



Winter 2015

Connect Cobb



Northwest Transit Corridor
Environmental Assessment

Connect Cobb Fact Sheet

Creating Connectivity and Options

The Connect Cobb project proposes Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) along U.S. 41 and continuing express bus service along I-75. This dual service, fifteen station transit solution serves the Northwest Corridor's two major trip types, local and commuter trips. ART provides local access to and between the major activity centers along the corridor. Limited stop express bus service provides for long haul commuting from/through Cobb County to other regional destinations. When fully implemented, Connect Cobb will link Kennesaw and the Town Center area through Marietta, the Cumberland area, and midtown Atlanta providing much needed travel options for thousands of daily riders.

ART uses buses that generally operate on their own guideways on existing roads or dedicated bus-only lanes. This permanent integrated system uses technology and design improvements to improve the ride, such as enhanced fare collection services; priority at signaled intersections; improved stations along corridors; and ground level boarding. Boston, Cleveland and Pittsburgh are examples of cities that have ART systems.

Express bus service operates with buses on roadways with mixed traffic. The buses make limited stops along normal bus routes to provide faster, or express, service. Cobb Community Transit (CCT) currently provides express bus service between Cobb County and Downtown Atlanta during peak commuting periods. Phoenix, Miami, Los Angeles and Seattle are additional examples of express bus systems.



Cleveland's HealthLine rapid transit system is an example of ART currently in use.



Dedicated, bus-only lanes with signal priority are typical ART system features.

Connect Cobb History and Status

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the Connect Cobb Project adhering to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Previously, an Alternatives Analysis (AA) that identified the ART/express bus locally preferred alternative (LPA) was completed for the project and finalized in December 2012. The EA is a continuation of the federal process towards approval of the project's implementation and funding. To develop the EA, the Connect Cobb project team collected additional data on environmental resources, conducted analyses, and met with stakeholders to refine the Purpose and Need statement, station locations, alignment of the alternates, and cost estimates. The team also made site visits to peer communities with similar transit systems, such as Cleveland's HealthLine, to see firsthand the operations and discuss the lessons learned.

The draft EA was prepared for the project and submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for its review in December 2014. The project team is in close coordination with FTA to address its comments. Once FTA approves the draft, then a public hearing will be scheduled. The team anticipates a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to be issued by FTA in the second quarter of 2015.

Connect Cobb and the Community

Efforts to connect with the community have been widespread. Several factsheets have been developed for the project and posted on the project website and distributed to email and mailing lists. Project kiosks with project displays, factsheets, and comment forms were held at the Marietta and Cumberland CCT transfer centers and MARTA Arts Center Station to educate transit riders on the project and collect their input. In November 2013, the project team hosted a public meeting to show the community the latest information on the project and gather feedback. Additionally, the team posted a project video, with a survey, on the Connect Cobb webpage www.cobbdot.org/connectcobb.htm, for those who were unable to attend the public meeting. The team also worked closely with the "Cobb in Motion" Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update team, meeting with shared stakeholders and providing project information factsheets at CTP events.



Stakeholders viewed project information at the November 2013 public meeting.

How Can I Get Involved?

Please visit our project website at www.cobbdot.org/connectcobb.htm for the most up to date information on project milestones and outreach events. You can also like us on Facebook to receive social media updates. If you would like to join our mailing list, or have any questions, please contact Kristine Hansen-Dederick at hansen-dederick@sycamoreconsulting.net or 404-377-9147.