



COBB COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2028

*Making Cobb County the best
place to live and work.*

www.cobbcounty.org

Cobb County Strategic Plan

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Cobb County Board of Commissioners



Lisa Cupid

Lisa Cupid is the Commission Chairwoman of Cobb County. She has served on the Cobb Board of Commissioners since 2013. Some of her accomplishments include expanding transit service, improving citizen education and engagement, and advocating for enhanced public safety measures including the use of license plate readers, additional body cameras and implementing a public safety nuisance abatement program. Cupid is known as a strong advocate for the fair treatment of all of Cobb's residents and stakeholders regardless of geographic, demographic, or economic standing.



Keli Gambrill,
District 1

Keli Gambrill has been active in bringing responsible development to West Cobb for the past 13 years with P.L.A.N. (People Looking After Neighborhoods). Keli recently served on the Green Meadows Preserve Friends group, Stout Park Steering Committee and the 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan Committee. She has worked for several small businesses here in Cobb County and has a bachelor's degree in accounting and finance.



Jerica Richardson,
District 2

Commissioner Jerica Richardson represents the eastern part of Cobb County which includes Smyrna, Vinings, East Cobb, Cumberland CID, and other parts of unincorporated Cobb County. Her platform is predicated on the idea that when we are connected, we can empathize, and overcome any challenge. Being a diverse metro county, her primary goal is to use the challenges the county faces to elevate conversations that communities around the country should be having. Such challenges on the horizon include rapid and diverse growth, balancing development demands, environmental stability and technology, discrimination, trust in law enforcement, recession-proofing the community, and long-term wealth gaps and inequality. She believes in working closely with the community and that there are only permanent interests in advancing the public welfare. As a private citizen, Jerica is a Georgia Tech graduate in Biomedical Engineering, and works full time as a Program Manager at Equifax.



Cobb County Board of Commissioners



JoAnn K. Birrell I,
District 3

Cobb County District Three Commissioner JoAnn K. Birrell took her oath of office for her fourth term on Dec. 30, 2022. Birrell, a 27-year resident of the county, has previously served in numerous community organizations including as past chair of Keep Cobb Beautiful and the Neighborhood Safety Commission. During her first term, Birrell initiated the Keep it in Cobb Program and established the Canton Road Redevelopment Committee. During her second term, she continued to work on revitalization and economic development opportunities. In her third term, she continued to support our public safety and veterans. She championed the step and grade to eliminate compression in 2020 for public safety and was instrumental in working with the Cobb Veterans Memorial Foundation for awareness and fundraising. Commissioner Birrell also serves as an advisory board member on the Cobb Veterans Memorial Foundation and received the Commander's Award for the Honorary Commanders Class of 2020-2021.



Monique Sheffield,
District 4

Monique Sheffield has been a District 4 resident for over 20 years. She currently serves on the Lindley Sixth Grade Academy's School Counseling Advisory Committee; is facilitator for Commissioner Lisa Cupid's annual Cobb County HOA Bootcamp; and is the Past-President of two HOA communities. Serving on the HOA Boards was rooted in Monique's desire to solve problems within her community. She also volunteers with Keep Cobb Beautiful and other civic organizations for litter pickup and beautifying her community. She is a graduate of Cobb 101: Citizens Government Academy and Cobb County's Public Safety Academy. She served on the Board of Zoning Appeals from 2017-2019. Her time on BZA provided a platform for Monique to connect with residents and business owners in the community on zoning appeals matters that are important to them. She is co-owner of Sheffield Realty Group, Inc., a boutique real estate brokerage located in Mableton, is a certified instructor with the Georgia Real Estate Commission and has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice.



Letter from the Commission Chairwoman

The County's Strategic Plan is designed to advance our mission: "to make Cobb County the best place to live and work through an efficient, effective and responsive government that delivers quality services" for all.

Our plan captures the varied perspectives of our citizens and utilizes data to guide county leaders as we work with various levels of government, our residents, community stakeholders and corporate leaders to continually achieve our mission.

Cobb County is recognized as a regional and national leader in community prosperity and home value with strong economic, educational, public safety, tourism and healthcare assets. Our people are our greatest asset and they with our physical resources have served as an economic, social, and cultural engine that has helped to drive the entire State of Georgia. However, despite and because of our success, we have a responsibility to the next generation of Cobb County residents to maintain our momentum. We also have a responsibility to our neighbors as they impact and are impacted by the growth and success our county continues to achieve.



To best ensure Cobb's success reaches everyone, for both today and tomorrow, our Strategic Plan identifies seven outcome areas: Community Development, Economic Development, Effective & Efficient Government, Housing & Livability, Infrastructure, Mobility & Transportation, and Public Safety. From those Outcome Areas we have further identified broad strategic goals that await further work and operationalization.

Cobb, as other counties, has experienced many changes over the last several years including a global pandemic. The pandemic has provided many lessons, particularly, that while challenges cannot always be prevented, but they can be prepared for.

I am encouraged by the dedication of our citizens, staff, business leaders and government partners that participated in this process. Only by gathering their perspectives could we have effectively created a plan that we can confidently integrate into our operations and adapt as needs, imperatives, and interests change.

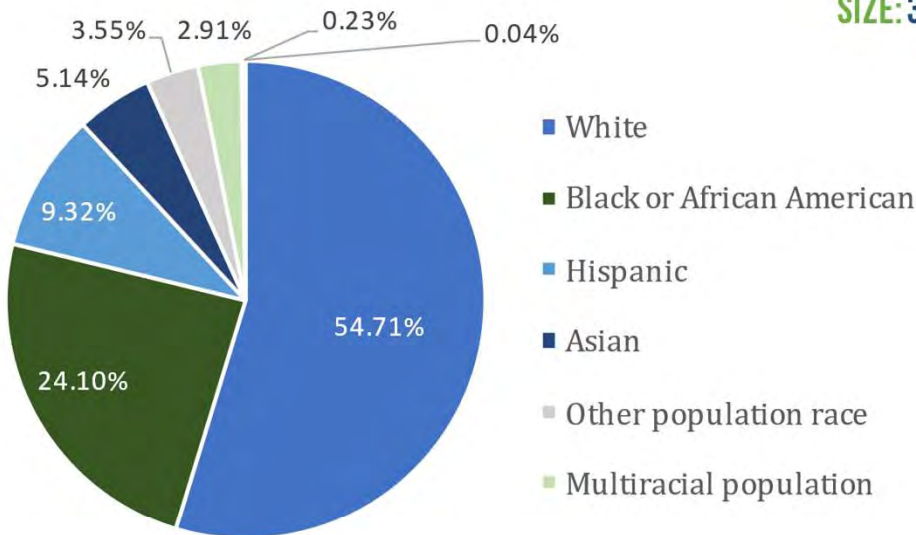
On behalf of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, I am proud to present this Strategic Plan to guide us as we move responsively and responsibly forward into the future.


Lisa Cupid, CHAIRWOMAN



COUNTY PROFILE

POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY



AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE: 3



51.3% OF RESIDENTS ARE FEMALE



48.7% OF RESIDENTS ARE MALE



6.1% OF RESIDENTS ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 5



12.3% OF RESIDENTS ARE OVER THE AGE OF 65



6% OF RESIDENTS <65 HAVE A DISABILITY



MEDIAN GROSS RENT, 2017-2021
\$1,367

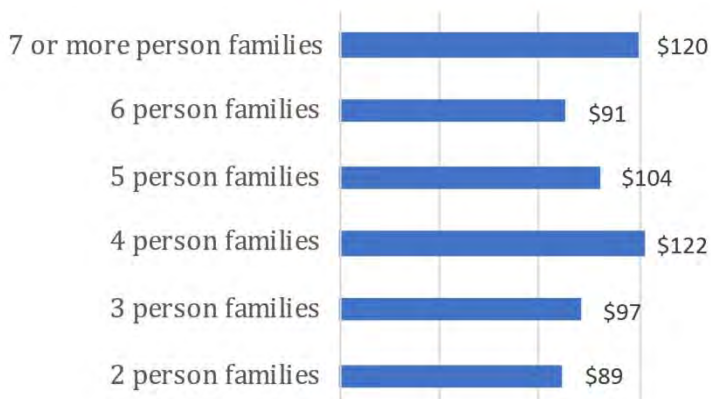
MEDIAN HOME VALUE
\$263,150



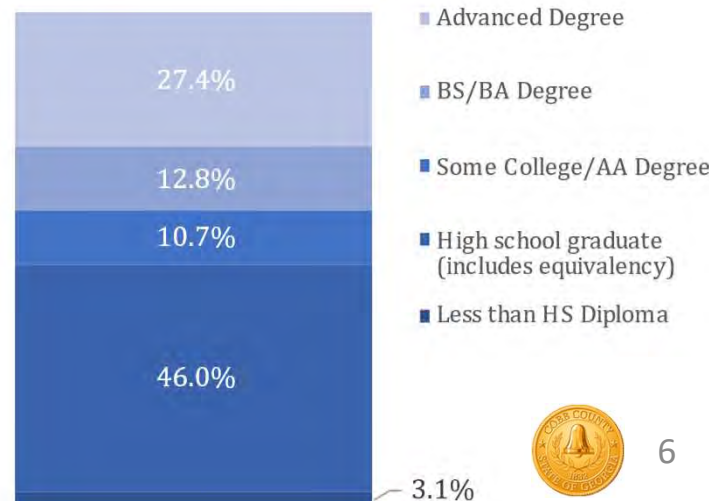
PER CAPITA INCOME
\$41,480

UNEMPLOYMENT
4%

MEDIAN INCOME OF HOUSEHOLD BY FAMILY SIZE (THOUSANDS)



EDUCATION OF POPULATION OVER 25 YEARS



County Mission, Vision, & Core Values



Mission

“Make Cobb County the best place to live and work through an efficient, effective and responsive government that delivers quality services.”

This mission statement serves as the cornerstone of the County’s work; the goal for all initiatives, services, and events to ensure that the county becomes the best place for residents and workers as a result of government operations.



Vision

“Cobb County is a thriving, innovative, and safe community that enhances quality of life for the well-being of all.”

This vision statement was forged through collaboration with staff and county leadership on multiple levels, through benchmarking methods, and analysis of data insights from community members.



Core Values

COMMITMENT is the grit and grind it takes to keep progressing toward our goals and initiatives. It includes dedication and determination, even in the face of adversity. It is servant leadership at its core.

DIVERSITY brings all of us together in support of a common goal regardless of our differences. Diversity is the springboard for inclusiveness. Diversity is being invited to the party and inclusiveness is being asked to dance.

INTEGRITY ensures the public that they can trust us to operate the county effectively, efficiently, prudently, and with the highest ethical standards.

TEAMWORK welcomes and brings varied perspectives to the table. It enables us to work collaboratively in the best interest of the county.



Context for Strategic Plan

- Recommendations for this plan are strategic, and not documented at the project level, to provide the board with maximum flexibility in charting its utilization.
- Suggested Strategies listed in this plan are non-exhaustive and will be examined with balanced consideration from the board and relevant stakeholders. It is the Cobb County Board's discretion on what strategic recommendations to adopt and implement. Outcome areas represent parallel priorities and are not prioritized.
- All Suggested Strategies listed in this plan are dependent on the availability of county resources, both financial and workforce.
- Some of the Suggested Strategies listed in this plan will require Cobb County to partner and collaborate with federal, state, and local agencies and relevant organizations at the project level; Cobb County is committed to collaboration and supporting all necessary entities to achieve these goals while recognizing jurisdictional responsibilities and limitations.
- Not all Suggested Strategies imply net-new initiatives. Some county activities have already been initiated which currently support these newly defined goals and success indicators.
- Suggested Strategies are a reflection of the comprehensive collection and aggregation of county leadership, agency perspective, and citizen-based voices.



Themes

Strategic themes were developed through consideration of elements uncovered in the Strategic Plan Project's discovery phase, such as challenges, enablers, community values, and other components of the strategic assessment work. Themes can be used to develop and connect goals and strategic actions.

Diversity

Stakeholders recognize that Cobb County is home to a population of residents with a wide range of backgrounds.

Accessibility

Stakeholders understand the importance of making public services and economic opportunities accessible to all residents.

Efficient & Effective Government

Stakeholders desire leadership to drive more effective and efficient operations, providing quality services in a collaborative and resourceful manner.

Sustainable Growth

Stakeholders emphasize the need to manage county growth in a way that accelerates long-term economic growth and responsibly manages resources.

Funding & Finances

Stakeholders often mention the need for adequate funding to support county services and infrastructure.

Innovation

Stakeholders express a need for Cobb County to invest in innovation as a way to drive growth.

Safe Communities

Stakeholders desire to live in a county that has measures in place to prevent crime and respond effectively to emergencies.

Affordability

Stakeholders find affordability of living within Cobb to be of high importance.

Resilience

Stakeholders understand the need for more economic opportunities to benefit the community.

Connectivity

Stakeholders would enjoy transportation that enables connectivity between neighborhoods, retail areas, and surrounding communities.



Strategic Outcome Areas

The following 7 Outcome Areas were developed through theme analysis and represent the issues of greatest importance to the Cobb County community. They were developed based on extensive stakeholder input and data analysis and were refined through iterative workshops. Each goal statement was created through joint commissioner collaboration.



Community Development

Cobb County is a place where land use policy and resources are used to thoughtfully and strategically develop and preserve communities, natural, and historical assets.



Economic Development

Cobb County is a place where people and businesses have an opportunity to thrive economically.



Effective & Efficient Government

Cobb County is a place where leaders are transparent, collaborative, and efficient in offering services and making data-driven decisions in managing resources.



Housing & Livability

Cobb County is a place where people have access to a variety of housing options.



Infrastructure

Cobb County is a place where facilities and innovative systems support effective county services and sustainable growth.



Mobility & Transportation

Cobb County is a place where people and goods safely reach destinations efficiently through a well-maintained and connected network of roads, sidewalks, trails, and transit.



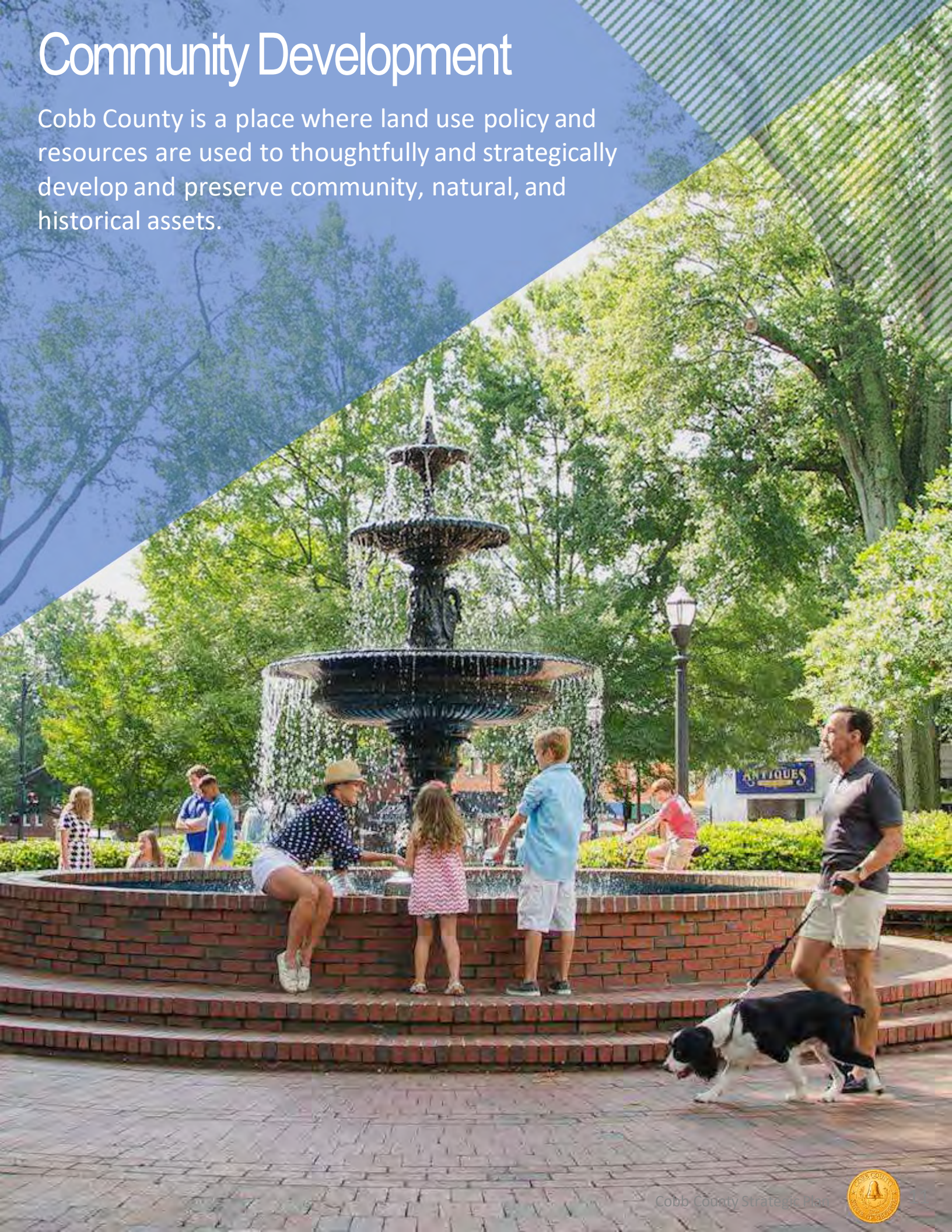
Public Safety

Cobb County is a place where all people feel safe to live, work, play, and visit.



Community Development

Cobb County is a place where land use policy and resources are used to thoughtfully and strategically develop and preserve community, natural, and historical assets.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

One of the most important priorities to Cobb County is creating an environment that provides an enjoyable living experience for its residents. This includes a built environment that meets their needs, preservation of greenspace and historic assets, and the support of arts, leisure, and culture.

With county-wide population and development growth, The County must consider how to simultaneously accommodate growth and development while maintaining the greenspace and visual appeal of the county. These objectives can be achieved by Cobb County strategically utilizing and preserving county owned property and by ensuring the proper zoning is in place and followed by prospective builders.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Sustainable Development
- ✓ Greenspace Preservation
- ✓ Streamlined Community Development Processes



Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Sustainable Development

- ✓ Identify and qualify place-based opportunities for revitalization and development
- ✓ Proactively examine and assess the county infrastructure's capacity for new development
- ✓ Consider leveraging vulnerability assessments to identify new development's impacts, threats and risks to critical county systems
- ✓ Leverage data to identify resource gaps to enable strategic development
- ✓ Support the efforts of the Cobb Sustainability department to identify climate risks and impacts associated with development

Greenspace Preservation

- ✓ Set a county-wide greenspace acreage goal
- ✓ Collaborate with County stakeholders to identify, record, and protect valued scenic and open space resources

Streamlined Zoning & Code Enforcement Processes

- ✓ Enhance efforts to communicate and streamline code enforcement activities across the County
- ✓ Explore adapting existing procedures to improve efficiency of public engagement in community development



Economic Development

Cobb County is a place where people and businesses have an opportunity to thrive economically.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Cobb County is a leader in Georgia for the growth and development of economic opportunities for its citizens. The outcome area of Economic Development addresses the prioritization of sustainable growth and meeting the critical development needs of the County. There is a clear desire to increase the presence of shopping districts, restaurants, and entertainment sources to foster a well-rounded and flourishing community.

The county must consider how to strategically attract new businesses to the county to drive economic growth, tourism, and job opportunities across all districts. Simultaneously, the county must encourage revitalization of abandoned and unoptimized strip plazas to encourage new development sources to take root as well as support and accelerate the growth of our small, local businesses.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Economic Empowerment & Upward Mobility
- ✓ Enhanced Collaboration & Strengthened Partnerships
- ✓ Attracting & Retaining Businesses



Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Economic Empowerment & Upward Mobility

- ✓ Continue to support entrepreneurship in the County
- ✓ Encourage the identification and availability of entry level jobs in the County
- ✓ Support the expansion of workforce pathway programs for youth and young adults
- ✓ Support partners to identify and prepare the workforce for in-demand skills

Enhanced Collaboration & Strengthened Partnerships

- ✓ Encourage strategic development activity that addresses resource needs across the County
- ✓ Proactively examine and assess the local infrastructure's capacity for new development and plan for that influx
- ✓ Lead the planning efforts to develop a county-wide vision for economic development that aligns the mission and vision of economic development stakeholders in the County

Attracting & Retaining Businesses

- ✓ Regularly inventory, evaluate and address the needs of businesses throughout the County
- ✓ Proactively encourage business investment by addressing identified issues that stifle business attraction and expansion in the County



Effective & Efficient Government

Cobb County is a place where leaders are transparent, collaborative, and efficient in offering services and making data-driven decisions in managing resources.



EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

Introduction

Stakeholder engagement activities routinely recognized that county leadership has an opportunity to demonstrate collaboration and transparency to their constituents and the citizens of Cobb County. The outcome area of Effective & Efficient Government strives to prioritize the inter-entity partnerships with neighboring organizations and systems to combine resources and time, better serving the residents and visitors of Cobb. A major priority within this outcome area is also ensuring adequate county staffing levels with well trained and skilled resources.

Additionally, it addresses the need for elected leadership to work towards clearly defined goals, to confirm policy and operational tasks are owned by the correct parties. Moving forward, the county must plan to promote cohesion, collaboration, and transparency, choosing to prioritize the needs of everyone.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Financial Sustainability
- ✓ Customer & Employee Satisfaction
- ✓ Sufficient County Staffing Levels
- ✓ Data-Driven Governance
- ✓ Efficient Public Services



EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Financial Sustainability

- ✓ Evolve the budgeting process to utilize an outcome-based funding model
- ✓ Explore and deploy a mix of options to increase financial resources for the County

Customer & Employee Satisfaction

- ✓ Implement an approach to solicit constituent and employee feedback
- ✓ Prioritize employee appreciation initiatives
- ✓ Invest in innovative tools and techniques to engage community members

Sufficient County Staffing Levels

- ✓ Use data to identify attrition and retention trends for initiative planning
- ✓ Support initiatives that address retention

Data-Driven Governance

- ✓ Collect and publish purpose-driven data based on strategic priorities
- ✓ Establish and implement a governance structure for the implementation of the strategic plan

Efficient Public Services

- ✓ Evaluate the current and projected demand for county services
- ✓ Identify and develop a plan to address demand gaps in service delivery



Housing & Livability

Cobb County is a place where people have access to a variety of housing options.



Introduction

Housing is critical to ensure Cobb County delivers on their mission to be the “the best place to live...”. Cobb County is home to a wide variety of living communities. Therefore, while constructing our identified strategies this variability was considered to ensure the diverse needs of Cobb residents are addressed. The goal of these strategies is to promote equitable access to reasonably priced housing, regardless of housing type.

The county must achieve a balance between preserving the history and culture of existing neighborhoods while also allowing the development of newer communities. Simultaneously, the needs for upper, middle, and low-income citizens must be addressed to ensure that, regardless of background, they are supported by the county. It is also critical that the county takes a proactive approach considering how development will impact the surrounding infrastructure, schools, and transportation system.

Key Success Indicators

- 
- ✓ Adequate Quantity & Availability of Housing Types
 - ✓ Increased Attainable & Quality Housing Options
 - ✓ Preventing & Addressing Homelessness

Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Adequate Quality & Availability of Housing Options

- ✓ Evaluate and adapt land use policies that promote exclusionary zoning and inhibit a variety of housing options across the County
- ✓ Set a county-wide housing mix goal
- ✓ Ensure the County's Unified Development Code enables a variety of housing types

Increased Attainable & Quality Housing Options

- ✓ Set a county-wide attainable housing goal
- ✓ Develop and publish a county Housing dashboard
- ✓ Explore the establishment of a County Land Banking Authority

Preventing & Addressing Homelessness

- ✓ Collaborate with public and private partners to establish a Cobb County Homeless Housing Fund (CCHHF)



Infrastructure

Cobb County is a place where facilities and innovative systems support effective county services and sustainable growth.



Introduction

The infrastructure of the county serves as the foundational framework for the operational and functional responsibilities of Cobb County. As an outcome area, infrastructure serves to address the concerns regarding stormwater management, technological innovation, and lastly, capital and facility improvements. As the county continues to develop and a significant portion of the stormwater infrastructure is reaching the end of its useful life, stormwater management has become an area of increasing concern. Additionally, there are opportunities to innovate the current operations through technological advancements to better serve the citizens and allow for staff efficiency.

The county must prioritize investments in and consider policy changes regarding county infrastructure. There is a need to discover a balance between budget management and functional capital improvements.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ **Prioritized Capital Improvements**
- ✓ **Resilient Stormwater Infrastructure**
- ✓ **Long-Term Infrastructural Investments**
- ✓ **Enhanced Technology Infrastructure**



Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Prioritized Capital Improvements

- ✓ Develop capital improvement plan that prioritizes the upgrade and modernization of outdated county infrastructure
- ✓ Identify and evaluate funding options to support short and long-term capital infrastructure improvements

Resilient Stormwater Infrastructure

- ✓ Develop long-term investment strategies for an aging stormwater system
- ✓ Evaluate and address barriers to repairing and replacing failing stormwater infrastructure
- ✓ Develop a stormwater maintenance policy to clearly define Cobb Water, Cobb DOT, and property owner responsibilities for maintaining stormwater drainage systems

Long-Term Infrastructural Investments

- ✓ Prioritize sustainability, growth, and service accessibility in a long-term capital improvement plan for the County
- ✓ Examine space utilization across County facilities for future workforce and facilities planning
- ✓ Assess and pursue opportunities to embrace hybrid work where feasible

Enhanced Technology Infrastructure

- ✓ Support enhancing and investing in cutting-edge technologies that improve the County's efficiency
- ✓ Explore options to streamline constituent service request data and improve the customer experience
- ✓ Evaluate and assess opportunities to consolidate disparate county systems and integrate siloed data
- ✓ Expand efforts to foster a culture of cybersecurity within the County



Mobility & Transportation

Cobb County is a place where people and goods safely reach destinations efficiently through a well-maintained and connected network of roads, sidewalks, trails, and transit.



MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

With the rapid growth of Cobb County, the transportation needs have also increased. The Cobb County Data Dashboards revealed that the county is primarily car dependent. Residents and visitors alike require the use of vehicles to reach employment, healthcare, and food sources. There is a particular need for mobility options that offer multiple ways to access all areas of the county. This includes walkability, bike-friendly roads, and public transit access. This outcome area also includes roads and traffic concerns; it is evident that roads must be maintained and interconnected to promote smooth transit.

The county must accommodate for the needs of those across the four districts ensuring they have access to reliable transportation. Additionally, Cobb County should set out to ensure efficiency across the county so residents, visitors, and goods can arrive at their destinations in a timely manner.

Implementation of the proposed strategies in the Cobb County Strategic Plan will also be fully aligned with recommendations outlined in the CobbForward Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP).

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ **Enhanced Transportation Infrastructure**
- ✓ **Proactively Address Transportation Safety**
- ✓ **Reduced Travel Delays**
- ✓ **Enhanced Mobility & Connectivity**



MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Enhanced Transportation Infrastructure

- ✓ Align County and federal transportation priorities to maximize funding resources and grant opportunities
- ✓ Continue to enhance and optimize Cobb Linc transit routes based on demand
- ✓ Prioritize addressing the lack of transportation infrastructure (i.e., bus stops) where needed

Proactively Address Transportation Safety

- ✓ Identify and publish county-wide transportation safety-related goals and success metrics
- ✓ Pursue federal transportation safety grants to support the implementation of projects that enhance safety across the County

Reduced Travel Delays

- ✓ Increase resources and investments for the Traffic Management Center

Enhanced Mobility & Connectivity

- ✓ Support long-term investments that prioritize connectivity across the County
- ✓ Continue to prioritize multi-modal solutions for all users



Public Safety

Cobb County is a place where all people feel safe to live, work, play and visit.



Introduction

Throughout the stakeholder engagement activities, public safety was clearly defined as an area of priority and concern for nearly all stakeholders. Public Safety encompasses the Cobb County Police, Cobb Fire and Emergency Services, E911, Emergency Management Agency and the Cobb County Sheriff's Office. Stakeholders expressed a need to dedicate resources, both funding and staff, to ensure a preservation of services.

As it stands, 911 Emergency Communications has the highest vacancy rate and poses the highest threat to the county not upholding the standard of safety. The county must dedicate time, resources, and policies to ensure that Cobb County continues to be the safe community that draws individuals to live and visit.

Beyond resources and funding, Cobb County must also prioritize creating a sense of collaboration and partnership with members of the community and our Public Safety departments. Implementation of the proposed strategies in the Cobb County Strategic Plan will also be fully aligned with recommendations outlined in the strategic plans and accreditation mandates of Cobb County Public Safety agencies.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Proactively Address Crime & Safety
- ✓ Effective Administration of Justice
- ✓ Reliable & Secure Public Safety Infrastructure



Strategies for achieving Success indicators

Proactively Address Crime & Safety

- ✓ Prioritize investments in modern public safety technologies
- ✓ Garner regional support and resources for the Real-Time Crime Center
- ✓ Encourage cross-sector investments in people and communities experiencing higher crime rates, poverty and homelessness
- ✓ Leverage partnerships to scale existing community policing initiatives

Effective Administration of Justice

- ✓ Use data to improve the streetlighting infrastructure across the County and prioritize expanding access in areas of need in order to deter crime
- ✓ Invest in attracting and retaining high-quality public safety staff
- ✓ Expand the County's anti-recidivism efforts
- ✓ Continue to strengthen relations and trust between law enforcement and the community

Reliable & Safe Public Safety Infrastructure

- ✓ Support public safety capital improvement initiatives
- ✓ Strengthen coordination with healthcare providers and other stakeholders to improve emergency response operations across the County



Appendix



Development Timeline

Over the course of 7 months the Cobb County Manager’s office and the Board of Commissioners sponsored The Comprehensive Strategic Planning project. The project timeline consisted of diverse activities to gather critical information from various stakeholders, identify themes, and develop strategies. The exhaustive timeline is included below:

- **September 13th:** Project Kick-off: The project steering committee, also known as the “tri-chairs” and the Accenture project team met to discuss project expectations, outputs, and plans.
- **September 27th -October 3rd:** Board of Commissioner Discovery Interviews: The project team met with each commissioner to learn of their vision, priorities, and goals for the county.
- **October 10th- 12th:** County Focus Group Interviews: County staff, Superior and State Court representatives, and the school system superintendents, each attended focus groups to discuss the strengths and challenges of the county. They also mentioned aspects they believe should be prioritized.
- **October 20th:** District 1 Listening Session: The project team openly invited residents of District 1 to attend the session and share what they desire to continue, stop, and start in the county. Residents also shared their vision for the county.
- **November 3rd:** Survey Launch: The custom self-administered stated measure survey launched across the county to gain any input and ensure a diversity of voices were heard.
- **November 15th:** District 3 Listening Session: The project team openly invited residents of District 3 to attend the session and share what they desire to continue, stop, and begin in the county. Residents also shared their vision for the county.
- **November 16th:** District 4 Listening Session: The project team openly invited residents of District 4 to attend the session and share what they desire to continue, stop, and begin in the county. Residents also shared their vision for the county.



November 30th: Community Visioning Workshop #1: Community leaders were invited to attend the 4-hour workshop to engage in interactive activities designed to gain contributions about the strategic direction of the county.

December 5th: Community Visioning Workshop #2: Community leaders were invited to attend the 4-hour workshop to engage in interactive activities designed to gain contributions about the strategic direction of the county.

December 8th: District 1 p.2 Listening Session: To increase turnout, the project team was requested to host an additional session. Residents of District 1 again were asked to share what they desire to continue, stop, and begin in the county. Residents also shared their vision for the county.

December 15th: District 2 Listening Session: The project team openly invited residents of District 2 to attend the session and share what they desire to continue, stop, and begin in the county. Residents also shared their vision for the county.

January 13th: Survey Close: The county-wide survey was closed to allow for an adequate amount of time for analyses of the results.

January 18th–26th: BOC Strategic Review Sessions: The project team met with each commissioner individually to share the outputs of the project to date and gain their feedback.

February 1st–3rd: BOC Retreat: The project team presented the survey results and key data dashboards to the retreat attendees. The strategic vision statement for the county as well as the goal statements for each outcome area were developed at this time.

February 24th: Community Roundtable: Leaders of the Cobb Community were invited to share their input and feedback regarding the strategic outcome areas to ensure the proposed strategies accurately addressed the community they serve.

February 27th–28th: Working Groups: County staff members met to discuss feasible strategies to solve the challenges of the county and meet the goals of each outcome area.



The Cobb County Strategic Plan project organized development into two major phases:

DISCOVERY and DESIGN.

Discovery Phase

The discovery phase was comprised of stakeholder engagement activities and dashboard development. To help guide this phase, key research questions were developed.

Primary and secondary sourced research method sources led to exploration and analysis which allowed for each question to be addressed. The research questions for both data analysis and stakeholder engagement questions are listed below:

Data Analysis: Research Questions

Benchmarking: *How does Cobb County Compare to peer counties across key indicators?*

Sociodemographic: *What does the socio-demographic landscape across the County look like?*

Access: *How accessible are services across the county?*

Industry & Talent: *What does Cobb County's local job market and talent fulfillment look like?*

Housing: *What is the housing mix across the county?*

Public Services: *Based on services usage, what does Cobb County's participation look like across those services considered most critical?*

Stakeholder Engagement Research Questions

Mission: *How is Cobb performing against the County mission?*

Core Values: *How is Cobb performing against the County's core values?*

Current State: *What are the County's key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?*

Future Priorities: *What are the most important and relevant focus areas for Cobb County to prioritize over the next 5 years?*

Inputs & Approach

To effectively answer the research questions and attain inclusive engagement, an integrated and diverse set of methods were deployed. The inputs used in the discovery phase are as follows:

- Interviews
- District Listening Sessions
- County-wide survey
- Community Workshops
- Cobb County Data (County-provided and publicly available data)



The approach used in the discovery phase is as follows:

1. Categorical assignments were made for all sessions and interview questions, to allow for ease of analysis and clearly defined descriptions for each insight.
2. Using the interview engagement methods, strategic questions were posed as guiding principles for the creation of Cobb data dashboards.
3. The insights were then evaluated to determine which streamlined theme with which they are aligned.
4. The collection of insights were then categorized and quantified to identify outcome areas.

Design Phase

The design phase is the compilation of the insights found in the discovery phase. The design phase leveraged several stakeholders and data accumulation to create a strategic vision, goals, and outcomes for Cobb County.

Insights Report

The results of the insights collected during the discovery phase were compiled and presented to county leadership. The insights report was sorted via stakeholder engagement, data analysis and SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats) findings.

Vision Document

As a result, a series of vision-based information were developed with the key outcome of creating a vision statement to be used for the Strategic Plan. The statement received multiple levels of feedback from county leadership and was ultimately finalized at the Board of Commissioners Retreat.

Inputs & Approach

To effectively create strategic recommendations which address the key research insights, an innovative and agile set of methods were deployed throughout the planning project's design phase.

The inputs used in the design phase are as follows:

- Board of Commissioner Retreat Discussions
- Interviews
- Cobb Leadership Working Groups
- Community Roundtable Discussions

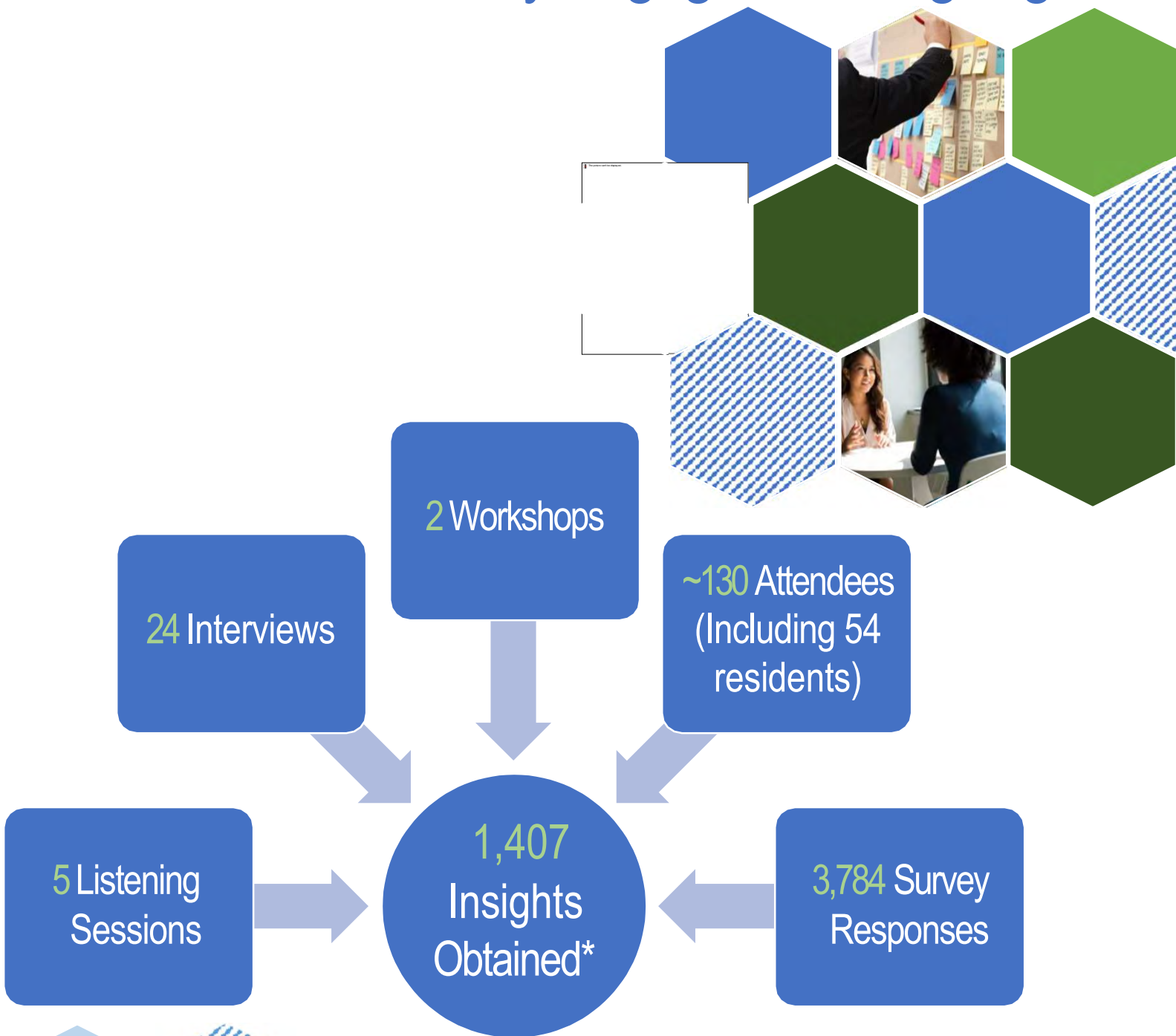


The approach used in the design phase is as follows:

1. Based on the County Insights Report suggestions, key strategic themes, goals, and outcomes were developed as a foundation for the strategic plan.
2. The themes, goals, and ideal outcomes evolved from feedback from multiple, diverse stakeholder groups.
3. Following the envisioning of the strategic goals and outcomes a feasibility assessment was conducted through leadership working groups.
4. The feedback from the diverse inputs were compiled and put into strategic recommendations and goals. These are the proposed strategies of the strategic plan.



Community Engagement Highlights



*5,191 insights if survey included

