned. The questions for this second interview should be more closedended and specific. Perhaps the idea of assigning a moderator or a person in charge of each particular section will yield a more effective (less general) interview.

NCPC Interview Comments

Organizational Setting

Enrique Vial works in the NCPC working to better the access of technology to the daily going-ons in the agency. He is interested in expanding computer access in a user-friendly environment for the employees. Specifically he is looking for new opportunities for CAD and GIS within the agency. Enrique is most familiar with the formatting changes being made in the department on the old data.

Nyambi Nyambi works specifically on organizing the network with empasis to GIS systems. Mr. Nyambi also emphasizes the importance of user-friendly systems in the department.

The third gentleman, whose name eludes me, is unfamiliar with computer applications in the department. He does, however, posses knowledge in the administrative and operational workings of the agency.

Divisions & Areas of Interest

There are three divisions that use mapping technology:

Review and Implementation - This department receives material from other government orgainzations. They digest both hard copies and more recently, in a digitized format. The data may also be accompanied by maps. This department then takes one month to process the information. The review is turned over to someone in the department that takes the information and looks for any violations of the law. The reviewer then checks to see if the plan meets the NCPC's interpretations of the laws. The data is often checked with outside information from sources like the Census, Dept. of Transportation, etc. Much of this information is only available in spreadsheet form. In some cases the submitting agency will work with the NCPC far in advance as to assure fewer complications during review. This is

especially important for big projects.

The second division is involved in the Development of the capital region. Their models encompass a 16-20 year period and in some cases a 60-100 year period. They are more interested in the overall future of the city.

The third division is the Planning Servicing Division. They have within their department a variety of experts in each field. One may be an expert in historical planning, another in transportation, etc. These people work as a sort of consultant group for the agency on a variety of topics.

The NCPC is currently using their technology for multimedia presentations. These, however, do not invole direct use of the mapping technology but rather a more graphical interface. The NCPC is currently digitizing the topolgy with ariel photo's of the D.C. area. Although they are interested in using GIS technology, they are currently working on making the resources available for the decision makers that do not understand the techonology as well. For this reason their current projects are working on a more simplistic model rather than the somewhat complicated applications of GIS.

What is Available

Currently, very little data is available in a computerized format at the NCPC. Most of the data, excluding census tracts and the road system, is available in dBase format, unsuitable for the GIS environment. Most of the infrastructure data available from other agencies is far behind what is available at the NCPC. Although the utility data may be accessable for GIS analysis, the traffic, sewage, etc. data is far behind technologywise. They do have, however, many paper maps that could be digitized in for GIS analysis. These maps are often supplied be the project managers of the various federal organizations looking for approval from the NCPC as well as the maps on hand in the department.

Example Case

The example project given was the second largest building in D.C. The design for this complex was submitted along with building specifications and any affects its presence would have on the environment. Much of this data is available from the EIS that is needed to submit. The reviewer then worked out any violations the proposed building may have had. In the case of the CIA building, so many neighbors complained that the project would create traffic problems that the CIA actually built roads and overpasses themselves to alleviate the problem.

Applications for GIS

Currently, only census data and the roads network may be used for GIS analysis. Further input may be drawn from maps that could be scanned in. The more recent possiblities for GIS in the NCPC would be the use of digitized overlays of the area along with certain data overlays from the census tracts as well as overlays of land features. The future of GIS in this department includes the impact of traffic, crime, etc. as overlays when planning. Enrique stressed that the future data should be in a medium compatable with all of the agencies so that data could be shared freely and easily. Eventually the project heads would fix the problems before they reached the NCPC.

At the next meeting possible projects and example maps and data will be worked

with.

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Interview with Reggie Griffith, Enrique Villas, Nyambi Nyambi:

About NCPC:
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NCPC is the central planing agency for the federal government and for the nation's capital. Its purpose is to affect federal planning policies in historical perservation, urban design, evironmental design, development in the national capital and other areas. However, it doesn't deal with policies effecting the local and state level such as zoning, education and so on.

Divisions:
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There are 3 divisions. Review and Implementation division is mandated to address planning and development issues faced by other agencies, which, in turn, feed project information to NCPC. NCPC in turn provides planning analysis and suggestions which are then implemented by respective agencies. Long Range Planing division deals with comprehensive planning which projects up to 15 to 20 years, and sometimes 60 to 120 years. Planning Services division provides specialized technical support for historical perservation, urban design, cartography and so forth.

Technology at NCPC:
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NCPC has made a transition from wordprocessors to a network of computer stations which enable multiple access to a common data source. Currently, UNIX, CAD, ArcInfo and others are beginnings of enhancing GIS capability of NCPC. In near future, a desired improvement is complete networking of computure with NCPC and with other agencies. With this improvement, NCPC hopes to digitize all of Washington D.C., including public works, and also include a powerful 3-D capability in spatial analysis. Other plan is to create a system of relational database to improve information management and networking.

Role of technology at NCPC:
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Multimedia system is now an indispensible tool for analysis and presentation. GIS application serves as a critical leverage in showing planning and development issues and projecting ensuing policies. Also, such technology facilitates and enhances communication of planning issues to laypeople.

Current challenges at NCPC:
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Much of the data is in hardcopy. Much of it is outdated or incompatible with the changes in public works, boundries, etc. And data are spread out in several places which makes access difficult and costly. One interesting note regarding data is the fact that utility companies have better database and better equipped to deal with them than the public sector. In terms of GIC, NCPC is not fully equiped with GIS at this stage. Thus, planning and mapping is not on par with people's expectations.

Future challenges at NCPC:
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The interviewees indicated the importance of further incorporation GIS and other technical capabilities in planning. Along with that, another concern is human development, which means that personnel must be trained to keep abreast of technology at NCPC.

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Suggestions for next interview:
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1) Ask about current NCPC projects
2) Ask what NCPC would like to do but cannot do at this time
3) Ask what kind of support NCPC would like to see from us
4) Discuss what we can contribute
5) Ask about problems we might encounter with this project, such as problems of accessing data, outdated data, so forth

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National Capital Planning Commission

Interview: March 15, 1994 - 4:00 P.M.

The interview was held with Enrique Vial, Nyambi Nyambi, and Executive Director Reginald Griffith of the National Capital Planning Commission. Mr. Vial indicated that his responsibilities were to implement information technology, including computers, GIS, and CAD systems. Mr. Nyambi indicated that he was repsonsible for getting the infrastructure environment set for the agency, including putting together network and GIS systems.

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) is the central planning agency for the federal government. It has the goal of providing for a flexible, living, yet historically interesting capital for the United States. It is in charge of a $7 billion capital improvement program. The NCPC monitors zoning, but does not determine it.

The NCPC has a number of division, including the long-range planning division, which covers comprehensive (15-20 year) and longer range (60-100 year) planning for everything that the federal government can influence within the capital area. Another division, planning services, is assigned to aid in specific areas, such as historic preservation, environmental issues, urban design, and cartography. A third developing division is that of planning information and technology, under which falls GIS.

A fourth division is in charge of reviewing plans submitted for review. Data is submitted in hard copy and digitized form in order to allow for more rapid data exchange. A draft is prepared on the agency's

observations and then after twenty days the commission votes on whether to approve or reject a project. NCPC only can recommend approval to projects outside of the District of Columbia.

The NCPC has a mission to decide what is best for the environment as well as in the interest on the federal government. The interviewees expressed that they felt that local conditions are best understood by a local agency like the NCPC. The importance of translating local needs and desires into planning terms to make use of local input was stressed.

The interviewees felt that the purpose of technology was to allow for quick access of data which can be used for analysis to assist the decision makers of the NCPC. Due to the one month deadline for review of projects, it is important for the NCPC to have data built-up as a background for any project that might be submitted. It plans to have its data accessible to anyone who needs to use it, including county, city, and other agencies.

The NCPC is currently in the process of attempting to fully implement technology in doing presentations. Currently technology is only used indirectly, for example to produce displays for multi-media presentations. GIS is used primarily as a "back-end tool", which must be input inro other software. NCPC would like to be able to use GIS directly without putting it through other software systems.

Technology is currently used in a number of ways at the NCPC. The network environment is used to coordinate reports, allowing word processing and the use of images to be integrated and used by multiple users each at their own desks. CAD is used to digitize the District of Columbia and to form a three-dimensional model for real-time analysis. NCPC is currently preparing GIS databases to fit the relationship data base model. There are five to six databases available to NCPC, but they are not integrated.

The interviewees felt that it was important that people feel comfortable using GIS and other networking systems at their desktop. They

indicated that these systems should be for general usage and not for specific projects. It was also noted that NCPC employees need additional training in GIS in order for it to be used efficiently.

The NCPC has US Census data, tiger files, and schematic prototype data available to it at the present. It is in need of additional sources of data and is currently converting aerial photographs to vector and photogram data. One problem is that other agencies have most of their data only in hardcopy format.

The interviewees indicated that they would present hardcopies of the spatial analysis that they do at NCPC at the next interview.