

COVER PAGE  
Appendix 2 (DRAFT)  
COMMUNITY PROFILE

## APPENDIX 2

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

This report examines existing conditions in Cobb County across a range of topics and measures. Understanding the current state of the people, land and facilities is a critical component to the comprehensive planning process. Data and information presented in this analysis serves as a baseline for future planning and provides the foundation for the vision, goals and policies of the Cobb 2040 plan.

The information contained within is derived from a variety of sources including the following: U.S. Census data, Atlanta Regional Commission and Cobb County Government. Past plans and studies, geographic datasets as well as local knowledge and input were provided during the community engagement process and by County staff.

### COBB SETTING

Cobb County is situated in the upper Piedmont section of northwest Georgia. It encompasses 346 sq. miles and is conveniently located to the



northwest of Atlanta and Fulton County. From the Chattahoochee River, the terrain slopes gradually to the north toward the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and is traversed by numerous creeks and streams. Lake Allatoona and other smaller man-made lakes and ponds, offer recreational opportunities and scenic vistas. The County is marked by gently sloping ridges and valleys, which run northeast to southwest. Abrupt slopes are found along Cobb's small mountains including Pine, Lost, Sweat, Blackjack, Kennesaw and Little Kennesaw, which also provide scenic panoramas and recreational opportunities.

Cobb County's natural beauty, abundant vegetation, proximity to water features, location within the Atlanta metropolitan region and its rich historical and cultural heritage provide assets that make Cobb a desirable place to live and work. The appeal of these attractions has contributed to its rapid growth in the past and will continue to attract people and businesses in the future.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Railroads and early industries helped establish Cobb County and its incorporated cities in the late 1800s and early 1900s. But it wasn't until World War II that Cobb County growth started to pick up. The Marietta Army Airfield was built in 1943, bringing with it the opening of the Bell Aircraft Corporation bomber plant and nearly 30,000 jobs. While Bell closed the plant at the end of the war, the subsequent Korean War led Lockheed, an aircraft manufacturing company, to reopen the plant in 1951. At the same time, the Marietta Army Airfield became Dobbins Air Reserve Base and the Naval Air Station Atlanta was added to the campus. The combination of these events, in conjunction with growth from the city of Atlanta, helped drive the economic engine of the County and set the stage for the rapid growth that was to come.

Because of the jobs that were now available in the 1950s and 60s and the lack of a robust transportation network, there was a need for housing to be located near employment. The south and central area of Cobb, which was also the commercial/industrial core of the County, began to experience

rapid residential growth. At that time, there was still considerable separation between Cobb County and the City of Atlanta.

The completion of Interstate 75 in the 1970s suddenly decreased travel times, significantly altering growth and development patterns. Cobb became more integrated into the Atlanta metropolitan area, and a second phase of intense growth began. During this time in the 70s, 80s and 90s, east Cobb and later north Cobb saw the character of the area change with cul-de-sac subdivisions and strip commercial developments along transecting arterial roadways.

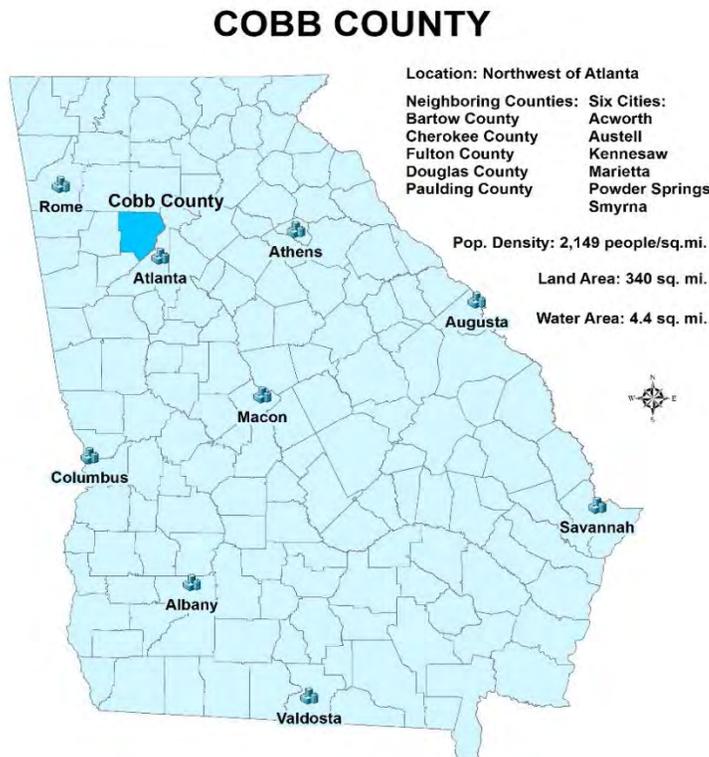


Figure 1

As land availability in east and north Cobb became scarce, the County's residential growth continued to progress in a seemingly counterclockwise fashion toward west Cobb in the 1990s and 2000s. During this time, large-lot residential subdivisions were built in relatively rural and agricultural areas. Learning from the inadequacies of the strip commercial corridors, commercial centers were characterized by well-defined, compact commercial nodes at strategic intersections of arterial roadways.

Development pressures in west Cobb continue to put a strain on services and infrastructure in that area. Much of the recent growth is due to the lack of available land in other parts of the County.

As the "back in time" growth progression of Cobb County has come full circle, redevelopment initiatives have started to renew the south Cobb area of the County. As these locations were the first to experience the rapid growth, they are now the first to experience the revitalization of underperforming commercial centers and neighborhoods.

#### DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

In the past 25 years, Cobb's development has reflected its increasing integration into the Atlanta metropolitan area. Links with Atlanta and with co-developing suburbs to the east in Fulton County have become stronger as access to I-75, I-285, and I-20 have increased in importance.

Cobb's "platinum triangle" area of I-285 and I-75 contains one of the largest concentrations of Class A office space in the area. It is also home to corporate headquarters for some of the region's largest employers.

Much of the land use along Highway 41 and Interstate 75 continues to be influenced by the cities of Acworth, Kennesaw, Marietta and Smyrna. Additionally, Dobbins Air Reserve Base and the Lockheed Martin Manufacturing plant are instrumental in anchoring industrial uses within the center of the County. The Town Center Community Improvement District (TCCID) and the Cumberland Community Improvement District (CCID) have encouraged land use patterns that promote a mixture of uses. The Town Center area continues to evolve into a residential and commercial service

area due to its location between I-75 and I-575, Cobb County International Airport and its proximity to Kennesaw State University. In the Cumberland area, office development has always been the primary use, but in recent years, the Cumberland CID has attracted more residential development to the area to promote a better jobs-housing balance. Since the Atlanta Braves baseball franchise has moved to Cobb County, the Cumberland area has continued to reap the benefits of more office, commercial and residential investments. As of 2021, the Cumberland CID had a \$23.6 billion annual economic impact on Georgia's economy and \$18 billion annual economic impact on Cobb County's economy. Growth in the Town Center and Cumberland area will continue to lead the County as more housing options become available, as well as more jobs.

Cobb County is dominated by established residential areas in east, west and south Cobb. Most residential areas are considered low dense neighborhoods serviced by nodal commercial centers at key intersections. Surrounding some of the commercial activity nodes are slightly denser detached and attached housing. The highest density residential developments continue to be developed within the higher intense commercial and job centers along the I-75 and Highway 41 corridor.

Commercial activity in the County is predominantly around three distinct development patterns. The first development patterns were established along the first arterial roadways in the County: Canton Road, Austell Road, Veterans Memorial Highway, Cobb Parkway, Atlanta Road and South Cobb Drive. Larger, more intense commercial development was established around freeway interchanges, such as the I-75 and I-575 intersection and the I-75 and I-285 intersection. The third pattern, and the least intensive, are the nodal activity centers. The activity centers are known as commercial "nodes" and are located at key intersections throughout the County. They provide easy access to commercial services for nearby neighborhoods and communities.

Industrial activity is critical to the economy in Cobb County. Most of the industrial development is focused near the interstates, airports, and railroads providing quick access to the transportation network. The largest industrial

area is located south of I-20. Other industrial districts are located around I-285 between South Cobb Drive and Atlanta Road and near the Cobb County International Airport and I-75. There is also an industrial area near the intersection of East-West Connector and Powder Springs Road that is anchored by Atlanta Junction, a large industrial "tank farm" operated by Colonial Pipeline Company.

Preferences continue to command detached, owner-occupied, single-family residential homes as the primary housing choice in the County. However, there will likely be a higher demand for attached residential units, both renter and owner-occupied housing in and around the I-75 and Highway 41 corridors and near job centers. With the expected increase in the older population, it is anticipated that there will also continue to be a need to provide supported and non-supported senior living communities. However, there should be checks and balances to ensure that the County does not over develop in one type of housing option. South Cobb has begun and will continue to see more redevelopment opportunities as planning efforts to rejuvenate older commercial corridors along Austell Road, Veterans Memorial and Mableton Parkway are implemented. Redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties should continue to be encouraged over the next twenty-five years. This promotes conservation of land resources and helps preserve stable suburban neighborhoods throughout the entire County. The revitalization and redevelopment of some residential areas will result in new investments along some of the County's older commercial corridors. These types of investments are greatly determined by factors such as macroeconomics, the cost and availability of land, and the business climate of the area. Thus, residential redevelopment greatly enhances the opportunity for private sector non-residential development along some of the underperforming corridors.

Cobb County's rapid growth transformed it from a small rural community to an integral part of one of the fastest growing metropolitan regions in the United States. As Cobb matures into a more suburban and urbanized center, more emphasis will need to be placed on redevelopment and neighborhood revitalization due to constraints on land availability. In order for the community to continue to expand its tax base and provide a high level of

service to the residents, property owners and businesses, Cobb County needs to find a balance of growth between quality redevelopment, new greenfield development and the preservation of stable suburban and rural neighborhoods. This should all be done while mitigating the unsavory aspects of growth.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

**Population**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of Cobb County has increased from 447,745 in 1990 to 766,149 in 2020 (Figure 2), making it the third most populous county in the metro Atlanta area.

**Total Population 1985-2020**

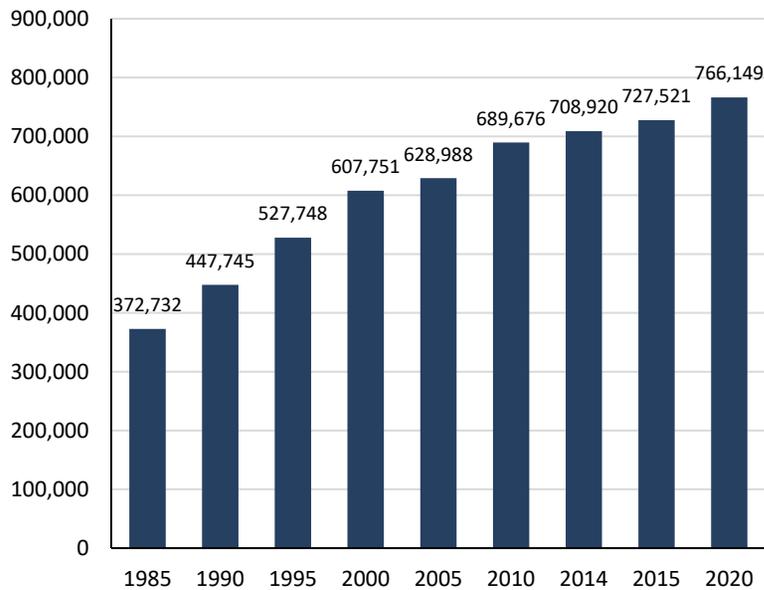


Figure 2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey – Decennial Census

It is anticipated that the County will continue to grow. However, population growth is expected at a steadier rate. As more and more people find Cobb

as a desirable place to live, there will continue to be a need for jobs, housing, recreation, and services to meet the demand of that growing population.

By 2050, Cobb County is expected to be home to over a million people resulting in a 35% increase in population over the next 30 years (Figure 3).

**Population Projection 2020 - 2050**

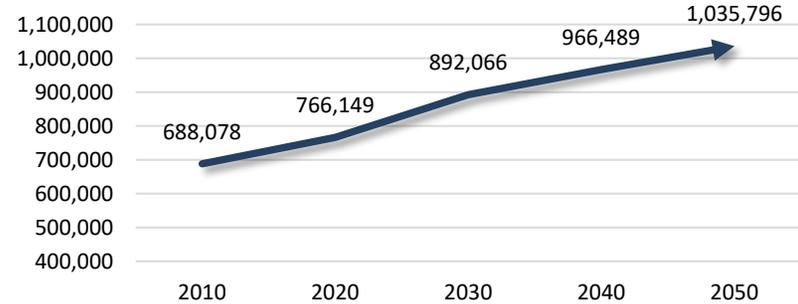


Figure 3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau-Decennial Census – Atlanta Regional Commission

**Age**

Cobb County’s median age has increased from 35.4 years of age in 2010 to 37.3 years of age in 2020. Just over 55% of the residents are of typical working age, ranging from 25-64 years old. The largest single population age group in 2019 was the 35-44 age group, which accounted for 13% of the population. The senior population, which for planning purposes, is considered 65 and older, saw an increase of 28,048 people between 2010 and 2019, resulting in a 46.8% increase over the nine-year period. Overall, most age groups saw a slight increase in population between 2010 and 2019. However, the percentage of the population that makes up the working age group has decreased, while the percentage of the population that makes up the senior age group has increased. This has resulted in an overall increase in the median age for the County.

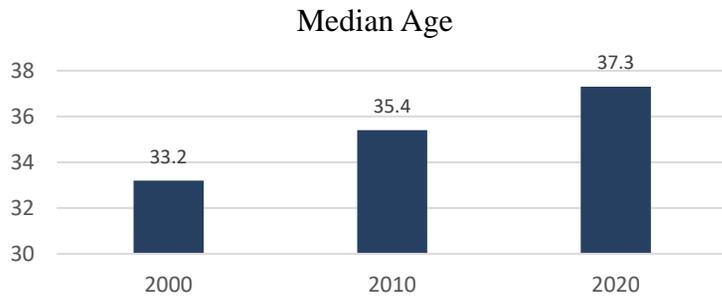


Figure 4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey – Decennial Census

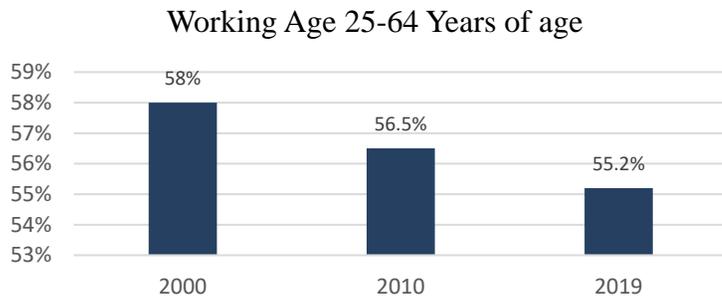


Figure 5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey – Decennial Census

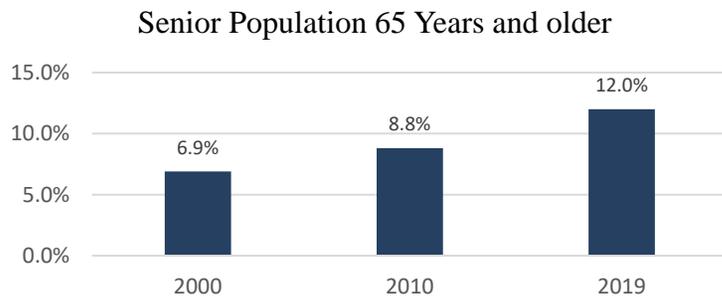


Figure 6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey – Decennial Census

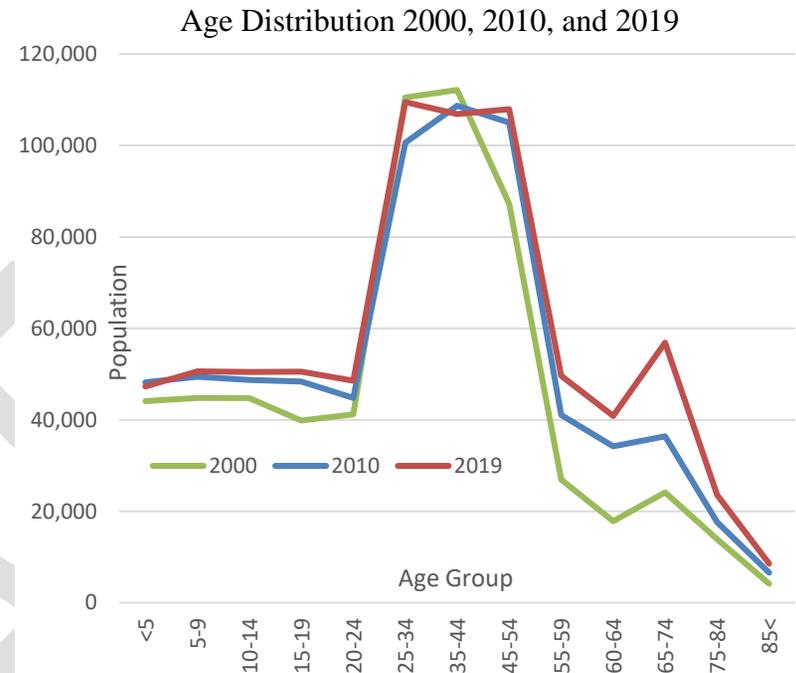


Figure 7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey – Decennial Census

According to population projections, the largest population cohort in 2050 will be 35-44 years old. However, the greatest demographic challenge for Cobb County in the next 25 years will continue to be the increase in residents over the age of 65, which is projected to grow from an estimated 89,040 in 2019 to 234,922 in 2050.

Projected Age Distribution - 2050

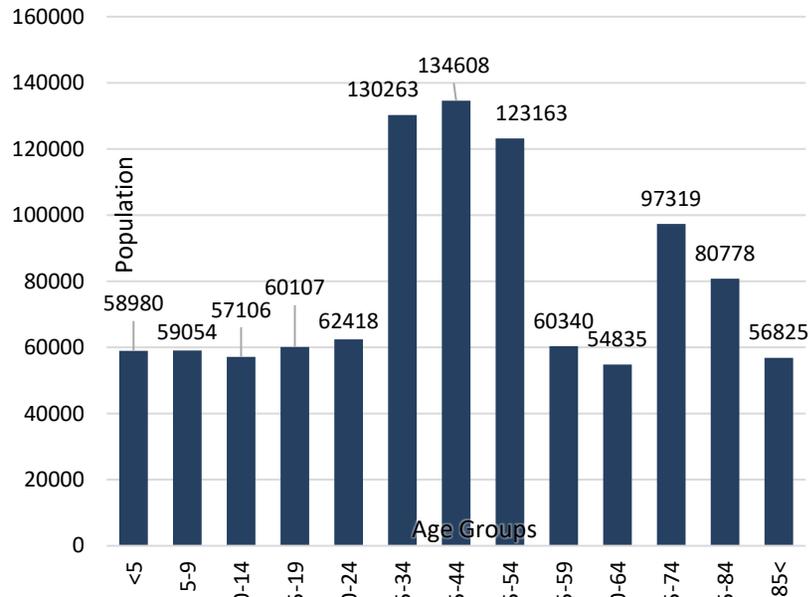


Figure 8

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

**Race & Ethnicity**

Trends from the past 30 years show that Cobb County continues to grow more diverse (Figure 9). The County’s increase in minority population mirrors the overall trends seen in Georgia and the Atlanta region. In 2020 the African American, Hispanic and Other populations collectively made up only 51.8% of the County’s population (Figure 10).

According to projected population growth by race and ethnicity, Cobb will continue to become more diverse. All race and ethnicity groups are projected to increase in overall population numbers over the next 30 years. However, the white population will make up a lower percentage of that overall growth.

Diversity Trend (1990-2020)

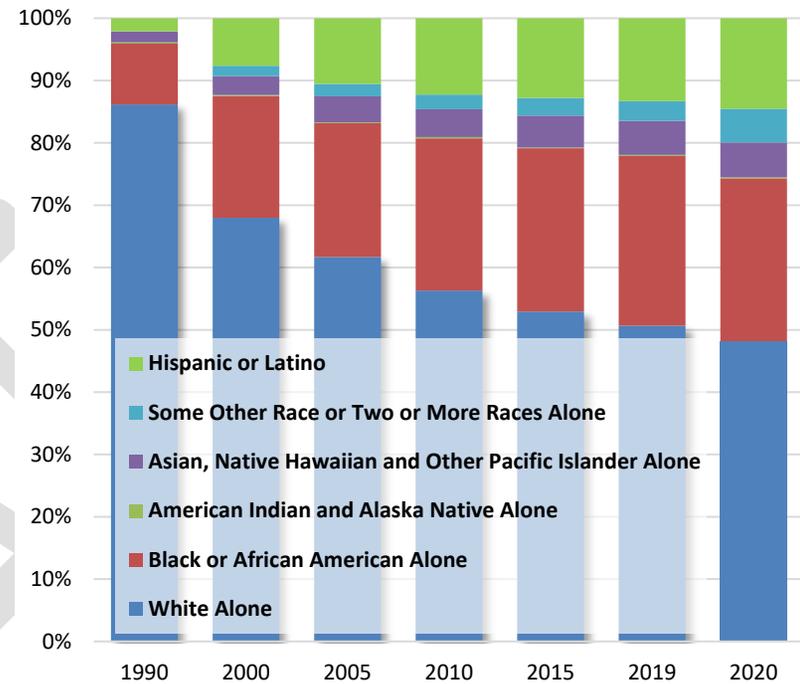


Figure 9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey – Decennial Census

**Race & Ethnicity 2020**

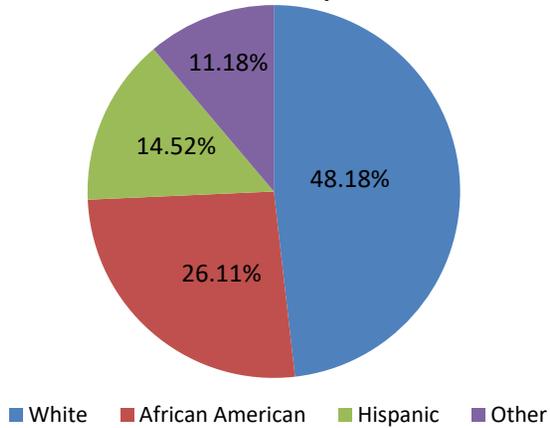


Figure 10

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census

**Race & Ethnicity 2050**

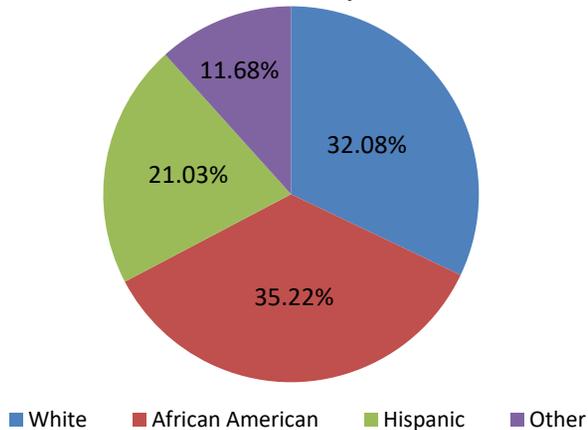


Figure 11

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census

**Educational Attainment**

Cobb County maintains a competitive edge in educational attainment among its workforce population. As of 2019, most County residents over the age of 25 (55%) had at least a college degree compared to 52% in 2010.

**Educational Attainment 2019**

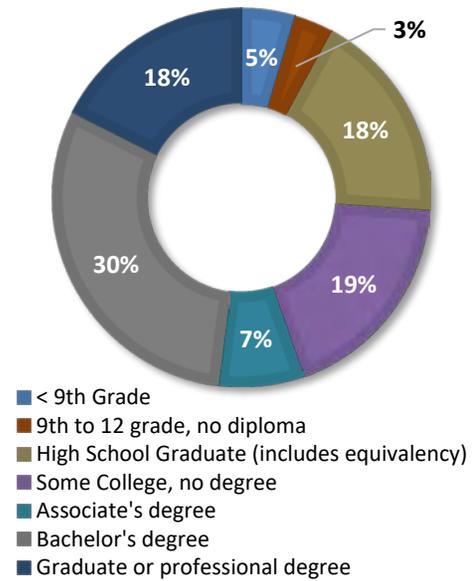


Figure 12

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

**Income**

Overall, Cobb has seen its median household income and per capita income increase over the last decade. The median household income in Cobb for 2019 was \$79,601. That was an increase of \$21,695 since 2011, which was the lowest median household income in the last 10 years. The per capita income in 2019 was \$42,005. That was an increase of \$14,142 over the last 10 years.

### Median Household Income 2000-2019

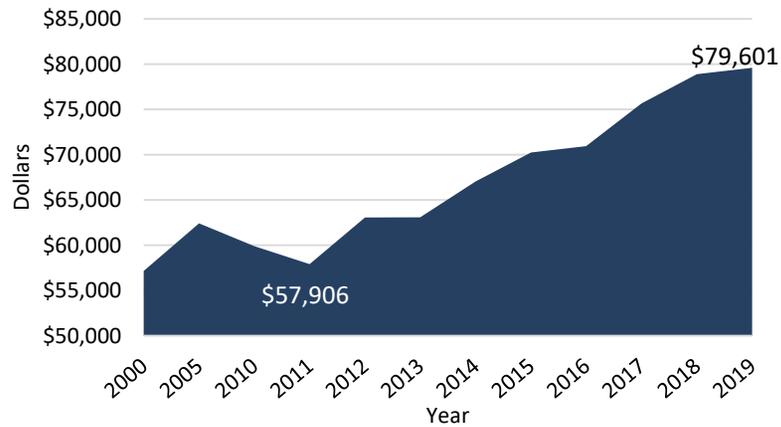


Figure 13

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

### Per Capita Income 2000-2019

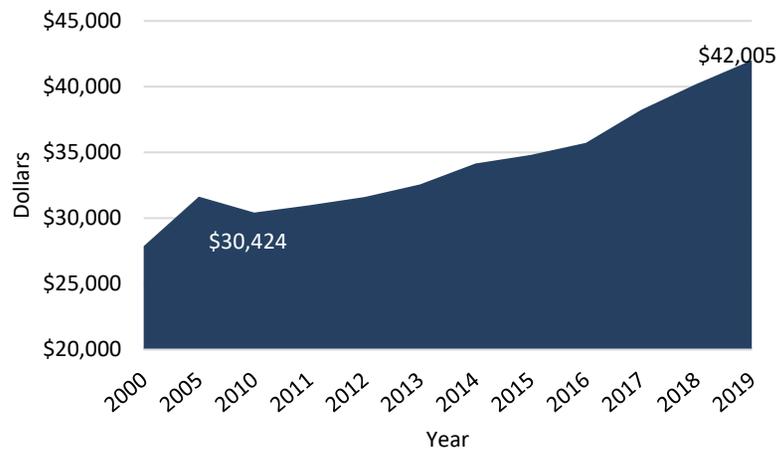


Figure 14

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

The income growth rate remains healthy with Cobb ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the highest median household and per capita income level in metro Atlanta. However, there remains areas in the county where income is below state and national levels.

### Median Household Income - Metro Atlanta

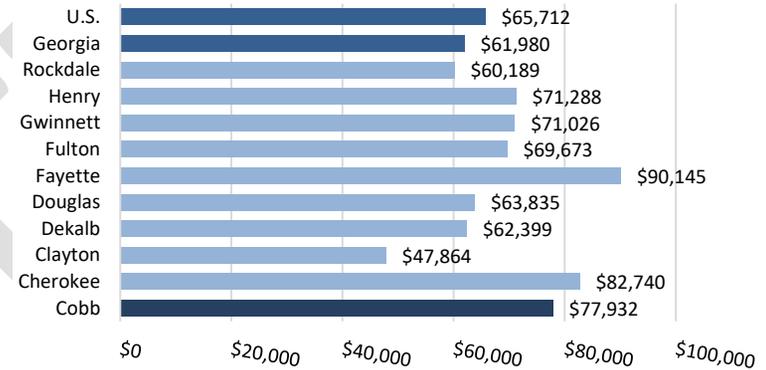


Figure 15

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

### Per Capita Income - Metro Atlanta

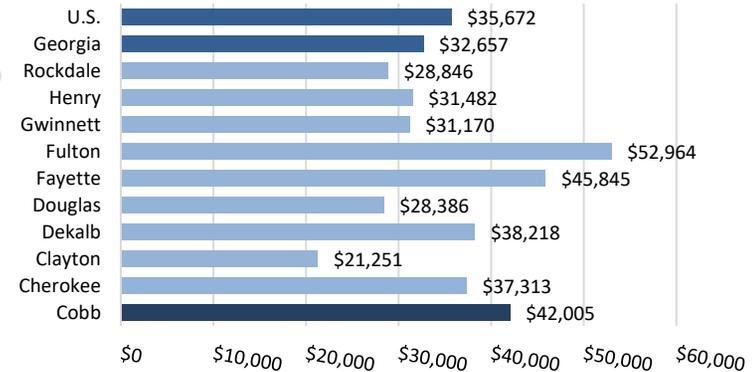


Figure 16

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

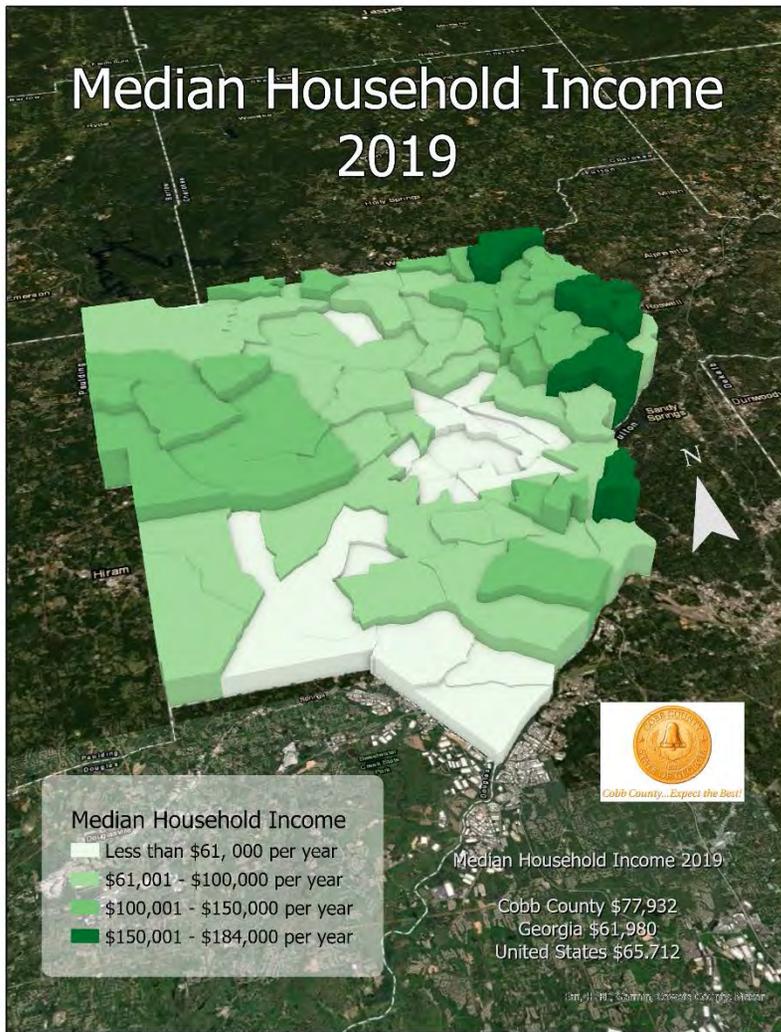


Figure 17

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

### Households

The United States Census Bureau defines a household to “include all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence”. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

The number of households in the County has steadily increased over the last 10 years. Between 2010 and 2019 the number of Households has increased by 30,777 or 12%.

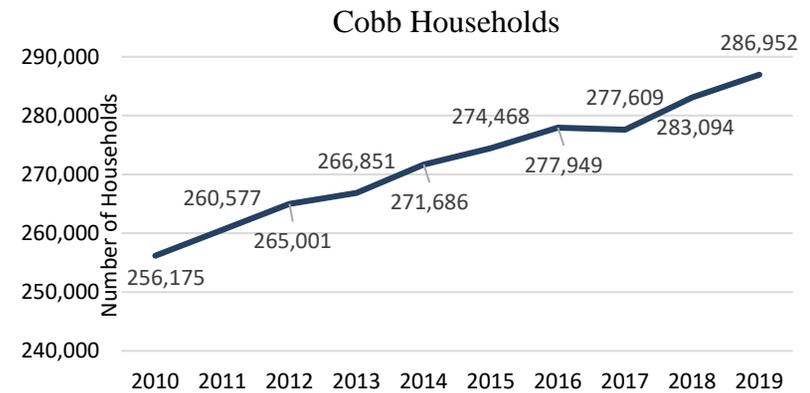


Figure 18

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey-Decennial Census

Non-family households have remained steady over the last 10 years. Between 2010 and 2019 the Non-Family Households have made up between 30.7% and 33.5% of the overall households in Cobb County (Figure 19).

The percentage of Households with children under the age 18 is decreasing, while the number of Households with at least one adult 65 and over is increasing (Figure 20 & 21).

Householders living alone are also increasing while single householders with children are trending lower (Figure 22).

### Non-Family Households

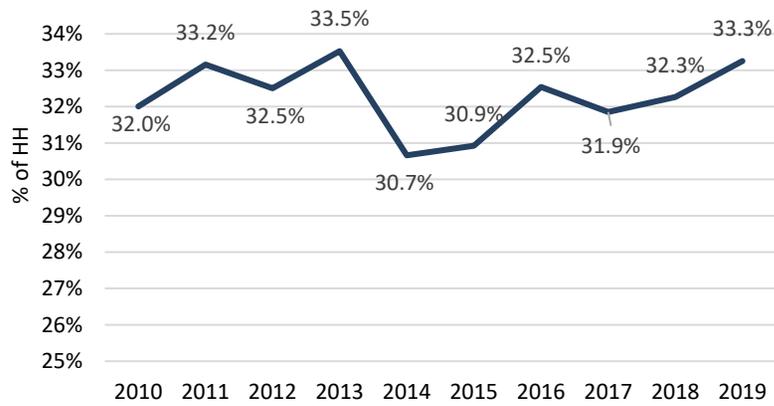


Figure 19

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey-Decennial Census

### % Households with at least one adult 65 years or older

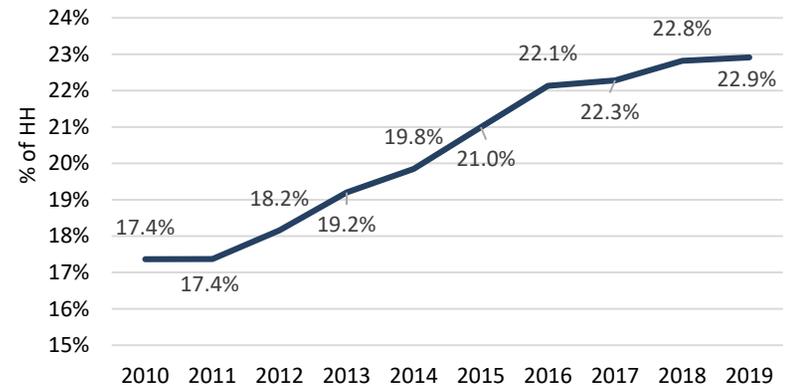


Figure 21

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey - Decennial Census

### % Households with at least one child under 18

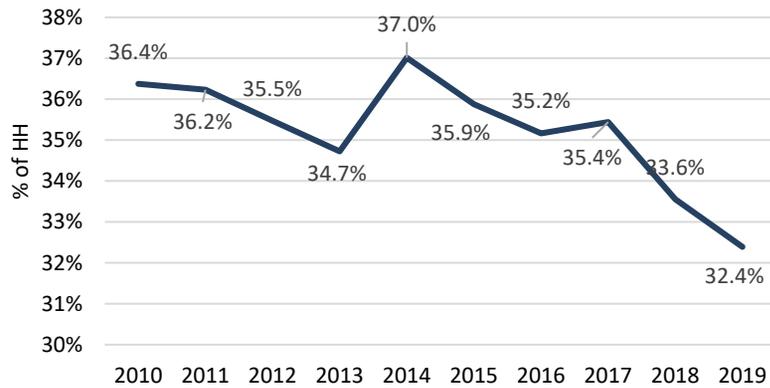


Figure 20

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey-Decennial Census

### Householders Living Alone with at least One Child Under 18

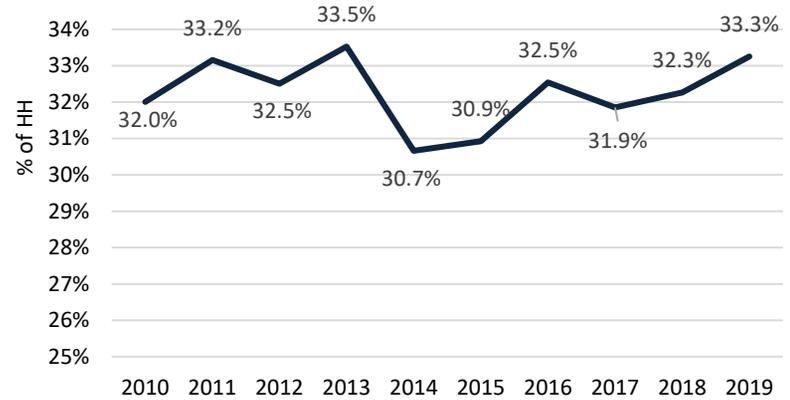


Figure 22

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey - Decennial Census

### Householders Living Alone 65 Years or Older

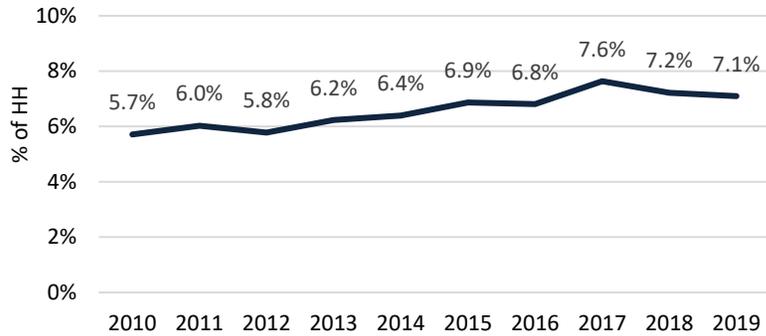


Figure 23

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey - Decennial Census

Consistent with the projected growth in population, the number of households in Cobb County is also forecasted to grow. By 2050, it is anticipated that the number of households in Cobb will rise to 408,242. That is a 42% increase from the number of households that were estimated in 2019.

### Projected Households

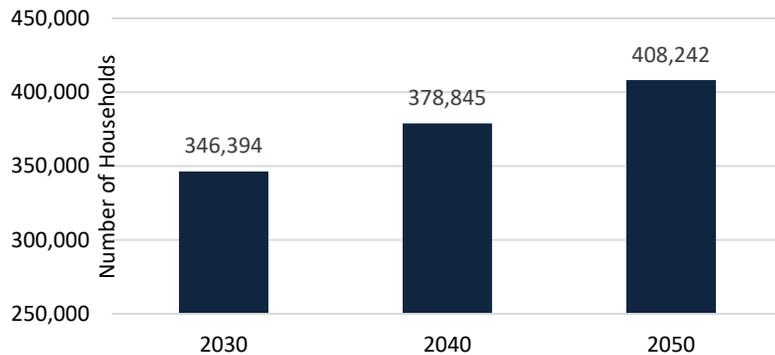


Figure 24

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

### Poverty

The overall poverty rate in Cobb County increased from 8.4% in 2005 to a peak of 13.9% in 2010. Since then the poverty rate has slowly diminished to 8.1% as of 2019.

### Living below Poverty Cobb County

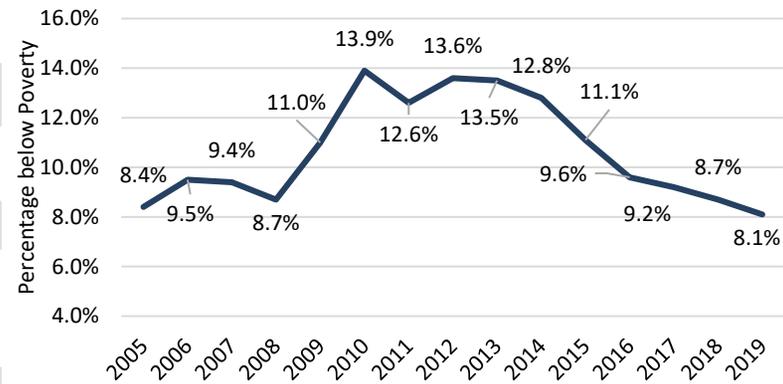


Figure 4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

Poverty rates in Cobb remain well below the State and National levels. However, there are pockets of poverty-stricken communities in central and south Cobb. Some of these areas have 28% to 34% of the population living below the poverty level.

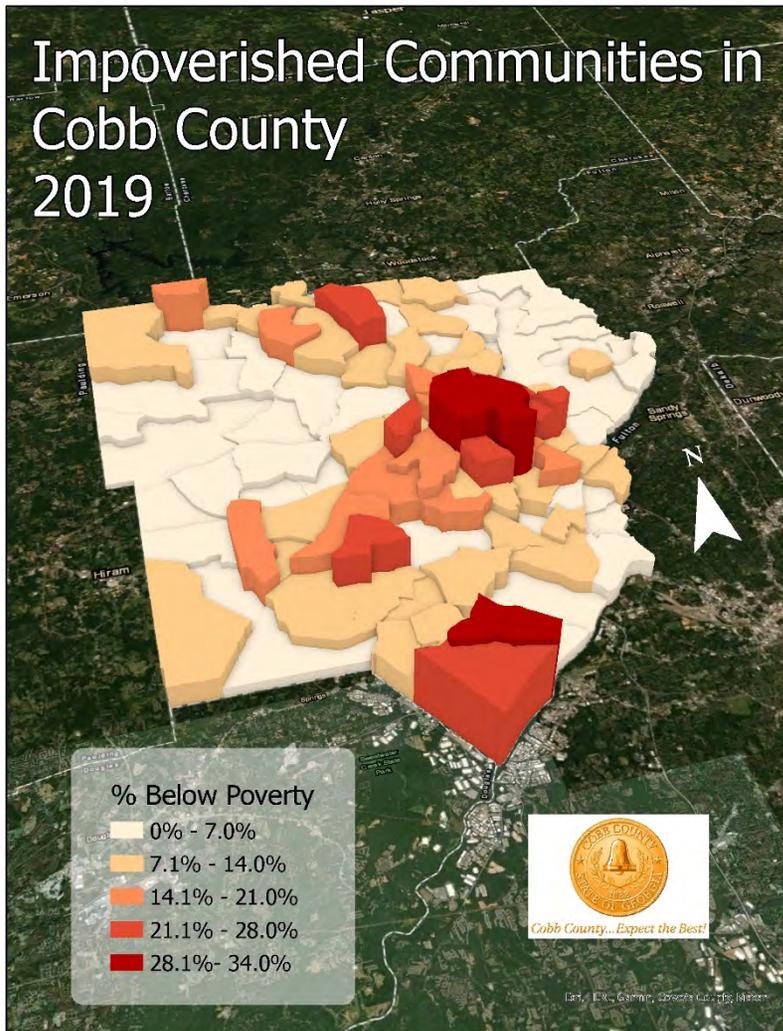


Figure 26

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

HOUSING

Housing Types

Most of housing units in 2019 were single-family detached units at 66.40%. Housing with 10 units or more made up 16.9% of the housing in the County and single-family attached units covered 8.5% of the housing type.

Since 2010, the largest increase in housing type was single-family attached housing, which grew 1.5%. Housing with 10 or more units grew one half of a percent and single-family detached housing increased by one tenth of a percent since 2010.

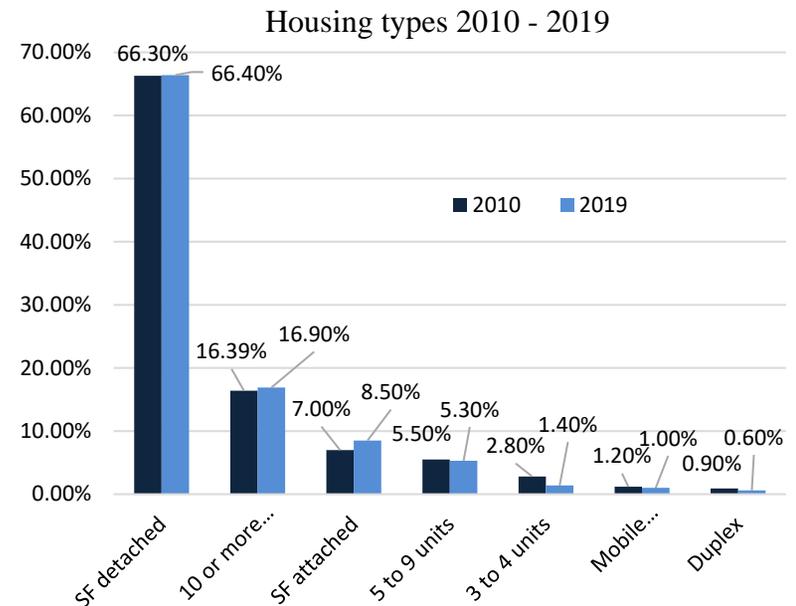


Figure 27

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

### Housing Units and Tenure

According to the American Community Survey 2020 5-year estimates, Cobb has 302,537 housing units. That is almost 16,000 more units than 2010 or 5.6%. For comparison, between 2000 and 2010, the County saw a 20.6% increase in housing units. The lower production of housing units is consistent with state and national trends.

Cobb County Housing Units		
Total # of Housing Units (2020 5-Year Est.)	302,537	
	<b>2000-2010</b>	<b>2010-2020</b>
Housing Units Change	49,039	15,976
% Change	20.6%	5.6%

Figure 28

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

Since 2015 owner occupied housing has slowly been trending up, while renter occupied housing has been slowly declining. As of 2019, almost two-thirds of housing is owner occupied, while one-third is renter occupied.

### Housing Tenure

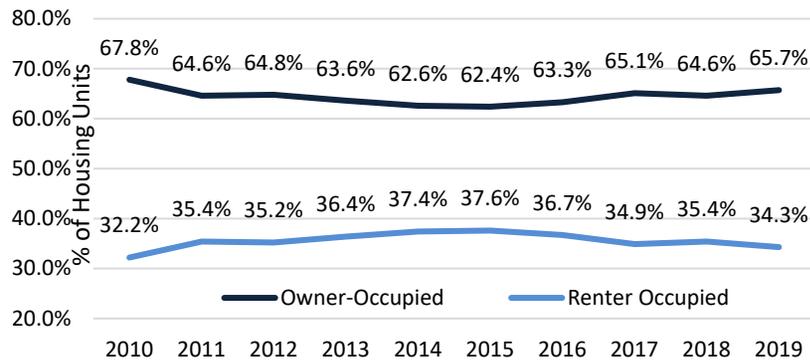


Figure 29

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

### Cost of Housing

While the cost of housing from the American Community Survey show lower home values than current market rates, due to market forces and rapid fluctuations in the real estate market, the numbers do show an increase in home values since 2013 consistent with state and national trends. Since 2013, the median home value has increased from \$182,700 to \$283,300 in 2019. That is a 55% increase in 6 years.

### Median Home Value (Owner-Occupied)



Figure 30

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

The median gross rent has also increased to over \$1,255 per month. The climb began in 2011 and has increased by 40%. This increase is fueled by demand as more and more people wanting their own space.

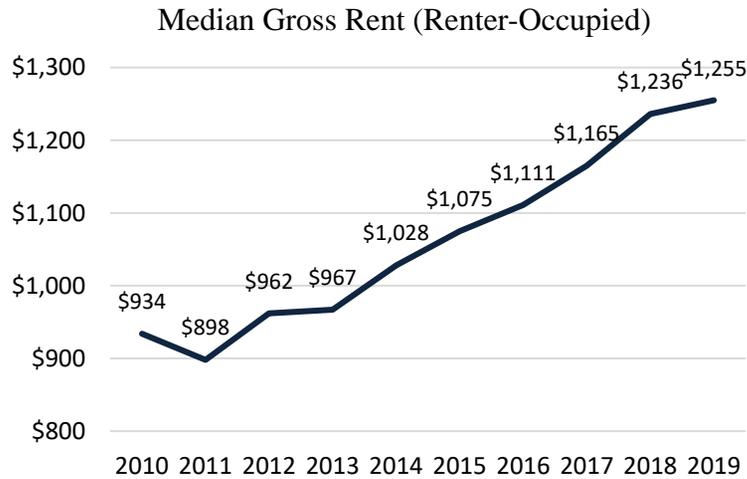


Figure 31

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

**Cost Burden**

County residents who pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs are considered cost burdened. The county-wide percentage of all homeowners who are cost burdened is around 22.5% as of 2019. However, almost half of renters are cost burdened. Both owner occupied and renter occupied cost burdened households are trending upward.

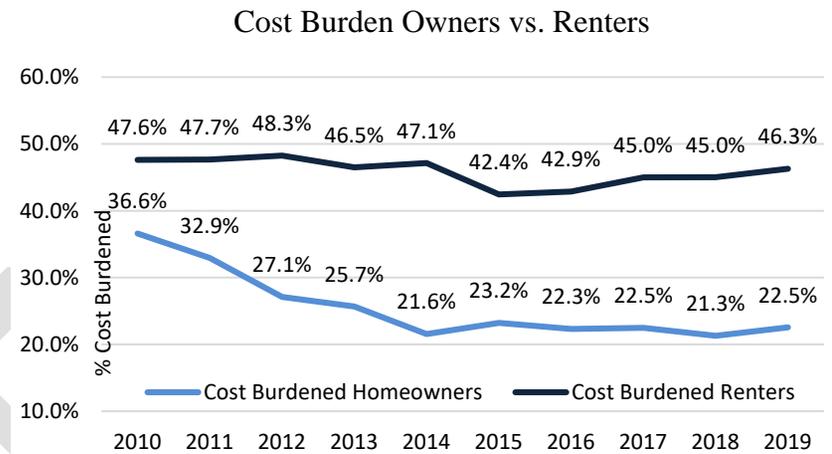


Figure 32

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

**Affordability**

A home value to income ratio can provide a sense of affordability of owning a home apart from mortgage costs by comparing the median home value of owner-occupied units to the median income for an area. A ratio of 2.6 is roughly the ideal affordability measure used by real estate agents and homebuyers. According to Figure 33, the ratio has been going up since 2013. As of 2019, the median home value was 3.56 times the median income.

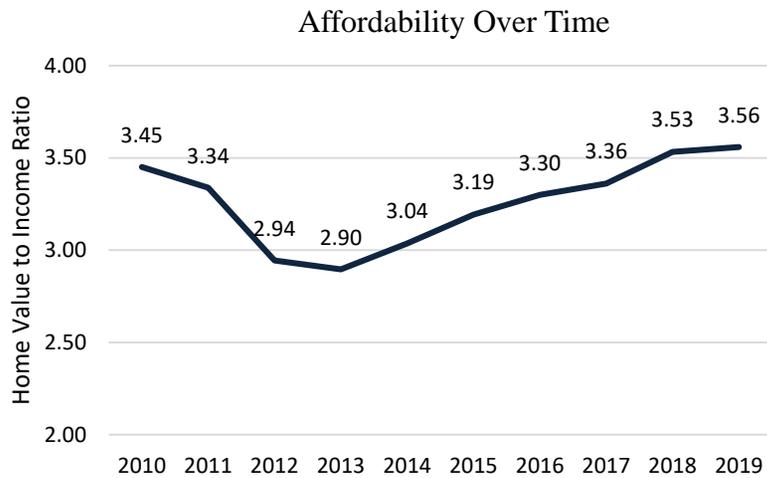


Figure 33  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

Compared to metro Atlanta, Cobb County has one of the highest home value-to-income ratios at 3.56. Only Fulton and DeKalb County have higher ratios in 2019.

As the home value-to-income ratio continues to trend up, coupled with increasing property values, home affordability will become even more of a concern for the local workforce and different segments of the population. Innovation and cooperation between multiple federal, state, and regional agencies, organizations and stakeholders will be key in meeting the affordability demand.

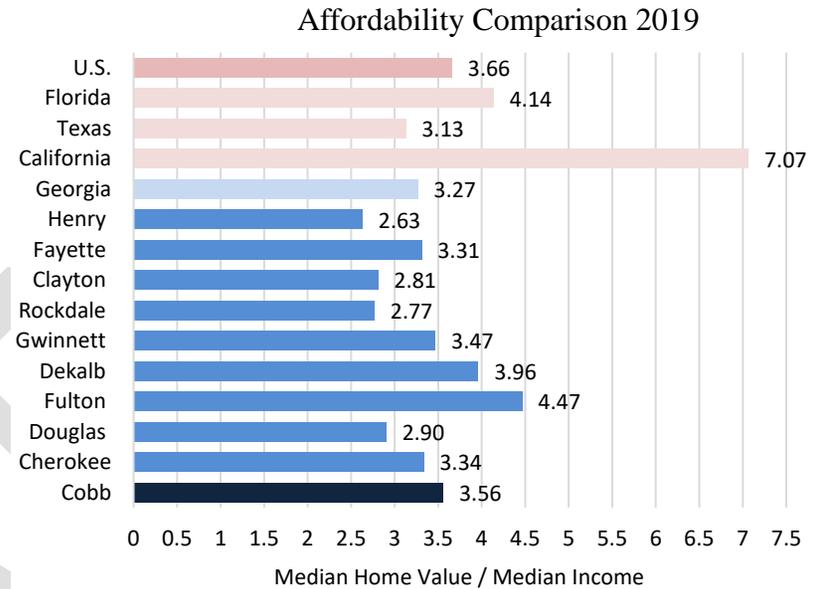


Figure 34  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

### Special Housing Needs

Cobb County is home to individuals of a variety of racial, ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds. In all communities throughout Cobb, there are individuals with various physical and/or mental disabilities, and other sociological hindrances, such as substance abuse. Individuals fitting this description may require special housing needs specific to the nature of one’s unique situation.

In Cobb County, there are several non-profit organizations that volunteer their efforts to assist those with special housing needs. The County has an office that is dedicated to administering programs made available through the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Additionally, the Cobb County CDBG Office administers funding from federally sponsored programs aimed at making affordable and adequate housing attainable for all.

The table below shows the estimated homeless population in Cobb County as of 2015.

Cobb County Homeless				
Year	Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency and Transitional Housing)	Unsheltered Homeless (Counts and predictive model)	Total Homeless	Total Emergency and Transitional Beds
2009	368	126	494	445
2011	361	49	410	410
2013	351	144	495	415
2015	324	91	415	348

Figure 35

Source: 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015 Report on Homelessness – Georgia Department of Community Affairs

There are several non-profit and faith-based organizations in Cobb whose mission in the County is to address special needs and homeless population. Many of these organizations utilize funds from programs administered by the CDBG Program Office, as well as private and corporate donations, and other government funding sources. These organizations are an important asset to Cobb County and are vital to ensuring that all County citizens have their needs and issues addressed.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Employment

According to the Georgia Department of Labor, as of March 2022 there were 436,817 civilians in the Cobb labor force, of which 424,688 were employed resulting in an unemployment rate of 2.8%.

Labor Force - March 2022			
	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Unemployment Rate
<b>Cobb County</b>	436,817	424,688	2.80%

Figure 36

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Unemployment rates are lower across the state and nation over the last 14 months with Cobb's rate performing better than Georgia and the United States.

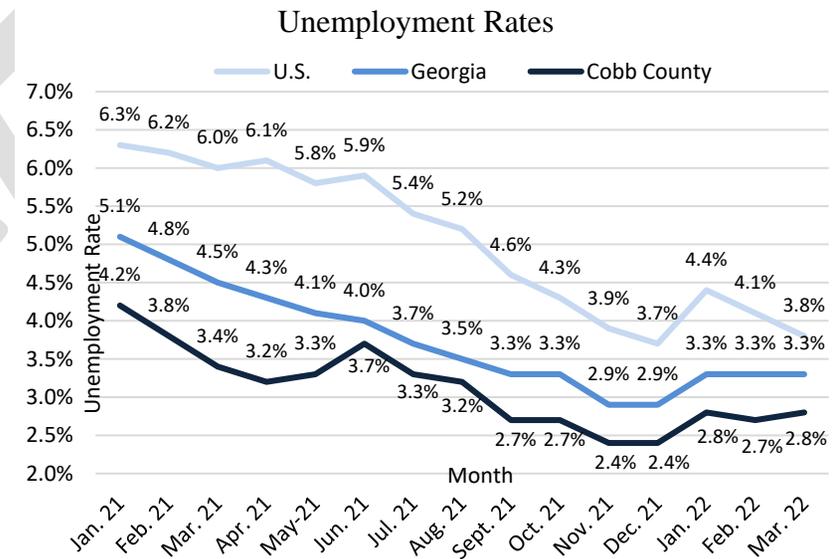


Figure 37

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

In 2020 the top five (5) occupations in Cobb included; Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Administration, Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services, Professional Scientific & Technical Services, and Accommodation and Food Services.

Employment by Job Sector – Cobb County	
Industry	2020
Health Care and Social Assistance	38,828
Retail Trade	38,085
Admin., Support, Waste Management, Remediation	33,907
Professional Scientific & Technical Svc	33,488
Accommodation and Food Services	29,245
Construction	28,087
Wholesale Trade	21,755
Manufacturing	18,054
Finance and Insurance	15,749
Management of Companies and Enterprises	14,371
Transportation and Warehousing	14,143
Information	9,653
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	8,033
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6,574
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4,184
Education Services	3,888
Utilities	1,009
Unclassified	882
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	77
Mining	62

Figure 38  
Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Employment will continue to increase out to 2050. Cobb County is forecasted to add approximately 24% more jobs by 2050.

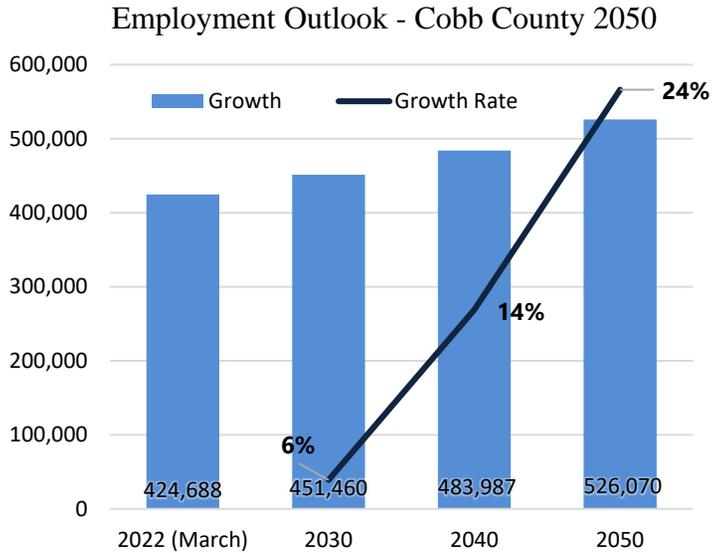


Figure 39  
Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

In the short-term, out to 2028, most of the jobs will be in the healthcare and personal care services followed by Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media and Education, Training and Library. In the long term, out to 2050, the forecasted increase in jobs will be in Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, Construction, Healthcare and Social Assistance followed by Retail Trade. Utilities, Agriculture, Mining, Manufacturing and Transportation and Warehousing jobs is expected to drop by 2050. Overall, Cobb is looking at a projected increase of 101,382 jobs between 2020 and 2050. Most of the jobs will continue to be in and around existing employment centers that stretch along I-20, I-285 and I-75.

Occupational Outlook - % Change 2018 - 2028	
Occupation	% Change
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	24.12%
Healthcare Support	22.15%
Personal Care and Service	21.15%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	19.44%
Education, Training, and Library	16.68%
Business and Financial Operations	16.15%
Architecture and Engineering	16.10%
Computer and Mathematical	15.76%
Food Preparation and Serving Related	14.19%
Legal	13.76%
Management	13.62%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	11.21%
Protective Service	11.07%
Transportation and Material Moving	10.15%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	10.01%
Community and Social Services	8.20%
Construction and Extraction	7.98%
Sales and Related	7.81%
Office and Administrative Support	5.45%
Production	1.64%

Figure 40  
Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Employment Outlook - % Change 2020 - 2050	
Job Sector	% Change
Finance and Insurance	68.8%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	43.2%
Construction	39.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	38.9%
Retail Trade	33.7%
Information	32.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	21.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	16.2%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	13.6%
Public Administration	6.5%
Educational Services	6.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6.1%
Wholesale Trade	5.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	5.4%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	0.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	-4.1%
Manufacturing	-11.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	-18.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-26.2%
Utilities	-57.8%

Figure 41  
Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

### Economic Development Resources

Cobb County has numerous resources that help keep it a competitive area for business, industry and tourism. These resources include low taxes, economic incentives, technical colleges, university, and a team of Economic Development professional and partners.

The following are economic development incentive programs that businesses and industries may take advantage of if certain criteria are met:

- Federal Opportunity Zone
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation Grant Program
- Business Retention
- Targeted Industry
- Special Economic Impact
- Façade Improvement Program
- Enterprise Zones
- Military Zones
- Commercial and Industrial Property Rehabilitation Program

The following maps depict where some of the above incentives could potentially be utilized.

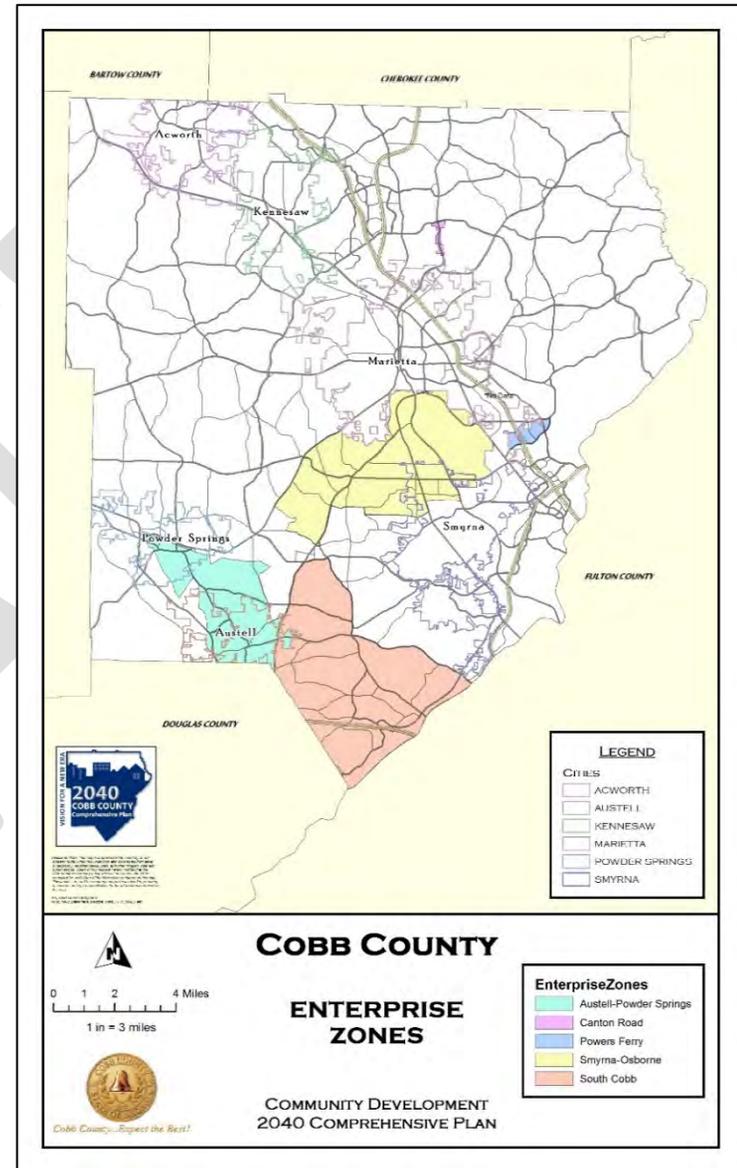


Figure 42

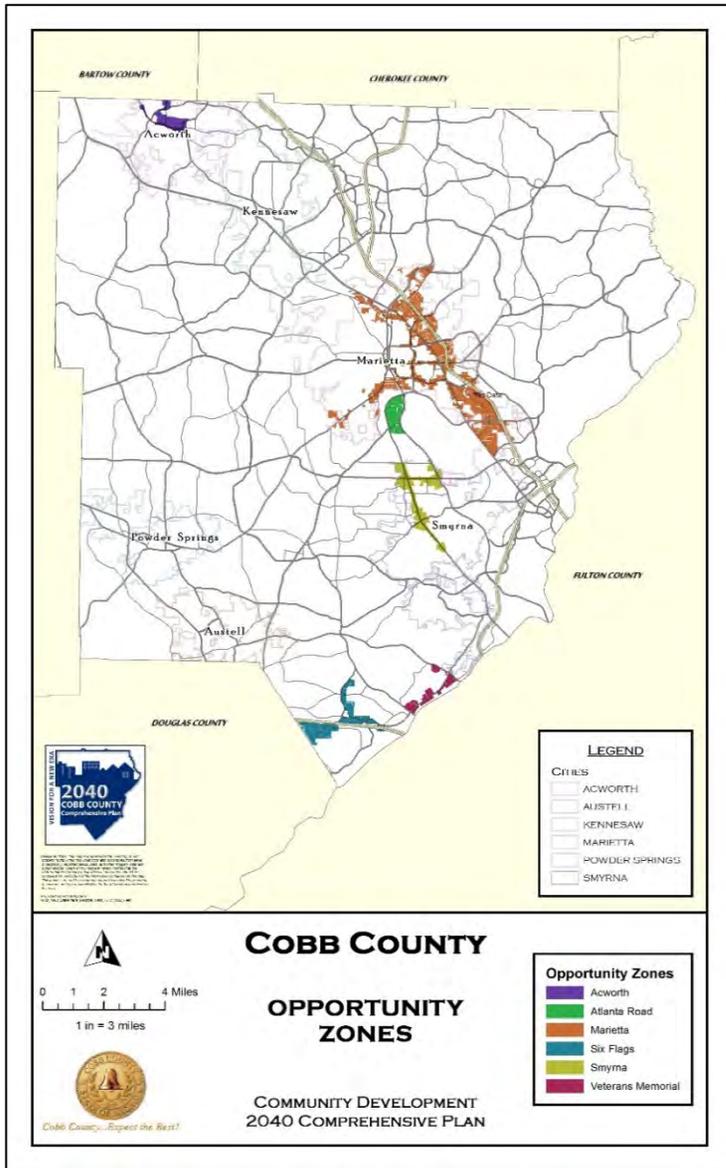


Figure 43

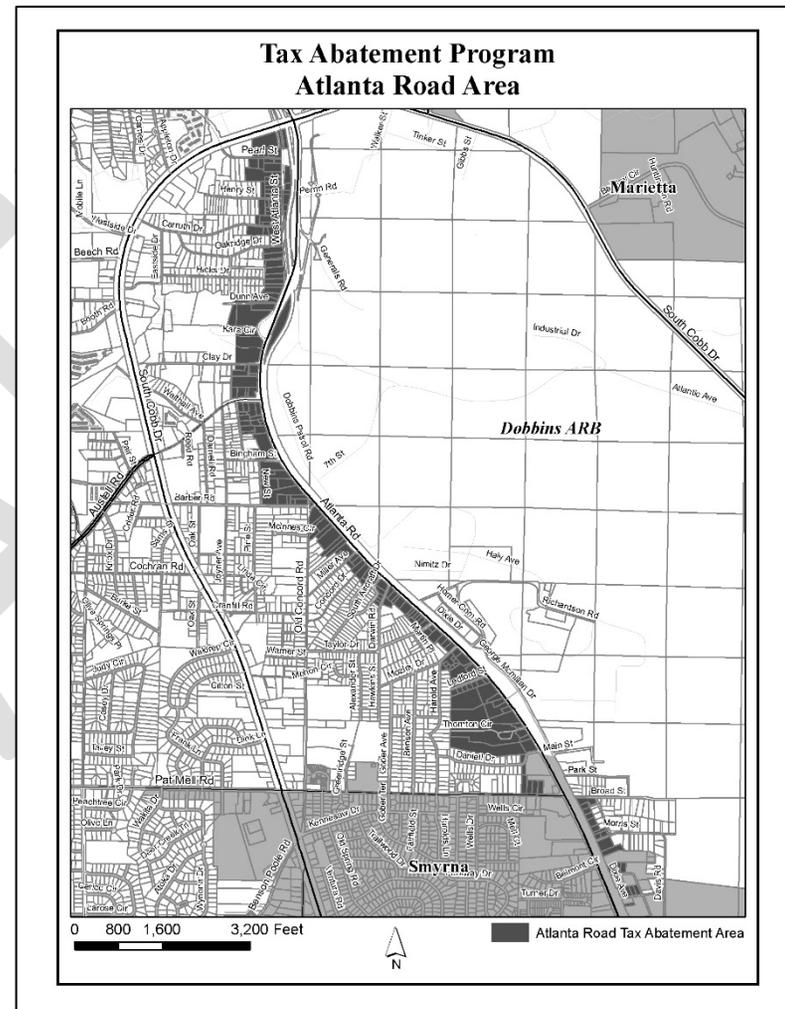


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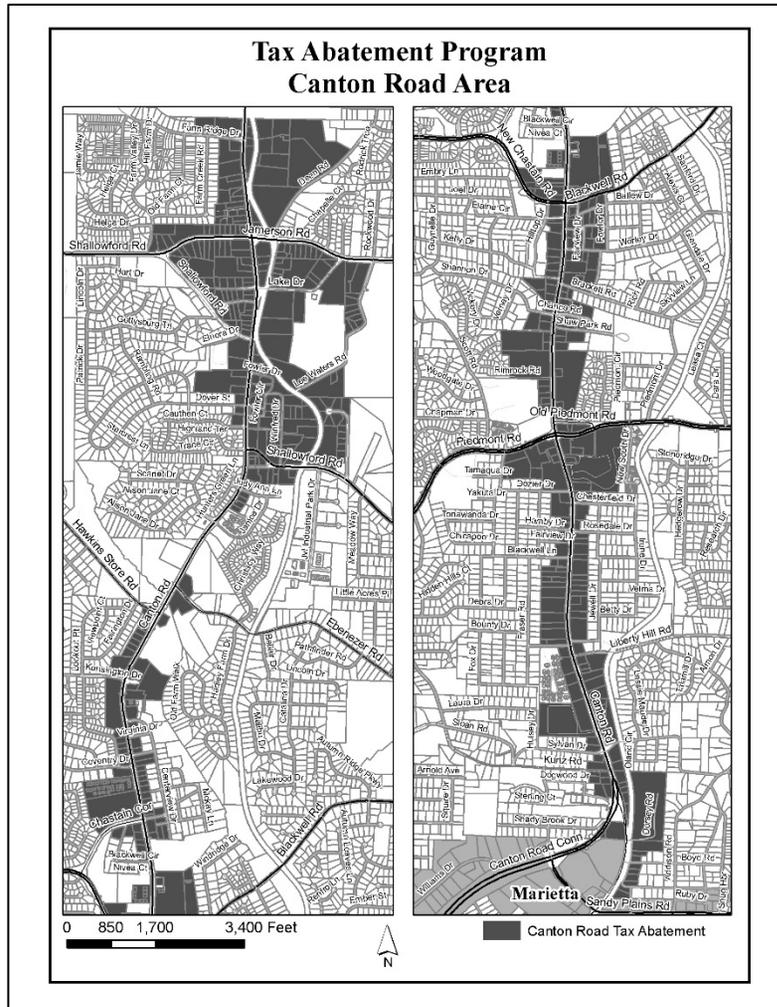


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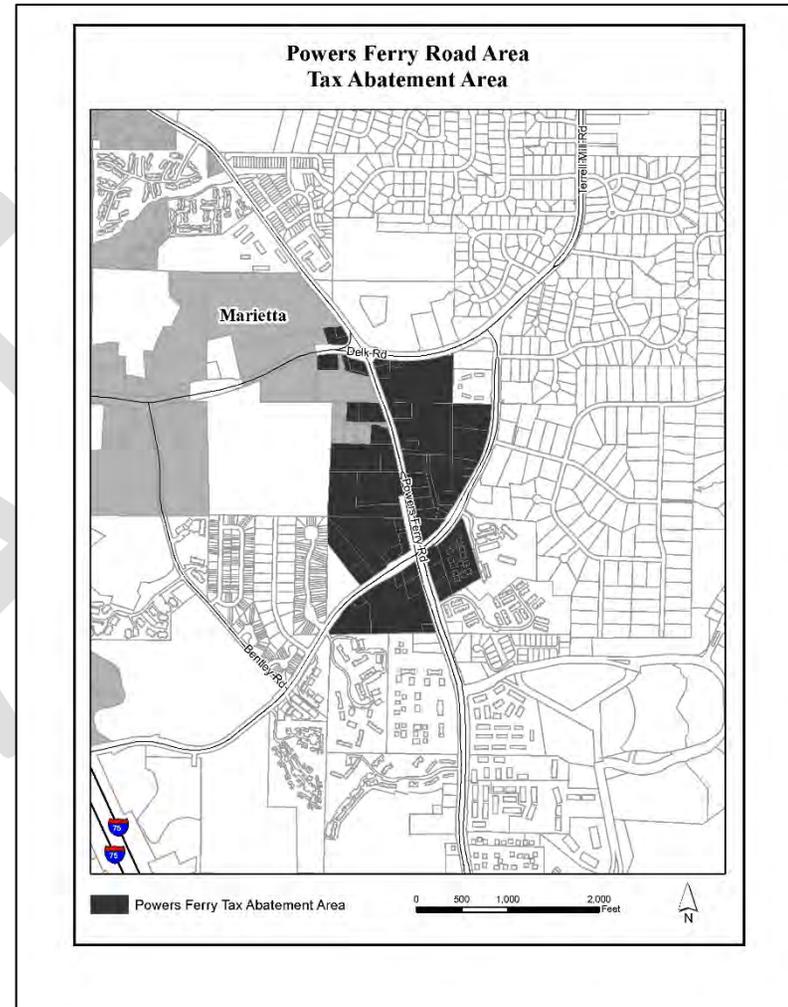


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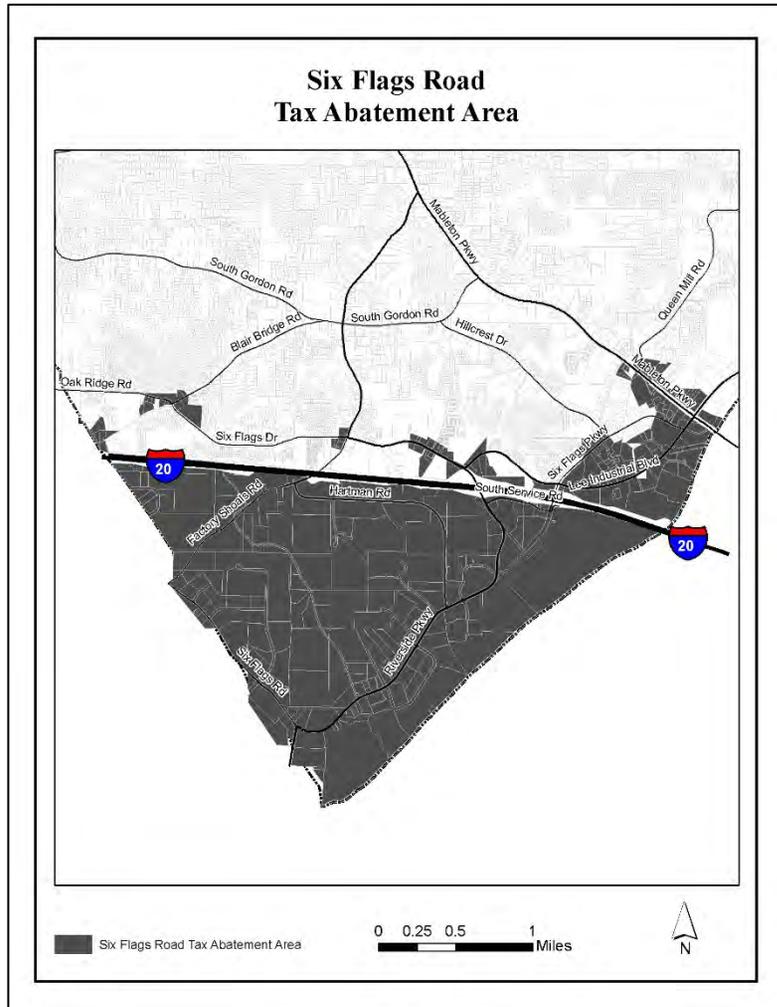


Figure 47

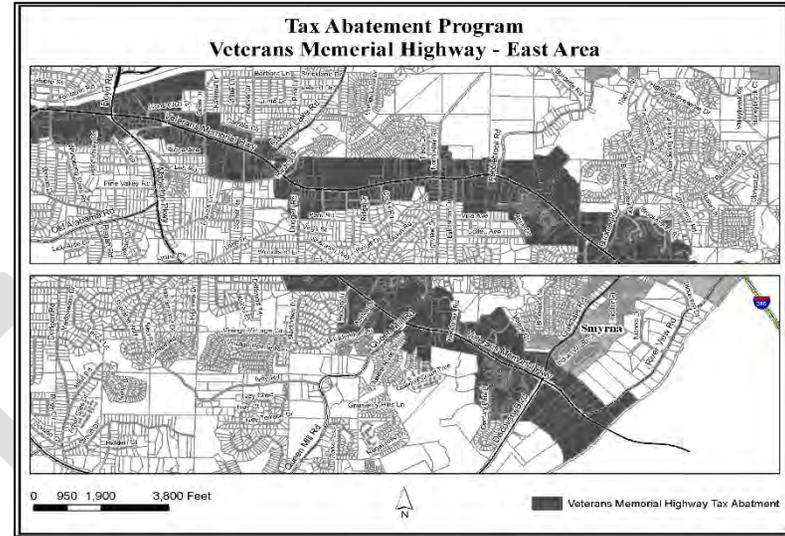


Figure 48

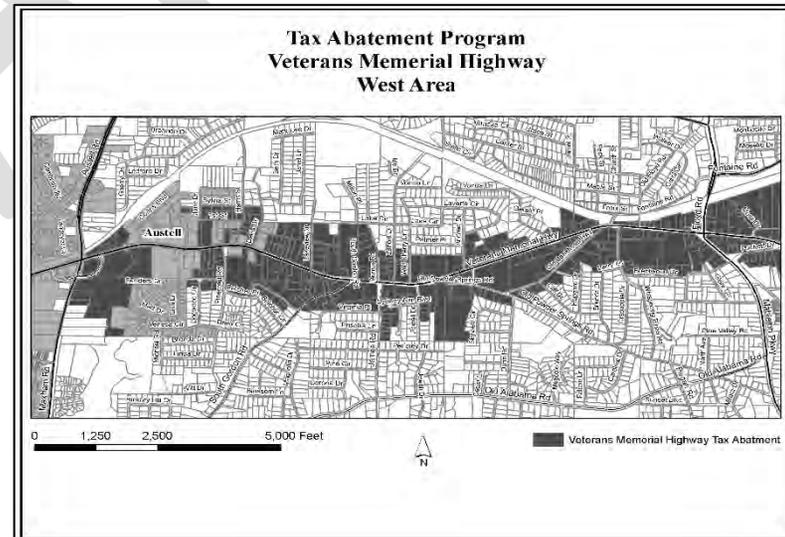


Figure 49

**Higher Education**

Cobb County is home to four community colleges and one university.

- Kennesaw State University
- Chattahoochee Technical College
- Fortis College
- ITT Technical Institute
- Lincoln College of Technology

Kennesaw State University (KSU) is a comprehensive university with thirteen Academic Colleges (Figure 53) and more than 150 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees. On January 6, 2015, Kennesaw State and Southern Polytechnic State University consolidated to increase efficiencies and effectiveness to better serve students and the State of Georgia. As of 2021, KSU set an enrollment record with 43,000 students enrolled at the college, making it one of the 50 largest public institutions in the country by enrollment. On-campus housing capacity is approximately 5,200 students with eight distinctive residential communities. According to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia report in 2012, KSU has an economic impact of \$1.2 billion. There are 92 countries represented in the student body and 18 NCAA Division I Athletic teams. KSU has been elevated to an R3 classification by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of High Learning. This classifies KSU as a doctoral institution with moderate research activity.



KSU ACADEMIC COLLEGES
Bagwell College of Education
Coles College of Business
College of Architecture and Construction Management
College of Computing and Software Engineering
College of Continuing and Professional Education
Honors College
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
College of Science and Mathematics
College of the Arts
Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering & Engineering Technology
Graduate College
University College
WellStar College of Health and Human Services

*Figure 50*  
Source: Kennesaw State University

Chattahoochee Technical College is a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia and as of 2021 is the largest technical college in the state of Georgia with an enrollment of over 14,000 students. It is a two-year college that provides accessible, high quality technical, academic, adult education and workforce training.

Other schools include Fortis College in Smyrna, ITT Technical Institute-Kennesaw and Lincoln College of Technology in Marietta.

The Cobb Chamber of Commerce is another resource that helps make Cobb County a business-friendly environment. The Chamber contains more than 2,500 members from a variety of large, small, domestic and international businesses with a focus dedicated to bringing the community and its leaders together to create jobs and strengthen the economy and quality of life. The Chamber develops economic development initiatives that can assist new and existing businesses in business growth, workforce development solutions, industry recruitment, research and education partnerships and programs.

The Cobb County Chamber of Commerce took the lead in creating Cobb's Competitive EDGE, which was launched in 2012. The EDGE was the first-ever, community-wide, public-private partnership. It brings together all of Cobb's economic development partners into a unified effort. The primary objective for Cobb's EDGE is to help local businesses expand, grow small business, protect Dobbins Air Reserve Base, recruit new businesses, create a more educated workforce and revitalize our communities and infrastructure through seven strategic "seeds" for success. The seven "seeds" are listed below.

- Retaining & Expanding Existing Business
- Encouraging Entrepreneurship & Aiding Small Business
- Marketing Cobb & Projecting a Positive Image
- Developing, Recruiting & Retaining Talent
- Investing in Transportation Infrastructure & Traffic Relief
- Support & Coordinate Redevelopment Efforts
- Cultivating Community, Identities & Sense of Place

As part of the EDGE plan, there were also seven strategic industry targets that were identified for Cobb to pursue in the years to come. Based on the strong competitive advantages that support an existing clustering effect in Cobb County, the seven targets were classified and grouped into two categories: Core Cluster Targets, and Growth Opportunity Targets.

The Core Cluster Targets take advantage of and leverage specific, localized industries that have already clustered in Cobb County.

- Aerospace & Advanced Equipment Manufacturing
- Information Technology & Software
- Professional & Business Services
- Wholesale Trade & Logistics

The industry targets that do not exhibit a clustering effect but merit strategic targeting due to their growth potential are considered growth opportunities.

- Health Care Services
- Travel & Tourism
- Bioscience

The Development Authority of Cobb County (DACC) promotes the public good and general welfare, trade, commerce, industry and employment opportunities for Cobb County. It is a seven-member board appointed by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners with two fundamental activities:

- Provide access to capital and to other financial incentives that would assist desirable economic development projects; and
- Market and promote Cobb County to new businesses.

*(Source: DACC website, Select Cobb)*

Cobb Travel & Tourism promotes Cobb County as a premier travel destination for conventions, trade shows, special events and leisure travelers. They are the primary destination marketing organization for Cobb County. They remain instrumental in creating strategic partnerships and alliances among industry stakeholders along with other goals related to travel and tourism.

*(Source: Cobb Travel and Tourism)*

#### **South Cobb Redevelopment Authority**

There are a multitude of economic development interests and programs in Cobb County. From incentives to regulatory tools developed by Cobb County Community Development, each one of these interests provides information that targets industries, programs, ordinances and incentives that attract and promote growth and development/redevelopment supporting positive economic trends within the County.

Cobb County Community Development works closely with the South Cobb Redevelopment Authority (SCRA) to revitalize and redevelop areas in South Cobb that have been underinvested or underutilized with the overall intent to promote and create favorable locations for trade, commerce, industry and employment opportunities. The SCRA and Cobb County Community

Development worked together to create a movement of programming, new progressive ordinances and incentives focused in South Cobb to assist economic growth in this area. The SCRA has the power to issue low-interest bonds to assist private land development, and they also can buy, sell, consolidate or leverage land resources to spur redevelopment activity in South Cobb.

The impetus of the South Cobb economic development movement is the South Cobb Implementation Strategy. It is designed to serve as a guide for future actions that will function as the primary basis for preserving, protecting and enhancing South Cobb’s existing assets with the greater goal to build new market share for the area and to improve the quality of life for those that reside there. This includes promoting the new Mableton Form Based redevelopment district, Six Flags redevelopment opportunities, branding South Cobb and educating private investors and business owners on the many strengths and opportunities in the South Cobb area, including redevelopment site incentives, Enterprise Zones and Opportunity Zones.



**Redevelopment Inventory**

Cobb County is limited on undeveloped land for development and those smaller undeveloped tracts will continue to dwindle over the of the next 30 years. As a result, it will become more important that the County promote

and encourage redevelopment initiatives and programs to ensure growth occurs in areas where infrastructure is in place. This will accommodate future population and business growth, while preserving character areas of the county and rejuvenating aging commercial corridors and older residential areas. A Figure 54 shows a list of Redevelopment sites that have been identified and promoted by Cobb County for redevelopment.

<b>Redevelopment Sites (2016)</b>	
2410 Canton Road	1057 Veterans Memorial Highway
4939 Canton Road	1336 Veterans Memorial Highway
3012 Canton Road	1480 Veterans Memorial Highway
2692 Sandy Plains Road	1245 Veterans Memorial Highway
1977 South Cobb Drive	676 Veterans Memorial Highway
3413 Austell Road	780 Veterans Memorial Highway
1887 Powder Springs Road	Church Stree and Mable Street
2745 Powder Springs Road	3300 Cobb Parkway
2546 Powder Springs Road	1275 Powers Ferry Road
3757 Floyd Road	1360 Powers Ferry Road
5055 Austell Road	1360 Terrell Mill Road
5590 Mableton Parkway	1410 Terrell Mill Road
320 Riverside Parkway	1480 Terrell Mill Road
380 Veterans Memorial Highway	

Figure 51  
Source: 2040 Comprehensive Plan (2021)

**International Affairs**

The promotion of Cobb County to international markets is essential to staying competitive in the Atlanta region. Cobb County is home to a diverse industry mix, McCollum Field (Cobb County’s International Airport) and a Norfolk Southern intermodal facility. In addition, Cobb is located with easy access to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, two deep-water ports in Savannah and Brunswick and the State of Georgia’s extensive rail and road network. These global trade facilities, in and around Cobb County and the state, makes the region a highly strategic location for international trade.

Cobb County is also home to 8 consulates and bi-national chambers, according to SelectCobb, which is a component of the Development Authority of Cobb County. In some cases, the trade promotion work is handled from within the countries' consular offices while others maintain independent trade offices. Here is a list of consulates and bi-national chambers located in Cobb County and services that they offer:

#### Consulates:

- Honorary Consulate General of the Republic of Austria
- The Austrian Trade Commission
- Consulate General of the Republic of Costa Rica
- Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Estonia
- Honorary Consulate General of the Republic of Iceland
- Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Nicaragua
- Finnish American Chamber of Commerce
- Honorary Consulate of Lithuania

#### Services:

- Determine the exportability of products or services
- Identify appropriate markets and buyers
- Develop market entry strategies
- Establish shipping and distribution networks
- Determine appropriate payment methods and identify export financing and insurance needs

As a way to form global partnerships and build economic ties to help promote global cooperation, generate tourism and further cultural understanding between international communities and local communities, Cobb County has officially recognized and signed agreements with the City of Seongdong Gu, Seoul, South Korea to become a sister city.

#### Economic Target Areas

The Dobbins Air Reserve Base (Dobbins ARB) cluster is a significant economic engine for Cobb County and the surrounding region. There are several hosted military tenants located on Dobbins ARB, and they include

the Georgia National Guard, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Air Force, the Navy Operational Support Center and the U.S. Army Reserve, among other government tenants. It is also home to several private organizations that include Lockheed Martin Air Force Plant #6, AT&T, Federal Employees Credit Union and Georgia Tech Research Institute. Combined, this cluster is one of the largest employers in Cobb County.

In 2014, Cobb County completed a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). The JLUS was a cooperative land use planning effort conducted as a joint venture between Dobbins ARB, City of Marietta, City of Smyrna, state and federal agencies and other stakeholders. The primary objective of the study is to reduce potential conflicts between the Dobbins military installation and surrounding areas, while accommodating new growth and economic development without compromising the operational missions of the installation.

The Town Center area is a regional job center location for office and industrial uses, as well as a retail/service area containing shopping, restaurants and automobile-oriented uses. The area is located between I-75 and I-575. The center of this cluster is the Town Center Mall, which is a regionally serving retail center. Corridor retail developments and office uses have followed the mall along the collector and arterial streets that are in the vicinity of the mall area. While not in the Town Center area, Kennesaw State University (KSU) is adjacent to the Town Center cluster and directly impacts the area. KSU has seen tremendous growth in enrollment, bringing with it a growing population of students, faculty, and staff looking for housing options, entertainment, recreation, shopping and access to local office parks and employers. The employment in the Town Center area is primarily service and retail oriented with a large quantity of the uses being automobile oriented and automobile dependent.

The Town Center Community Improvement District (CID) has completed a Town Center CID Master Plan that focuses on placemaking, trail expansion, smart technologies, balanced transportation, and redevelopment. Development strategies include:

- Placemaking: Creation of public spaces, gateway improvements and public art installments.
- Trail Expansion: Completing the remaining trail segments and multimodal loop by connecting major corridors, and activity areas to increase access, connectivity and enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.
- Smart Technologies: Deployment of advanced traffic systems, electric vehicle charging stations, smart bus shelters, and partnerships with Cobb Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and other agencies to pilot and employ new technologies and innovations.
- Balanced Transportation: Variety of roadway studies and improvements, forward thinking initiatives to improve traffic flow, increase traffic safety, and strengthen and promoting multimodal travel options
- Redevelopment Strategies: Reimagining Town Center Mall area

The Cumberland/Galleria area, which is home to the Cumberland CID, is a major regional activity center that has matured over the past decade and is anticipating significant growth in the next 20 to 25 years. It is located at the intersection of I-75 and I-285 and extends southward along I-285 to Atlanta Road. The area started mainly as a commercial retail area but has grown into a major office and professional service cluster that, as of 2017, has a 5.4% (2017 CCID annual report) impact on the Georgia economy and a 36% economic impact on Cobb County's economy. While retail remains the top job sector in the Cumberland CID, the area is also home to 33% of Cobb County's high-wage, professional jobs. Numerous companies house major regional and national headquarters or major business operations in this area.

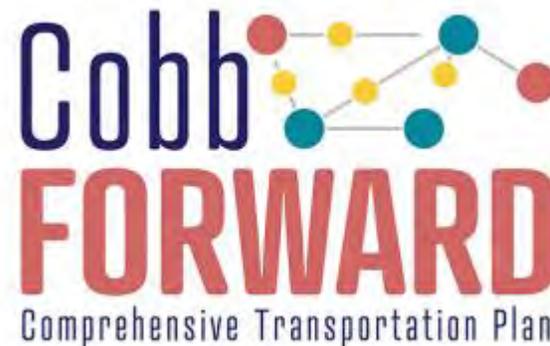
In the last 10 years, there has been a concerted effort to expand residential and entertainment options throughout the Cumberland area. This effort has been successful, with a population of 29,000 that represents 3.8% of Cobb County's total population. In 2017, the Cumberland/Galleria area became one of the top entertainment destinations in the Atlanta-metro area when the Atlanta Braves relocated to the district in a one-of-a-kind stadium

complex that was coupled with a year-round, mixed-use development destination that includes retail, restaurants, housing, hotel, office space and an indoor entertainment venue. Understanding the significance of the Braves development is important for the future of the Cumberland/Galleria area. Additional jobs generated by the development have and will continue to impact the area. Transportation infrastructure, including parking and circulator programs, will impact the area along with ancillary developments like retail, restaurant and office uses. With the addition of the Braves development, the transportation infrastructure programmed for the area and the new residential units in the pipeline, the Cumberland/Galleria area will function in the future more like an urban center versus a suburban satellite city.

## TRANSPORTATION

In the Cobb 2040 plan, the primary focus of the Transportation Element is meeting Cobb County's future transportation needs.

The Transportation Element is required for all jurisdictions that are included in a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Cobb County, and the cities within, are part of the Atlanta Regional Commission MPO. In addition, the rules specifically state the MPO's transportation strategy for the region may be substituted for this element.



### CobbForward

In 2022, Cobb County completed an update to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), known as CobbForward. Utilizing a robust community engagement campaign, CobbForward considers how Cobb will grow in the next 30 years. It offers policies and multimodal improvements to the transportation network and helps to position the County for implementation through local, state, and federal funding strategies.

CobbForward included four overarching components to develop the CTP.

- Existing Conditions: focused on establishing a baseline of where Cobb is today and understanding demand and travel patterns as well as the condition of transportation infrastructure
- Needs Assessment: involved the understanding future demand for transportation and anticipating projected mobility needs that may exist
- Recommendations: included the combination of projects and policies that can collectively look to address the needs identified in the Needs Assessment.
- Community Engagement

Through the collaboration between technical stakeholders, the Project Management Team, and the public, needs, goals and policies were identified to guide the team through the completion of the CobbForward plan and establish project priorities.

Cobb County recognizes the importance of developing a safe, balanced, efficient, multi-modal transportation network that minimizes impacts to the environment and reinforces the livability of neighborhoods. CobbForward is meant to guide the future mobility network of Cobb's motorized and non-motorized transportation including public transit systems, bicycle and pedestrian networks. Cobb County understands that an efficient transportation system is crucial to the economic and social well-being of a growing community with increasing travel demands. The ability to provide a safe, convenient and efficient transportation system will continue to be a challenge in the decades to come.

The CobbForward plan will act as the Transportation element for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan 5-Year update. The analytical requirements can be found within the CobbForward Exiting Conditions and Needs Assessment Report. The Needs, Goals and Policy, as well as the overall Vision will be integrated into the main 2040 Comprehensive Plan document.

### LAND USE

Land Use refers to how land is used and how it should be used moving forward. Future needs for various land uses are predicated on population and economic projections. The Comprehensive Plan guides land use to ensure land resources appropriately encourage a variety of housing choices, promote economic development, preserve natural and historic resources, provide open space and recreational uses and accommodate transportation routes and other public facilities, in order to protect and improve Cobb County's quality of life.

#### Existing Land Use

The analysis of existing land use patterns helps the community, staff, and elected officials gain an understanding about the current state of land use within the jurisdiction.

Cobb County's land use, character and development patterns are dominated by established residential areas within eastern and southern sections of Cobb County and developing residential areas in the west. Commercial uses are concentrated along highly traveled corridors and at major centers, such as Town Center and Cumberland. Industrial uses have assembled along the interstates with the largest concentration of industrial uses being in the southern tip of the county adjacent to I-20. Cobb allows for mixed-use and denser development in certain nodes, mostly within the regional centers of Cumberland and Town Center.

The existing land uses in Cobb have been grouped together into one of the following seven categories.

- (i) **Residential:** The predominant use of land within the residential category is single-family detached, single-family attached and multi-family dwelling units.
- (ii) **Commercial:** This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, services and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.
- (iii) **Industrial:** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities or other similar uses.
- (iv) **Mixed-Use:** This category is for development of land, building or structure with two or more different uses, such as but not limited to, residential, office, retail, civic or entertainment.
- (v) **Civic:** This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses and institutional uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
- (vi) **Transportation/Communication/Utilities:** This category includes such uses as power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, public transit stations, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.
- (vii) **Parks/Recreation/Conservation:** This category is for uses dedicated to active or passive recreation. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, open space, sensitive

habitats, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, undeveloped land and other similar uses.

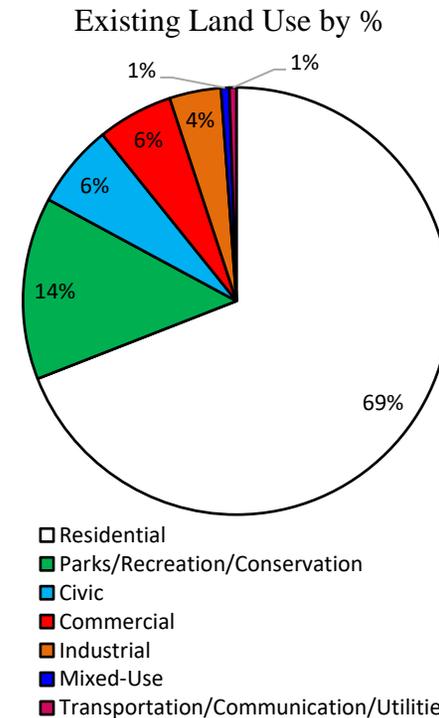


Figure 52  
Source: Cobb County Planning Division

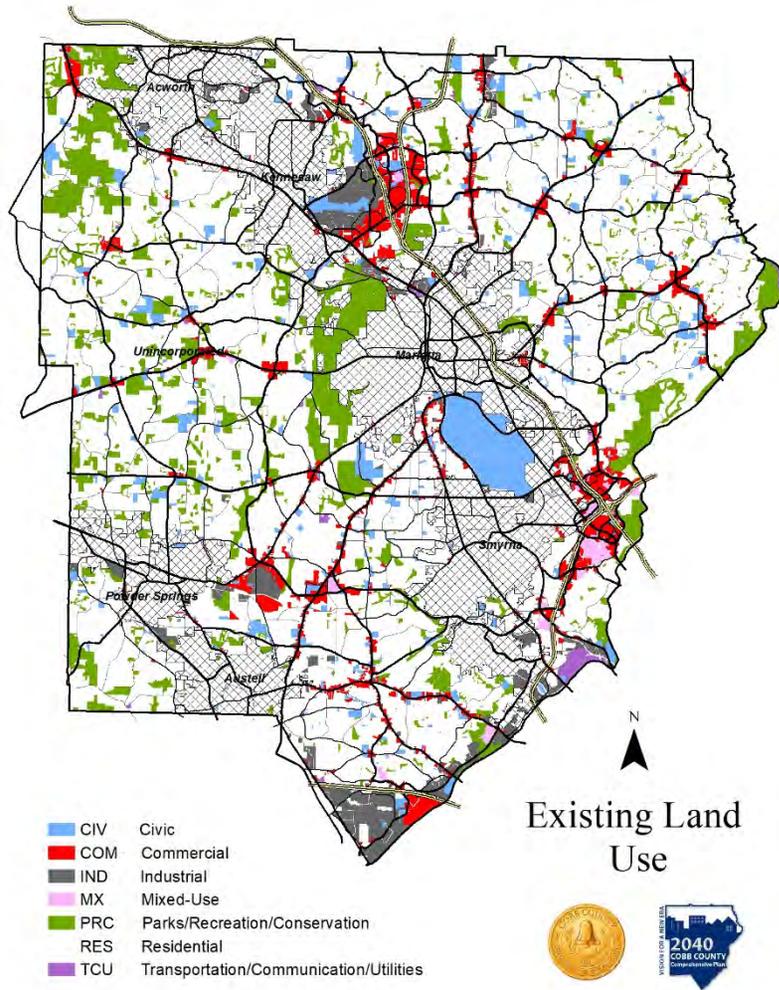


Figure 53  
Source: Cobb County Planning Division

### Future Land Use

The future land use map is a policy document that guides future land use decisions in Cobb County and is updated on an annual basis. The future land use map serves as a tool to implement the land use goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The future land use map includes land use categories, which describe development patterns and community character.

The primary future land use designation is low-density residential, which guides residential development between 1 and 2.5 units per acre. This reaffirms Cobb’s commitment to residential and the preservation of single-family detached, suburban style housing for the next 30 years.

There are three categories dedicated toward guidance of commercial use. The Regional, Community and Neighborhood Activity Centers make up a total of 6% of the future uses. Current goals and policies reflect more nodal type of commercial development versus “strip” commercial along high-volume transportation routes.

Parks/Recreation/Conservation makes up 8% of the future land use designations. Most of this is held in federal park land, which is Corps of Engineers property surrounding Lake Allatoona, National Park Service lands in the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, and the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area.

There are also pockets of land dedicated for future industrial uses that have been shrinking over the last 10 to 20 years. Recent policy changes resulting in a Priority Industrial Area future land use designation attempts to protect some of the more significant industrial areas in the County to ensure a variety of jobs for Cobb residences.

The future land use map and corresponding policies provide sufficient opportunities for each land use type to serve the needs of the community and balance a desired mix of residential, commercial, and industrial type uses.

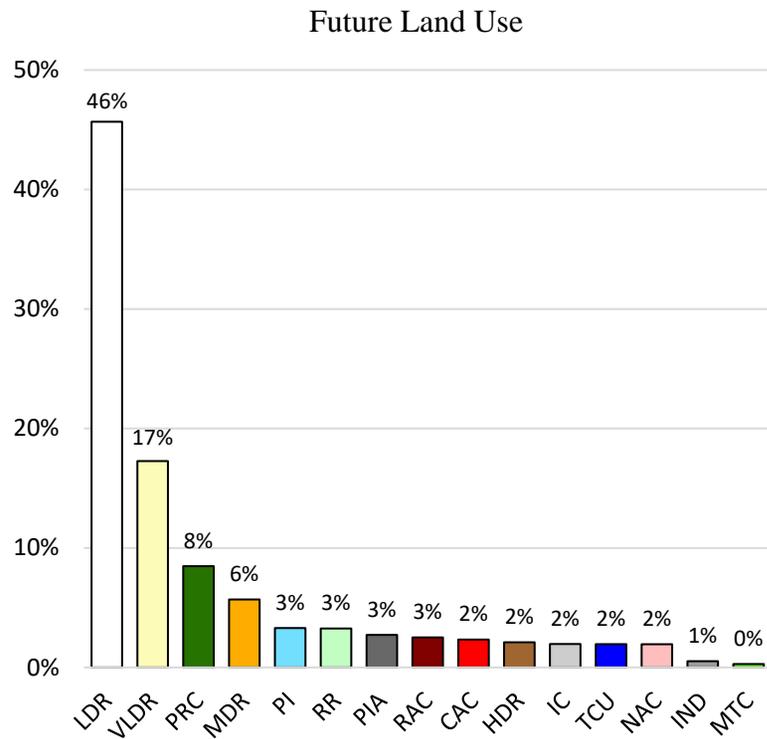


Figure 54  
Source: Cobb County Planning Division

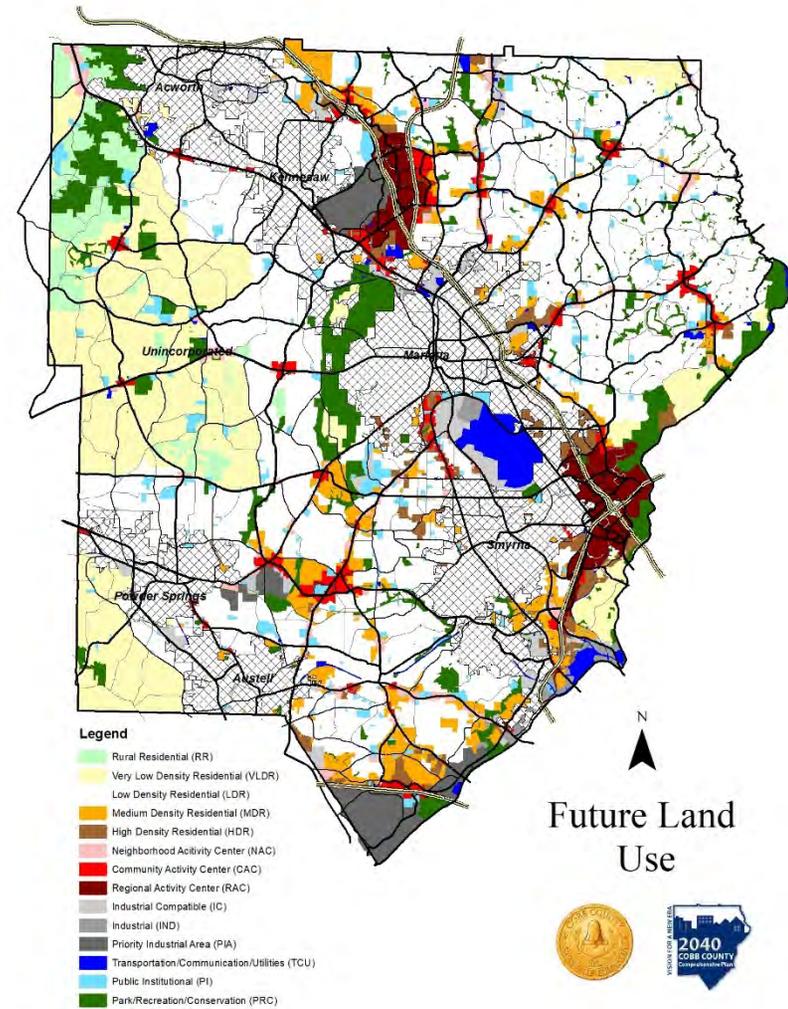


Figure 55  
Source: Cobb County Planning Division

**Development of Regional Impact**

Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) are large-scale developments that could potentially have regional impacts beyond the jurisdiction in which they are located. In order to assess the potential impacts before conflicts arise, the Department of Community Affairs has established regional review procedures for potential developments that meet certain thresholds.

The following projects are DRIs that have been submitted between 2021 and 2001.

DRI PROJECT	YEAR	DRI PROJECT	YEAR
White Road	2021	Tramore Pointe	2006
Circle 75	2020	Cobb West Park	2006
Oakmont Cobb International	2020	The Mountain	2006
Cumberland Mall	2020	Belmont Hills Redevelopment Plan	2006
McCamy Mixed Use Development	2019	The Goodman Company	2005
Austell Site	2019	Vinings Mountain at Paces Ferry	2005
Emerson Center	2017	The Mill at Covered Bridge	2005
Duncan Rd. Waste Transfer Station	2017	River View	2006
Terrell Mill Development	2017	Jonquil Village Redevelopment	2006
Vinings Atlanta	2016	Johnson Ferry Baptist Church	2006
Galleria 75	2016	Colonial Pipeline Company	2005
Dobbins Mill Transfer	2015	Paces Ferry Commons	2005
Goethe Tract	2015	Cumberland Boulevard	2005
Skyline II	2015	Regent Riverwood	2005
Old 41 Development	2014	T.I. Riverwood	2005
Interstate North	2014	Vinings West	2005
Hartman Distribution Center	2014	Cobb Galleria Performing Arts Ctr.	2004
Barrett Pkwy Mixed Use development	2014	Trinity Chapel Church of God	2004
Atlanta Braves Stadium and Mixed-Use Development	2013	The Villages of West Cobb	2004
East Cobb Retirement Community	2013	Circle 75 Project	2004
Bankhead C & D Transfer Station	2011	Discovery Tract	2004
Canton Road steel, metal & iron processing & transfer station	2011	South Atlanta Road Development	2004
Riverview on the Chattahoochee	2010	The Mill at Covered Bridge	2004
Riverview Road Resource Recovery Center & Transfer Station	2009	Lakeside Market Place	2003
Cobb-West Township	2008	Providence	2003

DRI PROJECT	YEAR	DRI PROJECT	YEAR
Riverview	2008	Hartman Road Business Park	2002
Colonial Pipeline Company	2008	Word of Faith	2002
Mableton Parkway Site Stabilization	2008	One Galleria Walk	2002
V at Vinings	2007	Atlanta Operations Center	2002
Belmont Hills	2007	Word of Faith Church	2002
LaFarge Building Materials, Inc.	2007	Hartman Road Business Park	2001
The Village at Vinings	2007	Gwinnett Partners, LLC	2001
Aspen Hills Redevelopment	2007	Queens Mill	2001
City Side at Town Center	2007	James Parkway Development	2001
Galleria Parkway Mixed Use	2007		

Figure 56  
Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural and historic resources are inherent characteristics of a community and contribute to the list of assets that give the community a unique identity and attract new residents or investors. They are also sensitive community elements that cannot be regained once destroyed.

Cobb County has been an attractive place in which to live and work for many years, rich in natural and historic resources. Even in the early days, communities such as Smyrna, Vinings, Austell and Powder Springs were popular places for tourists, due to its natural beauty. The past three decades have been a time of steady increase in growth of new businesses and residential communities that will continue. While growth is inevitable and new residents need to be accommodated, Cobb County's natural and historic resources can be and should be considered in the planning process in order to allow for growth without destroying the rich cultural heritage of the County. The following examines the natural and historic resources in Cobb County.

It is also important to note that the State's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) have put together a document titled, "Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria." These are basic rules and regulations intended to improve the natural environment for the people in the state. The Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning encourages each local government in the State of Georgia to review the Regional Water Plan covering its area and the Georgia State Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) to determine if there is a need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations. For further details please see Appendix 5.

### Water Supply Watersheds

During times of precipitation, some waters are absorbed by soil, other quantities of the resource are detained by depressions, ponds or lakes, or intercepted by vegetation. The remainder flows off the land as runoff. As the

non-percolating water flows into lower elevations, it combines with water released through the soil.

The boundaries of a drainage basin form a watershed for a river or stream. There are multiple watersheds within Cobb County providing water for Cobb and surrounding counties. The Watersheds and Groundwater Recharge area map (*Figure 57*) shows the name and location of the watersheds and the location of the Groundwater Recharge areas taken from Hydrologic Atlas 18 produced by Georgia DNR.

Watershed protection is necessary to help ensure water quality and safety for residents of a community. When vegetation is removed from stream channels and soils in the watershed are paved over, the potential for erosion, flooding and sedimentation increases. This sedimentation pollutes the water and causes aquatic life to deteriorate. There are many guidelines and regulations relating to watershed protection that can help local governments plan wisely.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) established requirements for environmental planning within sensitive water supply watershed areas. These requirements include vegetated buffers and limitations on impervious surfaces depending on watershed size and type. The Allatoona Lake watershed is exempt under these criteria because it is an U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lake, as well as, the Chattahoochee River and Sweetwater Creek watersheds because they are defined as large (greater than 100 square miles) water supply watersheds drawing directly from the river or creek. The only protective measure required by the DNR *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria* that applies to watersheds within Cobb County relates to hazardous materials.

In relation to hazardous materials, any new facilities that handles certain types and amounts of hazardous materials and are located within seven miles of a water supply intake must perform their operations on impermeable surfaces that have spill and leak collection systems.

### Groundwater Recharge Areas

A groundwater recharge area is any portion of the earth's surface where water infiltrates the ground to replenish aquifers. Recharge is the process by which ground water infiltrates to the underground openings by seeping through the ground or by flowing directly into openings in exposed rock. The areas with the greatest vulnerability to groundwater pollution from human activity are those with thick soils and relatively low slopes that may contain significant recharge areas. Cobb County is underlain by a complex of metamorphic and igneous rock ranging in thickness from less than 10 feet to possibly more than 10,000 feet.

In Cobb County, the largest probable groundwater recharge area encompasses Marietta and stretches north and south of the city. Two smaller areas of significant recharge are found in West Cobb, south of Acworth and Kennesaw. The relatively flat areas of thick soils are the most significant areas of groundwater recharge.

Georgia law requires that local jurisdictions adopt and implement recharge protection measures that meet State minimum standards. In areas of significant groundwater recharge, land disposal of hazardous waste is prohibited, as are new sanitary landfills that do not have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems. All new facilities that treat, store or dispose of hazardous waste or that handle hazardous materials of any type and amount must perform their operations on an impermeable pad that has a spill and leak collection system. The standards also include restrictions on lot size for use of septic tank/drain field systems.

To ensure protection of these groundwater recharge areas, the Cobb County Zoning Ordinance specifies that any activity relating to or associated with hazardous waste obtain approval from the applicable agency of the State of Georgia (state retains authority to regulate). This also applies to any landfilling operation.

The Water Quality Section of the Stormwater Management Division of the Cobb County Water System monitors surface runoff from commercial and industrial sites. Any hazardous waste cleanup sites are handled by the State of

Georgia's Department of Natural Resources. Cobb County is responsible for first response, notification to DNR and spill containment only. Cobb County also requires a minimum 20,000 sq. ft. lot size, dependent on suitable soil type and approval from the County's Office of Environmental Health, prior to allowing the installation of a septic tank. Approximately, 95% of Cobb County is on sewer service.

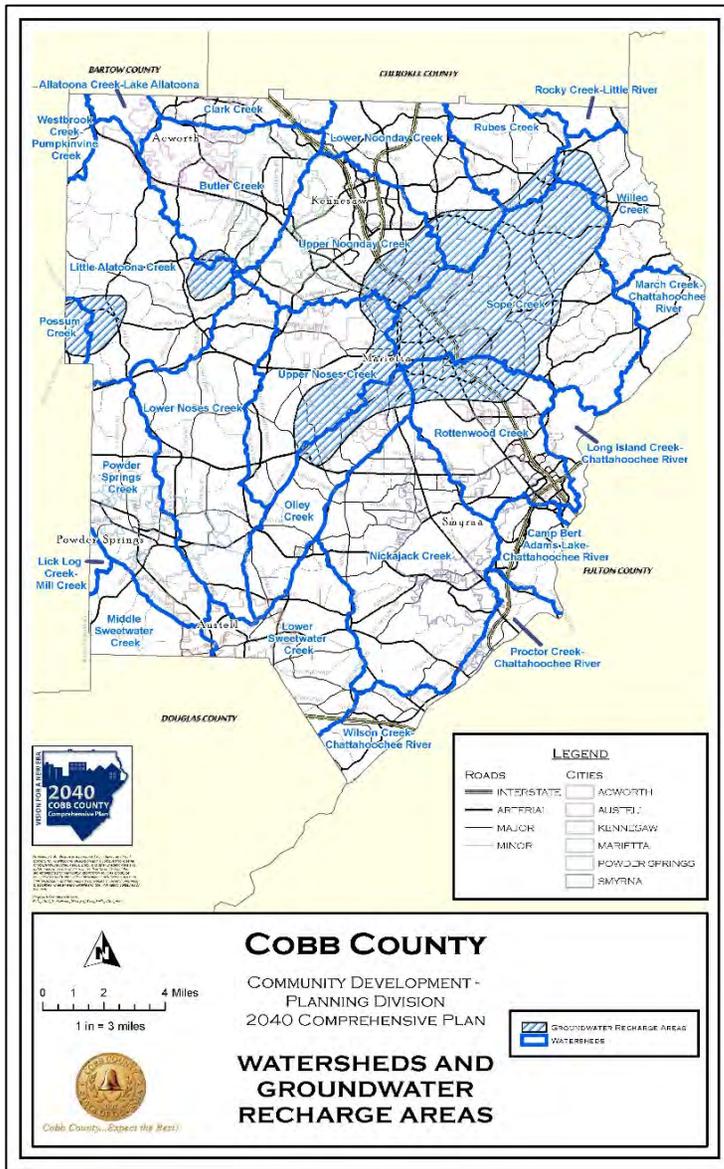


Figure 57

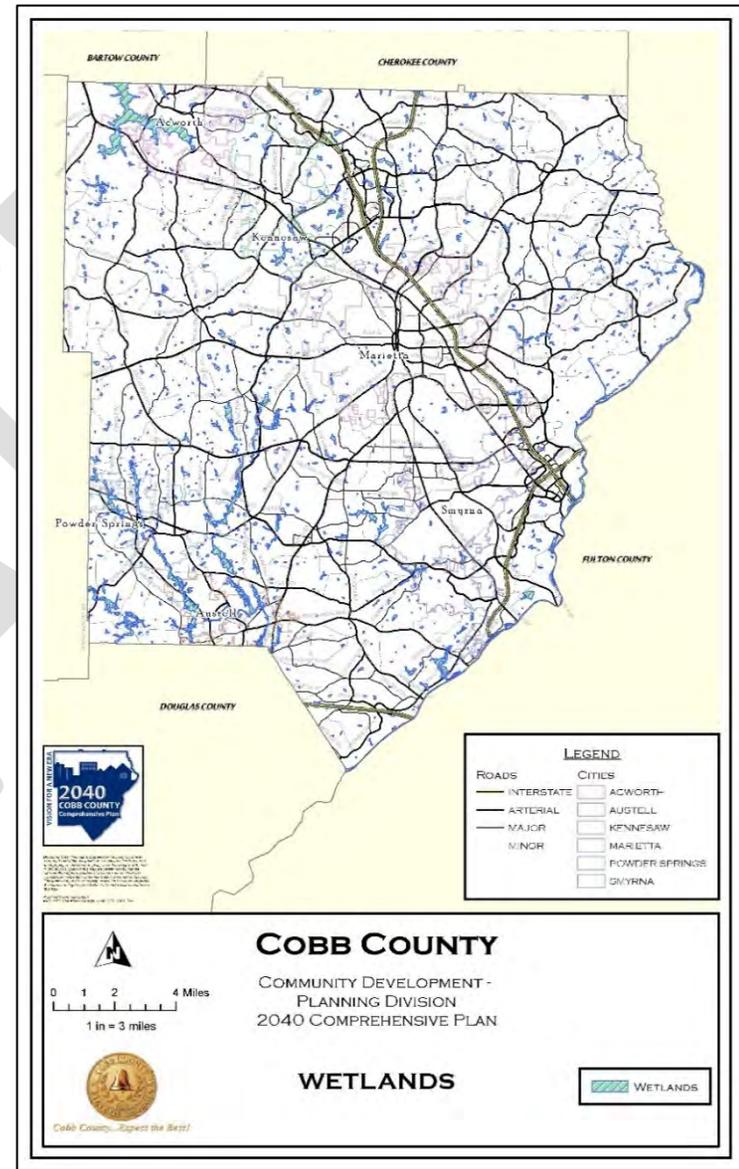


Figure 58

## Wetlands

According to the Georgia DNR *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria*, wetlands are those areas saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to, under normal circumstances, support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil condition. Wetlands, which generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas, are valuable for several reasons. They protect and improve water quality by trapping and filtering pollutants and sediment. They also recharge groundwater supplies and help to stabilize flood hazards by acting as natural flood control areas. In addition, wetlands are an essential breeding, nesting and feeding habitat for many species.

Wetlands are normally found in flood plains, along stream banks, and surrounding ponds and lakes. The U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USDA) has completed a series of detailed wetland maps for Cobb County. A generalized wetland map has been produced for this plan document and can be found in *Figure 58*.

According to the USDA maps, Cobb has many wetlands of five to 15 acres in size and several that are 20 to 40 acres. For example, concentrations of wetlands are found along the Chattahoochee River, along Ward Creek in West Cobb and along Sweetwater Creek in South Cobb.

Cobb County complies with the federal wetlands program under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act in order to maintain and protect these natural resources. The Cobb County Department of Community Development routinely visits each potential development site that is submitted for review. If it is determined that wetlands may exist on a site slated for development, the developer is responsible for requesting a determination of jurisdiction for any project that would result in altering more than one acre of wetlands as required by the Clean Water Act. Therefore, residential developments shall exclude any acreage within flood plains and/or wetlands when calculating the overall density of the development. Cobb County does not allow land disturbing activity within delineated wetlands jurisdictions except as restricted by permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

- **Acceptable** uses of wetlands may include the following:
  - Timber production and harvesting
  - Wildlife and fisheries management
  - Wastewater treatment
  - Recreation
  - Natural Water quality treatment or purification
  - Other uses permitted under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- **Unacceptable** uses of wetlands may include the following:
  - Receiving areas of toxic or hazardous water or other contaminants
  - Hazardous or sanitary waste landfills
  - Other uses prohibited by local governments

In some areas of Cobb County, specifically less intensive developed areas, there may be opportunities to go over and above these minimum standards of protection by using wetlands for passive recreation and green spaces. This would counteract the negative environmental impacts of new growth and development.

## Protected Rivers & Mountains

The Chattahoochee River and Kennesaw Mountain are the two major protection areas in Cobb County. The Federal government is responsible for the protection of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park and the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area, which follows a significant portion of the Chattahoochee River in Cobb County. It is important to note that Kennesaw Mountain does not meet the minimum requirements established by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to qualify as a protected mountain.

Existing land uses along the part of the Chattahoochee River in Cobb County are primarily industrial and industrial compatible. The properties that are currently undeveloped but recommended for activity center, industrial compatible or industrial use on the future land use map, are recommended for such to reflect existing zoning decisions made prior to 1991. Because past developments and existing land uses along the Chattahoochee River have the

potential to impact drinking water quality, the State of Georgia adopted the Metropolitan River Protection Act.

#### **Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA) and Chattahoochee Corridor Plan**

MRPA was adopted by the Georgia General Assembly in 1973 as a response to the overload that urbanization has put on nature's ability to control stormwater runoff and pollutants entering the Chattahoochee River. Land disturbance and construction causes more water to flow over the land, eroding soil and filling streams with sediment. The concentration of pollutants and the water temperature in stormwater runoff increases, destroying aquatic habitats. Originally, protection of the corridor surrounding the Chattahoochee and its impoundments stretched from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek. In the 1998 session of the Georgia General Assembly, MRPA was amended to extend protection of the Chattahoochee River from the Atlanta water intake to the southern limits of Fulton and Douglas counties.

MRPA required the creation of the Chattahoochee River Corridor, which extends 2,000 feet on either side of the river and its impoundments. Additionally, the act required the creation of The Chattahoochee Corridor Plan, which subjected all development within the corridor subject to the requirements of that plan. The Chattahoochee River Corridor Plan was adopted by ARC and established three sets of standards for protection of the river corridor. The standards include: limitations on land disturbance and impervious surfaces; a 50-foot undisturbed buffer and 150-foot impervious surface setback along the river, as well as a 35-foot undisturbed buffer along certain tributary streams; and specific restrictions in the 100-year and 500-year floodplains of the river.

The review process established through The Chattahoochee River Corridor Plan requires that all land-disturbing activity and development within 2,000 feet of the banks of the Chattahoochee River must be reviewed by ARC and Cobb County Community Development Department. Additionally, the development must also be approved by the Board of Commissioners and show consistency with the standards of the Corridor Plan.

Cobb County has taken an extra step toward river protection by adopting the Chattahoochee River Tributary Buffer Ordinance in accordance with MRPA. This ordinance aims to protect stream tributaries in the Chattahoochee River watershed that are outside the 2,000-ft. corridor. The ordinance affects all perennial streams including Willeo, Rottenwood and Sope creeks. In the ordinance, the "Protection Area" is defined as the stream channel and the land area extending outward 25 feet horizontally from the top of the banks on each side of all flowing tributaries. This tributary buffer ordinance has been augmented by the requirements of the Cobb County Stream Buffer Ordinance, which covers all streams in the county and has requirements for buffer depth that vary with basin size.

In addition, the Georgia General Assembly created the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD), a regional entity that addresses water quality/quantity issues for the greater Atlanta area. The MNGWPD was created in 2001 by the Georgia General Assembly and is composed of 15 counties, including Cobb. The MNGWPD is discussed in more detail in The Regional Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria (Appendix 5).

#### **Greenspace and Conservation**

There have been several programs established in Cobb County with the focus of acquiring greenspace and conservation lands. The programs range from state-level legislative action, such as the Georgia Community Greenspace program (the program ceased in 2004), to bond referendums in 2006 and 2008 for the purpose of parks and greenspace. Due to market conditions in the late 2000s, the 2008 greenspace purchase program was not implemented and was suspended. In January of 2017, the Board of Commissioners approved issuance of the voter-approved 2008 Parks Bond with a portion of the original amount.

In addition to the public held greenspace and conservation areas, the County also has an Open Space Community (OSC) Overlay ordinance. The OSC allows for the design flexibility of a single-family residential development in order to preserve certain percentages of open space that must be put into a conservation easement.

The Cobb County Water Systems began an aggressive program to acquire floodplain land along major waterways. The purchase of these flood prone areas can provide substantial buffers, preserve water quality and wildlife habitat as well recreational opportunities for citizens in areas protected from future development.

Cobb’s Future Land Use Map category of Park/Recreation/Conservation (PRC) is customized to delineate areas of permanent protection. The designation of “Conservation” within the PRC category defines areas permanently protected and those areas designated for future permanent protection.

The need for natural resources and cultural resource protection and conservation is an integral part of the physical, psychological and spiritual health of a community. For Cobb County to maintain and enhance the quality of life of its residents, it is vital that other programs and initiatives are considered and funded to ensure an adequate amount of open space or greenspace.

**Floodplain**

Flood plains are the relatively flat areas of land adjacent to stream banks. Flood plains in their natural, undisturbed and undeveloped state, provide storage of flood waters, channelization, silt retention and groundwater discharge. *Figure 59* shows the approximate locations of floodplain areas in the County. With its numerous streams, Cobb has land in the 100-year flood plain in all parts of the County. The Sweetwater Creek basin in the Austell area and land along the Chattahoochee River in southwest Cobb are particularly vulnerable to flooding.

Any fill material placed in a flood plain takes the place of the water that would be stored there in a flood. This causes the water level to rise and previously dry land is flooded. Cobb County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, a federally backed insurance program for the protection of property owners within flood hazard areas. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies and maps most areas in the County that are subject to flooding based upon the 100-year flood plain standard.

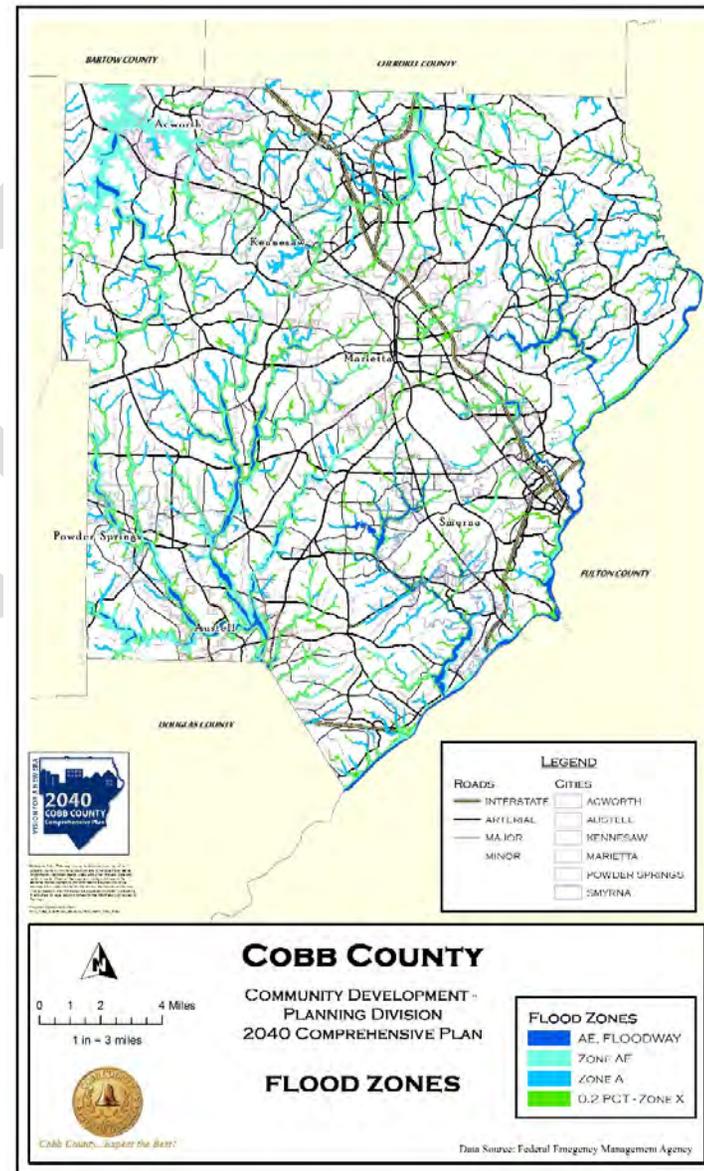


Figure 59

In order to prevent unnecessary flooding due to mismanagement of flood prone areas, residential developments shall exclude any acreage within floodplains and/or wetlands when calculating the overall density of the development. Development in the floodplain and in areas adjacent to floodplains is closely regulated by County ordinance.

The ordinance, administered by the Department of Community Development, requires a permit for any improvement or development, including grading and filling within an area of Special Flood Hazard. Regulations are also included that outline construction precautions for development in Flood Hazard areas.

### Soil Types

The soil types found in Cobb County include Altavista, Appling, Cartecay, Cicil, Chewacla, Surham, Gwinnett, Helena, Hiwassee, Louisa, Louisburg, Madison, Musella, Pacolet, Roanoke, Toccoa, Urban and Wilkes Series. These soils exist on topography that is mostly gently rolling to steep. The Soil Conservation Service Survey identifies soil types that are sensitive to development due to tendency to flood, steep slopes, and shallow depth to rock, or high shrink/swell potential. This survey is accompanied by a general county soil map that may be helpful to understand the distribution of soil types.

In most cases, Cobb County does not protect sensitive soils on ridges and mountains from development. However, it does regulate and enforce erosion and sedimentation control measures. Sensitive soils in the flood plain are protected under the Cobb County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Further protection of sensitive soils may be warranted in areas where ridges and mountain tops have yet to be developed. Pine Mountain and Lost Mountain in West Cobb are two sensitive areas in which well-planned and managed growth policies may be necessary to protect these environmentally sensitive areas in the future.

According to the USDA Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey of Cobb County, soil association normally consists of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil. The soil type is named for the most prevalent. The soils in one association may occur in another but in a different pattern. The soil types listed

below are from soil associations found on nearly level ground and on the slopes of small mountains.

#### Alluvial Soils along Floodplains:

- Cartecay-Toccoa: This association includes nearly level soils on broad to narrow floodplains. These soils formed along streams that have more than a 20% chance of overflowing in any one year. They are found in the floodplains of streams and the Chattahoochee River. Frequent flooding severely constrains development on these soils, which are protected by local floodplain management regulations.
- Toccoa-Cartecay: Similar to the above, these soils are found along streams that have a 5% to 20% chance of flooding in any given year.

#### Gently Sloping to Sloping Shallow Soils on Ridgetops:

- Wilkes: This association consists of soils on narrow ridgetops, sloping from 6% to 15% in most places. Runoff is medium to rapid, and this soil is not well suited to cultivated crops or development because it is stony, severely susceptible to erosion and shallow over rock. Wilkes soils are found in the northwest corner of Cobb on ridge tops west of Lake Allatoona. Very low density and open space uses are most suitable for this soil type.

#### Sloping to Steep, Deep to Shallow Soils on Irregular Hillides:

- Madison-Louisa-Pacolet: These soils are found on short slopes along drainage ways. They are well to somewhat drained soils on slopes from 10% to 60%. Runoff is moderately rapid to rapid, and these soils are steep, droughty and erodible.
- Gwinnett-Pacolet-Musella: These soils are found on hilly uplands and slopes with well-defined drainage ways. Slopes are from 10% to 45% and runoff is moderately rapid to rapid. These soils are well drained and generally support pine trees and mixed stands of hardwoods.

- **Louisburg-Appling-Wilkes:** This association consists of soils on short side slopes that are dissected by many narrow, well-defined drainage ways. They are excessively drained to well drained. Slopes are steep at 10% to 45% and are shallow, droughty and stony.
- **Madison-Gwinnett-Pacolet:** Made up of soils on short slopes adjacent to drainage ways, this association has slopes from 10% to 25%. These soils are well drained. This soil type is suited for residential as well as commercial development.

Very Gently Sloping to Sloping, Deep to Moderately Deep Soils on Broad and Narrow Ridgetops:

- **Appling-Cecil-Madison:** This association is composed of well-drained soils on broad, uniform ridgetops sloping 2% to 10%. It is better suited to cultivated crops than any other association in the County. It is also suited to residential and commercial development.
- **Madison-Gwinnett-Cecil:** Found on broad to narrow ridgetops, this association has slopes of 2% to 10% with well-drained soils. Most of the soils in this association were formerly cultivated or pastureland, but now most of it is wooded or developed.

Very Gently Sloping to Sloping, Deep to Shallow Soils on Narrow to Fairly Broad Ridgetops:

- **Gwinnett-Hiwassee-Musella:** These well-drained soils are also found on broad to narrow ridgetops with slopes of 2% to 10%. This soil association is found in primarily wooded or developed areas.
- **Appling-Pacolet-Louisburg:** This association consists of soils on ridgetops with slopes from 2% to 15%. The soils are well drained to excessively drained. These soils are shallow with high permeability and are generally wooded or developed.

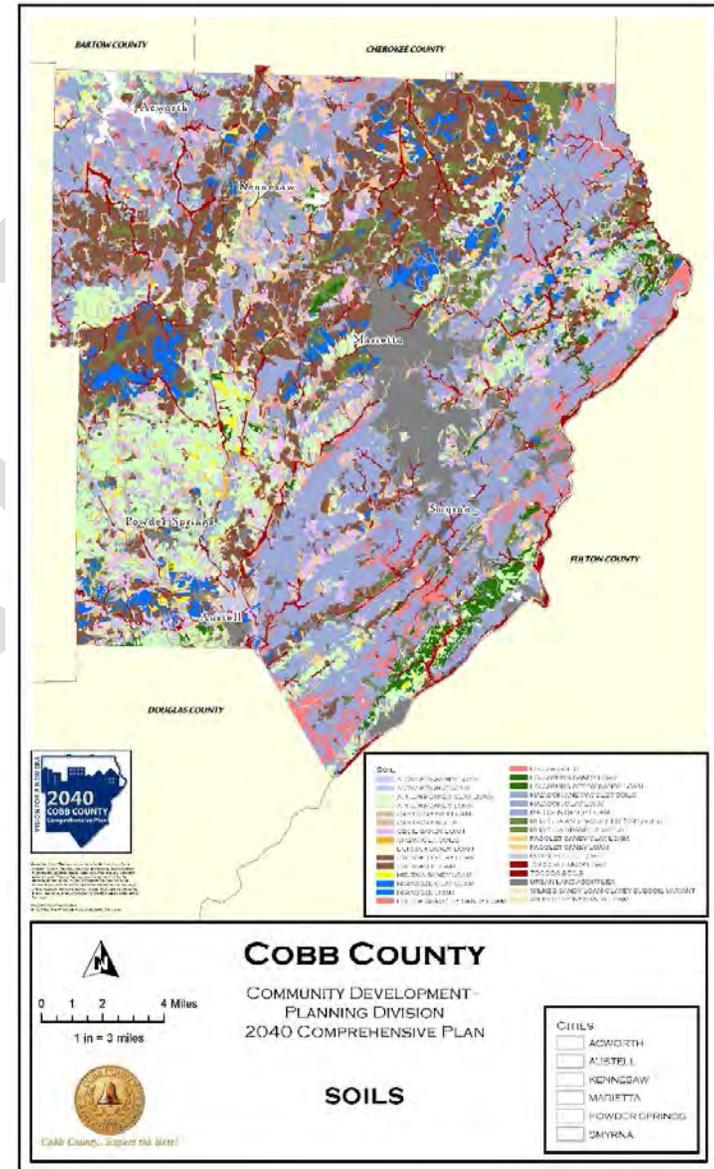


Figure 60

Dominantly Steep, Stony Soils on Mountains and Slopes Adjacent to Some Streams:

- Pacolet-Musella-Louisburg: This association consists of soils on mountain slopes that rise 100 to 600 feet above the surrounding area and on slopes adjacent to some streams. The soils are well drained to excessively drained. A large area of this soil type is found in the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Lost Mountain, Pine Mountain, Blackjack Mountain and their surrounding ridges. The headwaters of Sope and Sewell Mill creeks also have these steep, stony soils. Slopes are 10% to 45%. These soils are unsuitable for most non-farm uses.

Borrow and Fill Areas:

- Urban land and borrow pits: This association is comprised of cut and fill practices that consist of mixed sand, silt, clay and boulders. Found in urban and developed areas, the original soil profile has usually been severely modified by cutting, filling and shaping to accommodate community development. In places where cuts are deep, steep banks are severely eroded. The organic matter content and supply of available plant nutrients are very low.

### Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are defined as those areas with changes in vertical datum equal to or exceeding ten percent. According to the 1973 Soil Survey of Cobb County prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service, Cobb is made up of broad, convex ridgetops that are divided by many drainage ways. The elevation is about 750 feet above sea level along the Chattahoochee River and ranges from about 900 feet to more than 1,800 feet on the ridgetops and mountains. Steep slopes are found on the small mountains in the County: Pine, Lost, Sweat, Blackjack, Kennesaw and Little Kennesaw. Steep slopes are also found in sporadic locations throughout the County and along major streambanks such as Noonday Creek and Allatoona Creek.

Sweat Mountain and Blackjack Mountain in East Cobb have been developed residentially, as have many of the steep slopes rising from the Chattahoochee River. Pine Mountain and Lost Mountain in West Cobb have also seen residential development in the past several years, but thus far, this development has occurred at a slower rate and lower density than in east Cobb. The steep slopes in west Cobb may require more environmentally sensitive developments in lower densities than are found on Sweat and Blackjack Mountains. One mechanism in place for the entire County is the Open Space Community zoning overlay ordinance, which requires the preservation of steep slopes greater than 25%. Kennesaw and Little Kennesaw Mountains are protected from development because they are part of the Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield National Park.

Clearing steep slopes of vegetation in preparation for development often leads to erosion and sedimentation. On slopes that are determined to be suitable for development, erosion control measures are required in accordance with the Soil Sedimentation and Erosion Control ordinance. These requirements are intended to minimize the impact of construction upon potentially sensitive natural resources.

### Prime Agricultural and Forest Land

Prime agricultural and forest land is identified as those areas where the soils and topography are most conducive to vegetative growth. The total acreage of both agricultural and forest land has decreased rapidly throughout the metro-Atlanta area as a result of commercial and residential development. The developments impact forests and valuable watershed resources. Additionally, the placement of infrastructure necessary to support growth has caused a decrease in forest acreage, particularly bottom land and ridges.

### The Urban Forest

The term "urban forest" has been adopted to describe those forest lands that exist among a highly urbanized area, like the Atlanta metropolitan area. Although Cobb County is in the rural-urban interface of the Atlanta region, the urban influence on forest resources is reflected throughout the County. With east Cobb fully suburbanized, much of the old growth hardwood forest has been removed. The young pine stands that have remained on residentially

developed lands, pastures and moderate slopes are under pressure from Southern Pine Beetle infestations, tornadoes, thunderstorms and ice storms. This part of the urban forest is most likely characterized by small groups of pines, young native hardwoods, subdivision entrance and screen plantings and locally available ornamental species.

Further to the west, the cultivated and fallow pastures, livestock farms and upland forests of west Cobb have become a part of the suburban/rural interface. As residential and commercial development expands along the various arterials into the low-density areas of west Cobb, there will be increased stresses upon the natural resources and their benefits, which include canopy cover, water quality, erosion control, storm water management, air quality, property values and economic and aesthetic consideration.

#### **Developed Forests**

The composition forests in the developed areas of the County varies with type and age of development. The older rural homes and residential areas around the cities contain mostly large, old shade trees in the 50 to 100-year age range. Longer living shade trees are frequently planted by people who are likely to settle in one place. Some typical trees found in older areas are Water oak, Willow oak, American elm, Southern magnolia and Pecan.

Established subdivisions (more than 20 years old) have remnants of the forest canopy that survived the construction process and pruning practices. Many of these trees continue to suffer from stresses experienced years before. Landscape plantings reflect ornamental species in vogue at the time the subdivision was built. Dogwood, Plum, Crabapple, Bradford Pear, Maples, Pin Oaks and Weeping Willows are still evident throughout the County.

Newer subdivisions are characterized by dead and dying pines and hardwood trees, which previously made up the forest canopy in the area. The newer subdivisions are also devoid of viable overstory trees, old or new. The smaller lot sizes of current subdivisions make it nearly impossible to avoid severely damaging the root system of any tree growing, even when extra precautions are taken during construction. Planted trees are largely ornamental, which

quickly enhance the resale value of the home, reflecting the transient nature of the market.

The tree cover on commercial and industrial projects also varies with the type and age of the project. Developers of large office and multi-family projects can usually work around existing terrain and trees. Cobb County's newest such developments have begun to devote more space and care in landscaping and maintenance of existing tree cover. However, with much of the flat and open space taken up by previous development, developers of large projects are finding that it takes considerably more planning to work around existing trees. Shopping centers and industrial sites typically maximize impervious surface cover, rarely maintain existing trees and topography or provide adequate space in landscape plantings to reestablish overstory trees that will reach mature size.

More competitive markets and environmental regulations have dictated a greater use of trees in landscape designs for all types of commercial and industrial projects in the County, but the sizes and types of trees used to replace the original landscapes are not generally as substantial as older trees that have plenty of space in which to grow.

#### Undeveloped Forest:

Much of what is left of the undeveloped land in Cobb County is covered by forests. The overstory forest resource in these areas range from 20-year old successional species such as Pine, Sweetgum, Yellow-poplar and later successional species of Red Oak, Maple and Elm.

The more mature forests in Cobb range from 60-150 years old, although it is not difficult to find trees in excess of 200 years of age. These larger, older trees are found along wet undeveloped floodplains and riparian buffers, along ridges, on old home sites and along thoroughfares. While trees of this age may still be found throughout the County, many have been sacrificed due to road-widening projects and storm sewer replacements. On the driest sites, oaks prevail, with the dominant species being Chestnut oak, Post oak and Blackjack oak. On the moist, well-drained sites, other oaks are dominant, with Hickory. The species typifying these areas are White oak, Northern Red oak, Southern

Red oak, Scarlet oak, Black oak, Pignut hickory and Mockernut hickory. On the moist, northern slopes, beech may also be found.

Source: Georgia Forestry Commission

Protective Measure:

There are federal, state, regional, and local regulations that affect forest resources in Cobb County. Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act requires a permit for various impacts on wetlands over a predetermined acreage. The removal of trees from these areas may be permitted under certain circumstances that allow agricultural activities to take place.

At the state level, the Erosion and Sedimentation Act requires that a 25-foot buffer of "undisturbed" soil be maintained along all state waters. Along the Chattahoochee and its tributaries, buffers are regulated by the Metropolitan River Protection Act.

At the local level, Cobb County adopted a Tree Preservation and Replacement Ordinance in 1988. The basic requirement of the ordinance is that any development project must maintain a prescribed minimum density of trees on site. That density can be achieved by preserving existing trees, planting new trees or some combination of the two. The ordinance and associated administrative standards were written in a manner that minimizes impact on the project design while encouraging adequate protection of existing trees and appropriate selection and placement of new trees.

Another local ordinance that affords protection to forest resource is the Cobb County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Through restrictions of certain types of commercial and residential development activities in flood zones, this ordinance provides some degree of protection for forests growing in these areas.

**Sensitive Plant and Animal Habitats**

The development of agricultural and forest land over the years has encroached on many natural ecosystems. While the threat to plant and animals may appear insignificant, every species has an essential place and purpose in nature.

As a result of a growing concern over the conservation of the nation's native plants and animals, the United States Congress passed the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Shortly thereafter, the State of Georgia passed the Wildflower Preservation Act of 1973 and the Endangered Wildlife Act of 1973. As required by these Acts, Georgia DNR began an effort to list native species of plants and animals that are considered endangered, threatened, rare or unusual and designated these as "protected species."

The Georgia Rare Species & Natural Community inventory, maintained by the Wildlife Conservation Section, records for rare plant and animal species. The following ranking system was used to describe the status of certain sensitive plant and animal habitats:

- S1 = Critically imperiled in State, extreme rarity (Five or fewer occurrences)
- S2 = Imperiled in state, rare (six to 20 occurrences)
- S3 = Rare or uncommon in State (on the order of 21-100 occurrences)

The Cobb County inventory has identified 16 plant and animal species that have either a federal or Georgia protection status.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Rank
<i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>	Henslow's Sparrow	S2
<i>Amphianthus pusillus</i>	Pool Sprite, Snorkelwort	S2
<i>Cambarus howardi</i>	Chattahoochee Crayfish	S2
<i>Cyprinella callitaenia</i>	Bluestripe Shiner	S2
<i>Cypripedium acaule</i>	Pink Ladyslipper	S4
<i>Draba aprica</i>	Sun-loving Draba	S1/S2
<i>Elliptio arctata</i>	Delicate Spike	S2
<i>Etheostoma scotti</i>	Cherokee Darter	S2
<i>Hybopsis lineapunctata</i>	Lined Chub	S2
<i>Medionidus penicillatus</i>	Gulf Moccasinshell	S1
<i>Nestronia umbellula</i>	Indian Olive	S3
<i>Notropis hypsilepis</i>	Highscale Shiner	S3
<i>Platanthera integrilabia</i>	Monkeyface Orchid	S1/S2
<i>Rhus michauxii</i>	Dwarf Sumac	S1
<i>Schisandra glabra</i>	Bay Star-vine	S2
<i>Symphotrichum georgianum</i>	Georgia Aster	S3

Figure 61  
Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources

### Scenic Views and Sites

Cobb County is contained by portions of both, the Piedmont Plain, and Blue Ridge regions of Georgia, the topography and natural resources of the County provide beautiful landscapes for residents and visitors. The Chattahoochee River, Lake Acworth/Allatoona, Kennesaw Mountain and other high ridges and valleys are valuable scenic resources. The historic aspects of these natural landforms are equally important as most played a role in Civil War battles and/or in the industrial development of the County in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Lake Allatoona Reservoir and Lake Acworth are areas of natural beauty enjoyed through boating, fishing, camping, swimming and hiking. The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, with its gorges, woods and trails, is a large, scenic area along the eastern border of the County. Ruins of the old Marietta Paper Mills and other industrial structures can be seen in the mill ruins along Sope Creek. These ruins are in an area reported to be one of the few remaining undisturbed rock gorges of the Chattahoochee River tributary system.

Concord Covered Bridge Historic District is a very scenic residential district containing natural resources, such as rolling hills, densely wooded areas and Nickajack Creek. Adding to the natural beauty of this district, there are many historic homes, the historic covered bridge and antebellum mill ruins. The district is currently on the Cobb County Register of Historic Places with three structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Hyde and Powers family farms are rural islands within a suburbanized eastern Cobb County. Hyde Farm, which has not changed since the early 1900s, was a working farm into the early 2000s. It was purchased by the County in 2008 with the goal to open it to the public as a recreational and educational resource. Today, almost 200 acres of this land is still preserved as part of the families' and the County's past heritage. Other particularly scenic rural landscapes include sections of Old Lost Mountain, Old Villa Rica, Mars Hill Church, Old Stilesboro and Old Sandtown Roads.

Kennesaw and Little Kennesaw Mountains are protected from development as part of the 2,800-acre Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. The viewsheds from the summit of Kennesaw Mountain encompass the eastern portion of the County and the Atlanta skyline. The ten miles of hiking trails, meadows and ridges within the park and the historic character of the site make it a beautiful place for residents and visitors of Cobb County.

### HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historic Resources are synonymous with historic property. The National Historic Preservation Act defines "*Historic Property*" as: Any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure or object included on, or eligible for, inclusion on the National Register, including artifacts, records and material remains relating to the district, site, building, structure or object.

Cobb County has been known for its abundance and variety of historic resources. Physical evidence of the County's rich Native American, Civil War, agricultural, industrial and commercial heritage can still be found today. Each resource helps piece together a story about the evolution of Cobb County, which contributes to its unique identity.

Creek Native Americans settled in Cobb County as early as the mid-1700s, with the Cherokees arriving after the treaty of 1819. The Native Americans were the dominant inhabitants of the County until the mid-1830s. Cobb County was established in 1832 by the State Legislature and by 1838, many communities of settlers had been established. Cobb's Native American heritage can be discovered not only in certain archaeological sites and the artifacts recovered from these sites, but in certain names throughout the County. Kennesaw, Sope, Nickajack, Noses and Allatoona are all Native American names or derivatives of these names. Additionally, the Lost Mountain community and militia district was named after Native American lore.

Cobb County's role in the Civil War is also a major part of its history. The series of actions that took place in the County during the march on Atlanta have the highest level of significance of any events in the County's past. Not only does Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park bring visitors from all over the

country and the world, but other unprotected properties contain earthworks and fortifications from the war that are still clearly be seen today. Examples of antebellum architecture and community development also exist in small numbers. Farmhouses, factories and mills used to produce supplies for Confederate troops, while early railroads and early road systems are still a part of the fabric of the County's landscape. The abundance of railroads and early industrial development in Cobb helped to develop its reputation as a prime location for business.

With the industrialization of the County, between the 1880s and 1940s, came the development of towns as centers for commerce, education, politics and social life. Cobb's towns began to grow around the railroads and were incorporated between 1838 and 1912. The grid street pattern following railroad tracks is evident today in Cobb's historic downtown districts and surrounding neighborhoods. Marietta was by far the most significant population center and the town square is evidence of its historical importance to commerce in the late 1800s.

For inventory purposes, the historic resources within Cobb County can be separated into several categories according to use or type.

### Residential Resources

Historic homes in Cobb County include a wide array of architectural styles dating back to the 1840s. As an example of the earliest rural architecture in the County, the Hyde and Powers farm cabins in East Cobb are the last surviving home places that date back to 1840. Other residential resources include antebellum and Civil War period homes, which are relatively few and scattered throughout the County. Examples of this period home can be found in the Kolb House at Kennesaw Mountain and the William Gibbs McAdoo House on U.S. Highway 5.

During the period between 1832 and the 1870s, most homes were part of large farms; therefore, the homes that have survived are, in most cases, not a part of an historic district, but located within newer development. The Concord Covered Bridge Historic District is one exception. Its residences are on large acreages with few unfitting intrusions. There are some historic residential

districts in the County that are more densely developed and contain homes built between the 1840s and 1930s. Church and Cherokee Streets, as well as Washington and Whitlock Avenues, contain a variety of architectural styles including Italianate, Queen Anne, Dutch Colonial, Classic Revival, Craftsman, Greek Revival and Colonial Revival. A few of these homes operate as offices or bed and breakfasts, but the majority still serve as private residences.



*Hyde Farm Barn (after restoration)*

The homes of the upper class of Cobb are not the only significant historic residential resources. The Clarkdale Mill Village Historic District is a pure example of early 20th century industrial community planning. Built in the 1930s, the mill houses in this community range in style and size according to the hierarchy of mill employees, from small duplexes to larger single-family supervisors' cottages. These are all modest homes but represent a typical type of housing built around an industry that no longer exist in most communities.

Historic residences in Cobb County offer a character that sets neighborhoods apart and the increasing rarity of these homes only increases their demand among home buyers.

### Commercial Resources

Cobb County has commercial districts and resources that date back to the mid-1800s. Most of the surviving historic commercial resources within exist within the city limits of the six cities. The first central business districts sprang up around the railroads. Acworth, Austell, Kennesaw, Marietta and Powder Springs, each have unique downtown districts that reflect the culture of the cities' pasts. Due to Sherman's march on Atlanta in 1864, Smyrna does not have an historic central business district today. Upon incorporation, most cities simply chose a central point and extended the city boundary a certain distance from that point. In Cobb, four of the seven cities, had original boundaries that formed a circle around the central business district. Powder Springs was one exception; their original boundary included only the single land lot in which "downtown" was located. Marietta was another exception in shape. Lastly, Mableton was incorporated in 1912 but asked to have their charter repealed in 1916. The Historic City Boundaries Map in Figure 83, shows original city limits, including historic downtowns and dates of incorporation.

### Industrial Resources

Cobb County's industrial history has been prevalent since the mid-1800s. Various mill ruins such as Ruff's Mill in the Concord Road Historic District and Sope Creek Mill ruins in Marietta attest to the importance of industry from the earliest days of the County's development.

The Brumby Rocking Chair Company is also an example of Cobb's early role in manufacturing. Built in Marietta in 1879, the rocking chair factory off Kennesaw Avenue was in production for almost 100 years. The Brumby rocking chair is still around today, but the historic factory building has a new function. A construction company purchased the two large buildings in the early 1990s and began a very successful adaptive reuse project. The Brumby buildings now make up 167 apartment units, 131 of which are loft apartments with fifteen-foot ceilings. Much of the original machinery from the factory is still seen throughout the building and on the property. Adjacent to "the Square" in downtown Marietta, this project is a fine example of the economics of preservation at work.

Later in Cobb's industrial history, the Coats & Clark Thread Mill stands as an example of 1930s construction and technology. This mill was the driving force of the Clarkdale Mill Village Historic District, with residential resources. The mill is an example of Cobb County's move toward industrial and commercial importance in the twentieth century. The 230,000 SQFT mill was in operation until 1983. Today, the building is structurally sound and has been redeveloped to serve as the Threadmill Outlet Mall and City of Austell Government offices.



*Clarkdale Mill Village Historic District*

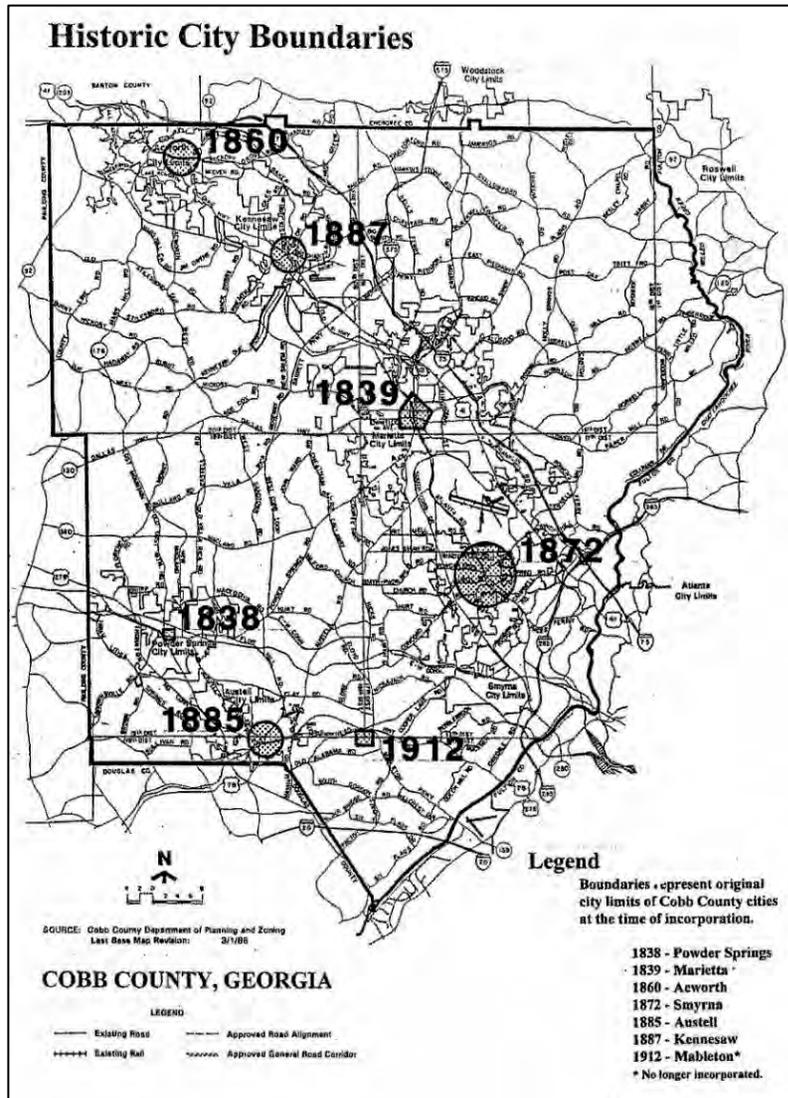


Figure 5  
 Source: 2006 Comprehensive Plan

### Institutional Resources

As historic industrial resources can reveal a lot about the development of Cobb County's economy, historic institutional resources communicate the social and cultural heritage of the County through their architecture, location, or history of use.

Most of the historic institutional resources in Cobb are churches or church-related buildings. Midway Presbyterian Church, located on Dallas Highway in the western part of Cobb, is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its congregation dates to September 8, 1849. The historic church building was built in 1904 and is believed to have been preceded by at least two frame structures. The most noted feature of Midway Presbyterian Church is the heavy Norman arched front entrance tower which is supported by five columns.

Zion Baptist Church is also on the National Register and is a significant part of Cobb's heritage. It was created in 1866 by newly freed blacks who petitioned to leave a white congregation in order to create their own congregation. In 1888, the congregation bricked in the wooden church they had been using and added a bell tower in 1897. Zion Baptist is the oldest black Baptist church in Cobb County.

Downtown Marietta contains many historically significant churches. Within a few blocks of each other, there are the First Baptist Church of Marietta, St. James Episcopal Church, First United Methodist Church and First Presbyterian Church. The architecture of these buildings reflects their city location and historically larger congregation than the rural churches. Their location in the historic downtown business district, adjacent to two historic residential districts, reflects the importance that the church held in society.

The Log Cabin Sunday School located on Log Cabin Drive in Smyrna is one of Cobb County's oldest surviving structures. The cabin was built in the late 1840s as a private residence and was later moved to its current location in 1868. It transformed from residence to Sunday school in 1912. As attendance grew, the school moved into a larger cabin, which was later replaced by a stone structure. The original building is still in use on a weekly basis.

### Historic Archaeological, and Cultural Sites

While many of Cobb County's historic resources are under private ownership, there are also historic archaeological and cultural sites under public ownership. These historic resources serve educational purposes for the public. These sites also help tell a story about the evolution of Cobb throughout the years.

The Gilgal Church Battlefield site is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is a 20-acre hardwood forest west of Marietta, which contains many remnants of the skirmishes and battles that took place between Sherman and Johnston's troops from June 10 until July 3, 1864. The integrity of the area has been well preserved.

Discovery Park at the River Line is another site on the National Register of Historic Places lists. One of the few surviving portions of significant earthworks is owned by the County and was part of the 2016 SPLOST to include passive recreation and interpretation.

The Robert Mable House and Cemetery is a County-maintained cultural center on a 16-acre tract of land, which contains a two-story antebellum house, a smokehouse, a detached kitchen and a family cemetery. The property also features significant archaeological aspects, such as a former encampment of federal soldiers during the Civil War. This site qualified as a National Register site based on its distinctive characteristics of a rural farm complex.

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park is a complex of historic resources. Within the park is the grave of an unknown Union Soldier, the Fellows, Illinois and McCook Monuments, the Kolb House and sites of archaeological significance such as Civil War earthworks.

Lastly, Cobb County considers its cemeteries to be important archaeological, cultural and institutional sites. Cemeteries can tell as much about the history of a place as historic buildings, structures or archaeological resources. Not only do historic grave markers serve to relay information about the identity of the deceased, they also help to trace the heritage of Cobb's people.

The passage of the Cemetery Preservation Ordinance in 1993, provides for the protection, preservation and maintenance of family and community cemeteries, graveyards and burial grounds. The ordinance also created the Cobb County Cemetery Preservation Commission, which is charged with the responsibility of maintaining an inventory and assessment of such cemeteries.

As overseers of cemetery protection, the Commission works with the Zoning Division to provide comments on zoning and variance applications, permits for land disturbance activities, as well as annexation applications from the cities.

### The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the country's official list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects and districts worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register helps preserve historic properties by providing recognition of a property's architectural, historical or archaeological significance. By adding sites to the lists, properties can be identified for planning purposes, so that the historic significance can be considered when state or federally funded projects are developed.

Owners of National Registered properties may qualify for federal historic preservation grants or State tax benefits gained through the charitable contribution of preservation easements to nonprofit organizations. Owners of income-producing properties listed in the National Register are eligible for federal tax credits for rehabilitation work that meets preservation standards. Listing on the National Register automatically puts properties on the Georgia Register of Historic Places, qualifying owners for state preservation tax incentives, as well.

Listing on the National Register does not place obligations or restrictions on the use or disposition of the property. National Register listing is not the same as local historic district zoning or local landmark designation, nor does the listing encourage public acquisition of or access to property.

The table below (*Figure 63*) is a list of the Cobb County Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places within Cobb County to date. There are certainly many other buildings, structures and districts throughout

the County that may be eligible for National Register and/or Cobb Register designation.



Cheney-Newcomer House

**Local Education, Recognition, and Protection**

In 1984, Cobb County took a major step toward protecting its past with the passage of a county-wide historic preservation ordinance, the first in Georgia. The ordinance established a five-member Cobb County Historic Preservation Commission (CCHPC). Appointed by the Board of Commissioners, its members recommend specific buildings, districts, sites, structures or works of art to receive historic designation.

To further promote the preservation of Cobb's heritage while allowing for growth, the County adopted a Landmark Historic Property Tax Abatement Program in 1992. Property that is listed on the National Register or Georgia Register of Historic Places and the Cobb County Register may qualify for "preferential classification and assessment of property taxes."

Cobb County Register of Historic Places	National Register of Historic Places (Unincorporated Cobb County)
Blackwell Family Cemetery	Braswell-Carnes House
Heights of Kennesaw Apartments Earthworks Trail (a segment of the Brushy Mountain Line)	Israel Causey-Maxham House
Israel Causey-Maxham House	Andrew J. Cheney-Newcomer House
Andrew J. Cheney-Newcomer House	Clarkdale Historic District
Clarkdale Mill Village Historic District	Gigal Church Battlefield Site
Concord Covered Bridge Historic District	Glover-McLeod-Garrison House
Brown-Loudermilk-Corey House	Johnston's River Line (updated 2015)
Fowler-Corey-DeGrasse House	Discovery Boulevard Tract
Gantt House	Henderson Road Tract
Gilgal Church Battlefield Site	Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park
Hill-Pike House	Robert Mable House and Cemetery
Discovery Park at the River Line	William Gibbs McAdoo House
Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park	Midway Presbyterian Church
Lost Mountain Store	George A. Power Cabin
Robert Mable House and Cemetery	John W. Rice Summer Cottage
William Gibbs McAdoo House	Riverview Carousel at Six Flags
Midway Presbyterian Church	Ruff's Mill and Concord Covered Bridge
Pace House, Yarbrough House and Old Pavilion	Sope Creek Ruins
George A. Power Cabin	Solomon Pace House
Hooper-Turner-Presley House (demolished 2015)	
Sewell Mill Ruins	
Sherar-Skelton House	
Sope Creek Ruins/Marietta Paper Mill	
Moss-Sibley Cabin	
Old Dallas Road Bridge	
New Friendship Baptist Church	
Shoupade Park	
Casteel-Nix-Volin House	
Hill-Crowe-White House	
Union Field Fortifications at Henderson Road and Howell's Mill	

Figure 63

Source: Cobb County Planning Division

**WATER**

The Cobb County Water System was created in 1940 to address the water distribution needs of unincorporated areas of Cobb County. Funding for the Water System is provided by fees for services rendered. No funding is provided to the Water System by the Cobb County General Fund.

Going forward, the Water System is well-positioned to meet the demands of its customer base into the future. The potable water supply, as provided by the Cobb County – Marietta Water Authority, is resilient and adequate to meet future demands. The four water reclamation facilities owned and operated by the Water System also have substantial unused capacity available to accommodate future wastewater flows, although technological upgrades to various components will continue to be appropriate. The System’s water distribution and wastewater collection networks have generally been sized to accommodate anticipated future flow peaks, such that its unusual that pipelines require replacement to increase capacity.

Wastewater (MGD)		
Facility	Capacity	Capacity Used (%)
Noonday Water Reclamation Facility	20	52
Northwest Water Reclamation Facility	12	56
South Cobb Water Reclamation Facility	40	62
RL Sutton Water Reclamation Facility	40	68

Figure 64  
Source: Cobb County Water Systems

In addition to the treatment plants, there are five separate intergovernmental agreements with neighboring jurisdictions that Cobb either sends sewer to or receives sewer for treatment. The facilities, intergovernmental agreements and sewer basins are noted on Figure 65.

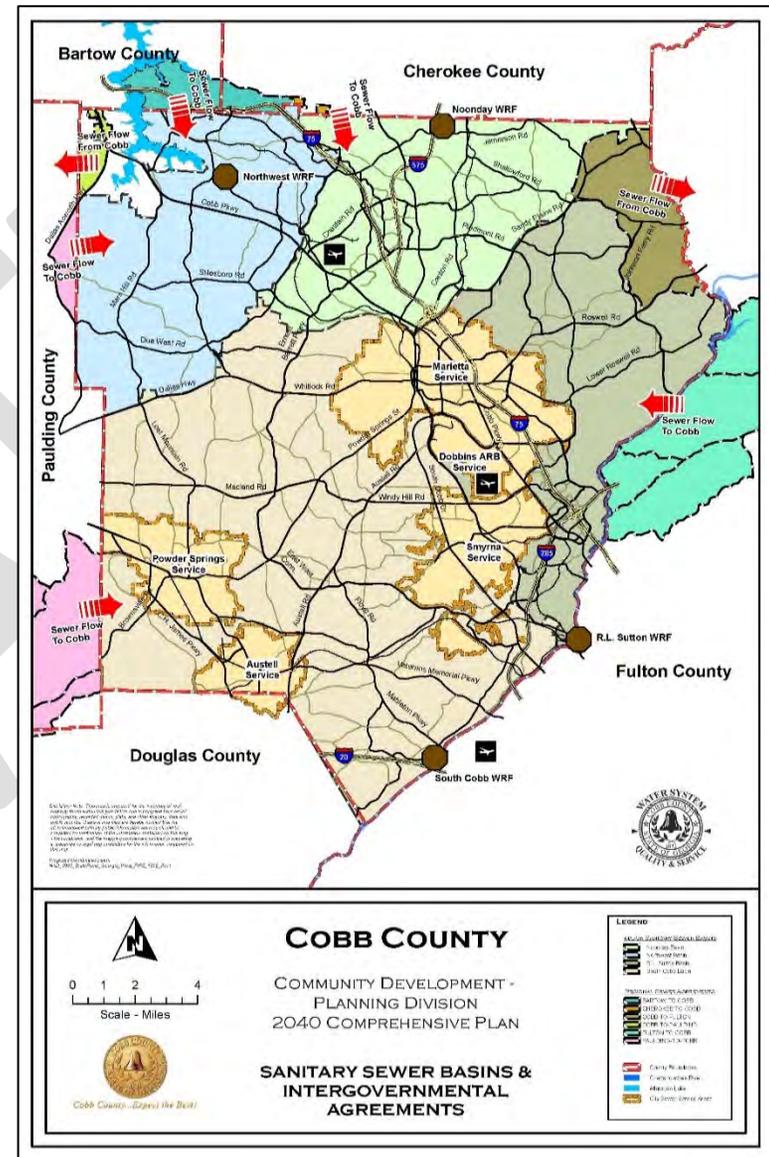


Figure 65

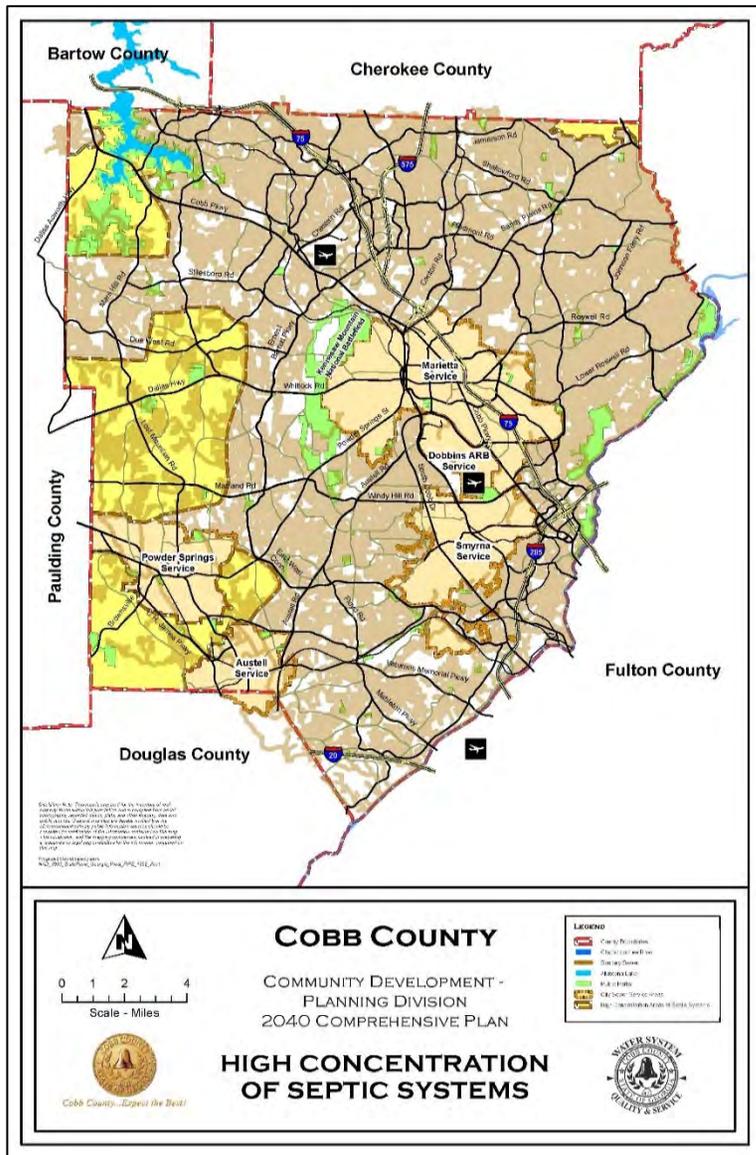


Figure 66

Most of the County is accessible to sewer. However, there are four areas in Cobb that lack a high concentration of sewer. Three of the four areas have sewer available on a widely scattered basis and one particularly small area in northeast Cobb lacks sewer all together. Most areas where sewer is not available is due to the topography of the land and may never need sewer service based on large lots that could handle septic systems. *Figure 66* shows areas of the county where sewer is prevalent and where it is lacking.

Stormwater Management (SWM) continuously updates the limits, magnitude and frequency of the 100-year frequency flood hazard in the County, to determine the extent that flood hazard areas have been augmented by human activity (i.e. dams and development). This is done to determine at what extent possible should certain lands be excluded from future development and what lands could be publicly owned, preserved and reclaimed as major floodplains and used as natural flood storage areas to the maximum extent practical.

In addition to floodplain management, SWM maintains stormwater infrastructure dedicated to and accepted by Cobb County for perpetual maintenance according to County Code. SWM utilizes best management practices that complies with federal and state mandates regarding clean water laws and regulations. SWM monitors a wide spectrum of non-point source pollutants within the major streams in Cobb County and implements plans to improve the aquatic habitat and quality of streams. SWM also monitors the biological diversity of streams as an indicator of the long-term water quality health of our major streams.

While the Water System’s outlook is strong and existing infrastructure provides an excellent basis for the continued provision of superior service into the future, several challenges and opportunities are anticipated in upcoming years:

- It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and retain suitable staffing, particularly during periods of heightened economic activity. Historically, excellent benefits (particularly a strong pension plan) have offset to some extent limited pay levels. Changes to the pension plan in recent years, combined with pressure to limit costs, have led to increased

reliance on consultants at increased costs to provide basic required functions.

- The handling and disposal of biosolids collected at the water reclamation facilities has become more challenging and substantially more expensive over the past several years. Environmental requirements associated with both incineration and landfilling have become more restrictive.
- Stormwater management activities performed by the Water System are funded by water and wastewater fees rather than through a dedicated funding mechanism (such as a Stormwater Utility). Because of this situation, stormwater management services tend to be reactive rather than proactive and are generally limited in scope to that which is essential.
- Cobb County experienced a great deal of growth in the last several decades of the twentieth century, including a substantial expansion of the water distribution, wastewater collection, and stormwater management networks. As this infrastructure reaches the end of its useful life, an increasing level of attention will need to be focused on pipeline replacement/renewal. This has been an ongoing priority for the water and wastewater systems but may become a more difficult issue for stormwater infrastructure because of costs and limited concern for replacement during design and initial installation.

Despite these potential issues, the Cobb County Water System remains in a very strong position and anticipates continuing to provide quality services at a reasonable cost to its customers into the future.

## PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Cobb County P.A.R.K.S. (Parks, Arts, Recreation, Keep Cobb Beautiful, and Solid Waste) Department is responsible for a variety of parks and recreational programming and facilities. Facilities include Cobb County Civic Center Complex, Al Bishop and Lost Mountain Softball Complexes, 5 recreation centers, 4 arts centers, the Mable House Barnes Amphitheater, 6 tennis centers and 122 tennis courts, 4 indoor aquatic centers, more than 60 miles of trails and the fairgrounds at Jim R. Miller Park. In total, Cobb P.A.R.K.S. manages 84 separate properties with a total land area of approximately 5,725 acres. Of the 84 parcels, 61 are developed and 23 are currently undeveloped.

An array of youth and adult athletic, artistic, therapeutic and education services and programs are offered through the department and with other organizations. Recreation programming is provided to Cobb's senior population at its Senior Centers and Neighborhood Centers.

The County park system has grown over time in accordance with the recommendations from the 1966, 1986 and 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plans. As part of the 2016 SPLOST, an update to the 2002 Master Plan was approved by the Board of Commissioners in 2018. The updated Parks Master Plan is a comprehensive long-range plan that used community engagement to identify and analyze the parks and recreation needs and desires of the community. The overall objective of the plan is to guide P.A.R.K.S. for future improvements over the next 10 years. The plan analyzed existing facilities and programs and provides recommendations for additional programs and facilities to serve the community.

The Cobb County Comprehensive P.A.R.K.S. Master Plan, which was adopted in 2018 will act as the Parks element for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan 5-Year update. While the Parks Element is not a required element per the DCA minimum standards and procedures, Cobb does want to reflect the importance of master planning for parks, recreation and programming, as well as the overall Vision, by integrating the Parks plan into the main 2040 Comprehensive Plan document.

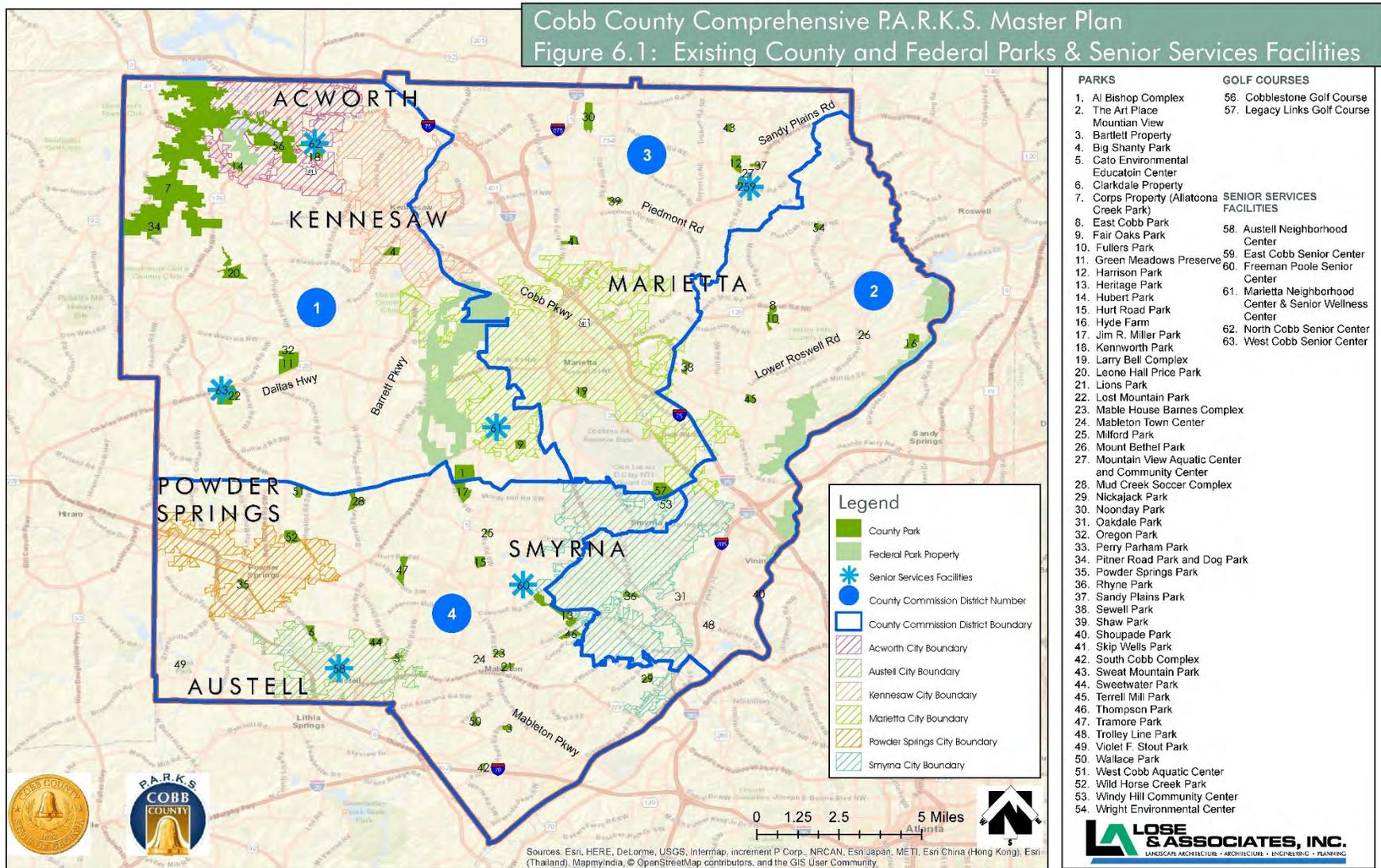


Figure 67

Source: Cobb County 2018 Parks Master Plan

## LIBRARY

Public libraries are important public facilities for residents of Cobb County. With an increase in the senior population, the library system will continue to experience increasing demands from patrons with more leisure time and rising expectations for educational and personal achievement.

The Cobb County Public Library System (CCPLS) is a 15-branch system with a mobile library that is headquartered in Marietta, Georgia. Its staff members serve a diverse population of more than 750,000 people.

- East Cobb Library
- Gritters Library
- Kemp Memorial Library
- Lewis A. Ray Library
- Mountain View Library
- North Cobb Library
- Powder Springs Library
- Sewell Mill Library & Cultural Center
- Sibley Library
- South Cobb Regional Library
- Stratton Library
- Sweetwater Library
- Switzer Library
- Vinings Library
- West Cobb Regional Library
- Cobb Library Bookmobile

The mission of the Library System is to be a place that is committed to being a vital resource center by providing equal access to information, materials, and services to enrich people's lives.

The Library System vision is to move beyond traditional library services by strategically integrating new technology services, creating engaging community centers, and providing life enriching library and cultural experiences for all who enter our doors.

System-wide services include:

- Innovation and entrepreneurship programs;
- 3D printing;
- Book clubs and kids;
- eGovernment;
- Hotspots and Wi-Fi;
- Interlibrary loans;
- Library services in Spanish;
- Meeting space;
- Accessibility services;
- Bookmobile and outreach services; and
- Park and museum passes.

There are 458,000 registered library system cardholders, 120,100 library passes, 2,172 virtual and in-person programs, and 38,340 virtual and in-person program attendees per the 2021 Library Systems Annual Report.

### Recent Library Facility Projects

- The Switzer Library underwent an extensive 2-year renovation. The \$9.6 million project was funded through the 2011 and 2016 SPLOST and grants from the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS), and appropriations from the Cobb County Board of Commissioners.
- The South Cobb Regional Library underwent a three-month renovation that included interior and exterior repairs.
- Gritters Library is currently under construction. It is being rebuilt using 2016 SPLOST and GPLS funds. The new Gritters Library is expected to be complete in 2023.

**BROADBAND**

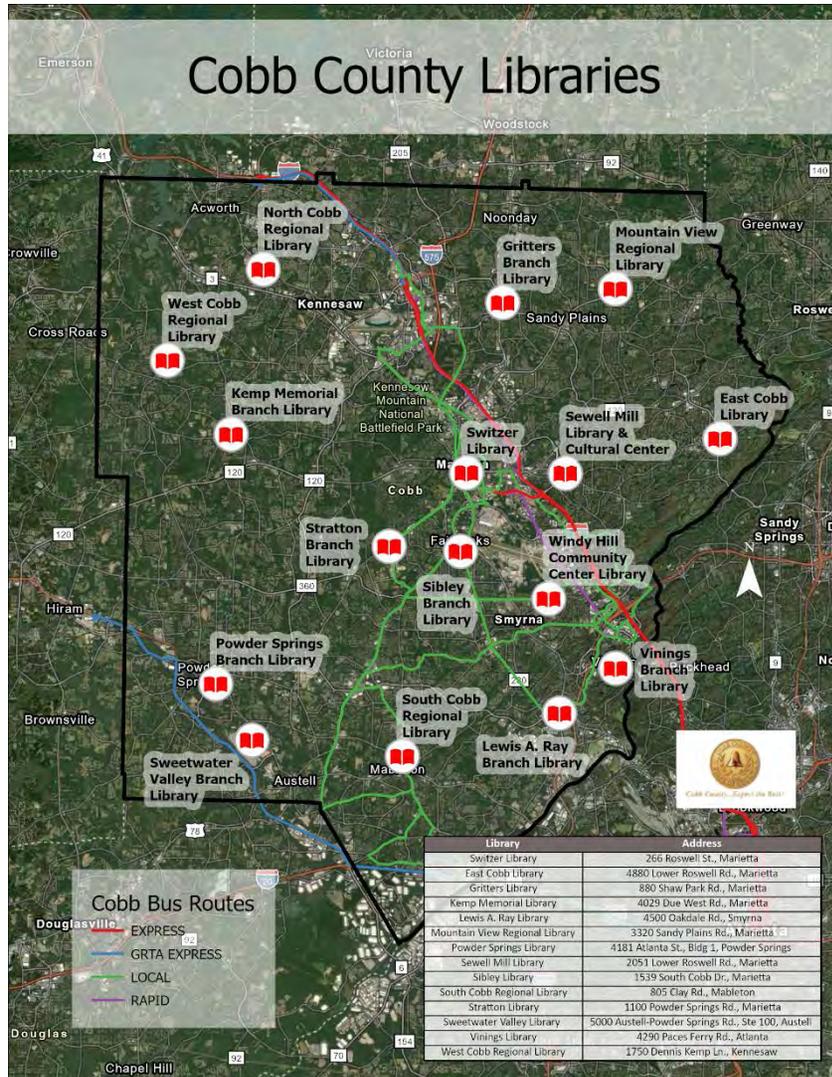


Figure 68

On October 1, 2018, the Minimum Standards and Procedures were modified in response to the Georgia General Assembly amending provisions of the Georgia Planning Act aimed at facilitating the enhancement and extension of high-speed internet infrastructure, known as the “Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act”. As of 2018, the amended statutes require all jurisdictions to include a Broadband element within their Comprehensive Plans.

According to DCA's minimum standards and procedures, local governments must address the availability of broadband services within the community and the deployment of broadband by service providers into unserved areas. The Broadband element must provide steps for the promotion of reasonable and cost-effective access to broadband to parts of the county designated by DCA as unserved areas.

In today's society, access to high-speed internet, computer processing, and information storage is the backbone to information and economic growth. Broadband can provide a community access to services such as healthcare, public safety, educational and economic opportunities, e-commerce, social connectivity, and other information resources. It is also vital to the success of businesses, whether they are operating within the regional, national or global economy.

Broadband service is based on a fixed, terrestrial, wired or wireless service at minimum download speeds of at least 25 Mbps and uploading speeds of at least 3 Mbps. Broadband can provide high speed internet access via multiple types of technologies including fiber optics, wireless, cable, DSL and satellite.

Figure 70 provides the percentage of population with access to broadband at varying speeds for Cobb County and compares it to the nation and other counties in the metro Atlanta area.

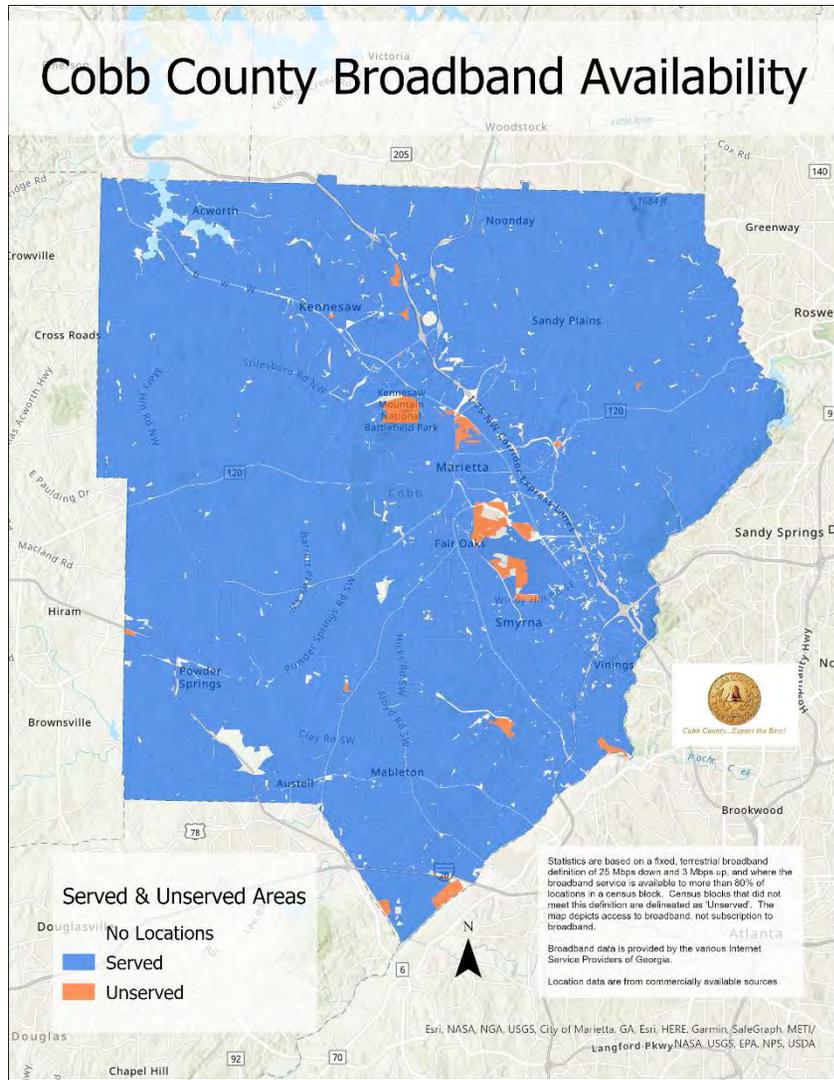


Figure 69  
Source: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 477

Percentage of Population with Access to Broadband			
	25 Mbps	100 Mbps	1 Gig
Nationwide	99.96%	93.14%	26.72%
Cobb County	100%	97.90%	60.82%
Bartow County	100%	93.17%	34.68%
Cherokee County	100%	96.72%	70.41%
Dekalb County	100%	98.83%	77.51%
Douglas County	100%	97.53%	49.30%
Fulton County	100%	97.35%	66.37%
Gwinnett County	100%	99.10%	77.77%
Paulding County	100%	98.16%	68.57%

Figure 70  
Source: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 477

There does not appear to be any deficiencies in the availability of broadband services in Cobb County. Residents of Cobb County and surrounding counties enjoy widespread access to broadband. According to the FCC, as of June 2021, one hundred percent of Cobb's population has access to the minimum speeds as defined by broadband services. In fact, the entire County has access to at least 2 broadband service providers and most have access to three or more broadband service providers. Overall, Cobb is sufficiently served with broadband availability and service providers throughout the County.



Download / Upload Speeds of 25 Mbps / 3 Mbps (25Mbps)				
Area	No providers	1 or more providers	2 or more providers	3 or more providers
Cobb County	0.00%	100%	100%	98.09%
Nationwide	0.04%	99.96%	99.87%	97.03%
Bartow County	0.00%	100%	100%	95.26%
Cherokee County	0.00%	100%	99.99%	98.09%
Dekalb County	0.00%	100%	100%	99.21%
Douglas County	0.00%	100%	100%	97.85%
Fulton County	0.00%	100%	100%	97.70%
Gwinnett County	0.00%	100%	100%	99.18%
Paulding County	0.00%	100%	100%	98.77%
Download / Upload Speeds of 100 Mbps / 10 Mbps (100 Mbps)				
Area	No providers	1 or more providers	2 or more providers	3 or more providers
Cobb County	2.10%	97.90%	83.55%	11.81%
Nationwide	6.86%	93.14%	59.81%	15.95%
Bartow County	6.83%	93.17%	58.33%	0.67%
Cherokee County	3.28%	96.72%	87.50%	5.03%
Dekalb County	1.17%	98.83%	87.91%	3.36%
Douglas County	2.47%	97.53%	80.74%	1.78%
Fulton County	2.65%	97.35%	81.14%	12.47%
Gwinnett County	0.90%	99.10%	91.38%	25.35%
Paulding County	1.84%	98.16%	84.04%	4.79%
Download / Upload Speeds of 1000 Mbps / 100 Mbps (1 Gig)				
Area	No providers	1 or more providers	2 or more providers	3 or more providers
Cobb County	39.18%	60.82%	23.90%	0.00%
Nationwide	73.28%	26.72%	24.80%	0.10%
Bartow County	65.32%	34.68%	0.67%	0.00%
Cherokee County	29.59%	70.41%	2.89%	0.00%
Dekalb County	22.49%	77.51%	2.55%	0.00%
Douglas County	50.70%	49.30%	1.44%	0.00%
Fulton County	33.63%	66.37%	5.59%	0.14%
Gwinnett County	22.23%	77.77%	1.49%	0.00%
Paulding County	31.43%	68.57%	0.00%	0.00%

Figure 71

Source: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 477

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The role of intergovernmental coordination among local governments is essential to, among many things, the effective delivery of services to the general public. Cobb County maintains working relationships with the six (6) municipal governments within the County, as well as several other authorities and agencies serving the public. The purpose of this section is to inventory existing intergovernmental relationships and procedures that will impact success of the overall goals and initiatives within this document.

### Municipalities in Cobb

As previously mentioned, there are six (6) municipalities within Cobb County: Acworth, Austell, Kennesaw, Marietta, Powder Springs and Smyrna. Each of these cities has their own local governing bodies in place, consisting of an elected mayor and city council. Except for Austell, which the Mayor performs the administrative functions, each city has an appointed city manager that oversees the day-to-day operations of the respective city's functions. These include zoning, code enforcement, building permits, site inspections, business licenses, public safety and others. These all mirror the functions overseen by the County Manager in terms of unincorporated areas in Cobb.

### House Bill 489 and House Bill 2

State House Bill 489 mandates coordination between local governmental entities on issues such as public utility/service delivery, public safety coverage, emergency response, future land use, annexation and others. The last update to the local House Bill 489 agreement was drafted and approved in 2004.

Per the first article of House Bill 489, the County holds a Service Delivery Agreement with each of the cities that ensures no duplication of services by cities and counties, resulting in timely emergency response by police, fire and emergency medical personnel. This is vital due to the vast overall area of the County and the unincorporated islands that are surrounded entirely by municipal boundaries. Article 2 of House Bill 489 established procedures for annexation of property by the cities. House Bill 2 of 2007 was the last

update to the procedures established by House Bill 489. It refined the annexation dispute resolution process.

As a part of the Service Delivery Strategy mentioned above, the County holds Intergovernmental Land Use Agreements (LUAs) with each of the six cities. The LUAs are intended to ensure consistent land use patterns in the fringe areas of each of the cities. These agreements are especially significant in the annexation and rezoning process and help ensure the character of neighborhoods and communities remain intact should they be annexed and rezoned into or out of a city. They also help to foster communication and positive working relationships between the cities, County staff and elected officials.

#### **Other Agencies/Jurisdictional Bodies**

There are several entities with which divisions of the Community Development Agency interact. Amongst these agencies are: Cobb County Water Systems (CCWS), Cobb/Marietta Water Authority, the Cumberland CID, Gateway Marietta CID and the Town Center CID. The CCWS and Cobb/Marietta Water Authority often provides vital input on potential impacts on water infrastructure caused by proposed developments, while working closely with the Zoning and Planning Division offices within the Community Development Agency. The CIDs work closely with offices such as the Planning Division, Economic Development and the Cobb Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding issues including, but not limited to the following: future land use/master planning, transportation infrastructure and redevelopment and economic development initiatives.

Cobb County also works to establish and nurture a working relationship with the Cobb County Board of Education. A strong working relationship between the two entities helps to better address issues pertaining to school capacity, transportation, water infrastructure, as well as, the potential location of new schools and education facilities.

As mandated by Federal law, Cobb County is under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Atlanta region. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) serves as the MPO. In accordance with

state law, ARC reviews the County's Comprehensive Plan updates, coordinates the review of Developments of Regional Impact, generates regional plans to improve the quality of life of the region and other matters that impact the Atlanta metropolitan region.

Cobb is also a member of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, which was created in 2001 via Senate Bill 130. The District, which consists of sixteen counties and the municipalities within, establishes policy, creates plans and promotes intergovernmental coordination for all water issues in the district. The District also facilitates multi-jurisdictional water related projects and enhances access to funding for water-related projects among local governments in the District area.

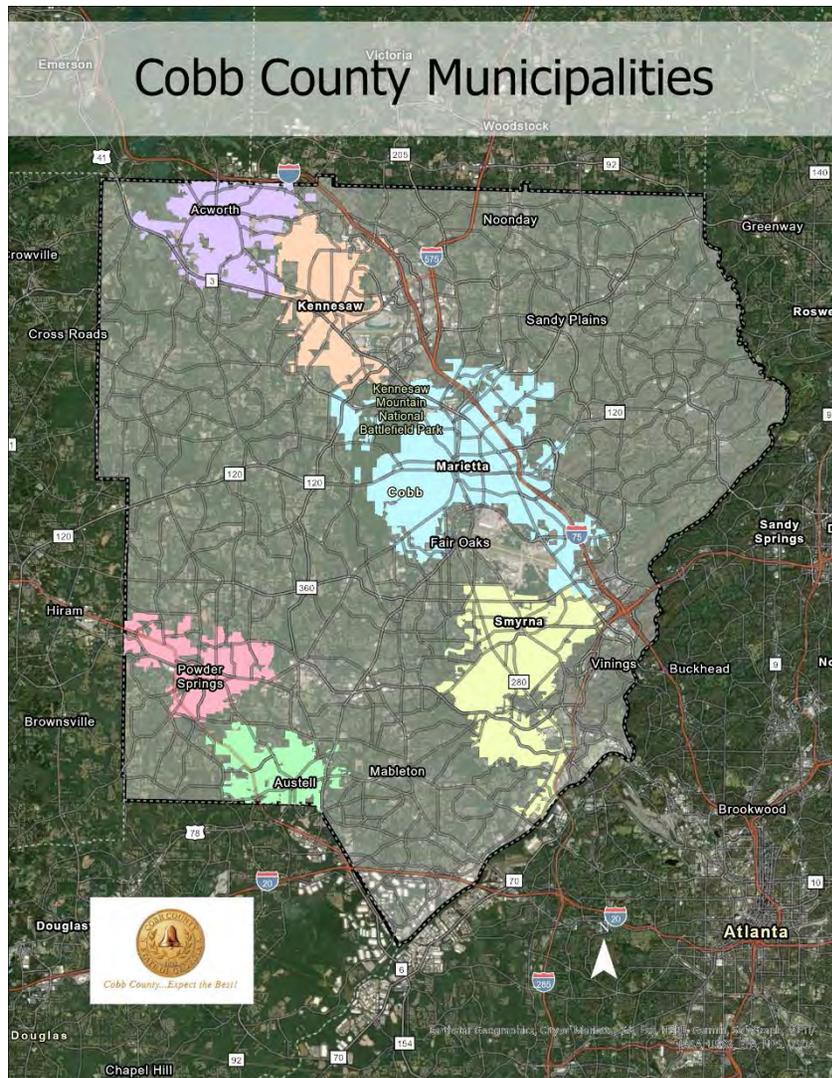


Figure 6

## SENIOR SERVICES

As of 2019, Cobb County's senior population (65 years and up) was more than 89,040 strong and growing. Senior Services will become a more important asset in the future as the senior population continues to grow and become more diverse. Cobb Senior Services already provides an array of services to meet the needs of today's seniors and continues to work toward solutions to the challenges of tomorrow.

In 1972, the Marietta-Cobb Community Center Service was created by the Marietta Housing Authority. When the agency became a part of Cobb County Government in 1984, its name was changed to Cobb Senior Services. Cobb Senior Services' mission is to improve the quality of life for the senior citizens through innovative programs and state-of-the-art facilities that meet their level of needs.

Today, Cobb County Government operates multiple senior and neighborhood centers around the County and provides a variety of services to all citizens age 55 and older, their families and care givers.

- Senior Wellness Center & Marietta Neighborhood Center
- Austell Senior Center & Neighborhood Center
- Freeman Poole Senior Center
- North Cobb Senior Center & Neighborhood Center
- Tim D. Lee Senior Center
- West Cobb Senior Center

Senior Services is staffed by full-time and part-time employees, as well as community volunteers, whose objective is assisting the senior citizen population of Cobb to remain independent through affordable transportation, nutrition, recreation, education, socialization and in-home services. Funding comes through federal grants, as well as state and County government funds. Staff provides support for a broad spectrum of seniors, ranging from:

- The very active senior who drives and dances

- The less mobile individual, who is still able to take advantage of noonday meals, transportation, social and educational programs
- The homebound senior needing trained assistance at home.

Cobb County’s senior population will continue to increase in number and diversity. The senior population will also make up a larger percentage of the overall population. To ensure adequate service delivery, Cobb Senior Services has established several goals and strategies within their most recent 2018-2028 Master Plan.

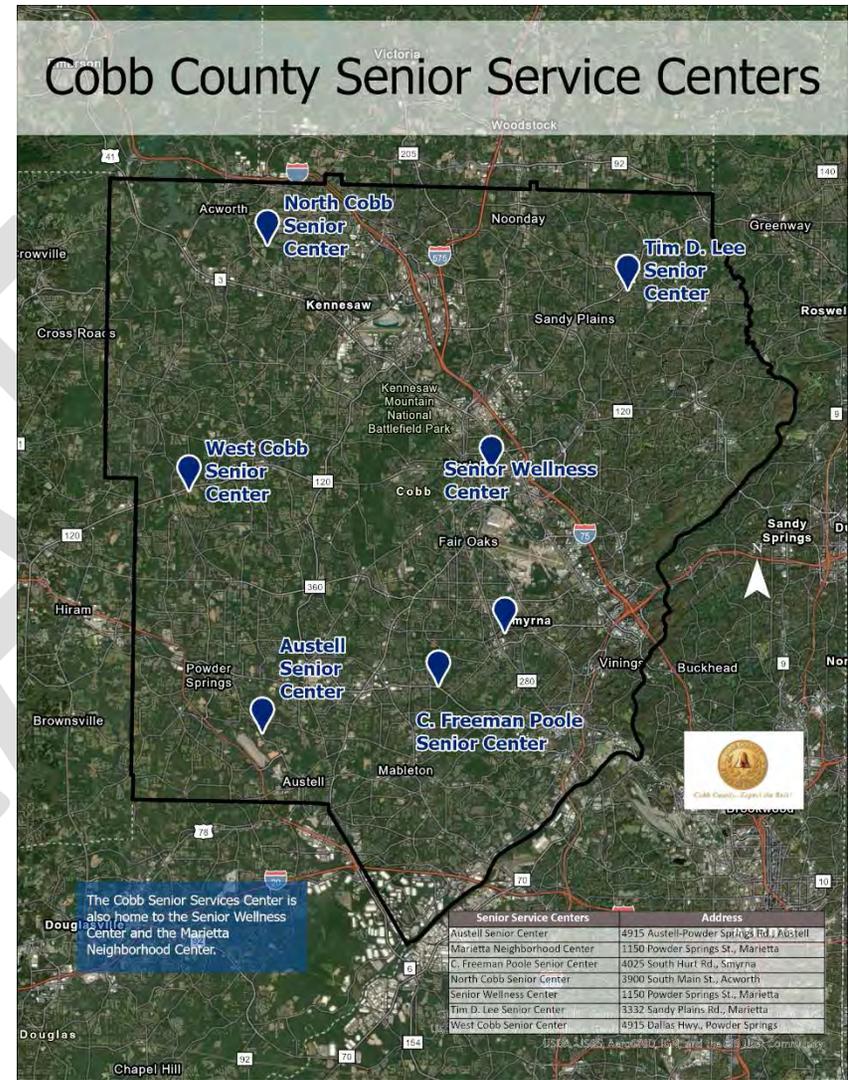


Figure 91