

2013 -  
2018  
Strategic  
Plan



*Cobb County...Expect the Best!*

Cobb County,  
Georgia

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# **Cobb County Government**

## **Vision Statement**

Cobb County: An exceptional community where all people and businesses can safely thrive through our commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and prudent resource management.

## **Guiding Principles**

We act with *Integrity* and *Transparency* which warrants the trust of our community and our colleagues.

We are *Service Oriented* and recognize Cobb residents, businesses, and visitors as valued customers.

We are *Accountable* as good stewards of public assets.

We are *Professional* and take pride in our work as well as the benefit it brings our County.

We are *Innovative* and strive to proactively seek improvements.

We are *Future-Focused* and actively anticipate and plan for the needs of our residents, businesses, and visitors.

We embrace *Teamwork* and value our partnerships with both public and private stakeholders to the benefit of Cobb residents, businesses, and visitors.

## Cobb County 2013 Strategic Plan

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### Strategic Commitment 1 -- Leadership

*Cobb County commits to provide, develop, and nurture leadership which is grounded in integrity, effectiveness, cooperation, and transparency as an essential component in the continued success of the County.*

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Goal 1.1- Develop, implement, and maintain a Strategic Plan to ensure that all stakeholders share an understanding of County values and provide a framework for County operations.

Initiative 1.1.1 – Through the County Manager and department leadership, at the direction of the Board of Commissioners (BOC), prepare and recommend a draft Strategic Plan to include strategic goals and initiatives. (Completed)

Initiative 1.1.2 – After consideration of BOC comments and recommendations, adopt a Strategic Plan for Cobb County (BOC) action. (Nov. 12, 2013)

Initiative 1.1.3 – Develop and implement a reporting system to be utilized in conjunction with the Strategic Plan to provide the status of the various goals and initiatives within the Plan. (Feb. 2014)

Initiative 1.1.4 – Update or otherwise adjust the Strategic Plan as appropriate, in response to guidance and direction provided by the BOC.

Goal 1.2 – Under the direction of the County Manager, ensure organizational efficiency, control costs, and improve customer satisfaction.

Initiative 1.2.1 – Develop and implement a process to monitor, measure, and ensure ongoing organizational efficiency, control/metrics costs, and citizen satisfaction. (Feb. 2014)

Initiative 1.2.2 – Align department-specific goals with an adopted County-wide system or standard of measurement and ensure that such goals support County-wide goals. (July 2014)

Initiative 1.2.3 – Communicate results to citizens in public formant.

Goal 1.3 - Ensure effective communication, coordination and cooperation between the members of the BOC and other public officials.

Initiative 1.3.1 – Hold regular meetings between the BOC Chairman and Elected Officials whose offices are supported by the General Fund.

Initiative 1.3.2 – Implement an on-going strategy for communication with other elected and appointed officials such as State legislators, City officials, Boards, and citizen groups. (Feb. 2014)

Initiative 1.3.3 - Establish an informal Advisory Council, comprised of the Chairman (or other member of the BOC appointed by the Chair) and a representative of each elected General Fund official, to provide continued intra-governmental communication, coordination, and cooperation. This Council will seek input as appropriate from the Employee Council referenced in Goal 3.3. (Feb. 2014)

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## Strategic Commitment 2 -- Efficiency of County Services

*Cobb County commits to provide exceptional public services in an efficient manner utilizing available and coordinated resources.*

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Goal 2.1 - Identify and resolve internal and external duplications of services to improve efficiency of service and achieve net cost savings.

Initiative 2.1.1 - Use recommendations made by the 2011-12 Citizens Oversight Committee, as adopted by the BOC, to avoid internal duplicate services. (Completed)

Initiative 2.1.2 – Identify other potential internal duplication within the County’s organizational structure on an on-going basis.

Initiative 2.1.3 - Expand current efforts, which were required by HB 489, to creatively seek partnerships with other jurisdictions to eliminate or reduce external duplication of services.

Goal 2.2 – Under the direction of the County Manager, with review by the BOC, continuously evaluate the current organizational structure and current processes to ensure operations are as efficient and streamlined as possible.

Initiative 2.2.1 – Evaluate services provided at the departmental level to address proper staffing.

Initiative 2.2.2 – Evaluate and make more efficient, where possible, the coordination of interrelated services.

Initiative 2.2.3 – Evaluate current processes and implement changes that improve efficiencies, result in long-term net cost savings, and maximize return on investment.

Initiative 2.2.4 – Utilize the Internal Audit Department resources to assess and make recommendations to promote efficiency and reduce costs.

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### Strategic Commitment 3 -- Human Resources

*Cobb County commits to the fair and equitable recruitment, compensation, benefits, development, retention, and wellness of County employees as its most valuable asset and recognizes that employees are integral to the success of County operation.*

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Goal 3.1 – Ensure that employee benefits and working conditions are such that the County can attract, hire, train, and retrain talented employees.

Initiative 3.1.1 – At the direction of the Board of Commissioners (BOC) and under the guidance of the County Manager, develop and implement a sustainable plan for competitive compensation and benefits. (June 2014)

Goal 3.2 – Encourage workplace opportunity and diversity.

Initiative 3.2.1 - Identify and implement opportunities to diversify the workforce through all levels.

Goal 3.3 - Provide an appropriate mechanism to solicit and consider recommendations and concerns of staff. (Feb. 2014)

Initiative 3.3.1 – Develop an Employee Council representing all Agencies and Departments, with the Human Resources Director serving as technical advisor, to consider matters related to the fair and equitable recruitment, compensation, development, retention, and wellness of County employees. (Feb. 2014)

Goal 3.4 – Establish a succession planning process for key leadership roles in the County organization (County Manager). (Oct. 2014)

Initiative 3.4.1 – Identify key leadership positions where succession planning is appropriate. (Oct. 2014)

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### Strategic Commitment 4 -- Communications

*Cobb County commits to encourage communications that foster collaboration between citizens and employees to leverage County strengths, ensure transparency, and generate trust.*

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Goal 4.1 - Communicate with citizens, businesses, and visitors the availability, value, and necessity of services provided.

Initiative 4.1.1 – Establish and implement effective digital media campaigns. (Feb. 2014)

Initiative 4.1.2 – Utilize public gatherings as opportunities for personal interaction with stakeholders.

Initiative 4.1.3 – Maintain effective relations with the media as an aid to communicating with stakeholders.

Initiative 4.1.4 – Develop a method to identify and communicate the importance and value of County services. (June 2014)

Goal 4.2 - Communicate with internal stakeholders (employees, boards, and elected and appointed officials) the value and necessity of services provided with emphasis on efficiency, creative cooperation, cost-sharing, and enhanced use of technology.

Initiative 4.2.1 – Utilize electronic media as the principal written means of communications with County staff.

Initiative 4.2.2 – Encourage in-person communications as appropriate as a more direct means of conveying information.

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## Strategic Commitment 5 -- County Government Financing

*Cobb County commits to sound fiscal policies as essential to maintaining financial strength and providing essential County services.*

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Goal 5.1 - Operate County government in a fiscally responsible manner that supports the County's triple AAA bond rating.

Initiative 5.1.1 - Consider all recommendations made by the 2011-12 Citizens Oversight Committee that reduce cost of operations without sacrificing service quality. Consider implementing recommendations by Citizens Oversight Committee where feasible. (July 2014)

Initiatives 5.1.2 - Under direction of the County Manager, develop and utilize financial metrics to assist in County governance. (refer to 1.2.3) (July 2014)

Initiative 5.1.3 – In conjunction with the BOC and the County Manager, evaluate current service levels provided by the County and prioritize according to existing or forecasted levels of funding. (July 2014)

Initiative 5.1.4 – Consider integrating sustainable, ongoing sources of funding for capital renewal and replacements as well as for infrastructure maintenance.

Initiative 5.1.5 – Evaluate the financial sustainability of any new programs or capital expenditures undertaken with grant funding.

Initiative 5.1.6 - Seek additional revenue sources for funding of services.

Goal 5.2 - Undertake a review of fee for service structure to offset the cost of services provided and ensure that all current sources of revenue, including fees and property taxes, are properly assessed and collected. (Feb. 2014)

Initiative 5.2.1 – Ensure that total unit costs for services provided are accurately calculated and accounted for.

Initiative 5.2.2 - Develop a target percentage of unit costs recovered via non-statutory user fees for services where appropriate and set incremental goals to achieve target (subject to legal restrictions). (July 2014)

Goal 5.3 - Evaluate various budget development strategies for enhanced financial accountability and effective expenditure of County funds and propose the most attractive for use in the development of the FY 2015-16 budget.

Initiative 5.3.1 Consider priority based budgeting to align County resources with public expectations. (Oct. 2014)

Goal 5.4 – Continue to address risk management in a comprehensive and proactive manner, including insurance considerations, safety of employees, and protection of property.

Initiative 5.4.1- Utilize workers' compensation and claims data to identify opportunities to improve work place safety.

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## Strategic Commitment 6 -- Economic Vitality

*Cobb County commits to encourage a thriving economy as a means to ensure the vitality and stability of our exceptional community.*

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Goal 6.1 - Identify and implement programs and initiatives to enhance economic development.

Initiative 6.1.1 – Support Cobb Competitive EDGE, programs such as Keep it in Cobb, and other initiatives to enhance economic development.

Initiative 6.1.2 – Ensure effective public and private partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, the cities of Cobb, the Board of Education, other County departments and other appropriate groups to assure that all stakeholders are involved in economic development decisions.

Initiative 6.1.3 – Create and promote educational/communication opportunities designed to encourage economic vitality and stability to include encouraging and supporting of existing and new local providers of goods and services.

Initiative 6.1.4 – Identify and nurture funding sources that might assist in addressing County economic strategies.

Initiative 6.1.5 – Utilize technology as a critical tool in identifying and encouraging development opportunities.

Initiative 6.1.6 – Establish policies and utilize land use/zoning to manage development. (July 2014)

Goal 6.2 - Identify and support development in economically-challenged and other targeted communities and commercial areas.

Initiative 6.2.1 – Implement policies to encourage development and make targeted areas more attractive such as enterprise rehab and opportunity zones, livable centers initiatives, and corridor studies and redevelopment sites identified by staff. (July 2014)

Goal 6.3 – Establish Cobb County as a community that embraces diversity through support of areas with an emerging sense of place.

Initiative 6.3.1 – Identify existing areas or communities within Cobb County and ensure that appropriate plans and design guidelines are available to support appropriate development and nurture a sense of place.

Initiative 6.3.2 – Engage the community by creating and implementing Design and Development Guidelines to include a Community Engagement requirement for Zoning applicants in certain identified areas. (July 2014)

Initiative 6.3.3 – Identify nodes that can serve as a central focus for uniquely characterizing a community (branding) and determine how to develop around these nodes. (July 2014)

Initiative 6.3.4 – Utilize historic resources and cultural activities as means to establish area identities as appropriate. (July 2014)

Initiative 6.3.5 – Recognize the importance of our growing senior population and make provision for their ongoing needs and lifestyles.

Goal 6.4 - Encourage and support new and existing local providers of goods and services.

Initiative 6.4.1 – Support, encourage and publicize local vendor participation.

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## Strategic Commitment 7 -- Transportation

*Cobb County commits to provide and maintain a safe, effective network of transportation options to support the access and mobility needs of its citizens.*

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Goal 7.1 – Develop partnerships for effective solutions to transportation needs.

Initiative 7.1.1 – Collaborate with local, regional, state, and federal partners to define future funding strategies including public-private partnerships.

Initiative 7.1.2 – Partner with activity centers to produce roadway standards that address the requirements for all users in the context of the road type and surrounding land uses.

Goal 7.2 – Address future needs through regular updates to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) with multi-modal strategies and projects including leveraging emerging technologies.

Initiative 7.2.1 – Coordinate CTP updates with the County’s Comprehensive and Economic Development Plans.

Initiative 7.2.2 – Define customer service approach and program for transit services.  
(July 2014)

Initiative 7.2.3 – Amend the 2030 Comprehensive Plan when necessary to incorporate findings and recommendations from approved and active Livable Centers Initiative and other similar transportation/land use Master Plans that will improve the county’s multi-modal transportation system.

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## Strategic Commitment 8 -- Public Services

*Cobb County commits to provide a variety of opportunities and services for its residents and businesses consistent with an exceptional quality of life.*

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Goal 8.1 – Provide programs and services through parks, libraries, senior services, and extension service that are available and easily accessible to citizens and visitors.

Initiative 8.1.1 - Develop and implement strategic, facility and open space plans.

Initiative 8.1.2 - Regularly monitor citizen and visitor satisfaction in all areas of public services.

Goal 8.2 – Identify and pursue fundraising, grants and corporate sponsorships for programs and services.

Initiative 8.2.1 - Develop partnerships with community organizations with similar missions and goals to enhance programs and services.

Initiative 8.2.2 - Proactively seek community volunteers and interns to assist with programs and services.

Goal 8.3 – Invest in education through continued support of programs and services that provide opportunities for lifelong learning, workforce readiness, and higher education.

Initiative 8.3.1 – Create and implement educational programs and tools that residents and patrons may utilize to enhance their area of interests, needs, and quality of life.

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## Strategic Commitment 9 -- Natural Resources

*Cobb County recognizes the importance of natural resources and commits to the principle of sustainability as essential to support quality of life and economic vitality for current and future generations.*

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Goal 9.1 – Provide exceptional water, wastewater, and stormwater management services and protect our water resources as a key element of environmental sustainability.

Initiative 9.1.1 – Implement an aggressive water conservation program to ensure that water supplies are utilized efficiently. (Jan. 2015)

Initiative 9.1.2 – Manage collected wastewater to minimize negative impacts on receiving waters.

Initiative 9.1.3 – Support initiatives to address adequate long-term water supplies.

Initiative 9.1.4 – In coordination with regional and state planning agencies, maintain and implement any required plans.

Initiative 9.1.5 – Provide exceptional customer service.

Initiative 9.1.6 – Provide technical support functions as needed to ensure efficient continuing operation.

Initiative 9.1.7 – Investigate methods of financing stormwater management. (Oct. 2014)

Goal 9.2 - Integrate energy conservation and alternative energy development into ongoing planning, construction, and maintenance of County facilities.

Initiative 9.2.1 – Conduct County-wide efficiency/energy audits.

Initiative 9.2.2 – Optimize efficiency of lighting and mechanical equipment.

Initiative 9.2.3 – Investigate alternative energy sources.

Initiative 9.2.4 – Strive to attain the highest feasible standard of environmental stewardship.

Goal 9.3 Explore sustainability opportunities as well as conserve and protect existing public green space and ensure that preserving future green space continues to be a priority.

Initiative 9.3.1– Educate the community on the use and tax benefits of conservation easements to permanently protect sensitive habitat and open space.

Initiative 9.3.2 – Develop natural resource protection policies to meet or exceed the requirements of state and federal mandates.

Initiative 9.3.3 – Continue to acquire wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Initiative 9.3.4 – Identify and pursue funding opportunities to assist in the acquisition of public green space.

Initiative 9.3.5 - Develop and implement natural resources sustainability educational opportunities.

Initiative 9.3.6 – Provide landscape, gardening and preservation education opportunities.

Initiative 9.3.7 – Explore earth science through environmental education.

Initiative 9.3.8 – Explore establishing community gardens.

Initiative 9.3.9 – Provide appropriate educational opportunities related to water conservation and quality protection.

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## Strategic Commitment 10 -- Technology

*Cobb County commits to effective and efficient utilization of information technology as an essential component in the management of County resources.*

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Goal 10.1 - Provide a sound technology infrastructure.

Initiative 10.1.1 – Maintain and implement a Strategic Plan for Technology.  
(Oct. 1, 2014)

Initiative 10.1.2 – Ensure that appropriate disaster recovery procedures and business continuity plans are in place. (Oct. 1, 2014)

Initiative 10.1.3 – Ensure compatibility and compliance of new software/hardware with existing systems.

Goal 10.2 - Identify best information and technology solutions that align to the business and strategic initiatives in the County.

Initiative 10.2.1 – Inject cost-benefit analyses, including consideration of both capital and non-capital costs, into planning for all major technology improvement projects.

Initiative 10.2.2 – Develop prioritization of computer technology investments.

Initiative 10.2.3 – Identify and cultivate public/private partnership opportunities to generate revenue and assist with project funding.

Initiative 10.2.4 – Leverage digital media to ensure that doing business with the County is easy and efficient.

Initiative 10.2.5 – Encourage movement away from multiple small systems toward larger, more efficient platforms. (Oct. 1, 2014)

Goal 10.3 - Maintain access to highly skilled resources.

Initiative 10.3.1 – Acquire, maintain, and provide adequate training for County staff where appropriate to meet requirements.

Initiative 10.3.2 – Identify and arrange access to contract resources where necessary.

Initiative 10.3.3 – Explore the use of hosted services as a cost-effective means of addressing requirements. (July 2014)

Goal 10.4 – Provide effective communication of technology issues and potential opportunities.

Initiative 10.4.1 -Establish governance protocols to ensure that stakeholders are properly involved in technology decisions. (July 2014)

Initiative 10.4.2 – Maintain an online work order system that addresses internal technical issues. (Oct. 2014)

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## Strategic Commitment 11 -- Safety

*Cobb County commits to provide a safe and secure community through state of the art equipment, systems, and highly trained personnel.*

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Goal 11.1 - Maintain and refine operations to reduce crime, reduce preventable injury/death and property loss, provide protection from homeland security threats, effectively manage emergencies and disasters, and engage with other jurisdictions and institutions to ensure protection of residents and visitors.

Initiative 11.1.1 – Develop and maintain a comprehensive Public Safety Strategic Plan that supports the Cobb County Strategic Plan. (July 1, 2014)

Initiative 11.1.2 – Evaluate current organizational structures to align with organizational mission. Identify and develop strategies to address resources, processes, and staffing issues to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services of protecting lives, property, and the environment. (July 2014)

Initiative 11.1.3 – Identify future needs of the County with respect to Safety and utilize available data to determine appropriate deployment of resources and staffing.

Initiative 11.1.4 – Coordinate with appropriate agencies for multi-jurisdictional exercises and drills to maintain standards and continuity of operations.

Initiative 11.1.5 – Provide training for personnel in order to deliver the highest quality services to the community and ensure employee safety.

Goal 11.2 - Provide public safety educational services and programs to the community in order to promote awareness and prevention and help ensure the highest quality of life within Cobb County.

Initiative 11.2.1 – Prepare and educate the community through outreach programs.

Initiative 11.2.2 – Educate citizens with respect to safety awareness and prevention.

Initiative 11.2.3 – Through available conduits, educate the community with respect to events, updates, etc.

Initiative 11.2.4 – Partner with community organizations to enhance safety efforts.

Initiative 11.2.5 – Maintain the community emergency response team programs and offer educational training to citizens.

Goal 11.3 - Maintain a safe, efficient, and effective work environment.

Initiative 11.3.1 – Identify current facility issues and address budget funding sources for future needs.

Initiative 11.3.2 - Identify, evaluate, and provide state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

Initiative 11.3.3 – Maintain vehicle and apparatus replacement schedules.

Initiative 11.3.4 – Provide necessary equipment and training to improve overall employee fitness levels.

Initiative 11.3.5 – Continue the management and ongoing evaluation of the 800MHz communication system to ensure quality regional interoperability for all county/municipality departments.