

# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



March 24, 2015 DRAFT



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*Prepared by  
Cobb County Community Development  
Planning Division*

# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

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**Marietta, GA 30090**

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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

*Mandated by the State of Georgia through the Georgia Planning Act of 1989*

*Vital to the State's economic prosperity*

*Provides a healthy and economically vibrant community*

*Framework for development*

*Fosters image of an attractive place to invest and raise a family*

*Well planned communities are better prepared to attract new growth*

## WHAT IS THE COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT?

The Cobb 2040 Plan Development document is set up to act as a plan development guide that describes the state minimum standards, local recommendations and essential procedures of the planning process that will need to be conducted in order to see a successful Comprehensive Plan update. In very basic terms, this document is a “plan to plan” document. In addition, this guidebook will provide information regarding the required and optional elements that will be included within the Comprehensive Plan, the data needs for each of the elements, a Public Participation Plan, and a project organization section that defines the flow of the plan development process and the structure of the Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan document.

## PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In the interest of providing healthy and economically vibrant communities that are vital to the state's economic prosperity, the State of Georgia requires all local jurisdictions to coordinate and conduct comprehensive planning duties through the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The state has given authority to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to set the minimum standards and to oversee the process at the state level. The purpose of the minimum standards is to provide a framework for the development, management and implementation of local comprehensive plans. In March of 2014, DCA established a new set of minimum standards and procedures for local comprehensive plans.

The benefits of a comprehensive plan is to work with the residents, the business community, and non-profits to develop a growth strategy that continues to make Cobb County an attractive place to invest, conduct businesses and raise a family. Our comprehensive plan is a fact-base resource for elected officials, appointed officials, and the community that creates and tracks implementation of community-based policies. Additionally, the local comprehensive plan creates an environment of predictability for business and industry, investors, property owners, tax payers and the general public. The plan can help local governments recognize and then implement important economic development and revitalization initiatives. Overall, well-planned communities are better prepared to attract new growth in a highly competitive global market.

## HOW THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL BE USED

The Comprehensive Plan will be designed for use by elected and appointed officials, government administration and staff, residents, businesses and developers, and others with an interest in the future of Cobb County. This Comprehensive Plan will be used to:

- Ensure that our existing growth strategy is relevant to prepare for the Cobb County we want to be in 2040;



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*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## HOW THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL BE USED

*Establish a Vision for Cobb County*

*Consolidate and Coordinate one Comprehensive document*

*Guide decision-making and evaluation*

*Coordinate incentives*

*Identify short and long term strategic actions*

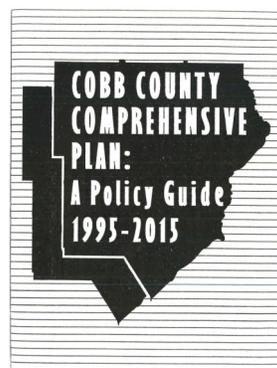
## HOW THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL BE USED (CONT.)

- Consolidate and coordinate all policies that are related to the County's economic growth, physical development, infrastructure, and programs;
- Guide decision-making on land use matters;
- Coordinate incentives between different county departments by linking a variety of incentive programs to the Comprehensive Plan; and
- Identify short to long term strategic actions for the county to undertake and monitor these actions annually to ensure implementation and accountability.

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to make an easy-to-read policy document that is accessible to all. Key challenges are described with supporting data to make the purpose of policies more apparent. Graphics, maps, photos and charts will be used to illustrate major points and improve the legibility of the text. Text boxes will be used to present background information or highlight issues.

As the County's primary policy and planning document addressing the physical development of the county, the Comprehensive Plan is of particular interest to elected officials who are responsible for adopting and funding its implementation. Appointed officials use the Comprehensive Plan as a guide to recommend land use decisions. The county administration is responsible for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and other plans to conform with it.

The Comprehensive Plan is also an important source of information and guidance to private sector parties involved in development. The Land Use Element and Future Land Use Map provide clear guidance on preferred development typologies for particular properties, which will assist in the preparation of development proposals. Many policies describe desired development outcomes, and consistency with these policies will be a factor in the review of many development applications such as rezoning petitions.



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

*Community Goals*

*Needs & Opportunities  
Community Work  
Program*

*Land Use*

*Transportation*

*Housing*

### OPTIONAL ELEMENTS:

*Community Facilities*

*Natural & Historic*

*Resources*

*Human Services*

*Economic Development*

*Public Safety*

*Disaster Resilience*

*Intergovernmental  
Coordination*

*Military Compatibility*

*Urban Design*

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In order to maintain the qualified local government (QLG) status and remain eligible for selected state funding and permitting programs, Cobb County must prepare, adopt, maintain, and implement a comprehensive plan specified by the requirements set by DCA. The Minimum Standards and Procedures set by DCA help in the preparation of Cobb's Comprehensive Plan so that it addresses immediate needs and opportunities while moving toward the realization of its long-term goals for the future. The standards include required and optional elements, community involvement, consideration of the Regional Water Plan and the Environmental Planning Criteria, and review of the existing Comprehensive Plan. The following information details the requirements, organization and public participation for Cobb's Comprehensive Plan, which will have a 20 year time horizon and will be branded as Cobb 2040.

Cobb County must include the required elements specified in the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. It is also encouraged to go beyond these minimum elements and supplement the Comprehensive Plan with other plan elements to ensure the overall plan is advantageous to the county. The required and optional elements that will be included in Cobb 2040 are listed below:

### Required Elements

**Needs & Opportunities (NO)** is a required element that will need to be updated every five years. This element is a locally agreed upon list developed from existing needs and opportunities, data analysis, the Steering Committee and the public through the community involvement process. Staff will review the current needs and opportunities for each of the planning elements, analyze data, and recommend additions, revisions, or deletions. The recommended list will be reviewed by the steering committee and will be presented to the community for additional comment. Once the public has provided input and has prioritized the list, the steering committee, Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners will have a final review to establish the prioritized needs and opportunities. The Community Goals will be established based on the needs and opportunities for each of the elements. The list of prioritized Needs and Opportunities for each of the planning elements will be followed-up with goals and policies and corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program. The Needs & Opportunities will be developed by the following:

- Analysis and mapping of data and information from each of the Cobb 2040 plan elements as needed
- Review and evaluate the existing Community Assessment, most recent demographic data and information about Cobb County using Census Data, GIS Data, DCA Data, ARC Data and/or other data sources as needed (each element has specific data needs).
- Gather and prioritize information through the community involvement process



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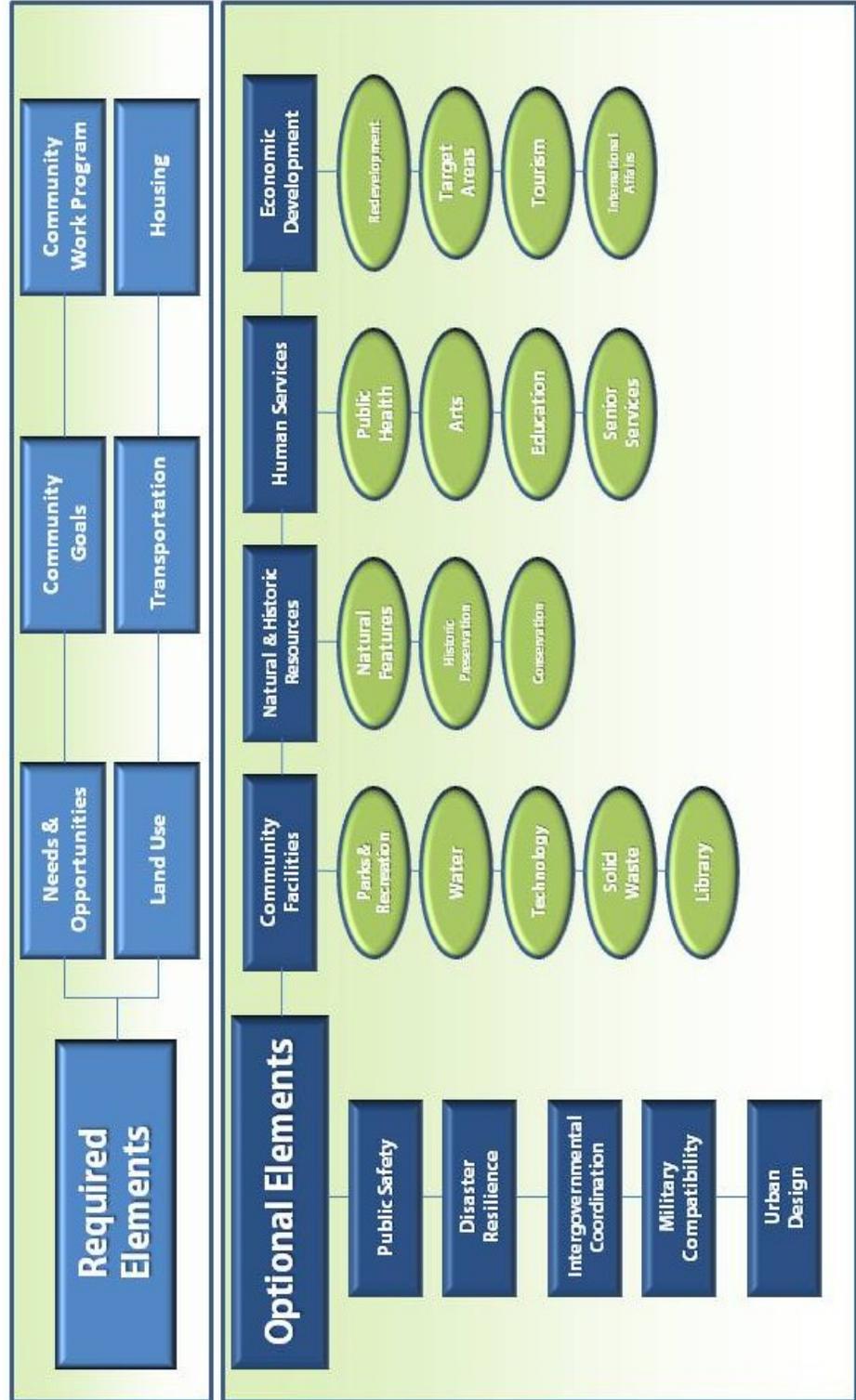
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Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan

## 2017 Comprehensive Plan Elements (DRAFT)



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*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

*Data collection and analysis*

*Community involvement such as a SWOT analysis to uncover additional needs and opportunities*

*Look for significant trends that need to be considered*

*Check for consistency with DCA Quality*

*Community Objectives  
Verify Needs & Opportunities within existing Comprehensive Plan*

## Required Elements (Cont.)

- When evaluating the data and information, the focus will be on the following:
  - ◆ Whether the data verifies the needs or opportunities identified in the existing Comprehensive Plan;
  - ◆ Whether the data uncovers new needs or opportunities not previously identified;
  - ◆ Whether community involvement reveals new needs or opportunities ;
  - ◆ Whether the data indicates significant local trends that need to be considered in the planning process;
  - ◆ Involving the community in carrying out SWOT or similar analysis – This process will be carried out through the Community Involvement Program. Please see the Public Participation Plan on page 26; and
  - ◆ Analysis of consistency with the Department of Community Affairs Quality Community Objectives – Staff will need to evaluate Cobb’s current policies, activities, and development patterns by comparing with the DCA’s Quality Community Objectives and the supporting Best Practices available on DCA’s website. This evaluation, comparison and analysis will help to identify additional needs and opportunities that could be adapted to DCA’s Quality Community Objectives.
- **Data Needs:**
  - Population Trends – 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2015
  - Population Projections – 2020, 2030, 2040
  - Age Profile – 2010 or most recent
  - Race/Ethnicity – 2010 or most recent
  - Family Unit – 2010 or most recent
  - Households – 2010 or most recent
  - Household Projections – 2020, 2030, 2040
  - Household size – 2010 or most recent
  - Household size projections – 2020, 2030, 2040
  - Poverty – 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 or most recent
  - Daytime Population – 2010 or most recent
  - Educational Attainment – Cobb County, Metro Atlanta, State of Georgia
  - Per Capita Income – 2010 or most recent
  - Median Household Income – 2010 or most recent
  - Crime Rate – Property Crimes and Violent Crimes by Precinct

**Community Goals (CG)** is a required element that can be updated at local discretion. The Vision Statement, Goals and Policies are dictated by the needs and opportunities identified through the data analysis and the community involvement process. It is recommended that the vision, goals and policies that exist within the current Comprehensive Plan be disseminated into their respective



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## COMMUNITY GOALS

*Cobb County Vision for 2040—Paints a picture of Cobb County desires to become*

*Goals for each of the planning elements*

*Policies for each of the planning elements*

## Required Elements (Cont.)

elements and presented to the community for additions, revisions, or deletions. It is expected that there will be at least 4 community workshops for the public to participate and provide meaningful input to the preparation of the vision, goals and policies. New goals and policies will need to be created for elements that don't currently exist within the existing Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that each of the elements will contain goals and policies that correspond to the identified, prioritized needs and opportunities.

The Community Goals element will lay out a road map for Cobb's future and include the components listed below.

- General Vision Statement – General statement that paints a picture of what Cobb County desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns to be encouraged within the county;
- List of Community Goals – A listing of the goals the Cobb County seeks to achieve; and
- Community Policies – Policies that have been created to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Goals.

**Community Work Program (CWP)** is a required element that will need to be updated every five years. This element will evaluate the Short Term Work Program and update the Report of Accomplishments to assist in creating a revised work program. The Community Work Program will lay out the specific activities that Cobb County plans to undertake during the next five years to address the prioritized Needs and Opportunities, identify Target Areas, or to achieve Community Goals. This is similar to the Short Term Work Program that is currently within Cobb's existing Comprehensive Plan. The Community Work Program will include any activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, administrative systems to be put into place to implement the plan. The Community Work Program will be formatted to include implementation measures for each of the elements and must include the following information for each of the action items:

- Brief description of activity
- Legal authorization for the activity, if applicable
- Timeframe for initiating and completing the activity
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity
- Funding sources

Data needs for the Community Goals is the existing Short Term Work Program and information and analysis from the Needs and Opportunities element as well as the Community Goals element.

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## COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

*Lays out specific activities to undertake during the next five years*

*Includes activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, and administrative systems*

*The Community Work Program is the Implementation schedule of the Cobb 2040*

## LAND USE

*Future Land Use Map Defines Land Use Designations*

*Future Land Use Map is the official land use element with respect to growth policies*

*Acts as a guide and policy framework for making land use decisions*

## Required Elements (Cont.)

**Land Use (LU)** is a required element for Cobb County due to zoning and development regulations that are in place. This element must be updated every 5 years. According to the Minimum Standards and Procedures, the LU element must include a Character Area map with defining narratives or a Future Land Use map and narrative.

Cobb County has used and intends to continue using the Future Land Use map as the official land use element of the comprehensive plan with respect to growth policies. The map designations and the descriptions of each of the designations will continue to act as the guide and policy framework for making land use decisions within the community.

It is intended, through the comprehensive plan update process and community involvement program, that the steering committee and the public will have a chance to review and suggest necessary changes including implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations which may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or influence future development patterns in a manner consistent with the Community Goals. The Land Use element will also incorporate existing and future supplemental plans by reference to ensure coordinated policy and recommendation findings.

The Land Use data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

- **Data Needs:**
  - Existing Land Use
  - Future Land Use
  - Zoning
  - Specific Area Policy Guidelines
  - Overlays
  - Master Plan / Corridor Study Areas
  - Airport Compatibility Zones and Noise Contours

**Transportation (TR)** is required for all local jurisdictions that are within a Metropolitan Planning Organization and shall be updated at local discretion. The Metropolitan Planning Organization's transportation strategy for the region may be substituted for this element. The objective is to evaluate the adequacy of the following major components of the local transportation system for serving needs of the community throughout the planning period:



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## LAND USE

*Land Use element will incorporate existing and future supplemental plans by reference*

## TRANSPORTATION

*Road Network  
Alternative Modes*

*Parking*

*Railroads*

*Transportation*

*Land Use Coordination*

## Required Elements (Cont.)

- Road Network – Identify roads, highways and bridges. Also identify any significant issues with road network, including connectivity, signalized intersections or inadequate signage
- Alternative Modes – Identify bicycle, pedestrian facilities and public transportation or other services for populations without automobiles. Also identify areas of the community where mode choice is limited. Evaluate how effectively mobility needs of the community are met by these alternative transportation modes.
- Parking – Identify areas with insufficient parking or inadequate parking facilities, (e.g., downtown, busy commercial areas) excess or obsolete surface parking facilities in need of retrofitting or redevelopment.
- Railroads, Trucking, Port Facilities and Airports – Identify freight and passenger rail lines, major rail intermodal facilities, non-rail freight operations, seaports, harbors, and commercial and general purpose air terminals. Evaluate the impact of these on the overall transportation network.
- Transportation and Land Use Connection – The transportation element should recognize that transportation policies, programs, and projects should be planned in alignment with local land use development policies. Future transportation investments should similarly be matched with appropriate land use policies.
- Develop a strategy for addressing any needs or opportunities identified above and integrate this strategy into the Community Work Program.

Cobb County is in the process of completing the 2040 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The CTP will be a stand alone document that will provide a funding framework and a prioritized project list as the foundation for transportation programming and policy decisions. It will focus on the transportation network needed to serve current and future developments. By the time Cobb 2040 is complete the CTP will be two (2) years into implementation and it is expected that there will be updates and minor changes as needed. A summary and reference to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan will become the “Transportation Element” of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Data Needs:**  
Comprehensive Transportation Plan

**Housing (HO)** Cobb County is designated as an entitlement community through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is therefore required to include the Housing element within the Comprehensive Plan. As recipients of federal Community Development Block Grant funds, HUD requires Cobb County to produce a five-year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. The current Consolidated Plan, which is set to expire in 2015, identifies the community’s affordable housing, community development and economic development needs and outlines a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for addressing those needs. Through coordination with the Cobb County



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## HOUSING

*Community Black  
Grant Entitlement  
Community*

*Five-Year  
Consolidated Plan*

### Required Elements (Cont.)

Community Development Block Grant Program, the existing Consolidated Plan will be updated and a summary will be included in the Comprehensive Plan. According to Chapter 110-12-1 of the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, the Consolidated Plan may be substituted for the “Housing element”.

The Housing data from the Consolidated Plan and any additional information that comes from the public involvement process will assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

- **Data Needs:**

- Existing and Updated Consolidated Plan
- Housing units change from 2000 to 2010. If available 2010 to 2015 also
- Housing types/Housing mix (Single Family attached/detached, multi-family, etc.)
- Vacancy
- Renter and Owner Occupied Housing
- Average Apartment Rents
- Condition of Housing Stock (Year built, # of rooms, kitchen facilities, plumbing, etc.)
- Cost of Housing – Median Housing Prices 2000 through 2015 (New & For Sale)
- Cost Burden Analysis
- Jobs-Housing Balance

### Optional Elements

**Community Facilities (CF)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. The Community Facilities element will include a list and baseline assessment of existing facilities and services. An evaluation of the adequacy and useful life of the facilities based on data projections will be conducted. Facilities to be studied include; Water supply and treatment facility, sewerage system and wastewater treatment, storm-water management, solid waste, fire protection, public safety, parks and recreation, Senior Services, Libraries, Schools, and technology services. Answering the question of whether these facilities will remain adequate moving forward based on the local development and demographics change over time will be the primary objective of this element.

The Community Facilities data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

- **Data Needs:**

- Park & Recreational facilities – Divided into 3 divisions



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## OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

*Community Facilities*

*Natural & Historic Resources*

*Human Services*

*Economic Development*

*Public Safety*

*Disaster Resilience*

*Intergovernmental Coordination*

*Military Compatibility*

*Supplemental Plans*

## Optional Elements (Cont.)

- Water facilities and programs – Supply & Treatment, Sewerage & Wastewater Treatment
- Maximum Day Water Demand (Current/Projections, 2010 to 2040, source ARC, Sewer System Master Plan for Cobb County)
- Average Daily Wastewater Flow Projections (Current/Projections, 2010 to 2040, source ARC, Sewer System Master Plan for Cobb County)
- Solid Waste/Landfill facilities
- Senior Services facilities
- Library
- Technology Facilities – IS structure, equipment, Technology master plan

**Natural & Historic Resources (NH)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. The Natural & Historic Resources element of the plan will address the natural and historic assets and programs in Cobb County. During the process of preparing the Comprehensive Plan a review of the Regional Water Plan and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria should be incorporated into the NH element. The review should determine if there is need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources. There will be three sub-elements that make up the NH planning analysis that will be critical to the planning process; Natural Features, Historic Preservation, and Greenspace.

Knowledge regarding such resources is important to their protection and conservation. The historic resources help preserve the historic, architectural, and aesthetic character and heritage of a community and help to provide a sense of place and continuity. The natural systems provide a means for air and water purification, as well as recreation. Awareness of the assets supporting the historic and natural resources allows future developments to coexist in a way that ensures the viability of resources in Cobb County.

The Natural and Historic Resources data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

### **Data Needs: Natural**

- Water Supply Watersheds – Areas of land upstream from government-owned public drinking water
- Groundwater Recharge Areas – Areas on earth's surface where water infiltrates the ground to replenish an aquifer



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## NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

*Addresses the natural and historic assets and programs in Cobb County*

*Knowledge of such resources is important to their protection and conservation*

*Allows future developments to coexist in a way that ensures the viability of resources in Cobb County*

### Optional Elements (Cont.)

- Lakes/Wetlands
- Protected Rivers & Mountains – Chattahoochee River and Kennesaw Mountain\*
- The Georgia Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act of 1991 – House Bill 643
- Permanently Protected Greenspace – Data will come from the Georgia Greenspace Program, Parks Bond Referendum, and Conservation Easement
- Floodplain
- Soil Types
- Steep Slopes
- Prime Agriculture and Forest Land – Data may be acquired through the UGA Extension Service
- Sensitive Plant and Animal Habitats
- Scenic Views

#### Data Needs: Historic

- Residential Resources
- Commercial Resources
- Industrial Resources
- Institutional Resources
- Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Sites
- National Register of Historic Places
- Local Education, Programming, Recognition, and Protection

**Human Services (HS)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Existing and projected data will be needed for the Human Services element of the plan in order to address the needs and opportunities revolving around programs associated with Public Health, Senior Services, Education and Arts. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. The HS element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals. Analysis for this element will include representatives from health care field, senior services, Parks & Recreation, and the Cobb County School Board

The Human Services data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.



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*\* Kennesaw Mountain does not meet the state criteria of a mountain based on elevation.*

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## HUMAN SERVICES

*Public Health*

*Senior Services*

*Education*

*Arts*

## Optional Elements (Cont.)

### Data Needs

- Health Services – Cobb County Board of Health (structure and mission), Hospitals/ Health Care Facilities, Health Services Assessment, research other peer comprehensive plans for health services, already programmed/proposed locations, services or programs. Any existing studies that have been created within the last 10 years (i.e. Cobb2020)
- Senior Services – Senior Population, Services and programs provided by Senior Services, Staffing for Senior Services, location and type of Senior Centers, already programmed/proposed locations, services or programs. Any existing studies that have been created within the last 10 years (i.e. Senior Services 10 year Plan)
- Arts (Cultural Affairs) –Location and services provided for each of the Art Centers, already programmed/proposed locations, services or programs. Any existing studies that have been created within the last 10 years (i.e. Mableton Arts Study)
- Education – Enrollment, projected enrollment, attendance zones, schools below/above capacity, educational opportunities from grade school (list & map of private/public schools) to colleges and tech. schools. Adult education programs, community/parental involvement, pupil/teacher ratio, expenditure per pupil, education of faculty, general statement on test scores of students, school food and nutrition services, after school program, student assistance programs, programs for students with disabilities, programs for the gifted, fine arts, extracurricular activities (sports), Cobb Board of Education, already programmed/proposed locations, services or programs (SPLOST). Any existing studies that have been created within the last 10 years.
- Access to health food options – identify existing food deserts based upon distance from grocery stores and locate other food production or distribution sites such as farms, farmer’s markets, community gardens, and community shared agriculture (cooperative) sites.

**Economic Development (ED)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement the Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Existing and projected data will be needed for the Economic Development element of the plan in order to address the needs and opportunities revolving around targeted Industries, redevelopment, target areas, tourism, and international affairs. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. The ED element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals.

Through coordination with Finance, Economic Development, Cobb Chamber of Commerce and local Development Authorities, the Cobb Competitive EDGE will be summarized and substituted for the ED element.

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Target Industries*

*Redevelopment*

*Target Areas*

*Tourism*

*International Affairs*

## Optional Elements (Cont.)

### Data Needs

- Cobb Competitive EDGE

**Disaster Resilience (DR)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Existing and projected data will be needed for the Disaster Resilience element of the plan in order to address the needs and opportunities revolved around hazard mitigation planning. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. The DR element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals. Analysis for this element will include representatives from Public Safety and Emergency Management Agency.

The DR element should include a comparative analysis and review of existing hazard mitigation plan and local comprehensive plan, policies and regulations to identify gaps and/or overlaps. It may be necessary that a summary of the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan (PDMP) become the DR element for the Comprehensive Plan with new policies and goals that link the hazard mitigation plan with the comprehensive plan.

The Disaster Resilience data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

### Data Needs

- Existing operating manuals
- Existing Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Commuting Patterns (inflow/outflow of commuters)
- Floodplain Mapping
- Historical Mapping (i.e. Tornado event tracks; Source Hazard Mitigation Plan??)
- Hazardous Mapping (GIS tool developed by FEMA that measures estimated losses from floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural disasters and impact of various mitigation practices that might reduce losses.
- Existing and Future Land Use Mapping

**Public Safety (PS)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Existing and projected data will be needed for the PS element of the plan in order to address the needs and opportunities revolved around Police, E-911, Fire, and Animal Control. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and



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## DISASTER RESILIENCE

*Hazard Mitigation Planning*

*Review of Hazard Mitigation Plan*

### Optional Elements (Cont.)

policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. The PS element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals. Analysis for this element will include representatives from Public Safety, E-911, and Community Development.

The Public Safety data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

#### Data Needs

- Police Precinct Map
- Facility (PD, Fire Stations, Animal Control, HQ, etc.)
- Staffing levels / population compared to other similar jurisdictions.
- Existing SPLOST initiatives
- Existing Programs
- Existing Plans/Studies
- Existing Short Term Work Program

**Intergovernmental Coordination (IC)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Existing and projected data will be needed for the Intergovernmental Coordination element of the plan in order to address the needs and opportunities revolved around coordination planning with other jurisdictions. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. The IC element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals. Analysis for this element will include representatives from Community Development and each of the six (6) municipalities.

The Intergovernmental Coordination data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

#### Data Needs

- Map of Six Municipalities
- Consolidated map of land uses in Cobb County
- List of Other Agencies/Jurisdictional Bodies
- Procedures/Legislation/MOU's that are in place



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUBLIC SAFETY

*Coordination with  
E-911/Communications  
Bureau*

*Fire*

*Animal Control*

## Optional Elements (Cont.)

**Military Compatibility (MC)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Existing and projected data will be needed for the MC element of the plan in order to address the needs and opportunities that revolve around coordination planning with Dobbins Air Reserve Base and associated services and uses. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. The MC element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals. Analysis for this element will rely heavily on the Dobbins Air Reserve Base Joint Land Use Study.

The Military Compatibility data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

### Data Needs

- Existing studies
- Dobbins missions/future missions
- Government/Private Tenants
- Safety Zones Mapping (JLUS)
- Noise Zones Mapping (JLUS)
- Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard Mapping (JLUS)

**Urban Design (UD)** is an optional element chosen and designed to supplement Cobb 2040 to make the overall plan advantageous for Cobb County. Urban Design itself is where connections are made between people and places, movement of people/goods and the community design, nature and the built environment. It combines place making with economic vitality to create places that are distinct, beautiful, and functional. The data needs for this element are already contained in all other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional data needs may include qualitative data about the form and function of various transportation systems and areas of the community to ensure that infrastructure and community design are being coordinated. Once the needs and opportunities have been established, goals and policies will be created and made part of the Community Goals element. This element is intended to create goals and policies to address place making and ensure we are creating and maintaining areas of Cobb County that meet the diverse needs of the existing and future residents. The UD element will also be included in the Community Work Program with implementation items developed to achieve the goals.



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## URBAN DESIGN

*Where connections are made between people and places, movement of people/goods and the community design, nature and the built environment*

*Combines place making with economic vitality*

*Creates places that are distinct, beautiful and functional*

## **Optional Elements (Cont.)**

The Urban Design data will be evaluated by staff, the steering committee and the public to assist in developing a prioritized list of needs and opportunities, community goals, and action items that will be included within the Community Work Program.

Cobb 2040 will be organized into county wide elements. While the state requires several important elements that are critical to the services and quality of life issues, the Cobb 2040 plan will primarily revolve around the prioritized needs and opportunities that will make up the Needs and Opportunity Element, goals and policies surrounding the Community Goals Element and the action items that will be the framework for the Community Work Program element. These three elements are required and will function as the “Plan Elements” as they provide structure, organization and content clarity to the Cobb 2040 plan. To ensure all required and chosen elements are included in the plan, each of the three Plan Elements will include “Goal Elements” as these elements will contain the goals and policies that will move Cobb County toward its vision for 2040. The Goal Elements will make up each of the Plan Elements with critical information that will consist of the Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Cobb 2040 Plan will contain the Community Goals and the Community Work Program. The Needs and Opportunities will be part of the Cobb 2040 Background Report that will contain data, analysis, trends, needs and opportunities and goal assessments. The Cobb 2040 Background Report will be included as a separate additional document from the Cobb 2040 Plan.

## **PLAN ORGANIZATION**

The Cobb 2040 process provides a systematic progression of how the update actions will move forward. A process diagram located on page 18 visualizes the separate procedures involved in the plan making process to ensure that it meets the minimum standards and procedures set by DCA . The illustration was developed to help get a better understanding of how the planning process will evolve and to be able to communicate to others how the process will flow.

The first procedural action will be a Public “Kick-Off” Hearing to inform the community of the Comprehensive Plan update and to solicit feedback on the process. Once comments have been received and addressed, the identification of a Project Management Team (PMT) and Steering Committee (SC) will take place. The PMT and SC will meet to discuss their duties and expectations as a team and committee. It is anticipated that the creation of a PMT and SC will overlap with data gathering and analysis. However, once the SC has been created the PMT will start interviews and community surveys.

The next phase of the project will be the development of the needs and opportunities, followed up by separate PMT and SC meetings for further input. Revisions to the needs and opportunities will be made based upon feedback from the PMT, SC, and community meetings that will be held in each Commission District. The same process will take place for the development of the community goals



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

*The Cobb 2040 process provides a systematic progression of how the update actions will move forward.*

*The Cobb 2040 Plan outline provides a table of contents style draft outline of the Comprehensive Plan document.*

*The general schedule provides a broad guideline of the Comprehensive Plan development process.*

*The detailed schedule helps move the plan forward and will work as a tool of communication, coordination, Collaboration and effectively manage the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan.*

## Cobb 2040 Process

and community work program. Each set of community meetings, will be designed according to the objective. Project Management Team and SC meetings will occur before and after each community meeting to ensure all comments and feedback has been vetted and incorporated into each of the elements in an appropriate manner.

After the final community meeting, suggestions and revisions will be made and the plan will be submitted to ARC for review. Once the plan has been found in compliance with the Department of Community Affairs, Community Development will seek Board of Commissioners approval of the plan in order to maintain Qualified Local Government (QLG) certification.

## Cobb 2040 Plan Outline

The Cobb 2040 Plan Outline provides a table of contents style draft outline of the Comprehensive Plan document. The plan outline was created to help get a better understanding of the different elements and components within the Comprehensive Plan and how the completed plan document will look, feel and flow.

The Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan will consist of multiple documents. The primary document will be the Cobb 2040 Plan, which will consist of the Vision, Community Goals and Policies and the Community Work Program. There will also be a separate background report that will include the identified and prioritized needs and opportunities. The background report will also include data analysis, trends, survey results and other important background information pertaining to the development of the Cobb 2040 Plan.

Below is a text version of the outline for the primary Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan along with a description for each of the chapters. A visual description of this outline is on page 19. The organization of the chapters were developed so that different audiences, such as citizens, business owners, developers and county officials can easily find and reference the information they need. The outline suggested here is only a draft that may change.

**Executive Summary** – Summary of Cobb 2040 process, findings, goals, policies and work program.

**Chapter 1 - Introduction** – is an introductory chapter that will explain the purpose and process used to develop Cobb 2040.

**Chapter 2 - Community Goals** – describes the community’s vision for Cobb County and guides the future by articulating goals and policies. The goals and policies will be organized by element.

### 3.1 Community Vision



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*(text cont. on page 19)*

# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



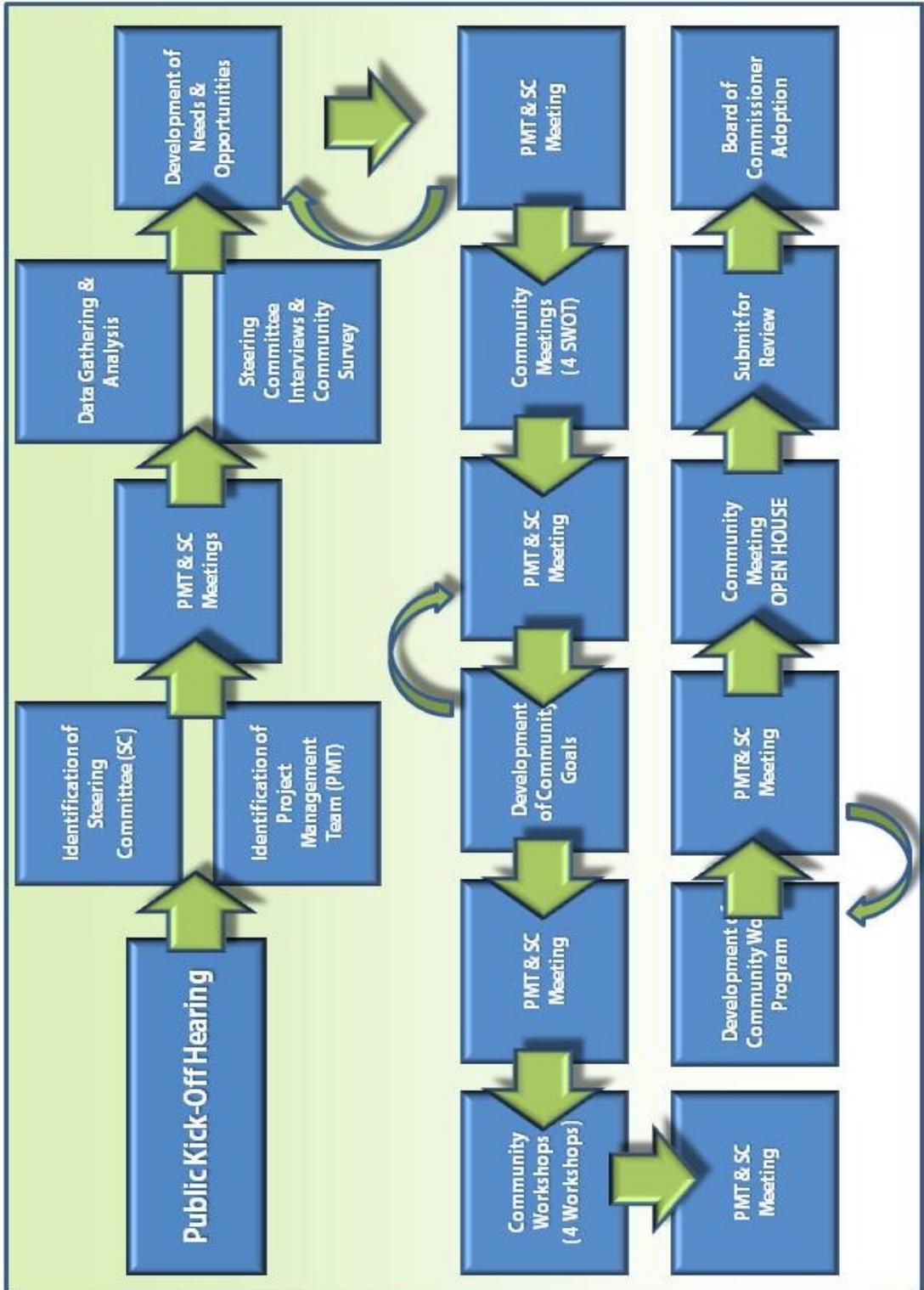
Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan



## 2017 Cobb 2040 Process (DRAFT)



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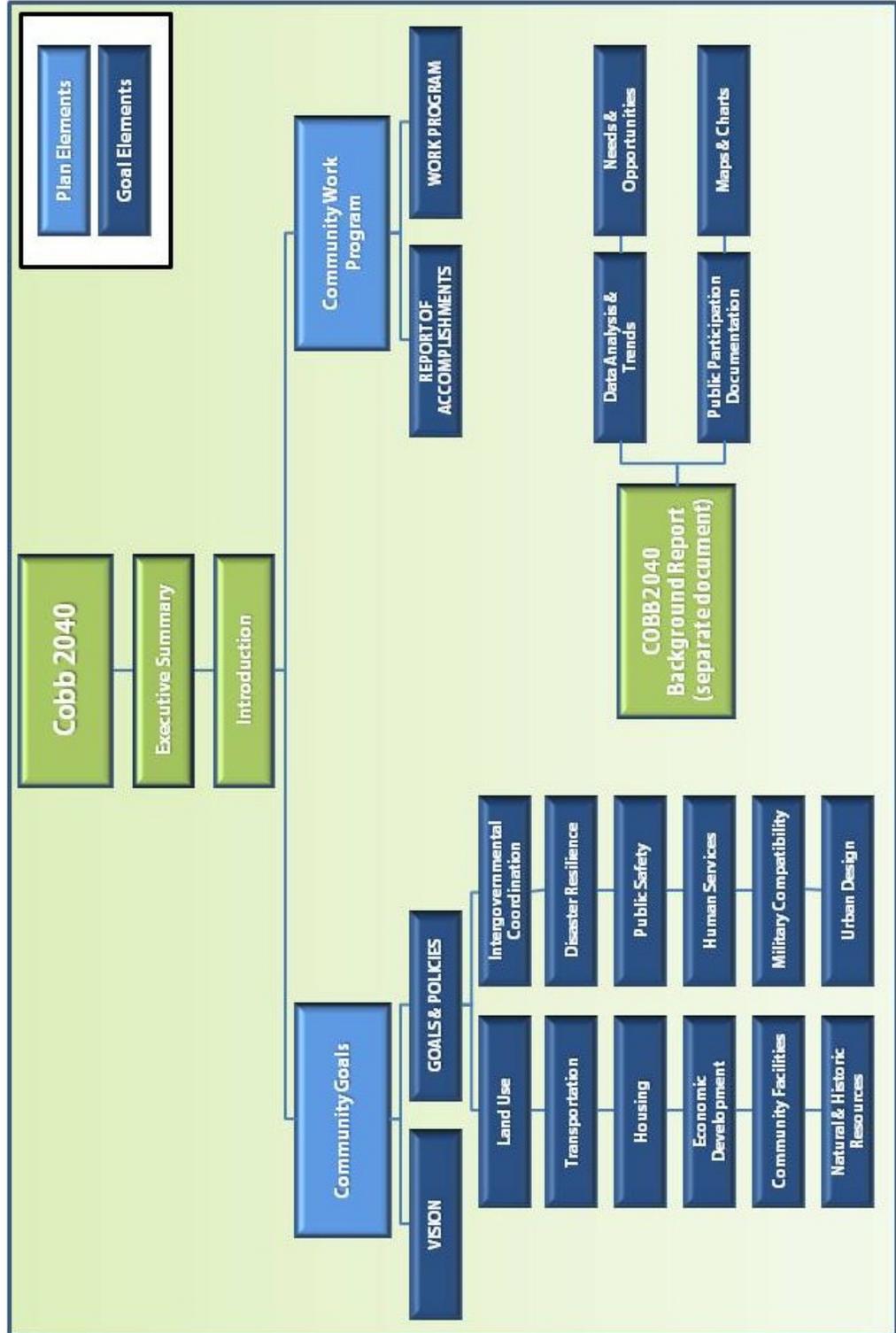
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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan

## 2017 Cobb 2040 Outline (DRAFT)



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## COBB 2040 PLAN OUTLINE

*Executive Summary*

*Ch1. Introduction*

*Ch2. Community Goals*

*Ch3. Community Work Program*

*Supplement  
Background Report*

## **Cobb 2040 Plan Outline (Cont.)**

### **3.2 Community Goals & Policies**

- 3.2.1 Land Use**
- 3.2.2 Transportation**
- 3.2.3 Housing**
- 3.2.4 Community Facilities**
- 3.2.5 Natural & Historic Resources**
- 3.2.6 Human Services**
- 3.2.7 Economic Development**
- 3.2.8 Public Safety**
- 3.2.9 Disaster Resilience**
- 3.2.10 Intergovernmental Coordination**
- 3.2.11 Military Compatibility**
- 3.2.12 Urban Design**

**Chapter 3 - Community Work Program** – describes the list of individual priority action items that will be implemented or initiated in the next 5 years. It will be organized by secondary element and will serve as an implementation tracking system. Each policy will be prioritized and cross-referenced to the related initiatives and goals.

**Supplement—Cobb 2040 Background Report (separate document)** - include data analysis, trends, survey results and other important background information pertaining to the development of the Cobb 2040 Plan.

## **Cobb 2040 Plan General Schedule**

The following schedule provides a broad guideline of the Comprehensive Plan development process. This timetable was set up as the initial schedule to get a better grasp of the requirements and time frame Cobb County has to complete the plan update process. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan 10 Year -Update is due October 31, 2017. The following is a broad guideline of when certain tasks will be conducted.

### **March—April 2015 – 1st Public Hearing**

The first public hearing must be held at the inception of the local planning process. The purpose is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the plan, opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and to obtain input on the proposed planning process. Once public comments have been addressed, the community may begin the process of developing the plan. A worksession will precede the first public hearing and will be held in March to describe the planning process and release the Plan Development Document for 30 day public review. In April



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## **COBB 2040 GENERAL SCHEDULE**

*April—1st Public Hearing*

*March 2015 to January 2017—Developing the plan*

*January 2017—2nd Public Hearing*

*June 2017—3rd Public Hearing (Adoption of Plan)*

*October 2017—QLG certification extended*

## **Cobb 2040 Plan General Schedule (Cont.)**

2015, the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners will approve the plan process as altered by public comments received.

### **March 2015 to January 2017 – Developing the Plan**

Each element of the Comprehensive Plan must be prepared with opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders and the general public. The four steps for involving stakeholders and the general public or as follows:

- A. Identification of Stakeholders: Compile a list of stakeholders who need to have a voice in the development of the plan. Members of the governing authority must be included among the selected stakeholders and be actively involved in plan preparation.
- B. Identification of Participation Techniques: At minimum, your community must form a steering committee to oversee and participate in development of the plan that includes some of the stakeholders. This would include members of the governing authority, economic development practitioners, and local government staff.
- C. Conduct Participation Program: Invite each of the stakeholders to participate in community activities and events that are scheduled. Use these participation events to solicit input on
- D. the content of the plan. Hold regular meetings of the steering committee to provide input and feedback to the plan preparers as the plan is developed.
- E. Quarterly Updates: There will be quarterly updates to the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners on the status of the Comprehensive Plan update process.

### **January 2017 - 2nd Public Hearing**

Once the plan has been drafted and made available for public review a second public hearing shall be conducted. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the contents of the plan, provide opportunity for residents to make final suggestions, additions or revisions, and notify the community of when the plan will be submitted to ARC for review. Once public comments have been addressed, the plan must be transmitted to ARC with a cover letter signed by the Chairman.

### **February 2017 - Submittal for Review**

- Notification of Interested Parties – (ARC to immediately notify interested parties of availability of plan.)
- Regional Commission Review – (ARC to review the plan for potential conflicts with neighboring jurisdictions, opportunities for inter-jurisdictional/regional solutions and consistency with the adopted regional plan.)
- Review – (DCA shall review for compliance with Minimum Standards and Procedures. DCA's findings and recommendations must be submitted to the ARC for inclusion of final report within **35 days** after submittal for review)



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## DEVELOPING THE PLAN

*Identification of Stakeholders*

*Identification of participation techniques*

*Data gathering and analysis*

*Conduct Public Participation Program*

*Provide Quarterly Updates*

## **Cobb 2040 Plan General Schedule (Cont.)**

- Report of Findings and Recommendations – (ARC must transmit a report of findings and recommendations to Cobb County within **40 days** of the submittal for review)

### **April 2017 to June 2017 - Plan Revisions**

If plan is not yet in compliance with the Minimum Standards and Procedures, the Cobb County must address any requested changes by revising the plan and resubmitting it to ARC for review. This process can be repeated until the plan is found to be in compliance with the Minimum Standards and Procedures.

### **June 2017 - Adoption of the Plan - 3rd Public Hearing**

Once the plan has been found by DCA to be in compliance with the Minimum Standards and Procedures, Cobb County may adopt the approved plan. In order to maintain QLG certification, the plan must be approved by Cobb County.

### **July 2017 - Notification of Local Adoption**

After adoption we have 7 days to notify ARC via copy of resolution. Subsequently, ARC has 7 days to notify DCA via copy of resolution.

### **September 2017 - Qualified Local Government Certification**

Once DCA has been notified by ARC that Cobb County has adopted the approved plan, DCA will notify the local government that QLG certification has been extended.

### **September 2017 to December 2017 - Publicizing the Plan**

Once plan is adopted by Cobb County, the availability of the plan must be publicized by Cobb County for public information. This may be met by providing notice in a local newspaper, posting notice online or using similar means to notify the public of plan adoption and directing them where a complete copy of the plan may be reviewed.

## **Cobb 2040 Plan Detailed Project Schedule**

A detailed project schedule was developed as a way to keep everyone from the project management team to the general public on the same page. The schedule helps move the plan forward and will work as a tool of communication, coordination, and collaboration. Ultimately, the detailed schedule is intended to effectively manage the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan update will be a three year process. The following three pages include the schedule for each year beginning in late March of 2015 and ending in October of 2017. Because of the initial stages of the project beginning early there is built-in time to methodically go through any issues and concerns that may arise through the plan building process and for that reason this



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## DETAILED PROJECT SCHEDULE

*Provide to keep everyone on the same page*

*Moves the plan forward*

*Works as a tool for communication, coordination, and collaboration*

*Intended to effectively manage the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan*

## **Cobb 2040 Plan Detailed Project Schedule (Cont.)**

schedule may be adjusted from time to time. Also, to ensure that we conduct our community meetings during seasons where most individuals would be home, staff has tried to assemble a community meeting schedule that works around traditional vacation seasons and holidays.



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan

2016 SCHEDULE for the Cobb 2040 Planning Process		2016											
Meetings		Jan '16	Feb '16	Mar '16	Apr '16	May '16	June '16	July '16	Aug '16	Sept '16	Oct '16	Nov '16	Dec '16
Public Hearing #1													
PMT Meeting #1													
PMT Meeting #2													
SC Meeting #1													
PMT Meeting #3													
SC Meeting Interviews													
SC Meeting #2													
Community Workshop #1													
Community Workshop #2													
Community Workshop #3													
Community Workshop #4													
PMT Meeting #4													
SC Meeting #3													
Community Charrete #1													
Community Charrete #2													
Community Charrete #3													
Community Charrete #4													
SC Meeting #4													
PMT Meeting #5													
SC Meeting #5													
Community Open House													
Public Hearing #2													
Submit to ARC for review													
Planning Commission Hearing													
Board of Commissioners Adoption													
Tasks													
Create Plan Development													
Create Cobb 2040 Website													
Est. Steering Committee													
Data Collection & Analysis													
Steering Committee Interviews													
Community Survey/VPS													
Develop Needs and Opportunities													
Identify Vision, Goals and Policies													
Draft Community Work Program													
Complete draft Comprehensive Plan													
Plan Revisions													
Adoption of Plan													
Notification of Local Adoption													
Comprehensive Plan Due													
Week Beginning													
Month													

## COBB 2040 Schedule



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

*Purpose*

*Project Management Team*

*Steering Committee*

*General Public*

*Public Education*

*Public Input*

*Public Interaction*



## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Civic engagement is a central component to any planning process, which is the reason why the State of Georgia requires community involvement for each of the elements that make up the Comprehensive Plan. Input from stakeholders and the general public ensures that the plan reflects the full range of community needs and values. For that reason, this Public Participation Plan will explain and give details on the process of engaging citizens, business owners and other stakeholders with varying interests and perspectives.

Cobb County Community Development will be the lead agency for carrying out a wide variety of community involvement opportunities including steering committee meetings, interactive public meetings, workshops, surveys, interviews, social networking and online feedback.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan is to provide citizens a guide on how they can get involved in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Public participation exercises will be designed to educate the public and allow for citizens to provide input and feedback as the plan is developed. The various strategies outlined in the plan have been chosen to ensure that all interested and participating parties have a clear understanding of the process. The public participation plan will be carried out by a three tier structured approach; Project Management Team, Steering Committee and General Public.



### Project Management Team

One of the first tasks in developing the comprehensive plan will be to establish a Project Management Team (PMT). The PMT will consist of staff personnel from different departments that best fit the planning elements included in the plan. The objective of the PMT will be to assist in the development of the comprehensive plan per their expertise and facilitate public involvement events and programs. The team will also ensure that the vision, goals and policies are realistic and can be achieved using best management practices and ensure the development of the plan meets the technical requirements mandated by the State of Georgia. It is anticipated that there will be five (5)



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## **STEERING COMMITTEE**

*Assist in identifying issues and opportunities, goals, policies and the Cobb 2040 Vision*

*Assist in identifying and prioritizing solutions*

*Offer innovative strategies*

*Review documentation and provide feedback, guidance and recommendations*

*Act as liaisons to the community*

*Attend Steering Committee meetings*

*Attend scheduled public meetings if Possible*

*Provide further insight that would help in increased understanding of issues and concerns*

## **Project Management Team (Cont.)**

PMT meetings schedule focusing on the process and development of the plan and to go over materials, format and duties for upcoming community meetings.

## **Steering Committee**

One of the avenues staff will utilize to generate a diversity of opinions from the public is to establish a Steering Committee. The purpose of the Steering Committee is to assist in the development of the plan document by having a number of stakeholders from different backgrounds and specialties working together to guide the planning process and offer innovative ideas and strategies related to Cobb's vision. The Steering Committee will be comprised of a variety of individuals from throughout the community including members of public, private, and non-profit sectors all of whom are active in the in the county. Please see the list on page 29 for a complete list of suggested Steering Committee Groups.

The Steering Committee meetings will include comprehensive plan education, exercises designed to gather input, a review of presentation materials for upcoming community meetings as well as discussions regarding feedback from prior community meetings. The SC will also play an important role in the development of Cobb's 2040 vision, goals, and policies as well as, assist in setting priorities for the Community Work Program. It is anticipated that there will be five (5) SC meetings that will be scheduled one week in advance of the community meetings. Each SC member will also be interviewed as part of needs and opportunities assessment to discuss opinions and views on the quality of life in Cobb County. The Board of Commissioners will recommend members and approve the final list once all invitees have accepted their role.

The specific role of the Steering Committee will include the following:

- Assist staff in identifying issues and opportunities, community goals, policies, and Cobb 2040 Vision that would meet the needs of different constituencies in the community;
- Assist in determining and prioritizing appropriate solutions to include in the Community Work Program, while meeting the community goals;
- Offer innovative strategies and tools that may be explored;
- Review related documentation and provide feedback, guidance, and recommendations based on community's input;
- Act as liaisons to the community and various interest groups by keeping them informed about the process and distributing information about public meetings and contents of the plan document;
- Attend Steering Committee Meetings to review and comment on materials prepared by the PMT;



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*(text cont. on page 31)*

# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan



## 2017 Cobb 2040 Steering Committee Groups



Elected Officials	2	Civic Associations	4
Planning Commissioners	2	Atlanta Regional Commission	1
Historic Preservation Commission	1	Conservation Organization	1
Public Safety	1	Cobb County Chamber of Commerce	1
Cobb County Department of Transportation	2	Business Associations	4
Cobb County Parks and Recreation	1	Town Center CID	1
Cobb County Water Systems	1	Cumberland CID	1
Cobb County Community Development	5	Cobb County School System	1
Community Relations Council	1	Kennesaw State University	2
City of Acworth (Staff)	1	Chattahoochee Technical College	1
City of Kennesaw (Staff)	1	Student Representative	2
City of Marietta (Staff)	1	Development Industry Representatives	2
City of Smyrna (Staff)	1	Millennial Representatives	2
City of Powder Springs (Staff)	1	Cobb NAACP	1
City of Austell (Staff)	1	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	1



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

*Is the process where training, instruction, and information are presented to the public as a means of expanding knowledge and understanding about the community*

*There will be a combination of participation techniques revolved around public education*

### Steering Committee (Cont.)

- Attend scheduled public meetings, if possible;
- Provide further insight to staff in an effort to gain an increased understanding about the opinions and positions of the various interest groups and neighborhoods throughout the county

### General Public

In order to make the Public Participation Program successful, citizens must be encouraged to become active in the planning process. The plan will better reflect the community's preferences and desires if the entire project team is able to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders with various interests. The intent is to interact with the community from the beginning as a means to build public support and trust throughout the process. In general, there are three effective types of participation techniques that will be used: public education, public input, and public interaction.

### Public Education

Public education is the process where training, instruction, and information are presented to the public as a means of expanding knowledge and understanding about the community. This is important because Cobb County is in the process of planning for a diverse community with various needs and it is critical that staff get a better understanding of those needs. There are over 700,000 people in Cobb County and not every person agrees on how their own community should develop in the future. The process of education can therefore help bring the community together to build consensus in creating a shared and common vision. There will be a combination of participation techniques revolved around public education including the following:

**Fact Sheet** – One of the first educational materials that will be developed will be a Fact Sheet that explains who, what, where, why and how about the Comprehensive Plan process. The Fact Sheet will be a condensed and concise presentation of information that emphasizes key points about the Comprehensive Plan.

**Branding** – Community Development staff will work with Communications staff and Steering Committee members to develop a branding campaign aimed at promoting comprehensive planning related events to the general public. Considering our financial resources are limited, Cobb County will strive to devise only the most cost effective measures necessary to accomplish our goals and objectives.

**Website** – Staff will create a project-specific website. The website will be updated on a regular basis throughout the comprehensive plan development process. Citizens will be able to access educational material about the comprehensive plan, how they can get involved, public meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and links to survey's and other important information listed on the site. There

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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

### General Public (Cont.)

*Fact Sheet*

*Branding*

*Website*

*Email Blasts*

*Social Media*

*Kiosk/Lobby Displays*

*Printed Public Information*

*Public Information Meetings*

*Television*

*Newspaper /Publication Ads*

### Public Education (Cont.)

will also be draft documents for the public to review as they become available and a comment box to provide input 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Email blasts – Periodic mass mailings by email will take place to provide participants important notices and other information. At public meetings, attendees will be allowed to sign in and list their email addresses on sign-in sheets. A database of emails will be created and periodic e-mails and future meeting announcements will be sent to the distribution list.

Social Media – Cobb County Communications Department maintains a Facebook page and a Twitter feed along with a Cobb App for mobile devices. All three of these applications are another cost-effective platform to market and advertise the comprehensive plan update process and to get people involved. Ideally, these new communication tools will be used to notify followers of dates, time and location of community meetings, new information that has been updated on the project website and any other press releases related to the Cobb 2040 Plan.

Kiosk/Lobby Displays – Use of location such as public libraries, government buildings and senior centers to post maps, photos, literature and other tools that promote the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan and promote involvement in the process. Displays will be set up during workshops, forums are other public gatherings to inform the citizens of the Comprehensive Plan update.

Printed Public Information – Cobb County’s Communications Department has a variety of ways to facilitate the flow of information to the public. One way is through the CobbLine, a monthly newsletter that keeps citizens updated and informed of county news. It is expected that staff will utilize the CobbLine as well as District Commissioner newsletters to advertise meetings, website and status reports regarding the Cobb 2040 Plan. There will also be an attempt to create business cards, post-cards and other printed material to be distributed by hand or through the mail on as needed basis.

Public Information meetings – There will be public informational meetings throughout the plan update process starting with the Kick-Off Public information meeting. There will be a total of 13 meetings where the public will be invited to participate and provide input. There will be four (4) public hearings, 4 community workshops (1 per Commissioner District), 4 community Charrettes (1 per Commissioner District), and one community open house. All community workshops and Charrettes will have an educational component to them as well an interactive participation session.

Television – Cobb County is fortunate to have a County-run public access channel, TV23. This station provides live broadcasts, preprogrammed material, and web feeds to people that live within the



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# COBB 2040 PLAN DEVELOPMENT



*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUBLIC INPUT

*Incorporation of public participation to ensure the comprehensive plan reflects the full range of community values and desires*

*Process of receiving contributions from the community to form the comprehensive plan*

*Public input will be gathered from numerous sources including the following:*

- Hearings*
- Meetings*
- Workshops*
- Steering Committee*
- Website*
- Surveys*
- Interviews*

## **General Public (Cont.)**

### **Public Education (Cont.)**

jurisdictional boundaries of Cobb County. The comprehensive planning efforts will attempt to utilize this type of media to educate the public about the comprehensive planning process and advertise upcoming public meetings. This will provide another vehicle to promote the process and increase public involvement. It is anticipated that this medium will be used throughout the entire planning process.

Newspaper/Publication Ads – Newspaper advertisements are among the most common forms of announcing meetings and special events to the public. Despite the advent of the Internet as a means of distributing and obtaining information, as well as increasing use of television advertising, newspaper ads continue to be popular due to their relatively inexpensive cost. Also, many newspapers are available via the Internet, which greatly broadens the scope of people they reach.

### **Public Input**

Incorporating public participation into the planning process ensures the comprehensive plan and planning agenda reflects the full range of community values and desires. Public input is the process of receiving contributions from the community with the process of forming the comprehensive plan. The observations from the public will help in the comprehensive plan decision making process. Cobb County intends to incorporate an array of interactive participation methods that include standard time-tested techniques and the latest in technological advances. Information will be gathered from numerous sources including meetings, hearings, workshops, surveys, interviews, website and steering committees. The following is a listing of techniques that will be utilized to gather public input:

Brainstorming – Brainstorming is a technique used to allow for the free flow of ideas. This will be used primarily with the Steering Committee as Cobb County identifies issues and action items. The brainstorming technique can be used as methodology for mitigating conflicts and to facilitate decision making/consensus building, which will be critical for the Steering Committee. Brainstorming techniques may also be included as part of the community Charrettes.

Public Information meetings – There will be public informational meetings throughout the plan update process starting with the Kick-Off Public information meeting. There will be a total of 13 meetings where the public will be invited to participate and provide input. There will be four (4) public hearings, 4 community workshops (1 per Commissioner District), 4 community Charrettes (1 per Commissioner District), and one community open house. All community workshops and Charrettes will have an educational component to them as well an interactive participation session. During the interactive portion of the meeting there will be opportunities for the participants to provide feedback, comments and opinions.

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*Cobb 2040 Comprehensive Plan*

## PUBLIC INPUT

*Brainstorming*

*Public Information Meetings*

*Website*

*Interviews*

*Surveys*

### General Public (Cont.)

#### Public Input (Cont.)

only to educate but to communicate and interact with a diverse segment of the community. This would include updating the public about upcoming meetings, distribution of surveys and questionnaires, and it will provide a format for direct communication through comment boxes. A website would facilitate the collection of surveys while allowing for easier assessment of the data due to its digital format (note: surveys will also be available in “hard-copy” format). The website would likely be our strongest resource for distributing information on public meetings and other events relative to the comprehensive planning process.

Interviews – As part of the existing conditions analysis and needs assessment for each of the elements, Steering Committee interviews will take place with each Steering Committee member. The interview will take place individually or in small groups to discuss their opinions and views on issues surrounding quality of life in Cobb County.

Surveys – One common, effective tool used to gather public opinion is the use of surveys. Surveys can be distributed in a variety of ways, enabling them to reach a variety of people, based on geographic location or other socioeconomic/demographic criteria. A major portion of the public participation plan is focused on gathering information from the public using such surveys. While there will be traditional “hard-copy” surveys incorporated into the process, Cobb County intends to heavily utilize digital, web-based surveys and possible telephone surveys in an effort to reach a larger segment of the community.

The difficulty in using surveys is making sure they are accessible to a variety of people. Work schedules, language barriers, lack of in-home telephone service and inaccurate addresses to consistently receive mail are just a few of the obstacles faced when administering surveys. Cobb County may attempt to hire a third party firm to conduct the surveys.

One specific type of survey that should be mentioned as its own participation technique is the visual preference survey (VPS). A VPS uses image of various development styles, urban design, or other visual depictions of various land use developments in an effort to gain an understanding about what the community wants from their built environment. The VPS images help those being surveyed visualize the shape, form and scale of development they would like to see in their communities. A majority of images used in the VPS should be gathered from within the community or neighboring areas where community members can identify the use or uses in question. This helps to assure the public that these development types are common in the area. It is anticipated that the VPS will be utilized to assist in the development of the Land Use Element by revising the Future Land Use Map and redefining future land use classifications. The VPS will also assist in the Urban Design Element as



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## PUBLIC INTERACTION

*Participatory technique that allows for active communication and interface with the public*

*Where public education and public input combine within a single event in effort to gain information on the community's desires*

### General Public (Cont.)

#### Public Input (Cont.)

a way to get the community's desires as it relates to community design, and the connections between people and places.

#### Public Interaction

Public interaction is the participatory technique that allows for the active communication and interface with the public in a way that will influence decision making. Public interaction is really the space where public education and public input combine within a single event in an effort to gain information on community desires. Public interaction involves the use of the following techniques: Steering Committee meetings – The Steering Committee meetings will include comprehensive plan education, exercises designed to gather input, a review of presentation materials for upcoming community meetings as well as discussions regarding feedback from prior community meetings. It is anticipated that the SC meetings will be scheduled one week in advance of the community meetings. During the initial phases of the update process the Steering Committee will have meetings to get to know one another and to get an understanding of the comprehensive plan update process, what to expect and what the county is expecting from the committee.

Interview – Interaction in the form of individual interviews or small groups will take place with each of the Steering Committee members. The goal is for the interviewee to provide as much feedback as possible concerning quality of life issues in Cobb County.

Public Workshops – Public workshops are a type of public meetings where exhibits and presentations are provided to those in attendance. General discussions of the presented topics will take place between the community and staff in order to explain issues as well as obtain feedback about the information presented. This type of meeting will be conducive to generating small group discussions with the community such as a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis. Surveys and opinion polls will be used to gather additional information from the participants at these meetings. There will be a total of four (4) public workshops, one in each commission district that will be designed to gather information related to the needs and opportunities of the county.

Charettes – Charettes are an important vehicle that can be used to directly involve the public in the comprehensive planning process. This is an interactive meeting where information is provided, questions/answers are discussed, and finally the participants are broken-up into smaller working groups in an effort to tackle a particular issue or opportunity. The Charette process will be used to create the county's vision, goals and policies. In addition the interactive sessions will also be used to draw and comment on maps and create new future land use policy for the county. This will also allow the public to have direct involvement in the vision for the future of their local areas. The



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## PUBLIC INTERACTION

*Steering Committee Meetings*

*Interviews*

*Website*

*Public Workshops*

*Charrettes*

*Open House*

*Public Meeting/Hearings*

## General Public (Cont.)

### Public Interaction (Cont.)

Charette meetings will be held around the mid-point of the public involvement process in an effort to ensure that the public has had an opportunity to voice their concerns regarding the needs and opportunities of the community.

Open House – Open House meetings allow interested individuals to “drop in” and get a first-hand look at the preliminary vision, goals, policies, and community work program. Project Management Team members will be present to answer any questions and take additional feedback and comments to refine the preliminary plan. There will be no presentation but displays of information describing the new Cobb 2040 plan will be available. The Open House format provides an opportunity to see and learn about the County’s new Comprehensive Plan before the adoption process begins.

Public Meetings/Hearings – Public meetings will serve as a type of participation technique that will be incorporated to meet the legislative requirements of mandated state minimum planning standards. In these hearings, the Comprehensive Plan will be discussed as part of a regularly scheduled monthly session with the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. These meetings allow for public discussion, but are not generally conducive to quality public interaction. This type of meeting will only be used at the beginning of the update process and in instances where the draft document and final document are in preparation for submittal to the regional and state bodies for review.



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