



## Suburban Transit Planning Strategies

**Presented By:**

**Eric Meyer, Cobb DOT**

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**Debbie Wilson, Kimley-Horn**

**March 27, 2019**

# Agenda

- Overview
- Transportation Demand Management
- Transportation Network Companies
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Existing and Potential Applications for Cobb DOT

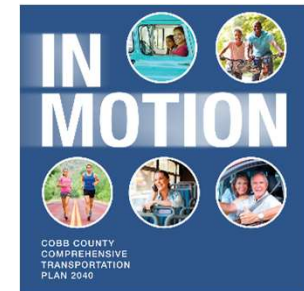
# Suburban Transit Planning Strategies

## Overview

Eric Meyer, Cobb DOT

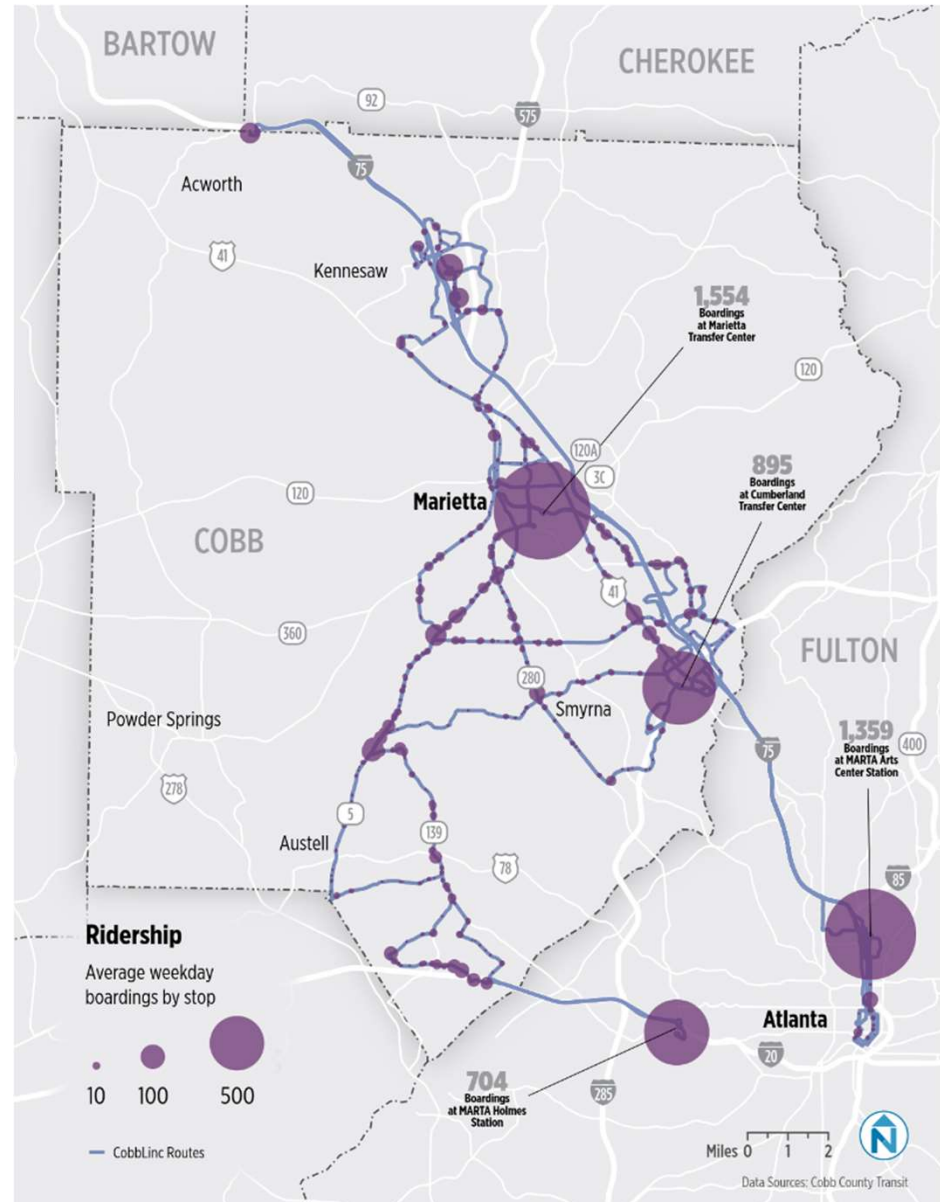
# Cobb Major Planning Efforts

- 2015 Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- Connect Cobb AA & EA
- South Cobb Transit Study
- Route 10X Plan
- Weekend Service Plan
- Transit Service Plan
- Roadway Safety Audits
- ADA Transition Plan
- Greenways & Trails Master Plan

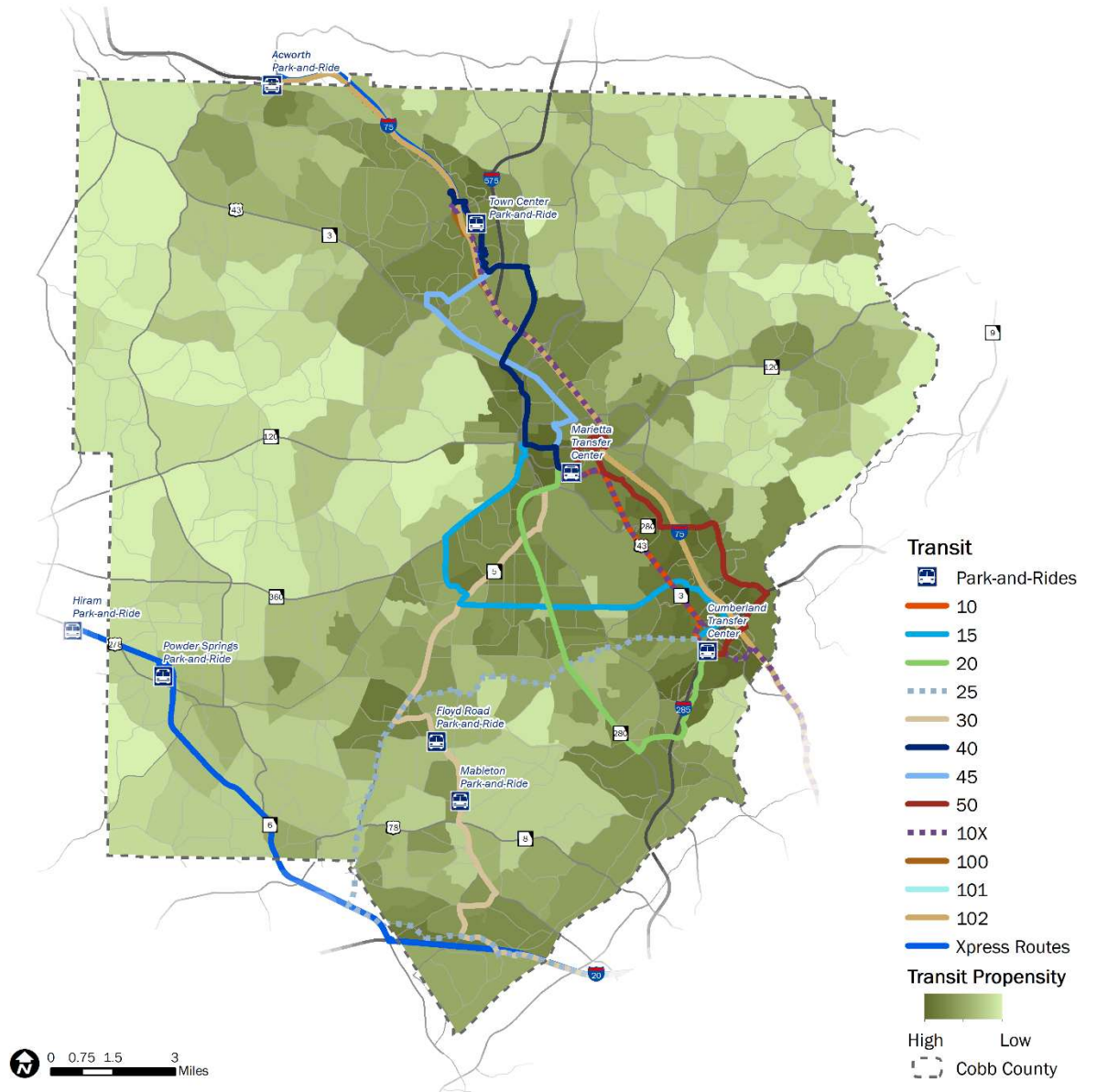


# Transit Service Plan

- Comprehensive analysis of CobbLinc's service
- Short-term plan to meet needs of residents, workers and businesses
- Included market assessment, travel demand analysis, ridership evaluation

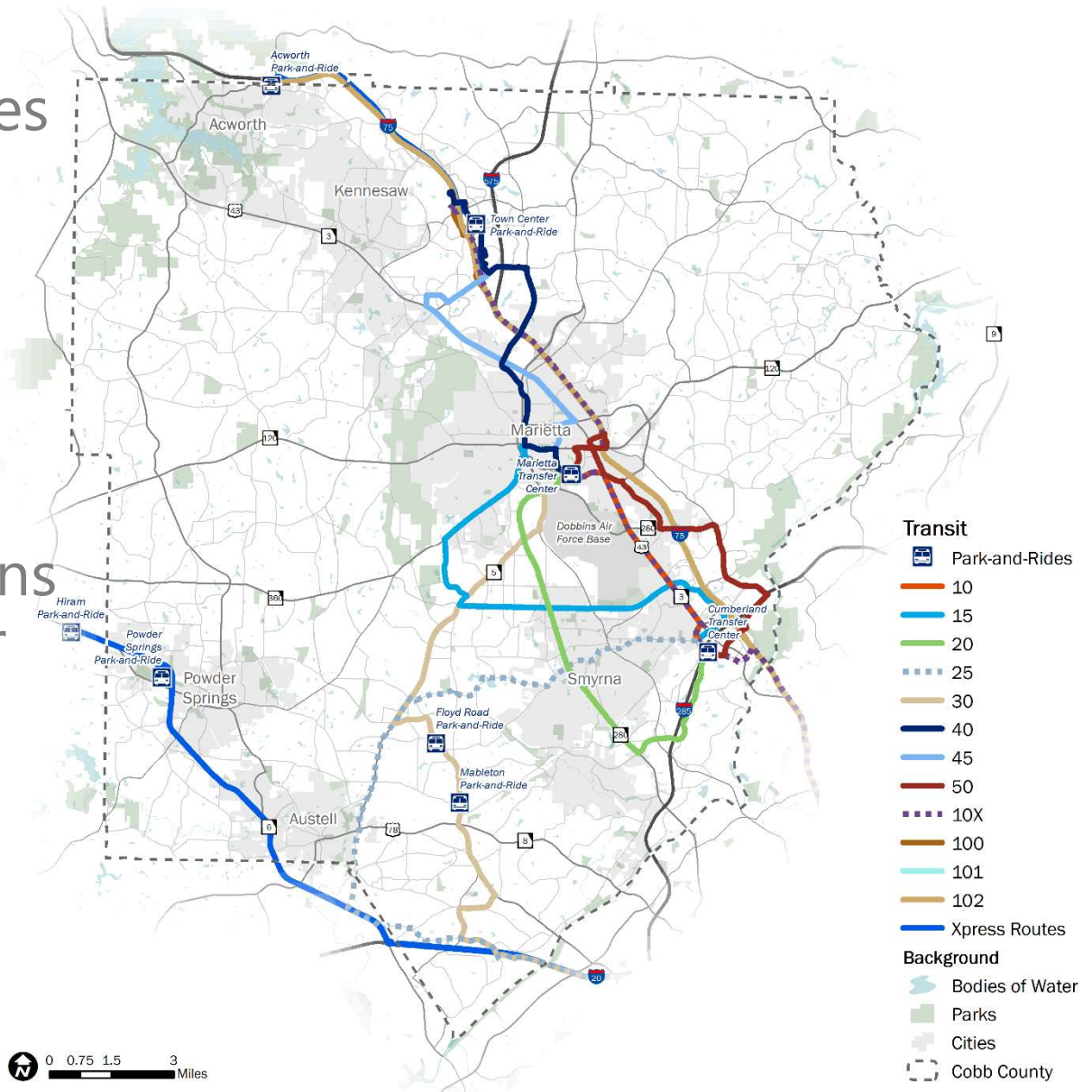


# Transit Propensity



# New CobbLinc Improvements

- New Sunday service
- Use of managed lanes
- Addressing on-time performance
- Service to new areas
- Strengthening core routes
- Enhanced connections to MARTA and other routes
- Options with TNCs



# Transportation Finance Options



SPLOST  
Renewal



Education  
SPLOST  
Renewal



Transit



Roads

Nov  
2020

Nov  
2022



# Transportation Finance Options

## **Transit Options**

- Status Quo
- Join MARTA under Existing Statutory Authority AND/OR HB 930
- Contract with MARTA under Existing Statutory Authority
- Expand using Full or Fractional Penny Sales Tax under HB 930

## **Roads Options**

- Fund Road Improvements with 2022 SPLOST (Full Penny is Only Option)
- Fund Road Improvements with T-SPLOST (Full or Fractional Penny)
- Fund Road Improvements with General Fund (Bond or Annual Line Item)

# Transportation Demand Management

Allie Velleca, AECOM

# COMMUTING in CUMBERLAND

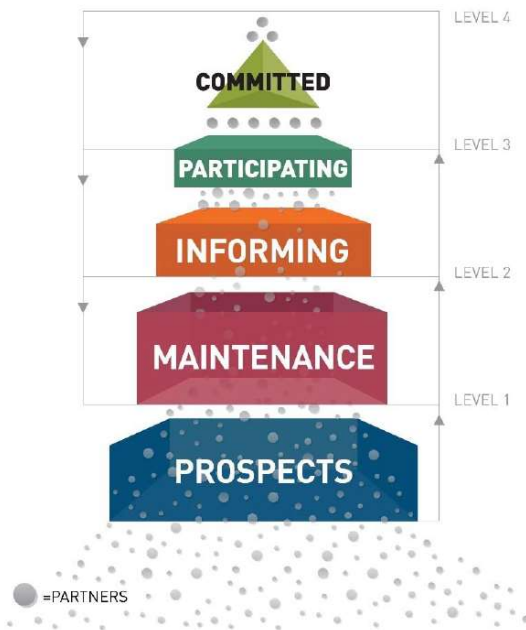


## Cumberland

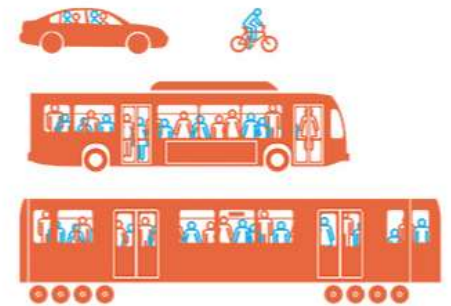
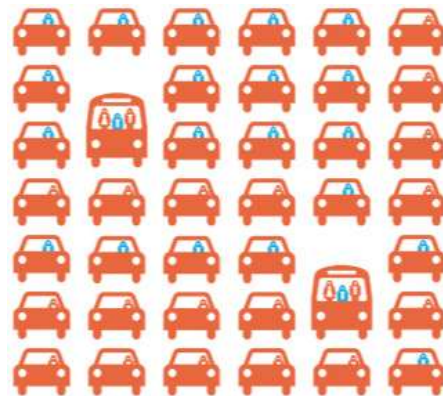
- Growing employment center
  - Large HQs
  - 75,000 jobs
- Transit access
  - Four bus routes
  - New circulator routes
  - Transfer center
- Road construction
- Weekday event traffic



# TDM Strategy



- Geographic location
- Number of employees
- Transit access



# Employer Outreach

- Worksite Assessment
  - Surveys
  - Dot Maps



# Commute Action Plan



## CONSTRUCTION

- Weekly customized emails
- Onsite presentations
- Q&A with CobbDOT





# TELEWORK SERIES

COBB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PRESENTS:

## MANAGING EMPLOYEES



### CONSISTENT MANAGEMENT

Effectively managing employees can be difficult if expectations are not consistently set, and ultimately met, by both employees and management alike. It is important to treat all employees fairly and equally in every respect, regardless of when and where they do their work. Employees with Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA) and traditional, in-office workers should be held to the same performance standards and work requirements, and should have the same access to trainings, incentives, and promotions.

### RESULTS VS. PRESENCE

To make AWA programs successful, it is important that employees are held accountable for the results they produce and not the hours spent in the office. Moving to a results-based management model can be uncomfortable for some managers, but will improve the overall performance of employees.

### COMMUNICATION

Every workday, an individual utilizing AWA should have contact with their manager and/or co-workers. Instant messaging services, video chats, and phone calls make personal check-ins easy. This frequent contact not only helps remote workers feel more connected and accountable, it also greatly improves team-wide coordination.

Companies with full-time teleworkers run the risk of these employees feeling isolated or not part of a larger team. It is important that management makes an effort to get to know their employees and that all employees are able to take part in team meetings and activities. Be sure to include teleworkers in day-to-day activities and, if possible, avoid scheduling fun and/or team building activities on a common telework or flex-day.

### DOCUMENTATION

Before an individual begins teleworking or using other AWA, managers and employees should document and sign an agreement that clearly outlines the specific terms of the work arrangement as well as the expectations of both parties. Agreements should detail standards for maintaining or establishing AWA norms, the quality and quantity of work produced, ensuring communication with the in-office peers, and all other common practices that will need to be maintained. Standards will need to be set if the employee is required to work fixed hours, or if AWA privileges can be revoked if the demands of work require it.

### MONITOR/MEASURE PERFORMANCE

Monitoring performance includes measuring an employee's quantity, quality, and timeliness of work; providing frequent feedback. It is always preferable to measure an employee's results rather than their activities, and this approach is especially helpful when managing AWA employees. Once performance measures and targets are established, communicating progress on meeting objectives should be frequent and regular. Knowing how well all employees are performing will help leadership, managers, and in-office and AWA employees feel that all personnel are treated equitably.

COBB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PRESENTS:

## ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS 101



Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA) is a broad term used to describe work arrangements that allow employees to work non-typical hours, days, and/or at remote locations. AWA often play a vital role in employee retention, business continuity plans, and can even have a positive impact on overhead costs. Employees who participate in AWA often have a greater work-life balance and frequently perform at or above the level of their peers. There are many varieties of Alternative Work Arrangements; however, there are three main types of AWA that are most frequently considered by companies.

### FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE



In a typical office environment, most employees arrive at work between 7:30am and 9:00am and leave between 4:00pm and 5:30pm. Some employees would prefer to shift their hours earlier or later in the day to allow them to shift their work to hours where they would be more productive or would allow them to meet other commitments before or after work hours.

An often unexpected benefit of flex hours is a reduction in total commute time for the employee. Starting and ending your day outside of typical work hours, allows you to miss the brunt of peak-time traffic. This commute-minded approach is particularly useful by allowing employees to adjust their itinerary based on local events, roadwork, and inclement weather.

### COMPRESSED WORK WEEK

Employees on a Compressed Work Week (CWW) schedule typically work the same number of hours per pay period as their '8:00AM-5:00PM' counterparts, just in fewer days. The purpose of reducing total days worked varies based on the needs of the company, as well as those of the individual employee. Some potential benefits of utilizing CWWs are:

- ✓ Reduced travel to/from work
- ✓ Allows for desk-sharing to more efficiently use space
- ✓ Extended business hours
- ✓ Improved punctuality/reduced absenteeism

Compressed work weeks can take a variety of forms while offering the same overall benefits. The three most common schedules for working a CWW are as follows:

"9/80" – eight 9-hour days, one 8-hour day, one additional day off every two weeks

"4/40" – four 10-hour days each week with one additional day off

"3/36" – three 12-hour days each week, with four days off – frequently shift-workers

### TELEWORKING



(Telecommuting, Work from home, Remote work) Telework (also known as remote work, work from home, or telecommuting) is one of the fastest-growing, most popular types of AWA. Telework is defined as manager-approved work performed outside of an organizational office or client site that is not a byproduct of work-related travel. We'll expound upon the definition of telework at-length throughout this course.

COBB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PRESENTS:

## TELEWORK – SUCCESS WITH TECHNOLOGY



Technological needs once presented a significant barrier to organizations seeking to untether their workforce. Today, we find that companies often have tools and equipment on-hand that can easily be configured to support telework. Reviewing and evaluating an organization's technological needs through a systematic framework results in a technology assessment that will guide an organization in finding the technology and work arrangements that best fit the organization's needs. The technology assessment has three steps:

- Step One – Create teleworker technology profiles
- Step Two – Establish an inventory of current technologies
- Step Three – Assess findings



### STEP ONE – CREATE TELEWORKER TECHNOLOGY PROFILES

Technology profiles act as a record of what tools a teleworker in your organization needs to successfully and securely perform their job function. Profiles will vary case-by-case; primarily based on the individual's role and responsibilities. Consider the following areas when building-out a technology profile:

#### Communication

- Does the role require communication with coworkers?
  - Collaboration tools like audio/video conferencing and presence technology such as instant-messaging (IM) keep teleworkers connected to the rest of their team at all times.
- Does the role require communication with sources outside of the organization?
  - Call-forwarding allows customer, client, or vendor-facing employees to answer their direct line remotely by rerouting calls to a home-office, or mobile device.
  - Caller ID spoofing will additionally enable the display of a specific phone number or area code when placing outbound calls, regardless of what device is used.

#### Hardware and Software

- Does the role require the use of specific equipment, programs, or devices? Can these be taken offsite, or accessed remotely?
  - Remote-access technology such as a Virtual Private Network (VPN) allows employees to tap into onsite resources securely from any location. If possible, have employees use non-stored, time sensitive passwords to access the VPN.
- Does the role have access to approved, company-owned technology including laptops, tablets, desktops, USB drives, and mobile phones or will they be using personally owned devices?
  - Using company-owned devices allows organizations to feel secured that devices are using the latest approved security technologies including drive encryption, anti-malware protection, and have the latest security settings in place for login pages, password-enabled screen savers, time-based automated logouts, and secure network access.

# TRY TRANSIT

- Free 10-trip passes
- Custom commute plans
- Customer appreciation



# Results

**REDUCE**

**1,798,549**  
VEHICLE MILES  
REDUCED

**61,273**  
VEHICLE TRIPS  
REDUCED

**729.1**  
POLLUTION  
REDUCED (TONS)

- 27,973** TRIPS AVOIDED BY TELEWORKING
- 19** COMMUTER EVENTS
- 10** COMMUTER PRESENTATIONS
- 336** NEW GCO REGISTRANTS
- 150** ENROLLEES IN GUARANTEED RIDE HOME
- 20** VANPOOLS



<b>37</b> WORKSITE ASSESSMENTS	<b>309</b> TRY TRANSIT SURVEYS SUBMITTED
<b>6</b> EMPLOYER SURVEYS	<b>1327</b> VIEWS OF TRY TRANSIT WEBPAGES
<b>61</b> CONSTRUCTION UP DATE EMAILS	<b>1600</b> REACHED, 7 SHARES ON TRY TRANSIT FB POSTS
<b>302</b> EMPLOYER SURVEY RESPONSES	<b>35</b> TRY TRANSIT PASSES MAILED
<b>200</b> IMPRESSIONS, <b>157</b> REACHED ON TRY TRANSIT INSTAGRAM POSTS	

**5686**  
EMPLOYEES REPRESENTED AT EMPLOYER PARTNERS

**Over 8000**  
TENANTS IN BUILDINGS MANAGED BY PROPERTY MANAGERS

- 19** TOTAL PARTNERS
- 13** NEW PARTNERS
- 11** EMPLOYER PARTNERS
- 8** PROPERTY MANAGERS
- 38** ETC CONTACTS

# Transportation Network Companies

Chip Burger, AECOM

# Overview

The Cobb County Department of Transportation and AECOM examined how peer transit systems procure and contract with Transportation Network Companies (TNC) to supplement their transit services

**Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)** are companies that use a digital platform to connect customers with drivers for the purpose of providing transportation for compensation

**Microtransit** provides transit-like service but on a smaller and more flexible scale using dynamically generated routes from common pick-up or drop-off points



# Peer transit agency case studies

Capital Metro and Via  
(Austin, TX)

Program with Via Transportation  
to replace previously existing  
flex-zone service

City of Altamonte Springs and  
Uber (Altamonte Springs, FL)

Program to subsidize Uber rides  
within the city and to other  
partner cities

City of Centennial and Lyft  
(Centennial, CO)

Program to address first- and  
last-mile connectivity from  
commuter rail station

Pinellas County Transit  
Authority and Uber/Lyft/Taxi  
(Pinellas County, FL)

Program to fill the gap for  
recommended or actually  
eliminated fixed-route services.  
county

Toronto Transit and various taxi  
companies (Toronto, ON)

Program to provide accessible  
transportation to people with  
disabilities

## How did the transit agency advertise for the program, and how did the TNCs respond?

TNCs generally do not respond to RFPs

TNCs prefer partnering opportunities

TNCs favor pilot programs lasting six to 12 months



# Did the transit agency encounter any unusual legal challenges in getting the TNC under contract?

Organizational structure and corporate culture of TNCs is different than that of local governments

TNCs were inexperienced in dealing with the unique needs of local government (but they want to grow in this market)

Transit agencies may require TNCs to maintain types of insurance and other requirements they do not normally carry:

- Commercial General Liability
- Worker's Compensation
- Drug and alcohol testing

Finalizing agreements with TNCs took substantial time

# Were there any requirements from TNCs for data? Were TNCs willing to share data?

TNCs often considered trip data to be “confidential trade secrets”, so data sharing opportunities were limited

Provisions for data sharing were included in contracting language to allow the city to monitor efficacy of the program

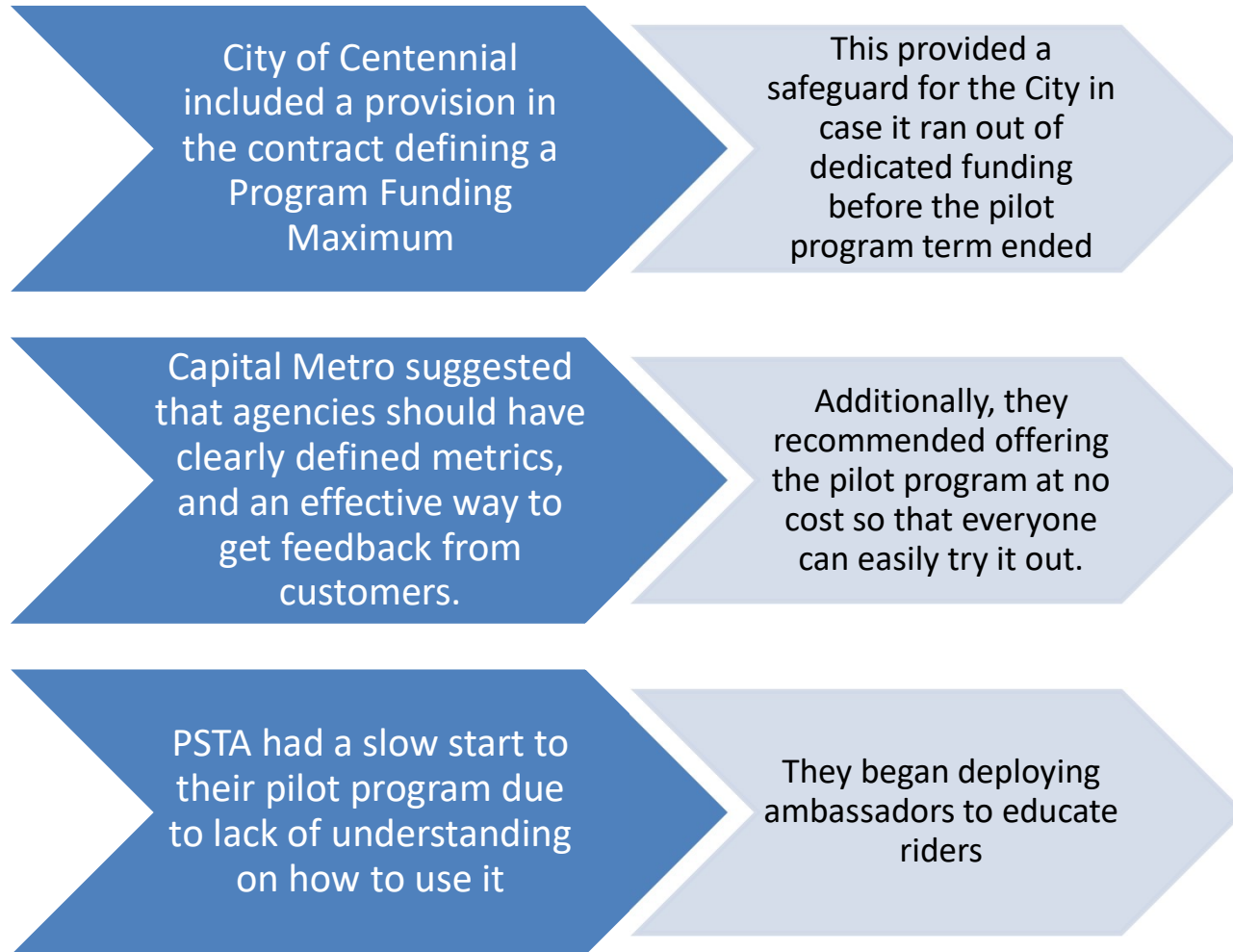
Monthly reports and invoices included things like:

Total number of trips, trip dates and times, average duration and distance of a trip, total number of unique riders, wait times, travel times

Capital Metro’s agreement stipulated that they “own” the data, allowing full access to the data for the duration of the pilot period.

The agreement required data be purged after the pilot concludes.

# Any other noteworthy conditions of service or lessons learned?



# Potential Applications in Cobb County, GA

## 1. Geography

- Austell
- Powder Springs
- Cobb Hospital

## 2. Connecting Routes

- Route 30
- Route 25

## 3. Call Center

### SYSTEM MAP

CobbLinc.com  
770.427.4444

#### LOCAL ROUTES



#### EXPRESS ROUTES

Monday through Friday



▬▬▬▬▬ CobbLinc Express

▬▬▬▬▬ GRTA Xpress

#### T TRANSFER CENTER

**MARIETTA TRANSFER CENTER**  
800 S. Marietta Parkway, Marietta 30060  
+ Park and Ride Lot



**CUMBERLAND TRANSFER CENTER**  
2996 Cumberland Blvd, Atlanta 30339



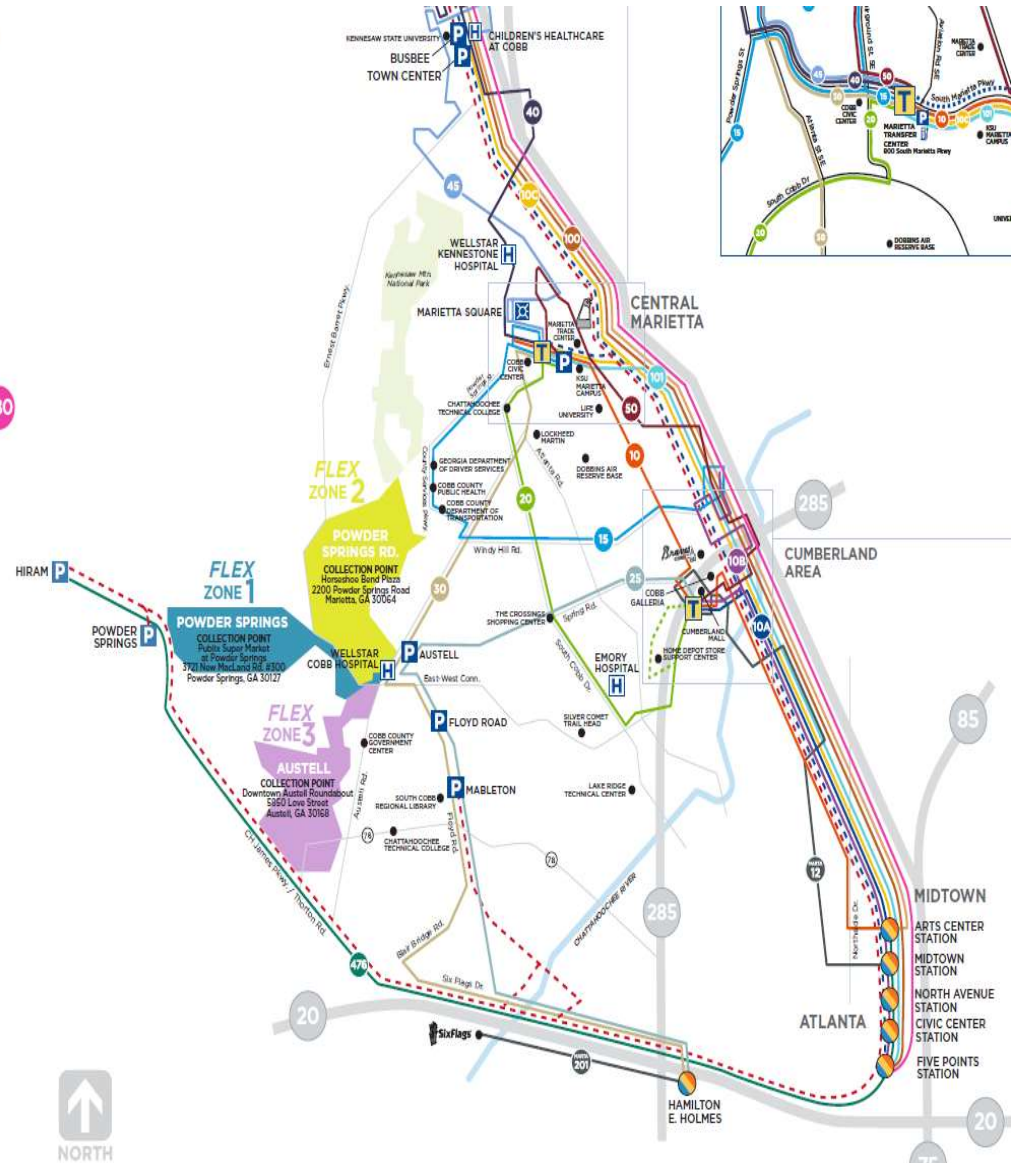
#### P PARK & RIDE LOT

#### H HOSPITAL

#### MARIETTA SQUARE

#### MARTA RAIL STATION

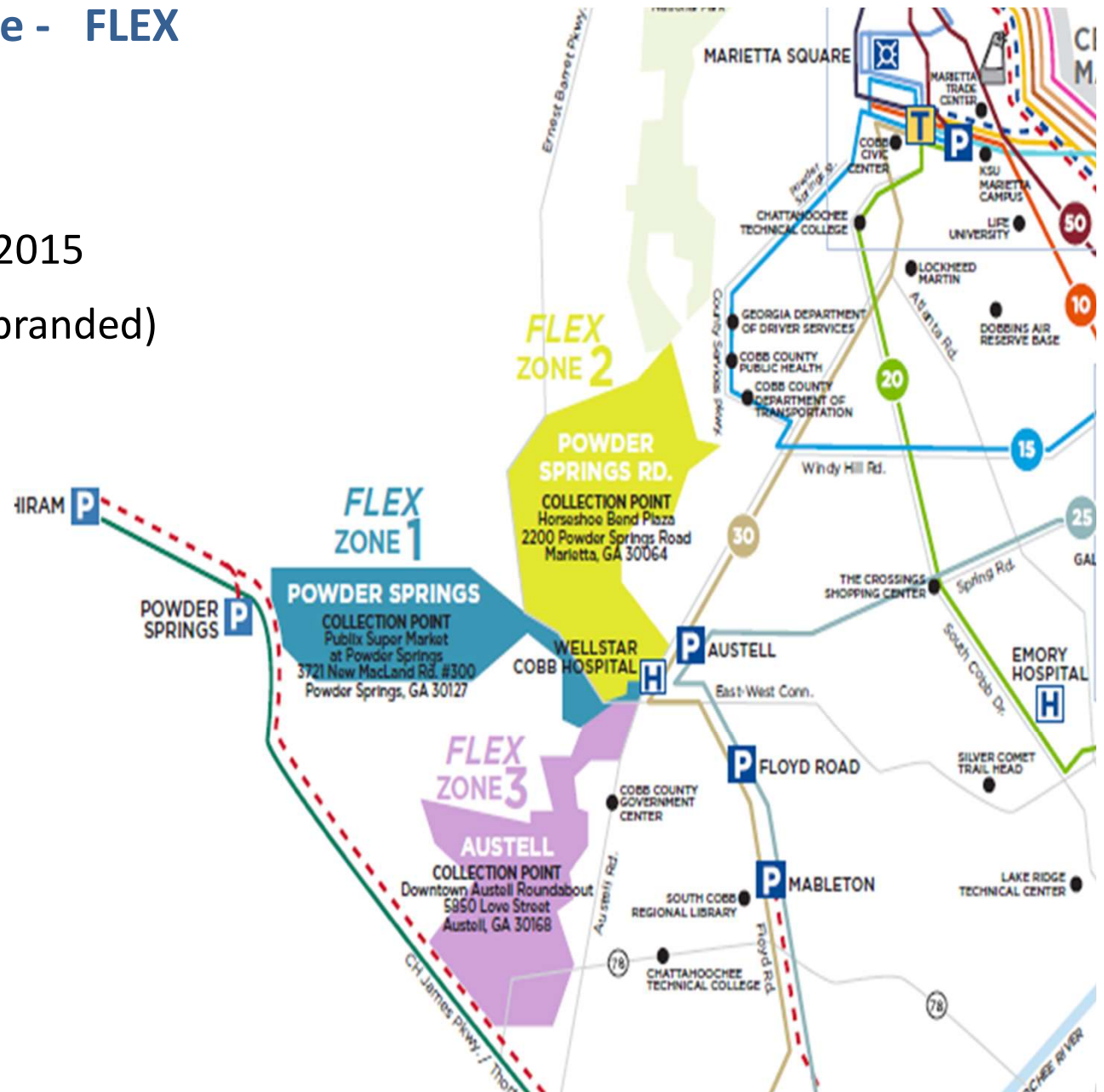
#### ● POINT OF INTEREST



# Potential Applications in Cobb County, GA

## Demand Response Service - FLEX

1. Geography
  - Three Zones
2. Operations Began April 2015
3. Paratransit Vehicles (Rebranded)
4. Call Center
5. Service Days & Hours
  - Monday – Friday
  - 7a-7p
6. 1,300 Riders / Month
7. \$30-40 / Trip



## Considerations: Geography, Days & Hours

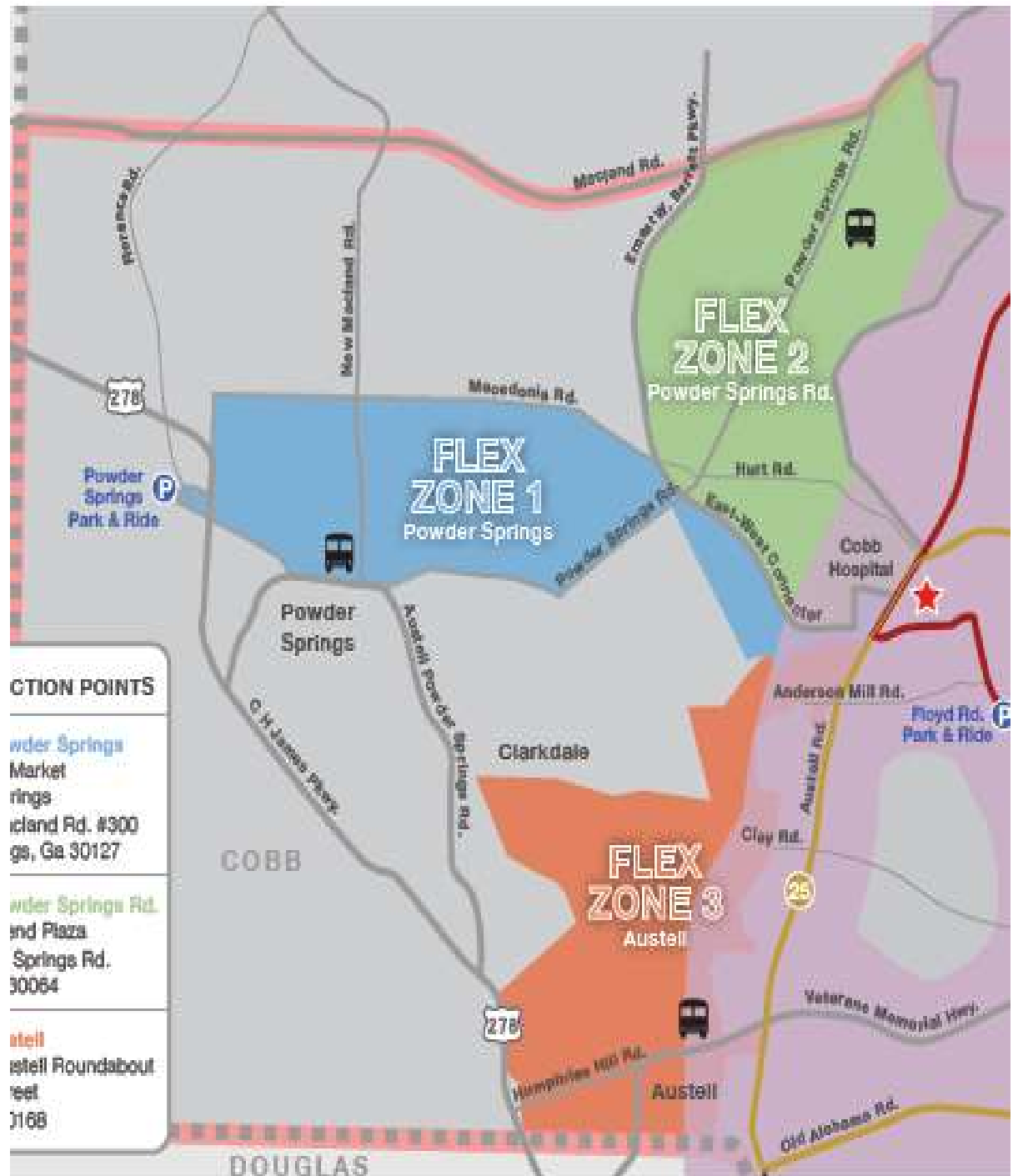
### 1. Geography

- One Simplified, Expanded Zone

### 2. Safe Pick-up & Drop-off Locations

### 3. Service Days & Hours

- Monday – Friday (Saturday? Sunday?)
- 7a-7p (Flex) vs. 6a-9p (Flex Feedback)



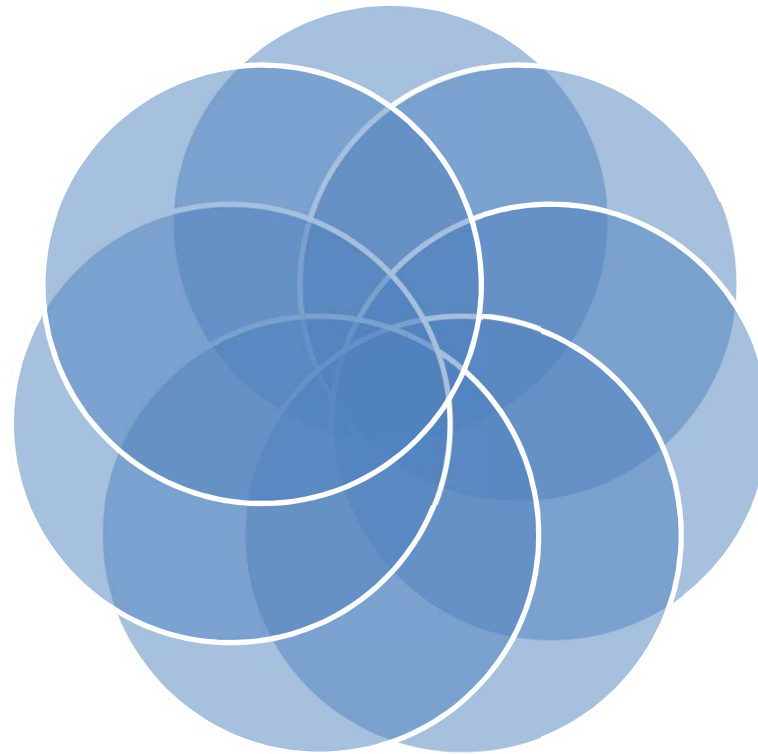
# Considerations: Eligibility & Price

Shared-Ride  
Option Only

***ADA Equivalent  
Service  
Required***

Maximum Trips  
Per Month

In App View or  
Promo Code



Surge / Prime  
Time Pricing

Fixed Fare or  
Percentage of  
Total

Phone Call  
Surcharge

## Considerations: Other





## Cost Scenarios

### New TNC Service Assumptions

- Monday-Friday, 6a-9p
- Minimum Fare: \$6.75 UberX, \$2.99 UberPool
- Average Fare: \$8.00
- Maximum Fare: \$11.00 (without Surge or Primetime)
- No Free Transfer

### Existing Flex Zones

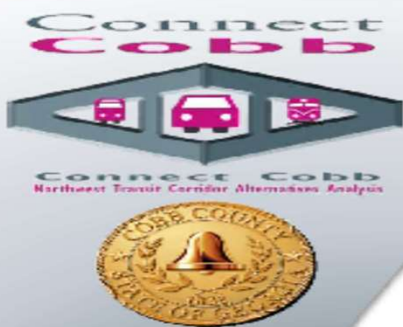
- ~ 15,500 trips / year
- Cost / trip ~ \$35
- Annual cost is over \$500,000 / year

Total Trips per Year	Rider pays 1 <sup>st</sup> \$2.50. County pays Remainder	County pays half of trip cost, up to \$5.00
36,000	\$198,000	\$144,000
48,000	\$264,000	\$192,000
60,000	\$330,000	\$240,000

- \* Flex carries 1,300 trips/month on average.
- \* Equivalent ADA compliant service cost estimate is unknown.
- \* Need to budget for marketing.
- \* Need to budget for assistance for those without smartphones and/or banking services.

# Bus Rapid Transit

Debbie Wilson, Kimley-Horn



10 December 2012



## Northwest Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study



In Association with:  
Arcadis  
Cambridge Systematics, Inc.  
Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.  
Pond & Company  
Sharon Greene + Associates  
STV/Ralph Whitehead Associates  
Sycamore Consulting, Inc.  
The Schapiro Group, Inc.  
Urban Collage, Inc.

# The AA Process

Cobb County DOT is project sponsor

Project is about 25 miles – Midtown to Acworth

- High demand corridor
- Served by Cobb Linc Route 10 – 47% farebox recovery is very high
- Need for travel choices

Develop reasonable alternatives

- Technology
- Alignments

Public Involvement – 55 events in 14 months

Evaluate alternatives – transportation, land use + economic, environment, financial

# The AA Process

Hybrid LPA was recommended

Bus rapid transit on US 41 with express buses on managed lanes

- Uses existing and (then) proposed infrastructure
- Minimizes stops
- Connects activity centers

# The AA Locally Preferred Alternative

Arterial Bus Rapid Transit on US 41 and express bus on managed lanes

- Maximizes use of existing and proposed
- Minimized stops
- Connects activity centers

## Connect Cobb - Northwest Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis

next 18 to 24 months, the environmental impacts of the LPA will be further quantified. In addition, extensive public outreach will be continued. Other next steps include: ongoing refinement of ridership and travel time forecasting, further detailing of the financial strategy, and a benefit cost analysis. The results of this analysis will offer necessary information which enables the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to make findings of project justification and local financial commitment, will support the consideration and inclusion of the LPA in the Cobb County Transportation Plan as well as the City of Atlanta Transportation Plan, and will enable the local Metropolitan Planning Organization to include the LPA as part of the regional long-range transportation plan.

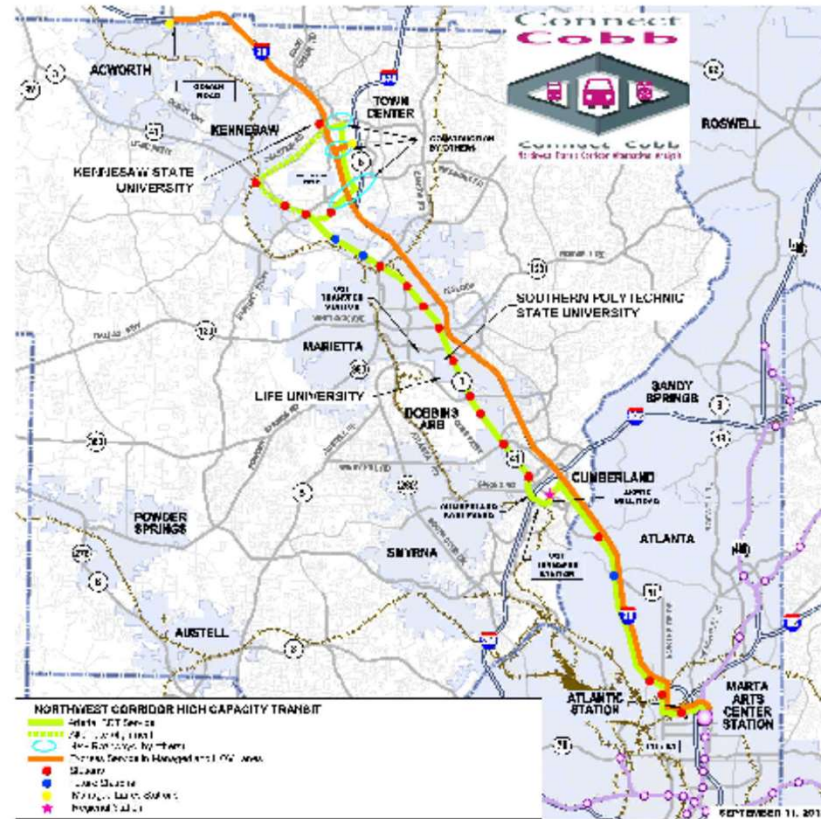


Figure 1-1: Locally Preferred Alternatives

# EA Process

**Lead federal agency:** Federal Transit Administration

**Local project sponsor:** Cobb County DOT



# Proposed Project

- ❑ ART on US 41
- ❑ 13.2 miles - Dedicated guideway from Kennesaw to Cumberland
- ❑ 12.1 miles - Use existing roads from Cumberland to Arts Center Station
- ❑ 14 stations + modify Arts Center for ART vehicles
- ❑ Vehicle Maintenance Facility near existing bus storage/maintenance facility – US 41/South Marietta Parkway

**Figure 2.1-1. Project Area**

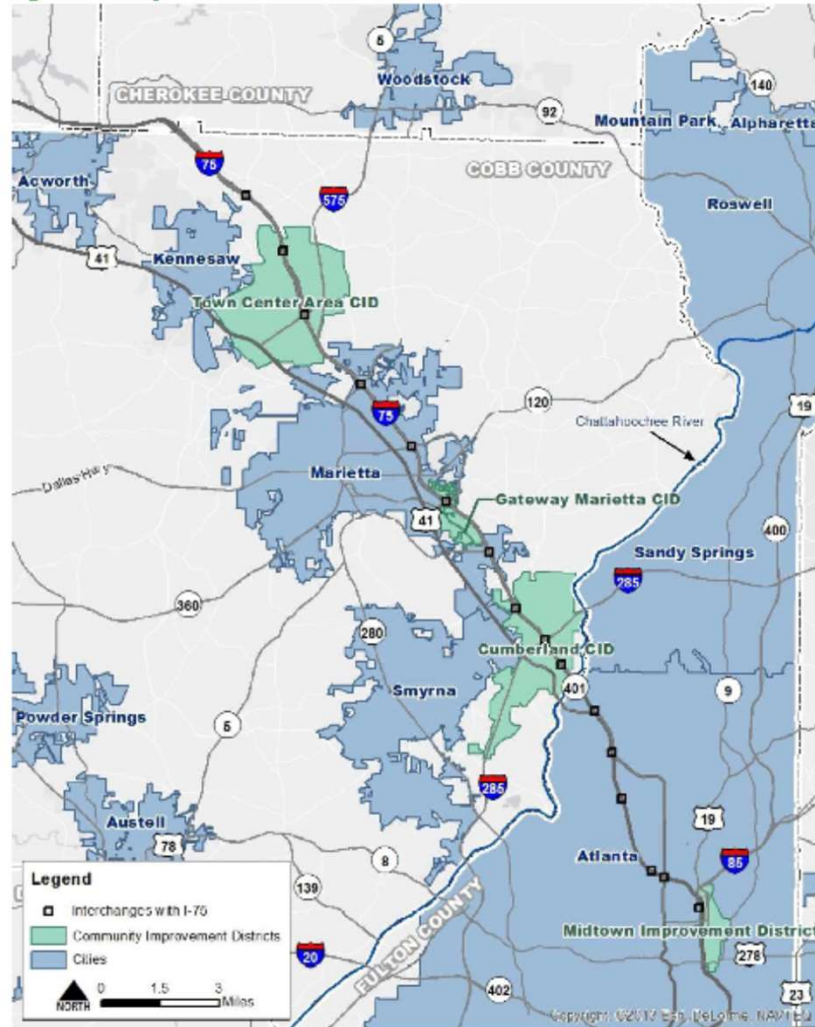
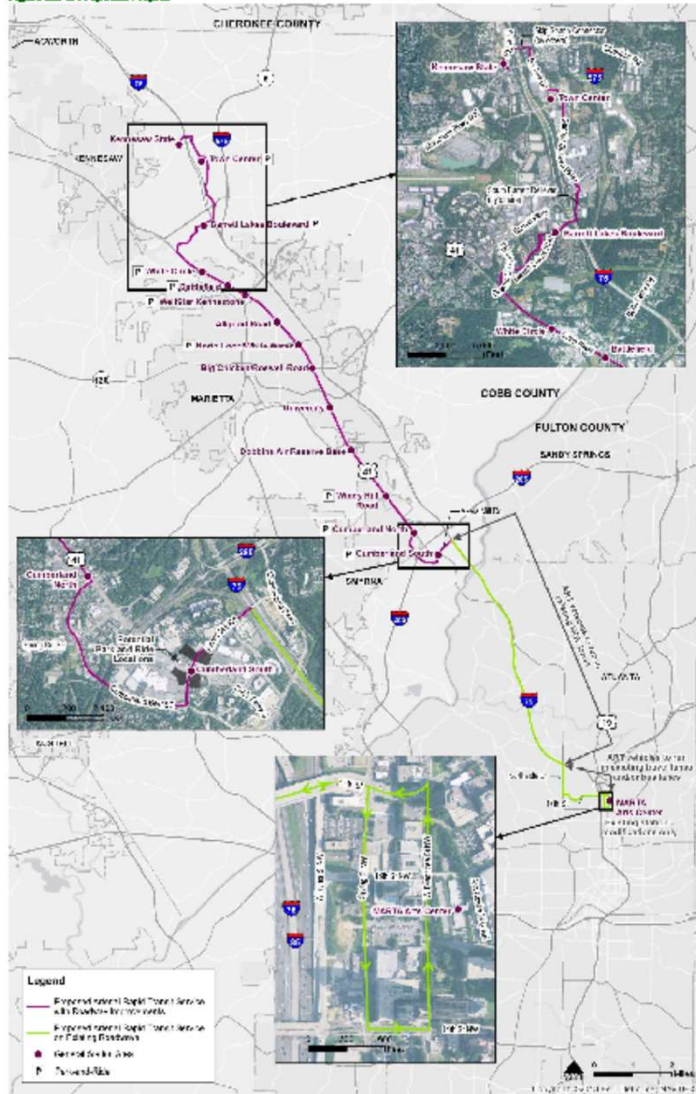


Figure 3.5-1. Proposed Project



# EA Components:

- ❑ Develop Purpose and Need
- ❑ Prepare detailed ridership forecasts
- ❑ Complete preliminary designs
  - Refined alignment
  - Guideway locations
  - Typical sections
  - Station locations and types

# Extensive Technical Analyses

- Transportation
- Utilities
- Neighborhood and Community Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Parks and Public Lands
- Section 4(f)/Section 6(f)
- Visual Impacts
- Displacements/Relocations
- Safety and Security
- Hazardous Materials
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Federal and State Protected Species
- Hydrology and Floodplains
- Water Quality and Stormwater
- Navigable Waters
- Waters of the US and Buffered State waters
- Indirect and Cumulative Impacts
- Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency

# Public Engagement

- ❑ Cobb County website, Facebook, Twitter, You Tube; Project website
- ❑ Fact sheets
- ❑ Transit Advisory Board meetings
- ❑ Kiosks
- ❑ Public meetings
- ❑ Public Hearing

# EA Findings

## **Impacts to:**

- Surface Transportation
- Transit
- Utilities
- History
- Visual
- Displacements and Relocations
- Safety and Security
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Federal and State Endangered Species
- Water Quality
- Hydrology/Floodplains
- Stormwater

# Construction Measures to Minimize Harm

- Traffic
- History
- Hazardous Materials
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Federal and State Threatened Species
- Hydrology/Floodplains
- Stormwater
- Waters of the US/Buffered State Waters



# EA Conclusion



Northwest Transit Corridor  
Environmental Assessment

## Federal Transit Administration Region IV

### Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

PROJECT: CONNECT COBB CORRIDOR

SPONSOR: COBB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CCDOT)

LOCATION: COBB AND FULTON COUNTIES, ATLANTA

#### Introduction

This document provides the basis for a determination by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Connect Cobb Corridor project. This determination is made in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 USC 4321-4347), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA Implementing regulations (40 CFR § 1500-1508), and the NEPA implementing procedures of the FTA (23 CFR § 771).

FTA, as the lead federal agency, and Cobb County Department of Transportation (CCDOT), as the local project sponsor, jointly prepared the Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine potential impacts to the human and natural environment that may result from the Connect Cobb Corridor project. The EA was prepared pursuant to 23 CFR § 771.119 and signed by FTA on April 14, 2015. This FONSI was prepared by FTA pursuant to 23 CFR § 771.121 and incorporates by reference the EA and other cited documentation.

#### Project Description

Two alternatives, the No Build Alternative and the proposed project, were evaluated in the EA.

##### No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative assumed that existing Cobb Community Transit (CCT) service on US 41/Cobb Parkway would continue, as well as CCT and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) express bus service in the I-75 corridor. This alternative also included projects in the vicinity either currently in construction or identified in the fiscally-constrained plan for the Atlanta region showing the region's highest transportation priorities (PLAN 2040).

##### Proposed Project

The proposed project includes arterial rapid transit (ART) service and associated improvements on US 41/Cobb Parkway, as described below (see Figure 1). The majority of the ART system would operate on dedicated guideway from the Kennesaw area to the Cumberland Mall area, would have continuing service to the existing Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA) Arts Center Station, and would begin at the terminus station at Kennesaw State University (KSU) near the intersection of Chastain Road and Frey Road.



Northwest Transit Corridor  
Environmental Assessment

pre-project conditions using native vegetation replanting. Native riparian plant species will be species that are adapted to riparian forests or stream edges in Georgia and the Southeast.

#### Environmental Determinations and Findings

##### National Environmental Policy Act Finding

FTA served as the lead agency for the project under NEPA. FTA reviewed the draft versions of the EA and signed the EA on April 14, 2015. The EA found that the project's construction and operation would cause no significant adverse environmental effects that would not be mitigated. This finding applies to all applicable environmental elements, including transportation, utilities, land use, neighborhood and community resources, cultural resources, parks and public lands, Section 4(f)/Section E(f), visual, displacements and relocations, safety and security, hazardous materials, noise, air quality, federal and state protected species, hydrology/floodplains, water quality/stormwater, navigable waterways, Waters of the US and Buffered State Waters, indirect and cumulative impacts, and environmental justice and limited English proficiency.

After carefully considering the analysis in the EA and the public comments and responses, FTA finds that the proposed project will have no significant adverse effect on the environment. The record provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

##### Environmental Finding

The Connect Cobb Corridor EA (April 2015) is attached and incorporated by reference as part of this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Based on the EA and its associated supporting documents, the Federal Transit Administration finds, pursuant to 23 CFR 771.121, that there are no significant impacts to the environment associated with the development and operation of the Connect Cobb Corridor project.

Dr. Yvette G. Taylor  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration Region IV

4-1-16  
Date

# The Project

- ❑ 25-mile corridor from Midtown Atlanta (Fulton County) to Acworth (Cobb County)
- ❑ High existing demand
- ❑ Served by Cobb Transit Route 10~47% farebox recovery is very high
- ❑ Need for travel choices for:
  - 🚌 Commuters and reverse commuters
  - 🎓 College Students
  - 👴 Seniors
  - 🛒 Local trips (shopping/reception/medical, etc.)

# Existing and Potential Applications for Cobb DOT

Eric Meyer, Cobb DOT

# Discussion

