

COMMUNITY S.W.O.T ANALYSIS

Cobb County facilitated informational and interactive meetings for citizens, business owners, property owners and any other interested parties in October and November of 2015. During the meeting Planners informed the community of what the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is and how the 2040 Comprehensive Plan would be updated. Information related to existing data analysis and findings were also presented to the community in 4 separate meetings at separate locations across Cobb County. Following the presentations participants were separated into groups to gather key information about the needs and opportunities moving forward the next 25 years in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) analysis. The following is information that was provided when asking the community to identify the key metrics related to the SWOT of Cobb County.

The list below will be combined with the existing conditions data analysis, an analysis of consistency with the Department of Community Affairs' Quality Community Objectives, interview results from the 2040 Steering Committee, the phone survey completed by the A.L. Buruss Institute and public comments submitted from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan website to identify prioritized needs and opportunities for each element of the plan that correspond to implementation measures in the Community Work Program.

Strengths	Count	Element
Parks & Recreation (Parks/Recreation/Greenspace, Federal parks, Marietta square, parks, Kennesaw Mtn., cultural facilities & opportunities, outdoors, silver comet, recreation, parks & trails, aquatic center, little league programs, greenspace, bike trails)	24	Parks & Recreation, Community Facilities, Transportation, Public Health, Economic Development, Urban Design
Location (convenient to assets, proximity to facilities, close to Atlanta, close to nature, access to highways & interstates, accessibility x2, proximity to regional airport, proximity of international airport, access to regional destinations, proximity to Atlanta x 2, proximity to mountains., climate x 2, relative to regional destinations)	24	All Elements
Quality of Life (stable, family, Marietta square, churches, quality retail shops without traveling to mall, low cost of living, stable community, convenient shopping, churches, clean, affordable, physical space, low cost of living, retail prices, nice people, civic organizations, civic engagement, income, diversity of different neighborhoods, ethnicity, age)	24	All Elements
Low Cost Living (low tax rate, low cost of living overall x 4, tax exemptions for seniors x 5, disability, low property tax, low taxes x 2, tax structure (sales tax rate), senior council)	21	All Elements
Education (college opportunities, educational attainment x2, good quality schools x4, higher education opportunities, schools)	20	Education, Land Use, Public Health, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Transportation

Strengths	Count	Element
Economic Development (tourism & entertainment, Cobb Energy Center, arts, theatre, six flags x 2, Braves stadium x 2, visitors, Atlanta United soccer complex, other attractions, employment opportunities x 2, Cobb Chamber, attracting new business, growth and vitality, exciting new developments, South Cobb/Mableton - best kept secret)	16	Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation, Education, Technology, Parks & Recreation
Public Safety (low crime x 4, relatively safe, animal control facility)	13	Public Safety, Public Health, Land Use, Economic Development
Government Services (customer responsiveness, clean, senior citizen friendly, well maintained, beautification)	12	All Elements
Government Management (good financial condition, low overall debt, good fiscal management, rich economic base, ethical, accessible to elected officials, efficient, fiscally responsible, efficient government)	10	All Elements
Community Facilities (libraries x 2, Senior Center, Sr. Programs, Technology, stability of senior population)	10	Community Facilities, Land Use, Technology, Senior Services
Transportation (sidewalks, roads & streets x2, alternate routes for highway & roads, road network, airport)	7	Transportation, Land Use, Public Health, Economic Development, Urban Design, Parks & Recreation
Land Use Plan (rural feel of west cobb, neighborhoods, nodal development, low density residential, good mix of commercial, low blighted areas)	6	Land Use, Transportation, Economic Development, Community Facilities, Natural & Historic Resources, Urban Design
Public Health (Medical facilities (Hospital))	5	Land Use, Public Health
Housing (affordable housing, good when compared to U.S., home values x 3, availability of homes, stable housing market)	5	Housing, Land Use, Public Health, Economic Development
Community Facilities (water infrastructure, water services, low cost)	4	Water, Community Facilities, Public Health
Natural & Historic Resources (hills, trees, history, historic assets)	3	Natural & Historic Resources, Land Use, Public Health, Parks & Recreation
Regional Development Center (ARC)		Intergovernmental Coordination
Non-profits (boys & girls club)		Community Facilities, Human Services, Housing

Weaknesses	Count	Element
Transportation (maintenance, congestion, lack of walkability and sidewalk x 4, lack of streetscape, no rapid transit, traffic related to bridges, not enough ways to cross river, thru traffic, public transportation, no public transportation interface to downtown Atlanta, too dependent on single occupancy vehicles, long commutes cause fatigue equates to accidents, too many cul-de sacs, connectivity x 2, lack of bus stops, Flex service doesn't cover enough areas x 2, beautification along right-of-way and debris removal, fragile transportation infrastructure, Clay Road traffic, lack of efficient transit, too many curb cuts on Six Flags drive, mass transit, alternate transportation, lack of infrastructure and regulations allowing for personalized motorized vehicles such as Segway, etc., lack of public transit x 3, bike infrastructure & pedestrian trails)	53	Transportation, Parks, Public Health, Urban Design
Land Use (lack of following land use plan, sprawl, moving away from nodal concept, abandoned buildings in south Cobb, increase density, too many apartments, too many senior living communities, too many high density neighborhoods, lack of infill redevelopment regulations, lack of protecting suburban neighborhood atmosphere, overdevelopment, maxing out zoning/land use map, zoning changes too easily, too much industrial land, zoning, isolated neighborhoods, density, lack of infill regulations, housing too close to interstate, no downtown area in South Cobb, aesthetics, lack of quality retail & restaurants, poor access to grocery stores, Code Enforcement of abandoned/neglected homes, HOA bylaws enforcement, lack of architectural design for new development & along Dallas Highway)	26	Land Use, Urban Design, Housing, Natural & Historic Resources, Intergovernmental Coordination, Education, Public Health, Economic Development
Park & Recreation (lack of parks and parkland x 4, lack of passive parks, arts/cultural activities/programs, greenspace, lack of greenspace x 4, lack of recreational parks, lack of funds for parks and greenspace, disparity in parks)	13	Parks & Recreation, Community Facilities, Transportation, Public Health, Economic Development, Urban Design
Government (financial aid for seniors, disability Services, perception of "Good ole boy" system, does not accommodate diversity as well, not transparent, community involvement, lack of care to constituents input, poor communication, perception, disparity in allocation of tax dollars, BOC not working together, lack of leadership, BOC has too much power, negative press and publicity, too low tax base to maintain or support quality of life that is expected)	14	All Elements
Education (crowded schools, south cobb schools, perception of schools, middle & high schools, educational options, maintenance of public schools, lack of proactive planning for schools, lack of retention and management of public school staff, lack of Tech/Voc. schools in Cobb County for skilled labor force, disparity in education)	10	Education, Land Use, Public Health
Housing (lack of affordable housing x 3, group homes are overcrowded, lack of foster homes, lack of senior housing, lack of mixed-income housing, too close to interstate, transiency within schools & rental property)	9	Housing, Land Use, Economic Development
Public Safety (lack of police officers, retaining officers x 2, crime, pockets of crime and perception of crime)	8	Public Safety, Public Health, Technology

Weaknesses	Count	Element
Economic Development (lack of investment in South Cobb, not enough small businesses or high tech jobs, general lack of high paying jobs, quality of businesses on Veterans Memorial Highway, livable wages, residents leaving)	7	Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation
Water (lack of sewer, cost of water, stormwater, lack of water & stormwater infrastructure)	5	Community Facilities (Water), Public Health
Intergovernmental coordination (lack of integrated plan across counties, Regional Development Center (ARC))	5	Intergovernmental Coordination
Technology (lack of fiber optics, more information online, lack of technical infrastructure)	3	Community Facilities (Technology), Public Safety
Natural & Historic Resources (environmental protection, trees threatened by invasive species, lack of preserving old trees during development, wildlife protection/preservation)	2	Natural & Historic Resources, Land Use, Public Health
Redevelopment (blighted shopping centers)		Economic Development, Land Use, Urban Design, Transportation, Public Health
Location (proximity to Atlanta)		All Elements
Community Facilities (Library hours)		Community Facilities (Library)

Opportunities	Count	Element
Land Use (better use of land use plan, more aware of zonings, more public input, higher densities around Highway 41 and I-75, keep rural feel of west cobb, limit growth, central gathering space, mix use livable communities in higher density areas, braves, redevelop blighted shopping centers x 2, mixed use/income development x 3, utilize Mableton Form Base Code, more development of South Cobb, create more walkable communities with sidewalks that connect to services and entertainment, transform cobb into green community, maintain lower densities, development/redevelopment in appropriate areas, proactive planning, provide more affordable senior living opportunities, develop live, work, play areas in Cobb, maintain a sense of place, provide more architectural design guidelines)	28	Land Use, Urban Design, Housing, Natural & Historic Resources, Intergovernmental Coordination, Education, Public Health, Economic Development

Opportunities	Count	Element
<p>Transportation (more technology, provide bike lanes x 3, telework, better transit options (CCT, FLEX, EXPRESS) in appropriate areas (light rail, associated parking) x 5, more walkability (sidewalks and fill in sidewalk gaps) x 4 , more multi-use trails, connect to MARTA and maintain security, MARTA to access new stadium, provide more bus stops, traffic signal timing, commuter rail on NS line, network of bike and walking trails x 3, regional public transit and more routes, promote transit, transit for seniors, shuttle buses during rush hour, schedule for express bus, take advantage of NW corridor expressway, shuttles in shopping areas, sidewalk connections to commercial areas, take advantage of McCollum International airport)</p>	27	<p>Transportation, Parks, Public Health, Urban Design, Land Use, Intergovernmental Coordination, Economic Development</p>
<p>Parks & Recreation (maintain & expand quality of services within PARKS, need more passive parks, complete planned parks before looking to expand, preserve more open space & greenspace, build on connecting to the Chattahoochee River using fed. parks and creeks/streams, expand existing parks i.e. Isakson prop., more soccer fields near Mableton Elementary, make silver comet trail a destination with focus on Floyd Road trailhead, parks and community gathering areas, more parks, trail connections to beltline, acquire property to connect to Chattahoochee river and recreation along river, improve opportunities for arts/entertainment (i.e. public sculptures, creative art places, broader entertainment, smaller venues utilizing local talent, better communication between seniors & arts)</p>	19	<p>Parks & Recreation, Community Facilities, Transportation, Public Health, Economic Development, Urban Design</p>
<p>Economic Development (attract more businesses, consider sharing economy, take advantage of Lockheed & young highly educated pop, improve on entrepreneurship, grow more high tech businesses, increase jobs to lessen traffic (less commuters moving out of county), promote South Cobb x 2, more incentives for businesses to create jobs for local residents, workforce development, increase jobs for millennials, attract more technology focused companies, form partnerships with KSU to form economic spinoff businesses, market cobb amenities, take advantage of economic impact from Braves move, more good paying jobs)</p>	15	<p>Economic Development, Education, Land Use, Transportation, Technology</p>
<p>Government Services (ensure diversity on committees, need ambassador program, keep youth in community, grow community involvement, promote community service through schools & civic groups, promote family life, reduce/stabilize transient population, advertise county events in local community, keep community more informed with better information, better use of existing resources, ensure ongoing existing services (not housing only), continue funding to maintain and/improve the Quality of Life of the County</p>	14	<p>All Elements</p>
<p>Education (improve quality of education, take advantage of higher education universities and tech schools, maintain/improve education attainment, promote/setup apprenticeships for students, improve educational programs, smaller class sizes, provide new schools & promote higher education, improve public relations for South Cobb County schools, equal disbursement of funds for schools, creative scheduling for all students, improve school quality/equality county wide x 2, maintain small size elementary schools, improve coordination between county government and Cobb County School District)</p>	13	<p>Education, Land Use, Public Health, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Transportation</p>
<p>Technology (fiber optics for Wi-Fi, Wi-Fi in parks & all public facilities, promote activities through social media, more high speed Wi-Fi accessibility countywide x 3, focus on technological advances in transportation and infrastructure, cable underground)</p>	9	<p>Technology, Community Facilities, Economic Development</p>

Opportunities	Count	Element
Senior Services (more Senior centers to meet projected demand, affordable housing designed for seniors, balance needs of seniors & millennials, improve senior benefits, better communication between seniors & arts)	5	Senior Services, Community Facilities
Public Safety (improve higher crime areas, new police precinct in NE Cobb and South Cobb, provide more officers, proactive ideology, new station/precinct, provide creative ways to better interact with the community)	5	Public Safety, Public Health, Technology
Housing (accommodate smaller household sizes for millennial and senior populations, create more affordable housing x2)	4	Housing, Land Use, Economic Development
Redevelopment (improve retail in South Cobb, tax incentives for redevelopment)	2	Land Use, Urban Design, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation
Intergovernmental Coordination (Cobb/Paulding provide more jobs)		Intergovernmental Coordination
Solid Waste (more recycle centers)		Community Facilities
Natural and Historic Resources (more trees)		Natural & Historic Resources, Land Use, Parks & Recreation, Community Facilities

Threats or Challenges	Count	Element
Transportation (THREATS: Paulding County growth means more traffic through Cobb, gridlock, air traffic, traffic bad for economic development, traffic in general, expanding transit, stadium parking, , more arterials, CHALLENGE: increased traffic from SunTrust Park and The Battery Atlanta, congestion, transportation for seniors in the evening hours, roads/accessibility of roads and expansion of roads, biking/walking, gridlock/traffic congestion, high fatalities on I-75 & I-285, fix traffic to improve quality of life, getting less cars on the road,)	20	Transportation, Land Use, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Public Health, Urban Design
Economic Development (THREAT: traffic congestion, lack of funding or incentives to keep corporations in Cobb, small business closures, Braves fallout, missing opportunity to connect to Atlanta, tourism CHALLENGE: providing more lucrative jobs & large businesses, keeping people to stay when visiting six flags, keeping Lockheed/Dobbins, Braves, providing new jobs, attracting quality of jobs, accommodating a growing economy, promoting tourism x 2, attracting large retail to south cobb, tourism, overcoming poor perception of South Cobb, parking related to stadium, finding funding to pay for projects, traffic congestion)	15	Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation, Education, Technology, Parks & Recreation

Threats or Challenges	Count	Element
Public Safety (CHALLENGE: maintain personnel, acquiring more police, corporation between police and community, maintaining public safety, new police precinct in Mountain View area, policing SunTrust Park & The Battery Atlanta, THREAT: increase crime x 3, gang presence, terrorism)	13	Public Safety, Economic Development, Land Use, Public Health
Land Use (THREAT: higher densities in rural areas, land values causing higher densities, overdevelopment, building within floodplains and wetlands, overcrowding, high density/multiunit housing, not following the land use plan, not adhering to nodal development practices, lack of planning, zoning policy breakdowns, CHALLENGE: attracting future residents/amenities, balance between development and greenspace zoning policy breakdowns)	12	Land Use, Community Facilities, Water, Natural & Historic Resources, Economic Development, Transportation, Public Health, Urban Design
Education (THREAT: growth of school population, failing schools, CHALLENGE: supporting public schools (financially & public relations, providing more community support), expanded schools to meet projected population, maintaining educational level)	7	Education, Land Use, Public Health, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Transportation
Quality of Life (THREAT: increase cost of living, lack of understanding different generational race & ethnic differences/cultures, uncertainty of Baby Boomer generation CHALLENGE: maintaining quality of life, maintaining quality of family unit and improving family life, investing in diversity)	7	All Elements
Environment (THREAT: environmental threat due to transportation projects & impervious surface, air quality from traffic, removal of trees due to development)	5	Natural & Historic Resources, Parks & Recreation, Transportation, Land Use, Public Health
Taxes (THREAT: tax increases, property tax increases x 2, losing senior tax exemption for school taxes, increased property values, CHALLENGE: maintaining property values)	5	All Elements
Intergovernmental Coordination (THREAT: annexations, incorporation of Mableton, creation of new cities within unincorporated Cobb, CHALLENGE: working with surrounding governments, threat)	5	Intergovernmental Coordination
Housing (THREAT: lack of affordable housing x 2, cost of housing relative to incomes, CHALLENGE: finding housing close to jobs (lessen commute), creating affordable housing)	4	Housing, Land Use, Economic Development, Public Health

Threats or Challenges	Count	Element
Community Facilities Water Infrastructure (THREAT: strained infrastructure if growth is too rapid, lack of water, aging utility infrastructure, CHALLENGE: maintaining infrastructure for future water supply)	4	Community Facilities, Water, Public Health, Land Use, Transportation
Government Services (THREAT: Government waste, impractical government projects, not enough public input, CHALLENGE: to balance the needs between seniors/millennials, balance the need for different parts of the county, creating more transparency)	4	All Elements
Funding (CHALLENGE: find funding, THREAT: lack of funding)	3	All Elements
Water (THREAT: Stormwater issues (too much impervious surface), Regional water level)	3	Water, Community Facilities, Public Health
PARKS (CHALLENGE: obtaining more recreation centers & more greenspace)	2	Parks & Recreation, Community Facilities, Transportation, Public Health, Economic Development, Urban Design
Natural & Historic Resources (THREAT: serenity, quiet way of life, CHALLENGE: minimizing the environmental impact)	2	Natural & Historic Resources, Parks & Recreation, Land Use, Public Health
Redevelopment (CHALLENGE: focus on distressed areas)	2	Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation, Urban Design, Public Health
Disaster Resilience (THREAT: weather events impacting infrastructure)		Disaster Resilience, Community Facilities