

City of Smyrna Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study

Technical Memorandum #3

Public Outreach & Stakeholder Engagement

Draft



January 2020



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Prepared for



Prepared by



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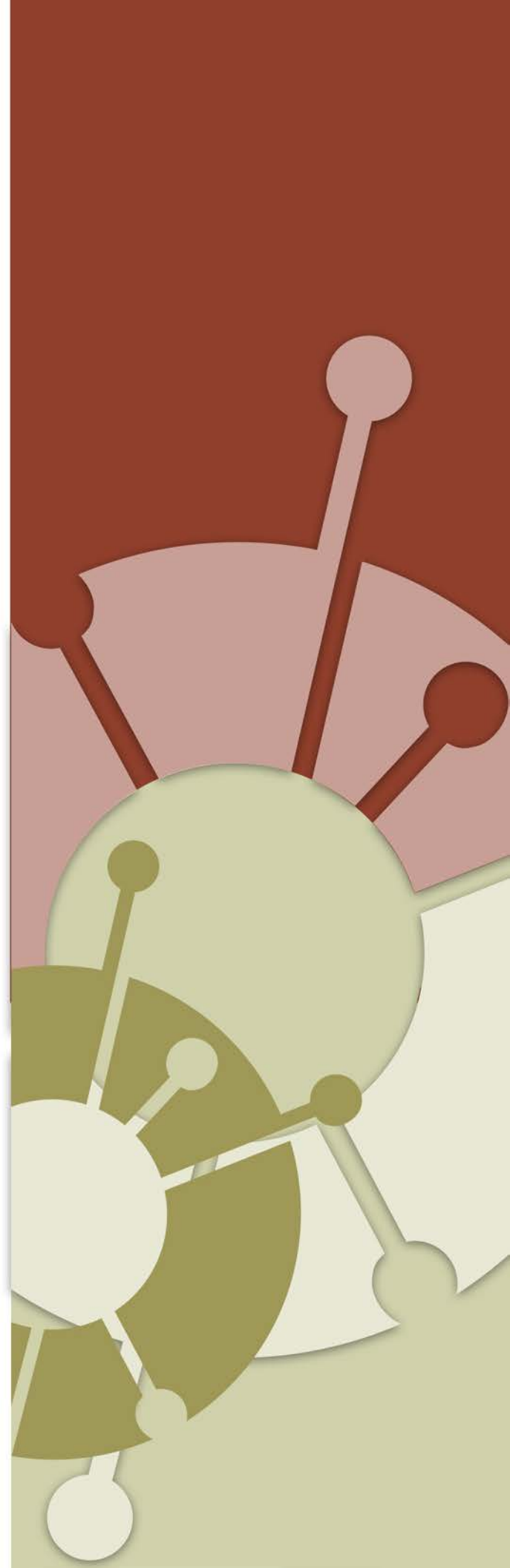
Section 1: Introduction

The success of any planning study depends largely on the strength and effectiveness of its public and stakeholder outreach program. Effective two-way communication with residents, the business community, City staff and elected officials, State and regional transportation agencies, employers and employees, visitors, and the general public is essential in creating strong community relationships, generating useful study input, and developing a creative, viable, and community-supported vision.

Recognizing this, the public and stakeholder outreach program for *Smyrna Connects* was designed to connect with a broad range of stakeholders to build awareness and educate them on the study as well as transit in general and to collect their input on Smyrna's transit needs.

Tools and techniques were employed to maximize participation and obtain high levels of quality input. Highlights of the program include interviews conducted with an extensive list of local and regional stakeholders, discussion groups with stakeholders of similar interests to allow in-depth topical conversations, workshops hosted in highly-trafficked public areas, a study website with project information and a link to an online survey to allow access to the study, and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to collect comprehensive input from local, regional, and State public agencies.

The significant response to these efforts has been instrumental in creating an accurate and complete picture of the current transit environment in Smyrna and the needs and desires of the community in the years ahead. This technical memorandum describes the tools and techniques used to date and indicates the important takeaways of the input received.



Section 2: Public Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

Public involvement efforts provide critical feedback and support and are part of the basis for developing transit needs in a community, as they gather information to ascertain community perceptions and expectations on local and regional transit services. This section describes the public involvement activities undertaken for *Smyrna Connects* and summarizes the key findings from each. To guide these efforts, City staff, with guidance from the TAC, prepared a Public Outreach Plan (POP) that describes the numerous outreach activities to be undertaken during the study along with a schedule to guide their implementation. The plan is provided in Appendix A and indicates the numerous opportunities and avenues for public engagement and engaging all key partner/stakeholder representatives of local agencies and organizations.

Public Involvement Techniques

Various public involvement techniques were used to engage a full range of the population, including underrepresented populations such as older adults and low-income and minority persons, to facilitate their active participation in the study development. Figure 2-1 shows the direct involvement and information distribution techniques employed to engage the public.

Direct involvement techniques include activities that engage the public through “hands-on” methods such as workshops, discussion groups, stakeholder interviews, and public input surveys. Information distribution techniques include the use of printed and online materials and include *Smyrna Connects* branding, business cards, a project website, social media outreach, email blasts, fact sheets, and presentation boards.

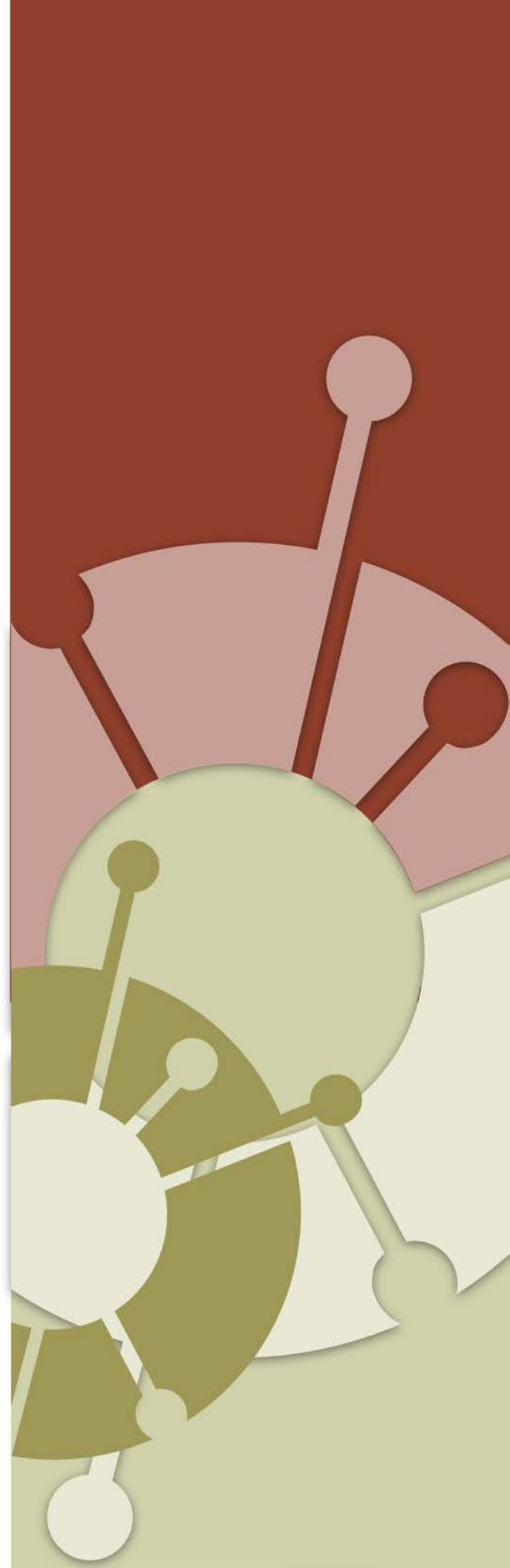
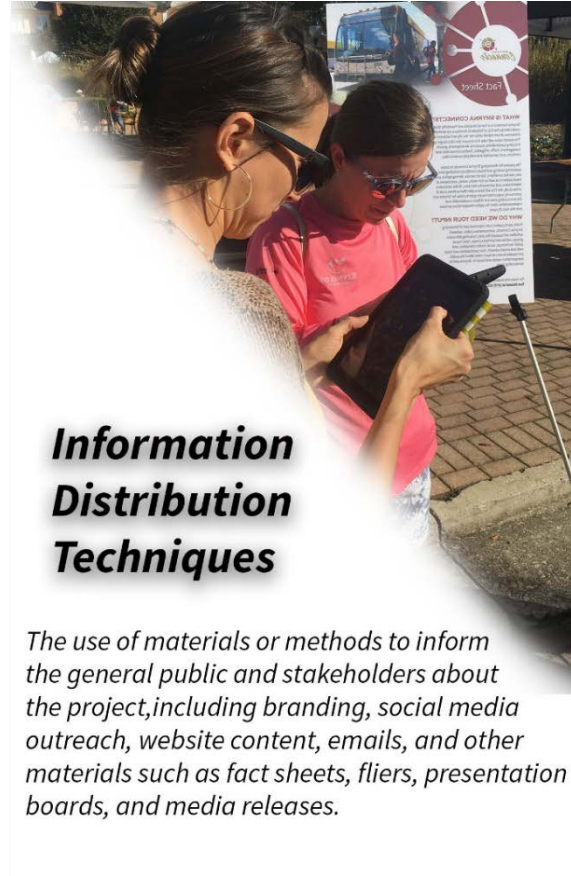


Figure 2-1: Public Involvement Techniques for Smyrna Connects



Direct Involvement Techniques

Activities that directly engage the public and stakeholders in “hands-on” workshops and/or discussion about the project, such as open house public workshops, stakeholder interviews, rider and non-rider surveys in both printed and online media, and presentations to elected officials.



Information Distribution Techniques

The use of materials or methods to inform the general public and stakeholders about the project, including branding, social media outreach, website content, emails, and other materials such as fact sheets, fliers, presentation boards, and media releases.

The remainder of this section discusses each technique used. The vision of the community for transit and the means necessary to achieve it will be derived from these activities and used in the strategy development and evaluation activities later in this study.

Summary of Smyrna Connects Public Involvement Activities

Several public involvement techniques and activities were used to ensure a wide range of opportunities for the community and key stakeholders to actively participate in study development. These activities and techniques are summarized in greater detail in the following sections. A summary of the participation by outreach event is provided in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Public Involvement Activities (Completed and Planned)

Outreach Event	Timeline	Engaged
Stakeholder Interviews		
Stakeholder Interviews	August–December 2019	41
Surveys		
Public Input Survey	August–December 2019	1,038
Open House Public Workshops		
Workshop #1: REV Coffee Shop	October 25, 2019	4
Workshop #2: Jonquil Festival	October 26–27, 2019	176
Workshop #3	February/March 2020	-
Workshop #4	February/March 2020	-
Discussion Group Workshops		
Business/Economic Development Community	October 25, 2019	7
Social Service Agency Representatives	October 24, 2019	9
Bus Riders	November 13, 2019	24
Cobb Transit Advisory Board	November 25, 2019	25
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings		
TAC Meeting #1	August 28, 2019	18
TAC Meeting #2	November 19, 2019	n/a
TAC Meeting #3	February 2019	-
TAC Meeting #4	April 2019	-
Other Efforts		
Email	August–November 2019	75
Grassroots Outreach	December 2019	25
Facebook	Ongoing	Many
Project Website	Ongoing	Many
Total		1,442+

Note: Total does not include website, social media engagements, or project presentations.

Smyrna Connects Branding

Prior to commencing any outreach, the project team coordinated with the TAC to develop a unique brand for the study to ensure that it gains the necessary attention from the local community and its regional partners. Branding also helps with the public outreach process and provides City staff with an established foundation for marketing campaigns or other similar promotional efforts beyond completion of the study.

The *Smyrna Connects* branding is shown on all relevant project material for the study.



Business Cards

To make better use of the unique branding created for the project and help promote the outreach efforts, business cards with the *Smyrna Connects* logo were prepared. These were distributed at public workshops, discussion groups, and any other similar events to direct citizens to the *Smyrna Connects* website to attain more information about the project and allow them to complete the current survey at a different time. This helped the City continue to build the brand.



Social Media, Email Blasts, and *Smyrna Connects* Website

Several indirect outreach methods were used to educate and inform the public of the current stage of the study. Social media were used to inform and educate the public about the study and upcoming public forums. The City of Smyrna's Facebook and Twitter pages were used to encourage citizens to take the survey and attend the public workshops. Emails were sent to transit stakeholders and their associates to engage members of the community and seek opinions, ideas, and relevant information. Emails also were sent to promote upcoming workshops and provide links to complete the current survey.

The *Smyrna Connects* website provides a one-stop location for those seeking information on the current stage of the study, including the process, schedule, meeting announcements, project milestones, survey links, and a mechanism to leave comments.



Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

A TAC was established at the outset of the project to monitor project progress, provide input throughout the study, and review deliverables. Members of the TAC are shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: Technical Advisory Committee

Local Representation	
Tom Boland	Smyrna Economic Development
William Parker	Smyrna Economic Development
Rusty Martin	Smyrna Community Development/Planning
Kevin Moore	Smyrna Engineering
Jennifer Bennett	City of Smyrna
Regional Representation	
Lori Sand	Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority
Kyethea Clark	Cumberland CID
Eric Meyer	Cobb County DOT
Andrea Foard/Ezekiel Guza	CobbLinc
Heather Alhadeff	MARTA
Kaycee Mertz	Georgia DOT
Megan Weiss	Georgia DOT
Amy Goodwin	Atlanta Regional Commission



Atlanta Regional Commission



Georgia Department of Transportation



CUMBERLAND
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



Applicable project deliverables were distributed to the TAC for review and comment. The following meetings were held as part of this effort:

- TAC Meeting #1:
Project Kickoff and
Review of Study Goals
and Schedule** – A

project kickoff meeting was held on August 28, 2019, at the City of Smyrna Community Development Meeting Room (Brawner Hall) to obtain guidance and



initiate the study process. All TAC members were present, and discussion included identifying key objectives, reviewing the scope of services, reviewing public involvement needs and schedule, and determining data needs. Attendees provided input into outreach strategies,

including suggestions for events, identification of stakeholders for interviews, and development of details for an online presence and study branding.

- **TAC Meeting #2: Outreach Update and Transit Needs Discussion** – On November 19, 2019, at Brawner Hall, the TAC met to review progress and discuss prior public outreach events, expectations for upcoming public outreach events, and results from ongoing public outreach and its implications. Attendees provided suggestions for additional avenues for information-sharing outside of the study, including data from recent regional onboard surveys, Cobb CTP focus groups, and MARTA planners. Attendees also shared their thoughts on general areas of transit needs and the importance of educating the community about transit options.

Stakeholder Engagement

To enhance the understanding of local and regional conditions and needs, a series of interviews was conducted with a selected set of stakeholders. Local and regional stakeholders were identified by City staff with input from TAC members. A structured question script was developed using TAC input to guide the interview discussions. Table 2-3 identifies the community stakeholders engaged in this process.

Each stakeholder was contacted through multiple phone calls and emails. In total, 26 of the 41 contacted responded and participated in an interview. The participants were asked for their input on perceptions and attitudes about public transportation and their views on future mobility needs locally and for the region. The interviews were structured to guide the participant to provide input in the following areas:

- **Conditions today** – questions were posed to obtain input on services, perceptions, awareness at this time, and pressing issues related to transit.
- **Where do we want to go?** – questions on goals were presented that focused on the type of service and technology goals desired for the future.
- **How do we get there?** – input was sought on improvement strategies that may be necessary to achieve the goals.

Stakeholder Engagement Summaries

Each stakeholder was provided the same questions and topics; the script is provided in Appendix B. Input received during these interviews was reviewed, and major themes were identified and are summarized in the following sections. Overall, interviewees indicated the need for quick and easy connections within and adjacent to areas of Smyrna, as well as more enhanced regional connections. Expanding awareness and marketing also were identified as critical to get potential riders to abandon their cars and switch to transit for their commute trips.

Table 2-3: Smyrna Connects Stakeholders

Name	Organization	Title
Derek Norton	City of Smyrna	Former City Commissioner, Ward 1
Andrea Blustein	City of Smyrna	Former City Commissioner, Ward 2
Maryline Blackburn	City of Smyrna	Former City Commissioner, Ward 3
Corkey Welch	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 4
Susan Wilkinson	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 5
Tim Gould	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 6
Ron Fennel	City of Smyrna	Former City Commissioner, Ward 7
Glenn Pickens	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 1
Austin Wagner	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 2
Travis Lindley	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 3
Lewis Wheaton	City of Smyrna	City Commissioner, Ward 7
Max Bacon	City of Smyrna	Mayor
Tammi Saddler-Jones	City of Smyrna	City Administrator
Scott Andrews	City of Smyrna	Assistant City Administrator
Mike Boyce	Cobb County	Chairman
Bob Ott	Cobb County	District 2 Commissioner
Lisa Cupid	Cobb County	District 4 Commissioner
Rob Hosack	Cobb County	County Manager
John Shern	Cumberland CID	Chairman
Kim Menefee	Cumberland CID	Executive Director
Mike Plant	Braves Development Company	President of Development
Jeremy Strife	Braves Development Company	Vice President/General Manager
Sharon Mason	Cobb Chamber of Commerce	CEO
Mitch Rhoden	Cobb Chamber of Commerce	Chairman
Dana Johnson	Cobb Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director, Select Cobb
Slade Gullede	Cobb Chamber of Commerce	VP, Government Relations
Nelson Geter	Cobb Development Authority	Executive Director
Clark Hungerford	Cobb Development Authority	Chair; President, Vinings Bank
Andrea Foard	CobbLinc	Director
Jeffrey Parker	MARTA	Executive Director
Todd VerSteeg	ATL	ATL District 4
Chris Tomlinson	ATL	Executive Director
Russell McMurry	Georgia DOT	Commissioner
Doug Hooker	Atlanta Regional Commission	Executive Director
Jaha Howard	Cobb School Board	Post 2
Charisse Davis	Cobb School Board	Post 6
Doug Stoner	South Cobb Development Authority	Chair, Former State Senator & Smyrna City Council, Ward 6
Barbara Allen	Smyrna Business Association	President
Brandon Beach	North Fulton CID	Executive Director
Teri Anulewicz	State of Georgia	State Legislator District 42
Holly Quinlan	Cobb Travel and Tourism	Executive Director

commended its continued efforts to improve the service with available resources, including the most recent service changes such as adding Sunday service.

- **Connectivity** – Stakeholders indicated the need to connect with MARTA and that the Perimeter Center, Midtown, and Downtown areas are underserved and lack good connections from Smyrna. The need to get from Smyrna to Downtown Atlanta directly was also mentioned. Stakeholders also stressed that better regional connections may be needed to access economic opportunities outside Smyrna and quickly connect to the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.
- **Funding and support** – Stakeholders indicated that currently there is no strong support for local funding for transit in Smyrna. They stressed the need for the regional entities to allocate a larger percentage of resources towards transit projects and noted that regional policies for funding are not clear and that money is spread thinly over multiple communities. It was mentioned that local and regional players need to be decisive and forward-thinking to create an impactful change.
- **Innovation** – Smyrna was consistently considered by stakeholders to be a forward-thinking and innovative place to live. Some praised Smyrna leadership for their support and initiation of this study, agreeing that it was timely and needed. Stakeholders commented that Smyrna is ahead of other areas and counties within the Metro-Atlanta region pertaining to consideration of transit. Some stakeholders agreed that transit is an economic development tool that could not only help to attract more businesses but also increase the quality of life in Smyrna. Stakeholders also agreed that there are many opportunities for progress and development, and the city will benefit from visionary leadership.
- **Traffic congestion and parking** – It was frequently mentioned that traffic congestion is a major problem on the nearby interstate highways as well as some roads in Smyrna, such as Spring Road and Atlanta Road. As more development occurs, spurred by activity centers such as The Battery, demand will continue to increase, potentially creating more traffic and parking problems. Stakeholders agreed that there is a need to consider alternatives such as transit to relieve some traffic congestion. Stakeholders noted that *Connect Cobb*, the effort to add Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) on US-41/Cobb Parkway, is still under consideration.

Where We Want to Go?

- **Local/adjacent areas quickly connected** – Stakeholders agreed that quick and convenient connections to activity centers within and to adjacent economic hubs is necessary. They stressed that there is a need for all-day connections to both economic opportunities and recreation areas such as parks, trails, and events. Those familiar with the tourist and hotel industry in Smyrna agreed that there is a gap in local transit connectivity and stressed that the need for shorter and more direct trips is important.

- **Well-connected regional network** – Regional connectivity was often mentioned as needed to connect to the surrounding areas for jobs. Connectivity to the Metro-Atlanta area was seen as key to attracting more residents and jobs while growing the local economy. Many comments referred to travel needs heading south to the Atlanta Central Business District (CBD) and north to the Marietta area. Some stakeholders also commented that although there is a lot of discussion pertaining to regional connections north and south, adequate focus may be lacking on east-west connections.

Regional connectivity and high-frequency services are top needs in Smyrna



- **High-frequent and attractive transit** – Connectivity, both local and regional, was mentioned often and always in conjunction with higher-frequency service and using technology that is more appealing than regular local buses. All stakeholders emphasized that transit should be available every 15 minutes or less to attract more ridership, especially choice riders. “Fast” and “convenient” were mentioned as key elements needed to embody transit in Smyrna if the goal is to attract the residents in and visitors to Smyrna, most of whom have access to personal vehicles.
- **Technologically advanced transit options** – The need for keeping on the cutting edge of technology was frequently mentioned, as the demographics are changing in Smyrna from older adults to more affluent younger adults, primarily in the southern parts of the city.
- **Transit-friendly policies** – The changing demographic segment would like to see changes made more proactively. For example, some indicated that charging for parking (which is already done at The Battery) may help rather than building more parking facilities/adding free parking. Most stakeholders would like to see a functioning transit system in place before traffic or parking become major problems locally.
- **Right mix of transit services** – An improved transit network that uses various technologies/modes was emphasized as needed to connect workers to economic opportunities and visitors to attractions. A few stakeholders familiar with the tourism market agreed that not having attractive and high-frequency transit could discourage visitors to key locations in the area if they depend on it elsewhere. Service workers may not be able to access jobs in the area if some form of transit is not available to get them from their neighborhood to high-frequency transit services that will get them to their jobs.

How Do We Get There?

- **Rail service** – Various types of rail were mentioned by most stakeholders as a way to make transit work in the study area. Light rail was the most popular type among stakeholders, although some mentioned using heavy rail on existing CSX corridors. However, light rail was

thought of as a long-term solution that would require significant investment by the public. Despite knowing that it potentially could solve a lot of connectivity issues with high-frequency services, most stakeholders shied away from making it their top recommendation, as the cost was seen to be too burdensome. Some also indicated that hilly terrain may pose a hurdle for operating light rail in the city. Some stakeholders suggested exploring the possibility of using the available CSX rail lines, as it could reduce infrastructure costs. Rail was also perceived as the most desirable by the public, in that it has a positive association and has been shown to attract more choice riders. Overall, despite the consensus that it may not be affordable, installing a rail system to connect Smyrna to the surrounding areas was the most popular choice for future transit services.

- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service** – Considering the price tag for implementing rail, stakeholders agreed that BRT was the practical option that fits the future needs for transit in Smyrna. South Cobb Drive from Windy Hill Road to I-285 was mentioned frequently and considered to be a prime candidate for this premium transit. Another corridor frequently mentioned was Atlanta Road, on which rail operated many years ago. Stakeholders indicated that the BRT system should ultimately connect to I-285’s managed lanes system, which may be in operation around the end of this decade. Partnering with regional operators such as GRTA was seen as a more meaningful approach to implementing BRT in Smyrna. South Cobb was seen as a more feasible corridor than other major arterials in Smyrna due to its right-of-way availability and it being a State road. A mix of exclusive-lane and mixed-traffic BRT was also discussed as a more practical configuration. Stakeholders indicated it may also be a safety asset, as BRT lanes could also be used as emergency lanes when needed to bypass traffic. BRT also was thought to be more advantageous than light rail, as it may better fit the topography in the study area. Although it was acknowledged that BRT is a good premium transit option, it was cautioned that it may not be well received due to miseducation and bad connotations associated with the word “bus.”
- **Small-area internal connectors** – Also mentioned frequently was the need to connect the city’s neighborhoods/areas that are currently not accessible by transit. Stakeholders indicated that although CobbLinc covers the major roadways, it is difficult for people to access those services unless they are close to the major arterials on which the service currently operates. Therefore, some type of micro-level transit may be needed to cover the first/last mile of these potential riders in underserved and unserved areas. Stakeholders commented that small-area van services could help attract residents that move to the city without a car (for each driver) and have no access to a bus stop. Environmentally- concerned residents and older adults may benefit from services that let them leave their cars behind and connect conveniently to major transit routes for medical, shopping, or recreational purposes. Technology and non-bus like transit were mentioned as necessary to make such a service work. Partnerships with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft also were mentioned as having some role to help such services.

- **Better Infrastructure** – Better transit infrastructure/facilities were mentioned as necessary for any new efforts to make transit a viable option. The current transfer center at Cumberland Mall was not considered to be favorable to support expanded and advanced transit services in Smyrna. Stakeholders are aware of the regional efforts to enhance the transfer facilities and were supportive of them. Some mentioned the need to upgrade the city’s bus stop infrastructure, making it safer and more visually attractive. They also agreed that any new stops for BRT or rail services would need to be premium quality and branded to attract choice riders. Other infrastructure needs include park-and-ride facilities for existing and future services and for regional commuters.
- **Enhanced marketing** – A strategy mentioned by almost all stakeholders as necessary to improve transit use was marketing and awareness. Various regional transit providers serve the region, some of which are not viewed favorably, and stakeholders indicated that it is important that marketing new services/plans is done correctly. They indicated that whereas most current city residents are aware that there is transit service, more needs to be done to help them understand what is available and how it can make their lives easier and better. Overall, stakeholders agreed that educating the public and being transparent about costs and benefits were crucial.
- **Funding** – Stakeholders regularly mentioned the potential use of Transit Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST) proceeds as an option to fund transit. This tax may be presented for voter approval in 2022 after the regular SPLOST penny tax is decided in 2020. Although some stakeholders were supportive of the tax, they were aware that this is a polarizing topic within the community. It was also stressed that for a sales tax increase to be successful, there would need to be educational campaigns, as lack of education may have caused the demise of sales tax referenda in surrounding counties. It was agreed that to complete major projects such as light rail, Federal and State funding would need to be secured in addition to the local tax.

Figure 2-2 illustrates selected input from *Smyrna Connects* study stakeholders.

Figure 2-2: Selected Stakeholder Comments



Discussion Group Workshops

Another outreach activity used for *Smyrna Connects* was discussion group workshops in which smaller groups representing key focus areas for transit were invited to discuss transit-related topics. The smaller group framework with guided discussions can increase participant interests and engagement on a topic. For *Smyrna Connects*, this approach was used with multiple sets of key groups, as summarized below. The discussion script used for the workshops is included in Appendix C.

Social Service Agency Representatives

The first discussion group workshop included representatives from area social service agencies who were invited to provide input on existing and future public transportation needs in Smyrna. The workshop was held on October 24, 2019, from 2:00–4:00 PM at Brawner Hall at 3180 Atlanta Road. Representatives from the following agencies were invited:

- Vision Rehabilitation Services
- Public Safety Foundation
- Cobb County Community Service Board
- Cobb and Douglas Public Health
- Cobb County Community Services
- MUST Ministries
- Cobb County Senior Services

In addition to City staff, nine attendees representing these agencies were at this workshop. Each was provided with meeting materials and received a brief project overview presentation. Input received and needs identified from workshop attendees included the following:

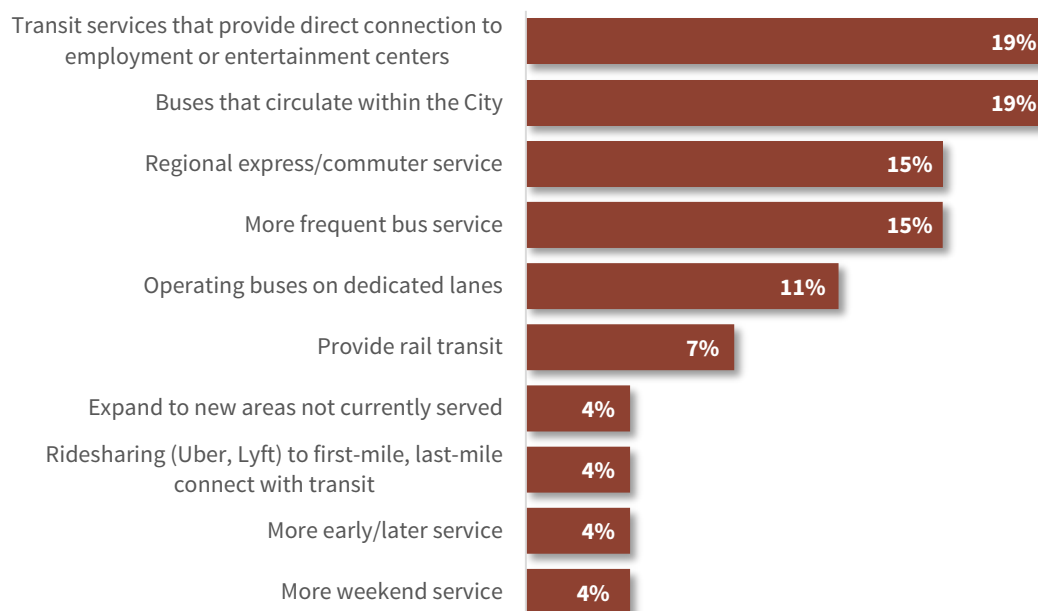
- About a third of the participants indicated that they have used transit previously. All agreed that there is a need for more or improved transit services within the City limits.
- Approximately half of the attendees responded that connections to regional transit systems would make transit more appealing.
- There was significant support for transit services that operate more frequently, such as buses coming every 10–15 minutes. The need for services that circulate internally within the city and the need to reach destinations quickly and without a transfer also were stressed.

A key focus of the discussion was transit needs for the city going forward. Attendees emphasized the need for transit to better and quickly connect Smyrna's residents and visitors to major employment and shopping hubs. Regional connections were also a key need, as were routes that serve only the city. In every case, enhanced service and increased frequency were mentioned as needs to attract more riders for any new services. Other needs identified by this group included the following:

- Park-and-ride at Cumberland Mall
- Increased awareness
- More bus stops and better bus stop infrastructure
- Incorporate Uber/Lyft with bus for first/last mile service
- Focus on new developments on Spring Road adjacent to Matthews Street and between Hicks Road and Old Floyd Road
- Need to change perception – make it cool, branded, not “the bus”
- Smaller buses/trolley for short trips, bigger buses for express routes

Figure 2-3 shows this group’s top transit priorities for the next 20 years.

Figure 2-3: Top Transit Priorities, Social Services Agencies Discussion



Business and Economic Development Community

A discussion group workshop was held with business and economic development leaders to gauge their input on existing and future public transportation needs in Smyrna on October 25, 2019, from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM at the Cobb Travel and Tourism office at One Galleria Parkway in the Cumberland area adjacent to Smyrna. Attendees included representatives from the following entities:

- Council for Quality Growth
- Cobb4Transit
- Kennesaw State University
- Cobb Galleria Centre
- Childress Klein
- Georgia Commute Options

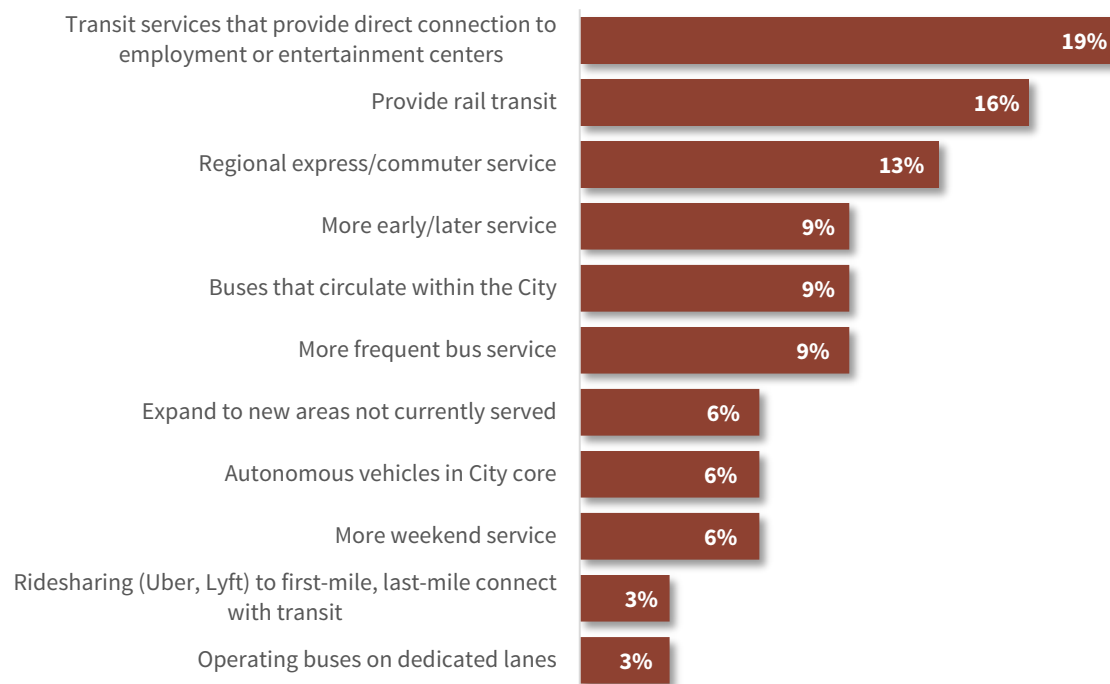
Seven attendees representing the above entities participated in this workshop in addition to City staff. Each attendee was provided with meeting materials and a detailed project presentation. After a presentation that set a foundation for a discussion on transit needs and vision, the attendees participated in a guided discussion. Input received and needs identified from workshop attendees included the following:

- More than half said they were familiar with the services and have used transit available in the area, mostly for recreational purposes.
- The group overwhelmingly agreed that there is a need for additional or improved transit services within the City limits and noted the need for quick and direct connections in the city and to adjacent and regional areas as a major need in the future. They also emphasized the need for higher-frequency services, such as buses operating every 10–15 minutes, as key to attracting choice riders to transit.
- The group also emphasized the role that technologies such as rail or BRT can play to improve the attractiveness and use of transit and were very supportive of BRT if done correctly.

Other key needs and direction from the group included the following:

- Awareness and marketing efforts need to be broadened; branding is important.
- Current transit is not compatible with service industry needs—need earlier and later hours.
- More desire than ever from community for transit, particularly in the southern portion of the county.
- Focus on northwest Smyrna and the South Cobb Drive corridor.

Figure 2-4: Transit Priorities, Business and Economic Development Community Discussion Group



Bus Riders

A discussion was held with bus riders to gauge their perceptions of current CobbLinc service in the city and their future expectations. With approval from CobbLinc, flyers were posted at key bus stops in Smyrna and on available social media to invite current CobbLinc riders to participate, with only riders who live in Smyrna or visit Smyrna for work or other purposes invited. As an incentive, free 10-ride bus passes were provided to anyone attending the workshop. The workshop was held on November 13, 2019, from 1:30–3:30 PM at the indoor facility of the Cumberland Transfer Center, selected with support from CobbLinc, as it provided the best and most convenient location for bus riders.

The workshop was timed to ensure that it would start after most routes converge at the transfer facility. The same format and structure as the other discussion group workshops were used to gather information on current and future transit needs from the existing riders. In addition to this workshop, project staff also were available at passenger waiting areas at the Cumberland Transfer Center to engage bus riders who did not attend the workshop. In total, 24 bus riders were involved in the discussions.

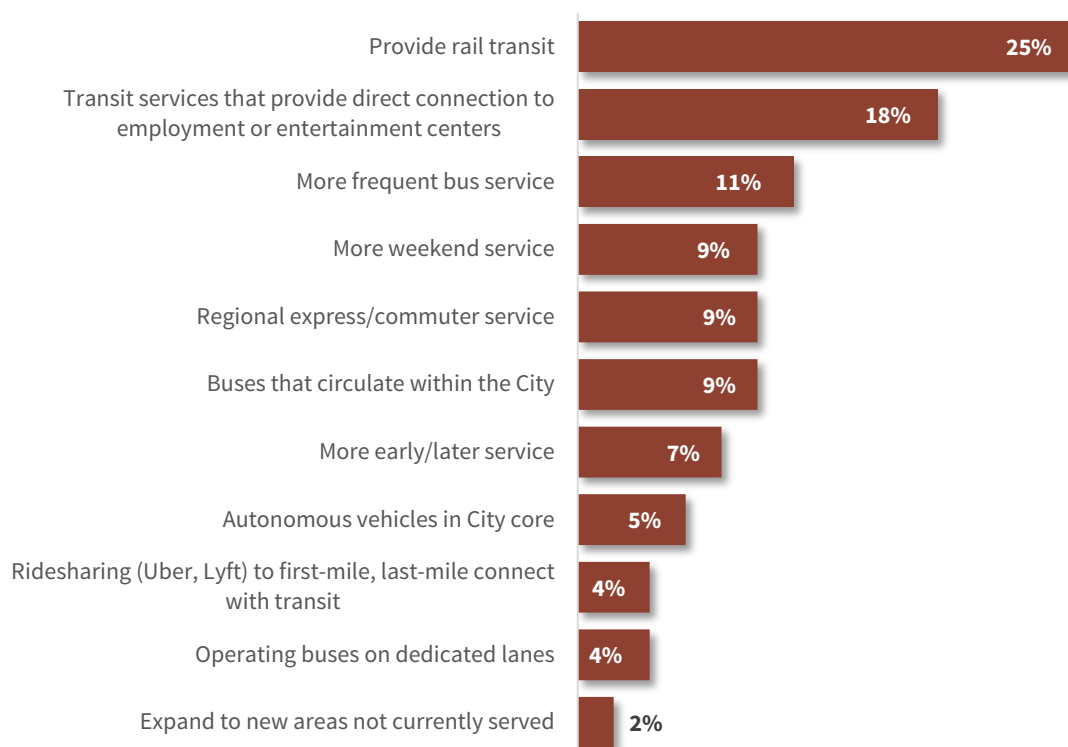


Following is a summary of the comments received at the bus rider discussion group about existing and future services in Smyrna:

- The majority of riders used both CobbLinc and MARTA transit networks for a variety of uses; the top uses were for work, shopping, and recreation.
- The majority indicated that they used transit services in Smyrna four or more days per week.
- Approximately a third of participants indicated that transit would be more appealing if the bus came every 10–15 minutes instead of every 30–60 minutes.
- Regarding needed transit improvements in the next 20 years, riders indicated that they would like to see include a regional rail connection to Smyrna and making bus service more frequent and direct, at least when it connects to employment/entertainment centers.

The top transit priorities for riders are shown in Figure 2-5.

Figure 2-5: Transit Priorities, Bus Rider Discussion



Transit Advisory Board

The Cobb Transit Advisory Board (TAB) consists of 15 members appointed by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners and includes Cobb County residents. The Board meets every month to assist the County and CobbLinc on transit decisions, discuss ongoing transit-related issues, and provide planning and operational recommendations.

An introduction and status update of the *Smyrna Connects* study was presented to the TAB at its November 25, 2019, meeting, which included members of the TAB, CobbLinc and Cobb County staff, and representatives of other agencies. The presentation included a summary of study progress to date including existing conditions, public meetings, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and online survey results.

Members of the committee provided feedback at the meeting and also through follow-up emails. Input included the following:

- Ensure that the study is coordinated and integrated with the CobbLinc system.
- The rail option should be explored where it makes sense, noting that “rail is an entirely different mode and has a real infrastructure aspect. Marietta and Smyrna and Cobb have a real interest in rail in areas that may be able to use it, e.g., Six Flags, SunTrust Stadium, and The Battery, the Platinum triangle of I-285/I-75NW, and often overlook the reality of Dobbins as an airport that is already tied to heavy rail.”
- Need first/last mile travel options such as using Uber or Lyft, taxi, bike, or scooter options.
- Interest in a follow-up update on draft recommendations.

Open House Public Workshops

To identify transit needs in the community and assess the perceptions of transit with Smyrna residents and visitors to the city, two public workshops were held in October 2019 after discussions with City staff on appropriate locations and potential events on which to piggyback. Each workshop included instruments to gather attitudes and opinions regarding transit services in Smyrna. The key focus was to gain an understating of why participants were not riding transit and identifying what Smyrna can do going forward to make transit a viable travel alternative. The open house-style workshops allowed City transit staff to engage with members of the public who could come and go as they pleased. Workshop materials are included in Appendix D.

Workshop #1

The first public workshop was held at REV Coffee at 680 Spring Road in Smyrna from 1:00–3:00 PM on October 25, 2019, and was attended by 4 participants who asked questions, provided input, and completed a tablet-based online survey. The following are results derived from the discussion and the input survey:

- Participants felt that transit could benefit the community and economic development.
- Major areas identified that need connections were Atlanta, Gwinnett, Sandy Springs, Buckhead, and Alpharetta.
- Local connections need to be made along Atlanta Road and South Cobb Drive and to all schools, both public and private.

- Frequency was emphasized as an extremely important attribute no matter the mode. Service also needs to be clean and safe.
- The aging population in Smyrna needs access to medical centers and other lifeline trips.
- Mobility-on-Demand services would be useful to connect neighborhoods to fixed-route services.
- Direct routes, more frequent service, and regional/express commuter services are the most important improvements in Smyrna for the next 20 years.

Workshop #2

The second *Smyrna Connects* public workshop was held over two days at the Jonquil Festival at Village Green in October 2019 from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM and from 12:00–5:00 PM. The workshop was attended by 176 participants who asked questions and provided input. In addition to engaging participants, a tablet-based survey was used to obtain input. A total of 120 participants completed the survey.

Highlights of input from the workshop are summarized below:

- Many participants or members of their households had used or were familiar with existing transit services in Smyrna.
- The majority agreed that there is a need for additional transit services in Smyrna, and almost half agreed that regional connections would make transit more appealing.
- Less traffic, saving energy, and more access to jobs were predicted benefits of having additional transit services in Smyrna. Most participants agreed that technology upgrades to city roadways that prioritize transit should be a priority over the next 20 years.
- The majority of workshop participants were residents of Smyrna ages 25–40 and had access to a personal vehicle.

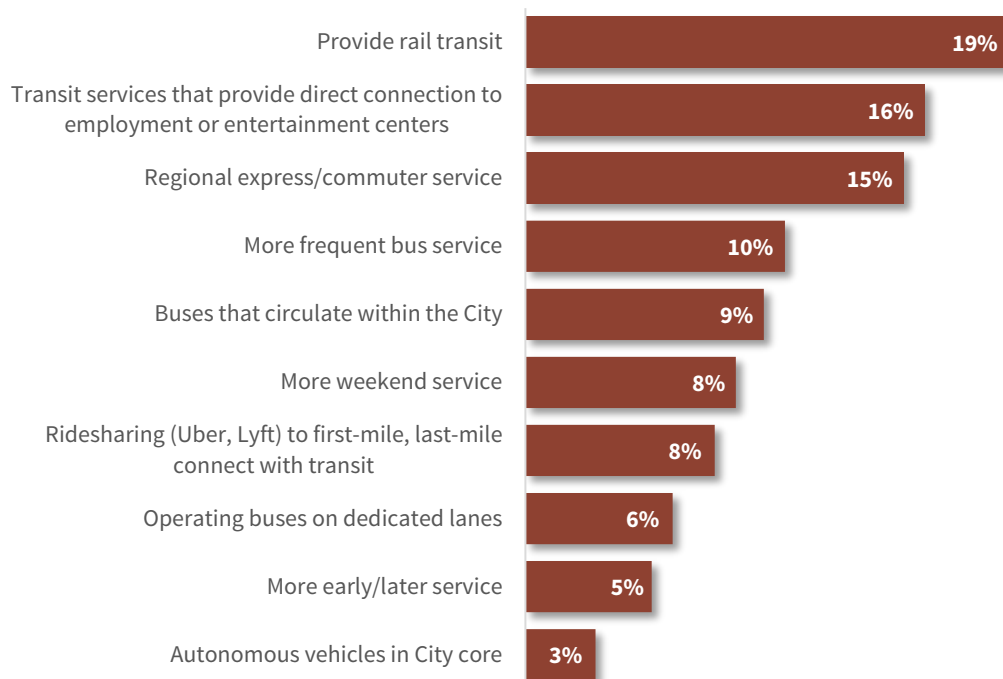


- Participants emphasized needing premium transit in Smyrna and wanted to integrate technology into help with trip planning.
- Participants commented that those who are low-income have the most difficulty connecting to economic opportunities or healthcare and noted that improved transit can help them.
- Most participants indicated that improved transit should be implemented sooner rather than later.
- Rail, more direct transit connections, and additional regional express/commuter route options were the most emphasized service needs by workshop participants. Although there was an understanding of the cost of establishing a rail connection to Smyrna, it still was the most desired future improvement for the Smyrna residents and visitors.



Figure 2-6 shows the transit priorities/needs expressed by the workshop participants at this workshop.

Figure 2-6: Top Transit Priorities at Workshop #2



Grassroots Outreach

Members of the *Smyrna Connects* study team attended an open house conducted by the Cobb County Community Services Board to share project information with community stakeholders and families that attended the open house. Of note is that many adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities that are served by the Board are dependent on public transportation for accessing essential life resources. Input received included the following:

- The majority of participants had used transit services previously and agreed that there is a need for additional or improved transit services in Smyrna.
- Participants identified buses that circulate in the city, more frequent bus service, and regional express/commuter services as the top three priorities for the next 20 years.
- Most participants selected BRT as the additional mode that the City should consider over the next 20 years.
- Participants agreed that the best method to receive public transit information is via website, smart phone app, or social media.

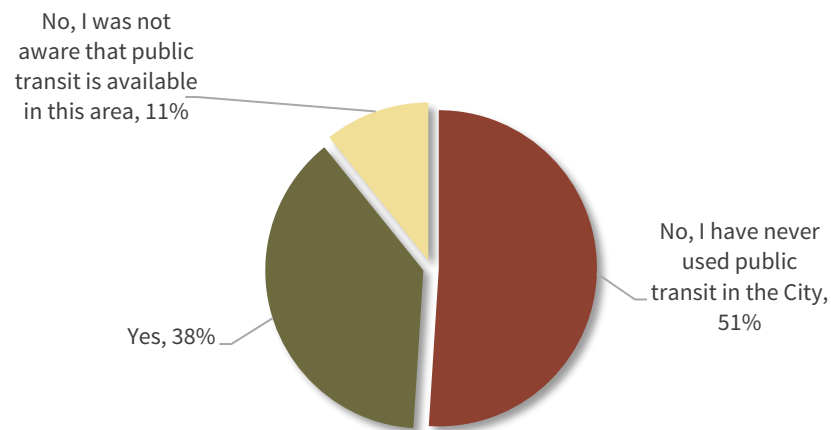
Public Input Survey

An online public survey was available from October to December 2019 via social media platforms created for the study, email blasts, and the *Smyrna Connects* website as well as during the public workshops. In total, 22 questions were asked to gather opinions about current services, willingness to use public transit, and the community's transit needs. Available in both English and Spanish, the survey was designed to gauge the public's interest in transit and gather sociodemographic information about survey respondents. A total of 1,038 surveys were completed. The survey instrument is included in Appendix E.

Summary of Public Input Survey Results

To accurately evaluate survey results, it is important to gauge the amount of awareness and consumption of transit services in the area. When asked if the participants or a member of the household used transit services available in Smyrna, approximately 51 percent said they had not used public transit, and 38 percent indicated that they had used either CobbLinc or MARTA. The remaining 11 percent responded that they were not aware public transit was available in the area.

Figure 2-7: Have you or a member of your household used transit services available in Smyrna?



To assess how transit is used by those who have used transit in the area, respondents were asked to indicate what types of trips they made and how often they used transit. Approximately 43 percent said recreation, 23 percent said work, and 12 percent said they used transit for other trips. The remaining uses and their corresponding response rates are shown in Figure 2-8.

Figure 2-8: What type of trips do you use transit for?

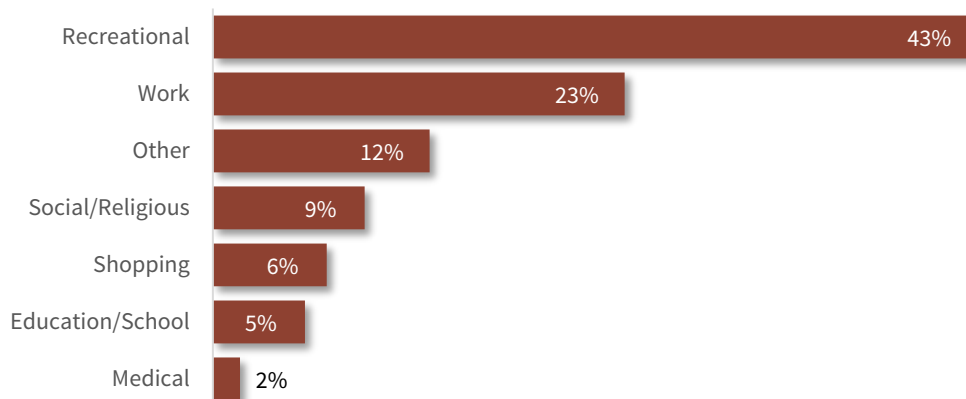
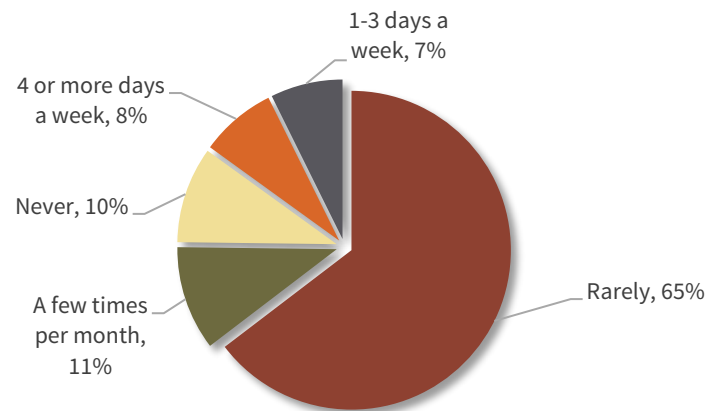


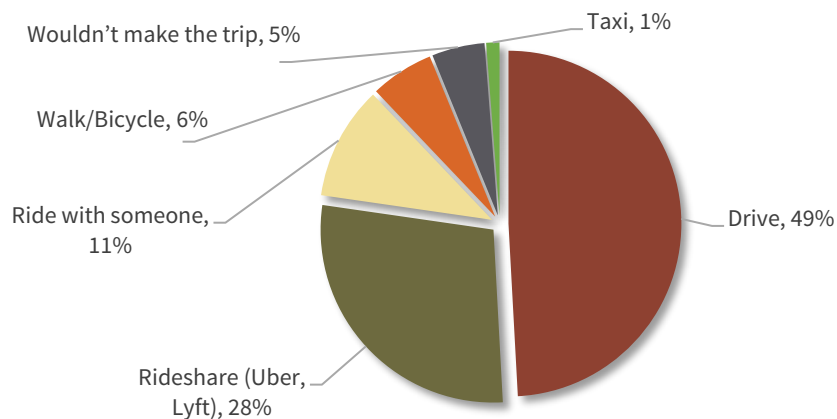
Figure 2-9 shows the frequency with which respondents used transit. Approximately 65 percent indicated that they rarely used transit services within the city, 11 percent said a few times per month, 10 percent said never, 8 percent indicated 4 or more days per week, and 7 percent responded 1–3 days per week.

Figure 2-9: How often do you use the transit services available in the city?



Participants were asked how they would make the trip if transit services were not available. As shown in Figure 2-10, the most popular choices were drive (49%), use rideshare services such as Uber or Lyft (28%), and ride with someone (11%). Others indicated walk or bicycle (6%), would not make the trip (5%), or taxi (1%).

Figure 2-10: How would you make the trip if transit services were not available?



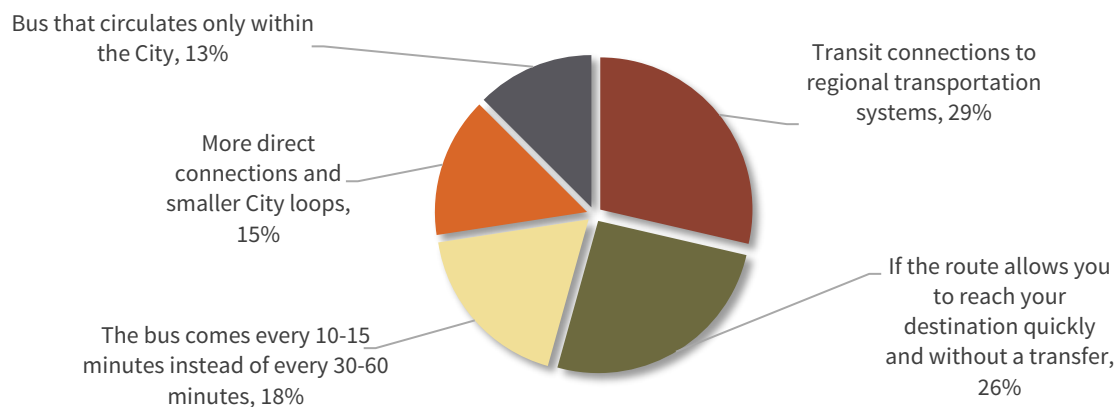
Although 61 percent responded that they did not use public transit in Smyrna or were not aware of the services, 75 percent agreed when asked if there was a need for additional/improved transit services in the city. The remaining respondents indicated they did not know (13%) and did not believe there was a need (12%).

Figure 2-11: Do you think there is a need for additional/improved transit services in Smyrna?



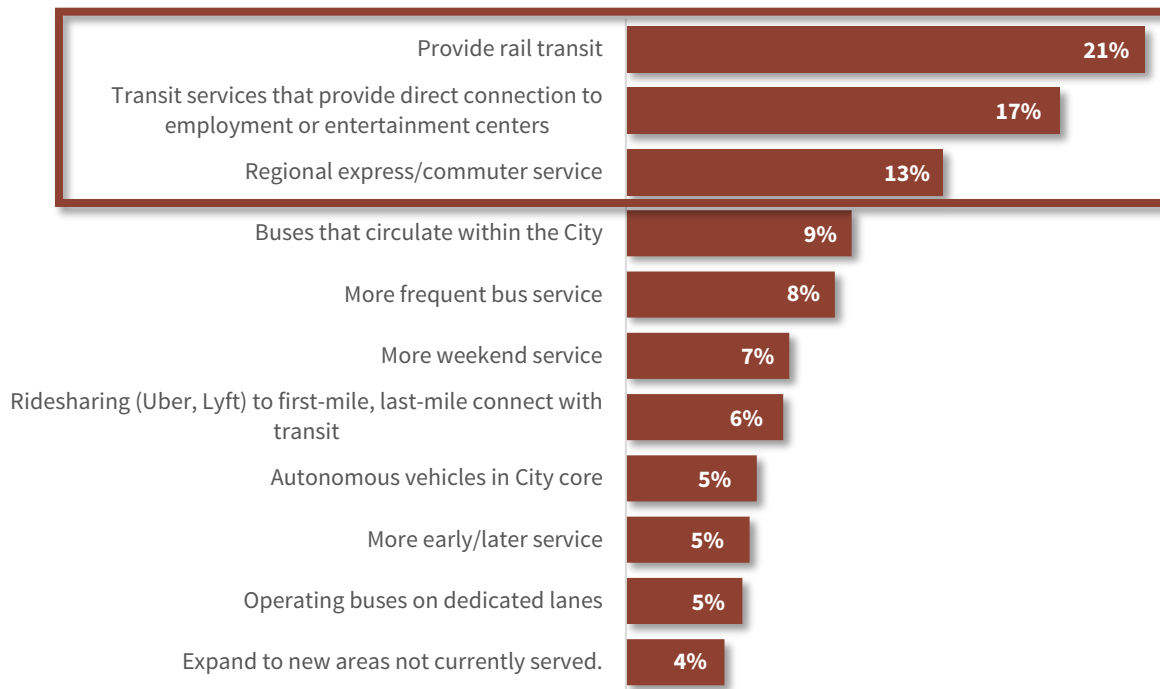
To help determine the transit needs in the area, participants were asked what would make transit more appealing to use or to use more often. As shown in Figure 2-12, top responses were transit connections to regional transportation systems (29%), routes allowing riders to reach their destinations quickly and without transfer (26%), and a bus coming every 10–15 minutes instead of every 30–60 minutes (18%). Other options included more direct connection and smaller city loops (15%) and buses that circulate only within the city (13%).

Figure 2-12: What would make transit more appealing for you to use it or use it more?



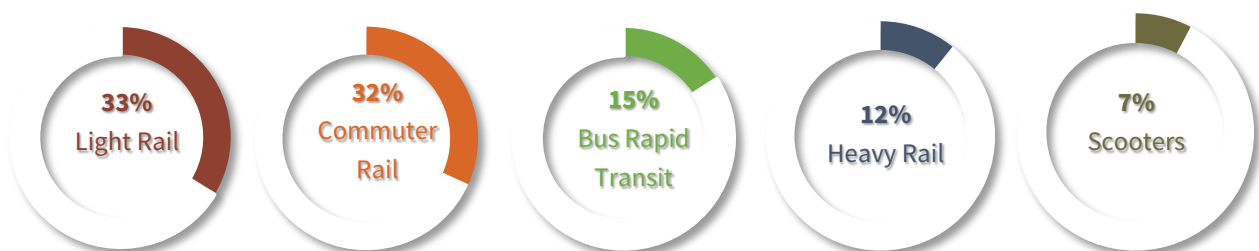
To rank the different transit service options available, participants were asked to select what the City should prioritize in the next 20 years. Responses were providing rail transit (21%), transit services that provide direct connections to entertainment centers and employment (17%), and regional express/commuter services (13%). The remaining distribution of priorities was buses that circulate within the city (9%), more frequent bus service (8%), more weekend service (7%), ridesharing to first/last-mile connections (6%), autonomous vehicles in the city core (5%), more early/late service (5%), operating buses on dedicated lanes (5%), and expanding to new areas not currently served (4%). These results are shown in Figure 2-13.

Figure 2-13: What should the City consider as public transit priorities over the next 20 years?



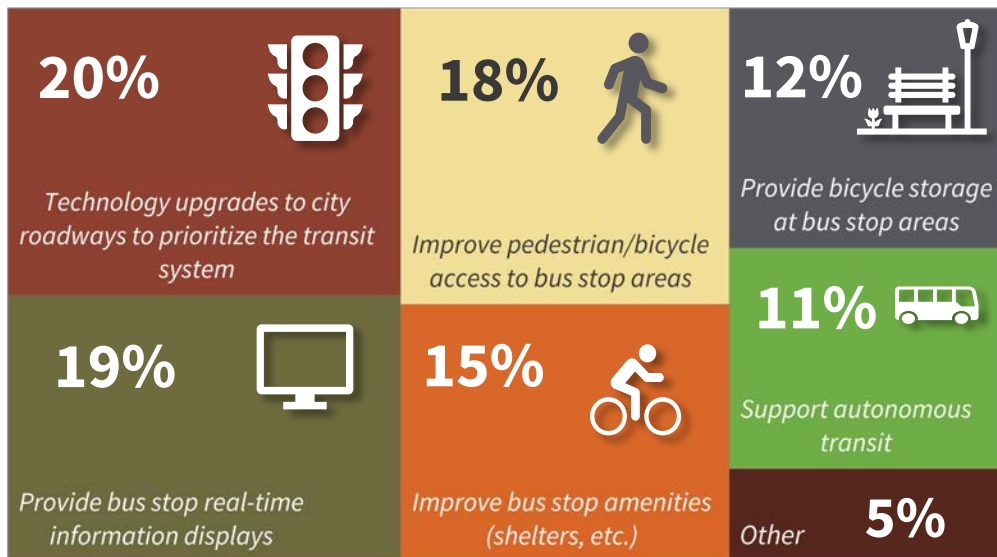
Participants were asked about other modes in addition to local and express buses the City should consider over the same time period. Light rail was the top choice (33%), followed by commuter rail (32%), BRT (15%), heavy rail (12%), and scooters (7%). These results are illustrated in Figure 2-14.

Figure 2-14: In addition to local/express bus, what other modes should the City consider over the next 20 years?



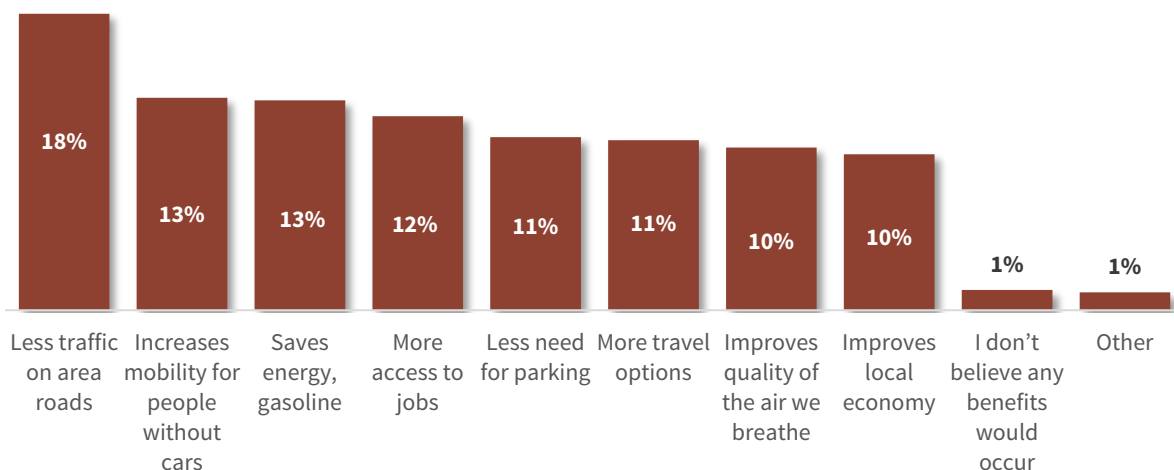
Exploring other improvements after inquiring about modes, participants were asked about the transit infrastructure and technology improvements they would like to see the City support in the next 20 years (Figure 2-15). The top response (20%) was technology upgrades to roadways to prioritize transit, followed by real-time information displays at bus stops (19%), and improving pedestrian access to bus stop areas (18%). Improving bus stop amenities (15%), providing bicycle storage (13%), autonomous vehicles (11%), and other (5%) were also considered as infrastructure and technology improvements.

Figure 2-15: What transit infrastructure and technology improvements should the City consider supporting in the next 20 years?



Participants were asked what benefits they believed could result from additional transit services in the City and adjacent areas. Less traffic on area roads (18%), increased mobility for people without cars (13%), and energy savings (13%) were noted as the top three, as shown in Figure 2-16.

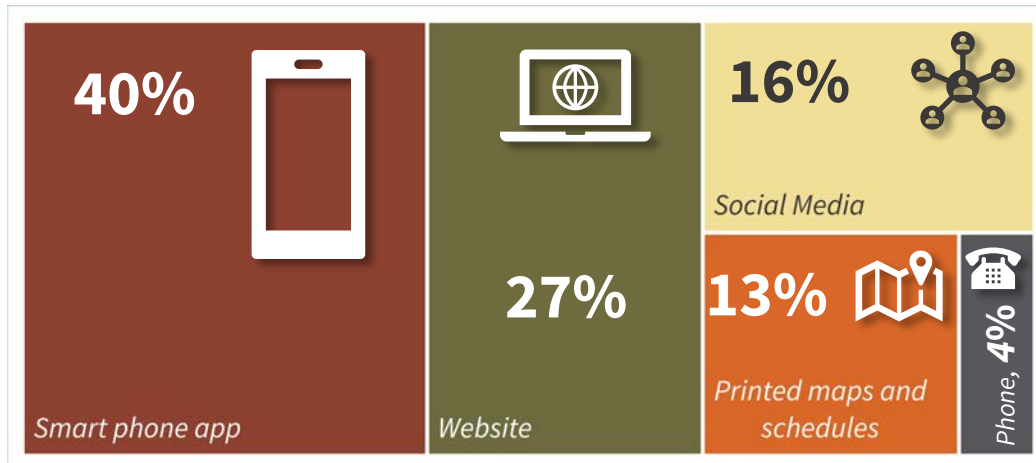
Figure 2-16: What benefits do you believe could occur as a result of additional transit service in the city and adjacent areas?



Receiving public transit information is important for making service accessible and convenient to the public. Approximately 40 percent agreed that a smart phone app would be the best way to access

information, 27 percent indicated on a website, 16 percent said through social media, 13 percent said printed maps and schedules, and 4 percent said telephone (Figure 2-17).

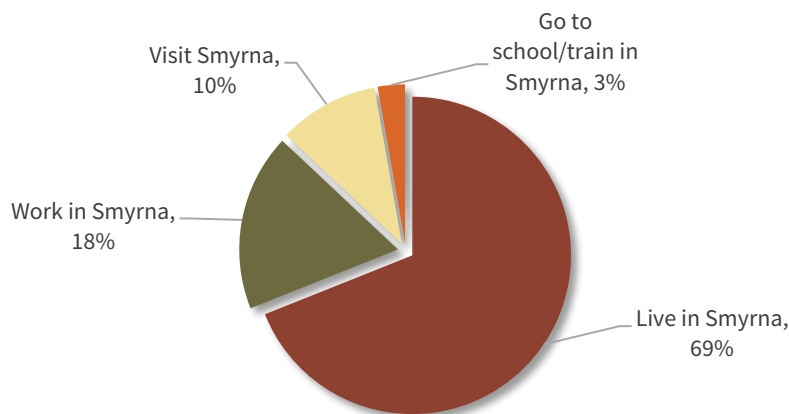
Figure 2-17: How would you like to have access to public transit information?



To develop a profile of survey participants, each was asked to provide socio-demographic information. These results help analyze and put the results in context.

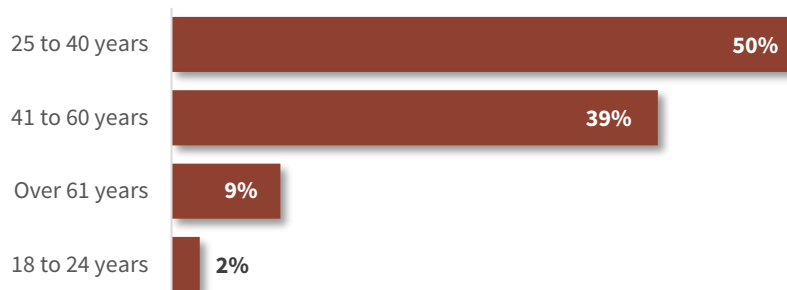
It was important to know if the respondents were from Smyrna or why they visited Smyrna. Of the total, 69 percent lived in Smyrna, 18 percent worked in Smyrna, 10 percent were visiting Smyrna, and 3 percent went to school and trained in Smyrna.

Figure 2-18: Respondent Relationship to Smyrna



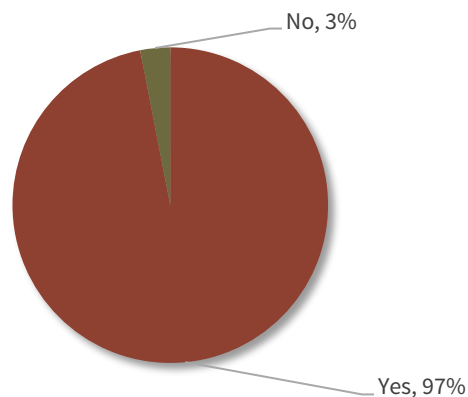
More than half of respondents indicated that they were age 25–40, 39 percent were 41–60, 9 percent were 61+, and 2 percent were 18–24 (Figure 2-19).

Figure 2-19: Respondent Age



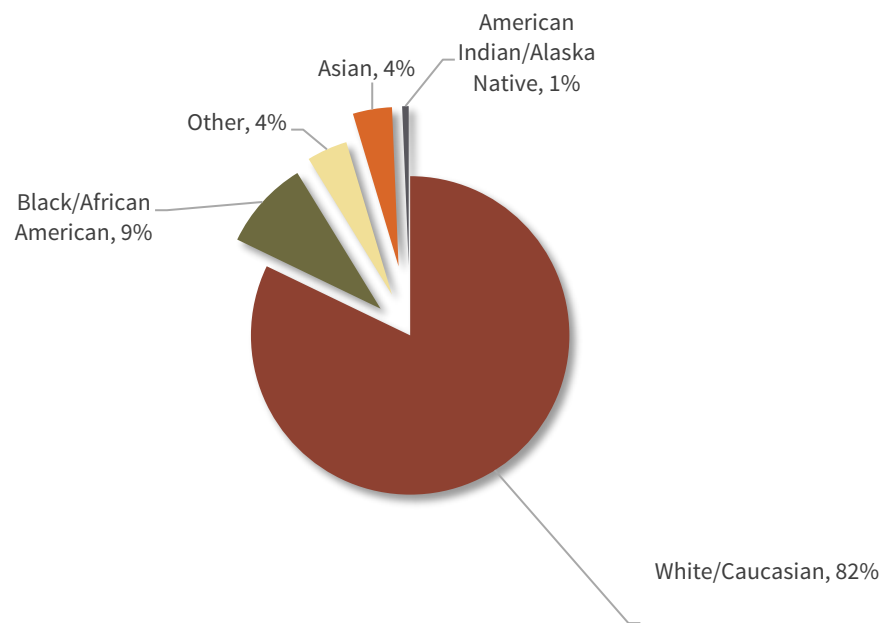
Analyzing access to a personal vehicle was also relevant, as those who do not have access to a personal vehicle are more likely to rely on public transit. When analyzed with other responses, this also can identify the attitudes on transit from respondents who own personal vehicles. The data show that approximately 97 percent of respondents indicated having access to a personal vehicle and 3 percent indicated that they did not (see Figure 2-20).

Figure 2-20: Respondent Access to a Personal Vehicle



When asked to indicate race and ethnicity, 82 percent of respondents said White, 9 percent said Black/African American, 4 percent said Other, 4 percent said Asian, and 1 percent said American Indian/Alaskan Native (Figure 2-21).

Figure 2-21: Respondent Race/Ethnicity















Public Outreach Summary

Public involvement techniques used for *Smyrna Connects* helped the City obtain essential and timely information on existing and future transit needs as perceived by the community and its key stakeholders in Smyrna. The general public provided valuable input on such needs and issues, and stakeholders provided confirmation of those key needs and also helped understand why such needs exist and provided their expertise and experience on what can be done to address those needs.

The first phase of outreach, as summarized in this document, was designed to understand the community's vision for transit and what tools and strategies they perceive as a means to achieve it. Figure 2-22 shows the public outreach activities conducted and the strategies considered to be important for the next 20 years.

The next step of *Smyrna Connects* is to combine the understanding gained from this outreach effort with all other study findings to develop a set of strategies to improve transit in Smyrna. Once this is done, those strategies and plans will be presented to the general public in the next phase of public outreach.

Figure 2-22: Smyrna Connects Outreach in Brief (Completed to Date)

	Stakeholders	Surveys	Public Workshops	Discussion Groups	Advisory Committees	Media
Technique	 41 stakeholders	 1 public input survey	 2 public workshops	 4 discussion groups	 2 Technical Advisory Committee meetings	 Website, social media, email
Outcome	 26 interviewed	 1,038 engaged	 180 engaged	 65 involved	 18 involved	 Many engaged
Transit Needs/Policy Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local/adjacent areas quickly connected Regional connections to north and south High-frequency transit Attractive transit technologies such as rail, BRT Right mix of transit services Small-area internal connectors with smaller buses Better Infrastructure Enhanced marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light rail/ premium transit service Strong support for additional/more transit in city Connections to regional transportation systems, direct and quick trips High-frequency transit (bus every 10–15 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail connections Increased frequency, more direct transit connections Additional regional express/commuter route options Mobility-on-Demand services to connect neighborhoods to bus routes More awareness Better bus stop infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail or BRT technologies to improve attractiveness and use Direct, quick connections to major employment, shopping hubs Increased frequency Park-and-ride facilities Increased awareness, more marketing First/last mile options Smaller buses/trolley for short trips, bigger buses for express routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated transportation system that meets local and regional connectivity needs Coordination between regional plans and entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web-based resources for information: how to ride transit; real time updates; and trip planning

Appendix A: Public Outreach Plan



Smyrna Transit Analysis & Feasibility Study

Public Outreach Plan

Final

September 2019

Prepared for



Prepared by



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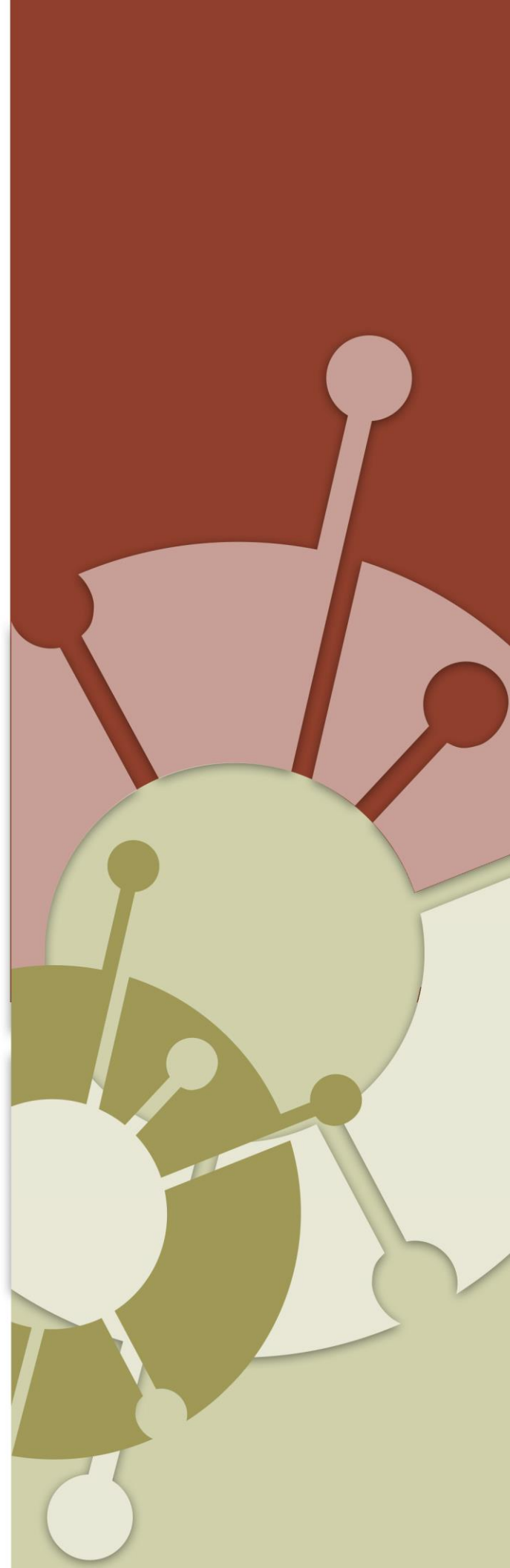
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Section 1: Introduction

Through the Smyrna Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study (TAFS), the City of Smyrna is embarking on a process to articulate an overarching, consensus-driven vision for transit for the city and its immediate environs. This transit vision will take into account the City's larger objectives of sustainability, economic development, growth management, traffic mitigation, livable communities and corridors, and connected and walkable communities. The process for developing the TAFS will include examining existing and future conditions including land use, market conditions, transit service, demographics and travel patterns; the needs, wants, and desires of stakeholders and community members; and costs and potential funding sources of transit alternatives. At the conclusion of the study, the City will have a reader-friendly final document that outlines the full scope of community-supported, potential transit opportunities for Smyrna and the surrounding area, comprising a sustainable, implementable vision for public transportation services over the next 20 years.

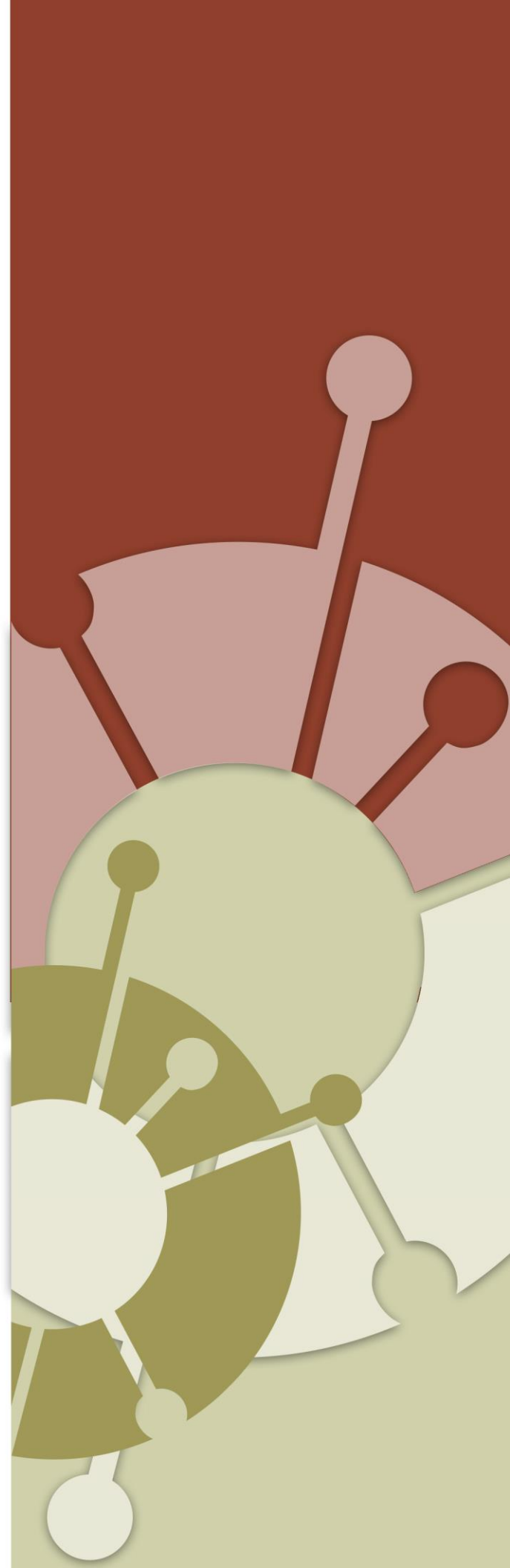


Section 2: Public Outreach Process

Strategy

Public outreach will play a crucial role in the development of the TAFS. Throughout the TAFS effort, stakeholder and community involvement activities will be used to collect input from the public, key stakeholders, and relevant departments/agencies and to educate and inform the community about the study and, ultimately, its results. Care will be taken to engage citizens from backgrounds that are often underrepresented in planning efforts, such as those from older adult, low-income, limited English, and minority backgrounds. Additionally, coordination will occur with a wide variety of stakeholders such as the general public, business owners, major employers, elected officials, local advocacy groups, Smyrna and Cobb County departments, and regional and State transportation agencies.

This Public Outreach Plan (POP) serves as the guideline for coordinating public and stakeholder activities, distributing project information, engaging the public and interested parties throughout the process, and collecting input and outlines and identifies outreach strategies, input opportunities, methods for communication, and documentation. Regarded as a “living document,” the POP will be evaluated for effectiveness throughout the process and revised accordingly.



Key Objectives

Key objectives of the approach for outreach are to:

- **Educate and involve the general public throughout the process.** Public outreach tools will be used to 1) educate, 2) listen to, and 3) learn from the public early and often throughout the study. It is our goal to ensure that all citizens who are interested and affected by the study have opportunity to be educated, ask questions, and provide input.
- **Consult with agency representatives and local officials and staff to gather their ideas for transportation solutions,** relying on their knowledge and experience. It is recognized that individuals who interact with the current transportation system and have knowledge of the surrounding area, region, and resources will be a key source of information and insight.
- **Collaborate with community stakeholders and gather their ideas for issue identification and the creation of solutions.** This process is an opportunity for stakeholders in the community to voice their needs, desires, and opinions about transit. Coordination with primary users, employers, elected officials, businesses, and residents will provide invaluable perspective to the process, encourage consensus on solutions, and allow for ease of implementation.

Phases of Outreach

Stakeholders and the public will be engaged at key stages throughout the planning process including at the following strategic points:

- Project kick-off, to inform the community of the study and to gather data or opinions from the public
- Presentation of draft plan recommendations and final draft plan

By intent, outreach tends to be heavier on the front end of a project, allowing the collection of as much input as possible. This input directly feeds into a complete picture of the planning environment and the formulation of potential solutions. Touchpoints with the community at the draft recommendation stage and the final draft plan stage are also important to confirm accurate interpretation of the input and that the community's need and desires are being adequately addressed.

Section 3: Public Outreach Activities

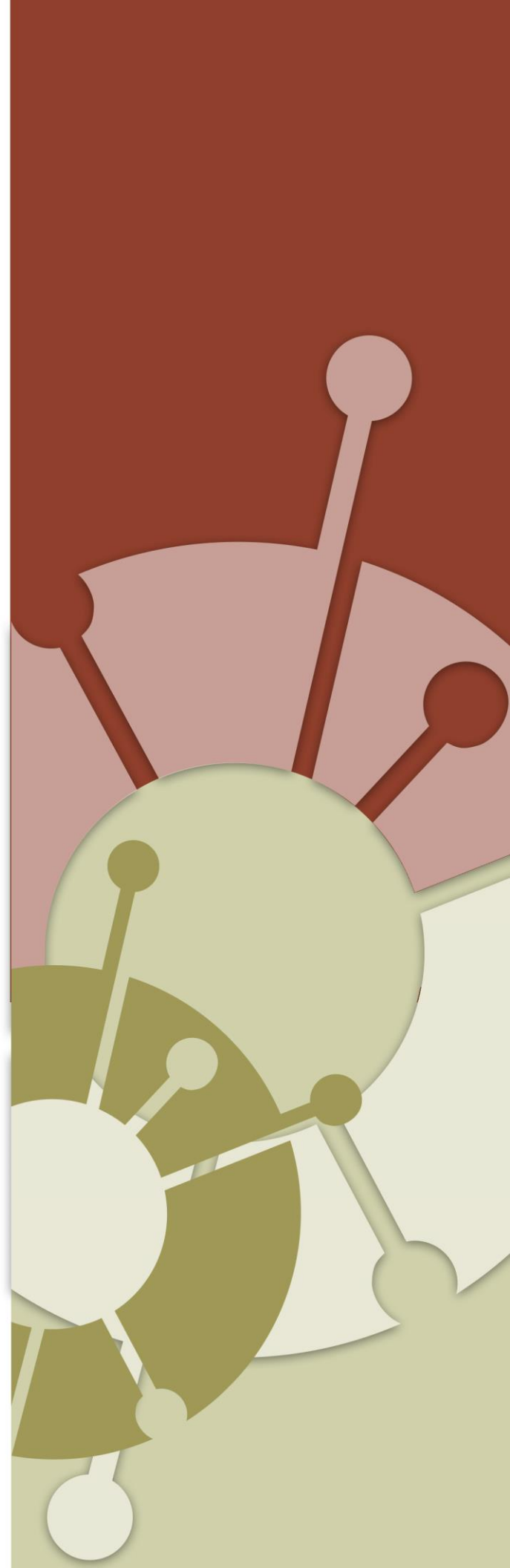
Table 3-1 provides a list of planned outreach activities. Each activity is described in detail below.

Table 3-1: Public Outreach Activities

Outreach	Phase I (August–	Phase II
Project	✓	✓
Technical	✓	✓
Public Outreach	✓	
Branding	✓	
Stakeholder	✓	
Public Input	✓	✓
Discussion	✓	
Public Meetings	✓	✓
Website and	✓	✓
Presentations	✓	✓

Project Management Team

A Project Management Team consisting of City of Smyrna staff and the Consultant team will monitor the progress of the plan, brainstorm solutions and strategies, and plan community engagement opportunities at a high level. The team is anticipated to meet on monthly basis (up to nine meetings) either in person or by conference call.



Technical Advisory Committee

As one of the initial outreach tasks for the study, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was assembled. That will support and help guide the overall TAFS effort, including serving as a technical resource for data and information. Members include representatives from the City and the Consultant team, as well as the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Cobb County, CobbLinc, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA), Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID), and the Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority (ATL).

Table 3-2 is a list of the TAC members and their affiliations.

Immediately after convening the group, an initial **Kick-off Meeting** was hosted to set the overall scope, goals, and desired deliverables for the TAFS process. Up to three additional meetings with the TAC are envisioned at key technical milestones—during the development of transit service improvement strategies, during development of transit investment scenarios, and during development of the transit master plan. All TAC meetings will be documented.

Table 3-2: Technical Advisory Committee Members

TAC Member	Organization
Tom Boland	Smyrna Economic Development
William Parker	Smyrna Economic Development
Rusty Martin	Smyrna Community Development/Planning
Kevin Moore	Smyrna Engineering
Amy Goodwin	Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)
Jennifer Bennet	Community Relations Director
Lori Sand	Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority (ATL)
Kyetha Clark	Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID)
Eric Meyer	Cobb DOT
Andrea Foard/Ezekiel Guza	CobbLINC
Heather Alhadeff	MARTA
Kaycee Mertz	Georgia DOT
Megan Weiss	Georgia DOT

Project Branding

In an effort to help ensure a clear, well-placed position for the project in the minds of the public, a logo and project identity will be developed. Branding the study will ensure that the project is set apart and is readily and widely recognized for its unique attributes. The project logo will be used on all written and electronic materials and online on the website and social media.

Stakeholder Interviews

To enhance the understanding of local conditions, perceptions and attitudes about public transportation and mobility needs will be gathered from key selected stakeholders in the community.

Appropriate candidates will be identified in coordination with City staff, and up to 37 stakeholder interviews will be scheduled and conducted. A structured question script will be developed in coordination with City staff and used to guide the interviews. Interviewed stakeholders will be given a briefing packet, including a study fact sheet, project schedule, and study website information. Where possible, representatives from groups with a similar focus may join together in small group meetings. Interviews will be individually documented, and a summary report of the effort will be prepared.

Public Input Surveys

Surveys are an important method of information gathering, generating data that is essential for developing an understanding of the community and its needs and desires. As part of the TFAS, two surveys will be conducted at key milestones:

- Phase I Survey – an initial survey will be developed and hosted during the analysis of existing and future conditions phase.
- Phase II Survey – a second survey will be developed and hosted during the development of the transit master plan.

A link to the surveys will be posted on the City's web page and distributed via available email/social media outlets. To reach a broad audience, paper copies of the surveys will be provided at planned outreach events. Survey responses will be compiled with all pertinent comments included in a final results summary.

Discussion Group Workshops

To allow for in-depth discussions with stakeholders on the issues and needs surrounding transit in the study area, up to four geographically-distributed and invitation-based discussion group workshops will be conducted. These groups will involve a small number of participants (8–12 persons) and include members from the business, health, social service, transportation disadvantaged, older adult, and education communities, among other active stakeholder groups. Workshops will be held at accessible venues with topics, materials, and logistics coordinated with City staff. Each workshop will be documented.

Public Meetings

Up to four public meetings at two distinct milestones in the process will be hosted. The first round of meetings will be held following the analysis of existing and future conditions and during the transit needs and market analysis tasks. This round of meetings will focus on educating attendees about the study and collecting input on mobility needs. The second round of meetings will be held later in the planning process during the development of the transit master plan task to gauge public reaction to various alternative transit strategies. The meetings will be coordinated, planned, and scheduled with City staff and input from other stakeholders to target appropriate attendees in geographically-distributed venues. The study team will look for opportunities to co-host with other community

events, where possible, to promote higher turnout. Meetings will be held at different times (day and evening) to accommodate a variety of work and personal schedules. Displays and handouts will be engaging and designed to return a high level of feedback. A summary report of the public meetings will be prepared.

Website and Social Media Outreach

A project website will serve as a hub of information for the study and will include project background and schedule, links to the online surveys, documents, displays, findings, study and outreach event announcements, and information on how the public could submit comments and remain involved.

Additionally, the study will capitalize on the network of social media subscribers the City currently enjoys. The project team will provide content and a schedule of postings regarding the TAFS to the City and also will share them with the TAC and other stakeholders for their use in helping promote the study and participation in outreach events.

Presentations

To support communication and approval of the TAFS master plan, a user-friendly, graphical PowerPoint presentation will be developed based on the final draft report. Up to five (5) presentations will be made during the plan adoption process, with potential audiences including regional committees and boards, the general public, the City of Smyrna Mayor and Council, and the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. The final presentation file will be provided to the City for its continued use with all final electronic project materials.

Documentation

Details and results of each outreach activity (stakeholder interviews, online survey, discussion group workshops, and public meetings) outlined in this plan will be provided in summary documents as they are completed. Upon completion of the public outreach program, a summary report will be prepared that will include results from each public outreach activity. Key findings, conclusions, and summary statistics will be presented in a user-friendly manner with easy-to-understand text, tables, and/or graphics.

Section 4: Schedule

Figure 4-1 graphically depicts the proposed sequencing of the outreach activities. Figure 4-2 illustrates the overall project schedule with technical and outreach tasks combined.

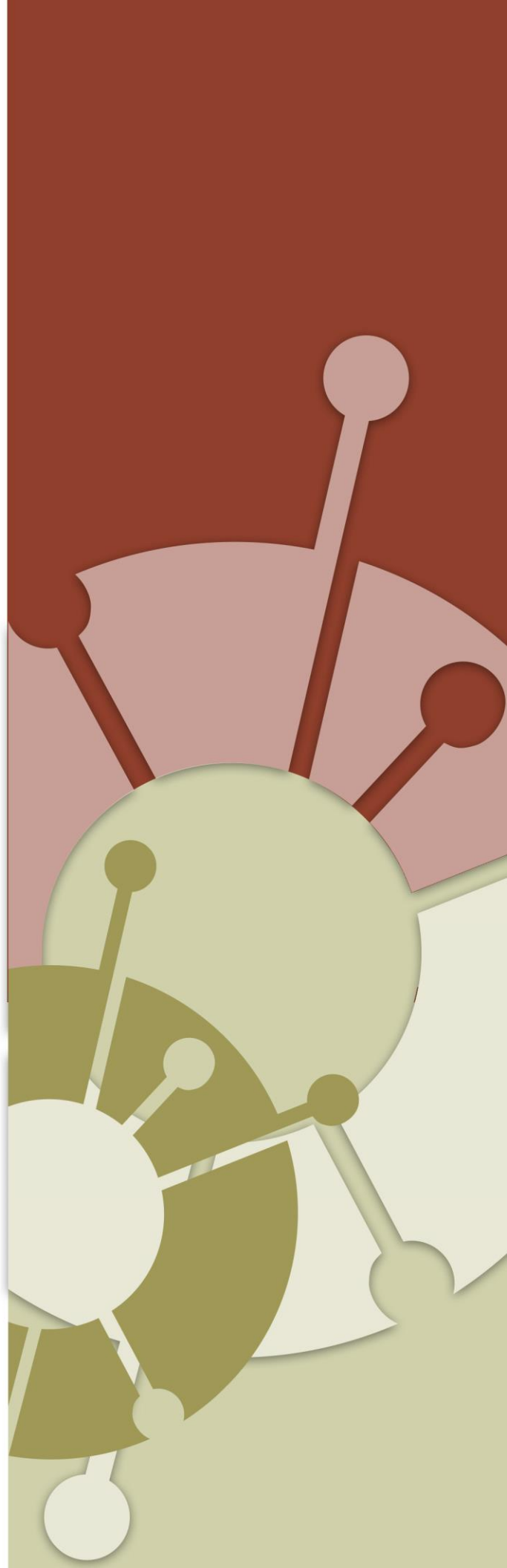


Figure 4-1: Schedule of Public Outreach Activities

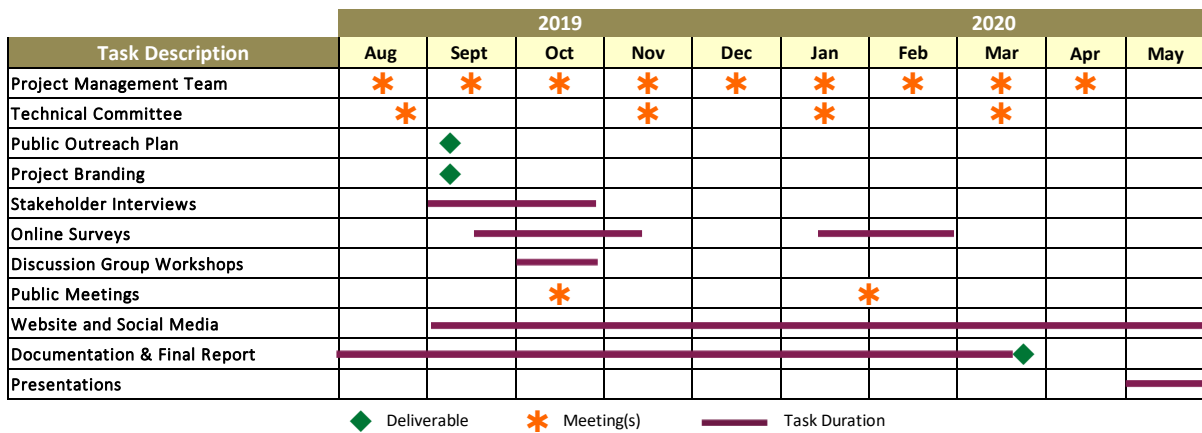
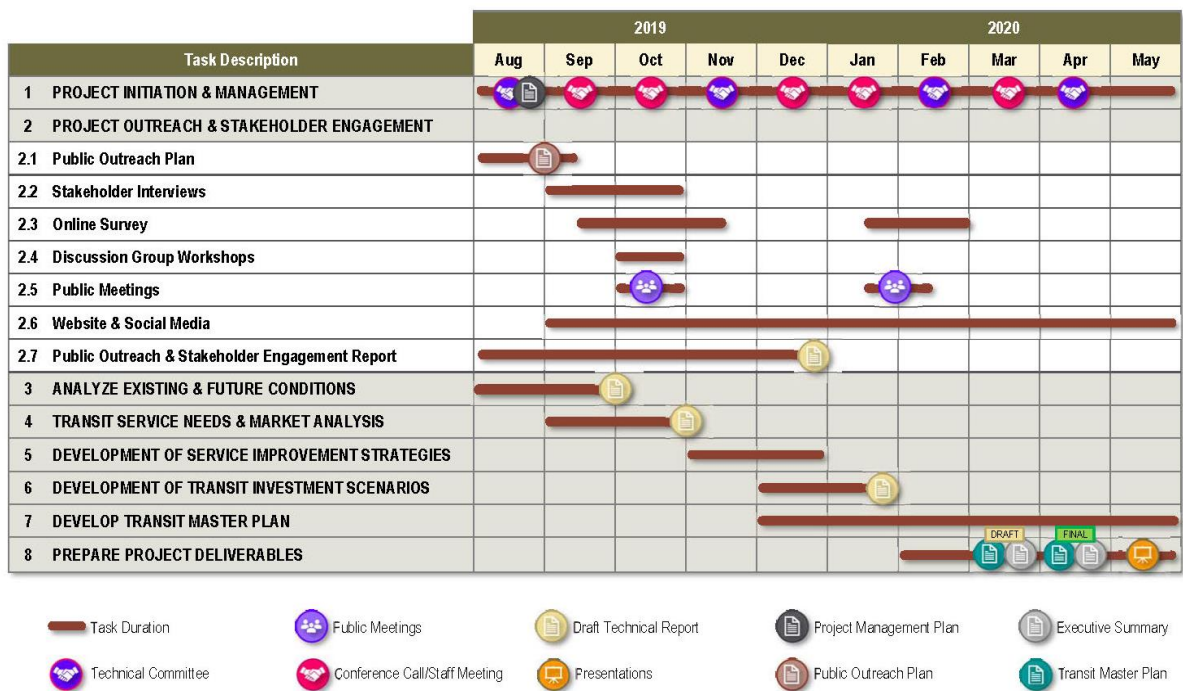


Figure 4-2: Overall Project Schedule:



Appendix B: Stakeholder Interview Script



Stakeholder Interview Guide

City of Smyrna Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study

Internal Stakeholder - The following questions are designed for stakeholders from the City of Smyrna & Cobb County.

A. Today

- 1) How much awareness of and support for transit is there in the community? Have the levels of awareness and support changed in recent years?
- 2) What is your perception of transit's role in the community? CobbLinc? MARTA? GRTA (Xpress)? The ATL?
- 3) Is the transit system responsive to community needs? How are those needs communicated to the transit systems?
- 4) Is information on transit readily available in the community?
- 5) Is traffic congestion a problem in the City of Smyrna? If so, what role can transit play in mitigating this problem?
- 6) Is there a parking problem in the City of Smyrna? If so, how does this affect transit's role in the community?

B. Where We Want to Go

- 7) What goals have the community and elected officials voiced for transit? What do you see as appropriate goals for the transit system in the next 5 to 10 years? Next 20 years?
- 8) What is happening in the City of Smyrna in terms of residential and commercial development? How much? Where? How can transit best respond to these trends?
- 9) Should CobbLinc be looking at new markets for transit service, or should it concentrate on its existing markets?
- 10) Is there a need for premium transit (bus rapid transit or rail) connections between the City of Smyrna and Cobb County? And Atlanta?



- 11) Is there a willingness in the community to consider additional local funding for transit?

C. How We Get There

- 12) What improvements are needed in the transit system to attract more riders and meet community goals?
- 13) Is there a need for more park and ride lots, possibly in conjunction with more express or limited-stop bus service to Atlanta and other destinations?
- 14) Are there areas currently not served or underserved by transit that should receive a higher priority?
- 15) Are there other policies that should be changed to help the transit system reach its goals?

D. Summary

- 16) What are the major strengths and accomplishments of existing transit services?
- 17) If you could pick one thing to change about the transit system, what would it be?
- 18) What is your vision for transit in the next 5 to 10 years? Next 20 years?



External Stakeholder - The following questions are designed for regional stakeholders. However, please add internal questions if and when applicable.

A. Today

- 1) What is your perception of CobbLinc's, MARTA's, GRTA's (Xpress), and the new ATL's role in the region?
- 2) How much awareness of and support for transit is there on this side of the Atlanta region?
- 3) Have the levels of awareness and support changed in recent years? How and why?

B. Where We Want to Go

- 4) What goals have the regional elected officials voiced for transit?
- 5) What do you see as appropriate transit goals for Smyrna in the next 5 to 10 years? Next 20 years?
- 6) Is there a need for premium transit (bus rapid transit or rail) connections between the City of Smyrna and the region (Cobb County, Atlanta, other destinations)?
- 7) Is there a willingness in the region to consider additional regional and state funding for transit?

C. How We Get There

- 8) What transit improvements do you think are needed in Smyrna to attract more riders and meet their local community goals as well as the regional goals on transit?
- 9) Is there a need for more park and ride lots, possibly in conjunction with more express or limited-stop bus service to Atlanta and other destinations?
- 10) Are there any regional policies that should be changed to help the transit system reach its goals?

Appendix C: Discussion Group Materials



DISCUSSION GROUP WORKSHOPS

City of Smyrna Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study

Welcome!

Introductions

Workshop Presentation

Discussion Focus #1 - Perceptions of Transit in the City

- Are you familiar with the various transit organizations/services in the region that can impact our City's mobility options?
 - CobbLinc
 - MARTA
 - GRTA/Xpress
 - ATL
- Considering the possibility of increasing transit services in the City, what do you think that its role as a mobility option should be in the community?
- What about the role of the various regional transit entities (e.g., CobbLinc, MARTA, GRTA (Xpress), the ATL)
- Are you familiar with the current transit services operating within the City? If so, how much awareness of and support for transit is there in the community? Have the levels of awareness and support changed in recent years?
- Is the current transit service responsive to community needs? How are those needs communicated to the transit providers, like CobbLinc?
- Is traffic congestion a problem in the City of Smyrna? If so, what role can transit play in mitigating this problem?
- Is there a parking problem in the City of Smyrna? If so, how does this affect transit's role in the community?



Discussion Focus #2 - Transit Goals & Markets

- What do you see as appropriate goals for any transit services that are operated within the City in the next 5 to 10 years? Next 20 years?
- What is happening in the City of Smyrna in terms of residential and commercial development? Where? How can transit best respond to these residential and commercial development trends?
- Is there a need for premium transit (bus rapid transit or rail) connections between the City of Smyrna and Cobb County? What about to/from Atlanta?

Discussion Focus #3 - Improving Local & Regional Access

- What is CobbLinc currently doing well in Smyrna?
- In what area/s do you see opportunity for improvement?
- What service improvements are needed in the existing transit services to attract more riders and meet community goals?
- Are there areas in the City currently not served or underserved by transit that should receive a higher priority?
- Is there a need for more park and ride lots, possibly in conjunction with more express or limited-stop bus service to Atlanta and other destinations?

Discussion Focus #4 - Funding & Vision

- Is there a willingness in the community to consider additional local funding for transit?
- What is your vision for City's transit services in the next 5 to 10 years? Next 20 years?

Appendix D: Public Outreach Materials

COME VISIT US!!

AT OUR FALL POP-UP EVENTS:
FIND OUT ABOUT *SMYRNA CONNECTS*,
FILL OUT A SURVEY, AND
TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS ON
TRANSIT!

OCTOBER 25, 1PM - 3PM

REV COFFEE

1680 SPRING RD SE B
SMYRNA, GA 30080

OCTOBER 26, 10AM - 6PM

OCTOBER 27, 12PM - 5PM

JONQUIL FESTIVAL

VILLAGE GREEN

SMYRNA, GA 30080



SMYRNA
Connects

WWW.SMYRNACONNECTS.COM



**Free 10 Ride
Bus Pass** for the
first 10 riders who call
the number below to
RSVP and attend the
discussion!!

The City of Smyrna is conducting a Transit Feasibility Study

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

Please attend our Bus Rider Discussion if you:



**Use public
transit**

and



**Live in
Smyrna**

or



**Go to Smyrna
for work or
other purposes**

Bus Rider Discussion

November 13, 2019 (1:30PM - 3:30PM)

Cumberland Transfer Center

(Please come inside the facility/building)

If you have any questions, please call (404) 417- 4088. If you need more information about this study, please go to **www.SmyrnaConnects.com**



Fact Sheet



WHAT IS SMYRNA CONNECTS?

Smyrna Connects is a Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study being conducted by the City of Smyrna to develop a comprehensive, consensus-driven transit vision for the city and adjacent areas. This transit vision will take into account the City's larger objectives, including sustainability, economic development, growth management, traffic mitigation, livable communities and corridors, and connected and walkable communities.

The process for developing *Smyrna Connects* includes examining existing and future conditions including land use, market conditions, transit service, demographics and travel patterns as well as the needs, wants, and desires of stakeholders and community members. At the conclusion of the study, the City will have a plan that outlines a set of community-supported transit opportunities for Smyrna and the surrounding area and reflects a sustainable and implementable vision for public transportation services over the next 20 years.

WHY DO WE NEED YOUR INPUT?

Public participation is an important part of developing *Smyrna Connects*, and numerous public outreach activities will support the plan, including discussion groups, online and printed surveys, open house public workshops, social media interaction, and web and email outreach. Your participation and input are needed so we can learn more about the public transportation needs and issues in Smyrna and its surrounding areas.

For more information, visit www.smyrnaconnects.com or contact **Tom Boland at (678)631-5348**.



Appendix E: Public Input Survey



Public Input Survey

City of Smyrna Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study

Your Transit Today

1. **Have you or a member of your household used transit services available in the City of Smyrna?** (Select all that apply) **If answer is NO, go to question 6.**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I have used CobbLinc | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I have never used public transit in the City |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I have used MARTA | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I was not aware that public transit is available in this area |

2. **What bus route do you use most often? Leave blank if you aren't a transit rider**

CobbLinc Route _____

MARTA Route _____

3. **What type of trips do you use transit for?** (Select all that apply)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Education / School | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Social / Religious | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____ | |

4. **How often do you use the transit services available in the City?**

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> A few times per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> Never | |

5. **How would you make the trip if transit services were not available?**

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk / Bicycle | <input type="checkbox"/> Ride with someone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi | <input type="checkbox"/> Rideshare (Uber, Lyft) | <input type="checkbox"/> Wouldn't make the trip |

Your Transit Tomorrow

6. **Do you think there is a need for additional / improved transit services in the City of Smyrna?**

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|

7. **What would make transit more appealing for you to use it or use it more?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ The bus comes every 10-15 minutes instead of every 30-60 minutes
- ☐ Bus that circulates only within the City
- ☐ More direct connections and smaller City loops
- ☐ If the route allows you to reach your destination quickly and without a transfer
- ☐ Transit connections to regional transportation systems

8. **What should the City consider as public transit priorities over the next 20 years?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ More frequent bus service
- ☐ Buses that circulate within the City
- ☐ Regional express / commuter service
- ☐ More weekend service
- ☐ More early / later service
- ☐ Operating buses on dedicated lanes
- ☐ Provide rail transit
- ☐ Autonomous vehicles in the City core
- ☐ Ridesharing (Uber, Lyft) to first-mile, last-mile connect with transit
- ☐ Transit services that provide direct connection to employment or entertainment centers

(The Cumberland CID or the Battery)

- ☐ Expand to new areas not currently served. Where? _____

9. **In addition to local / express bus, what other modes should the City consider over the next 20 years?**
(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Bus Rapid Transit
- ☐ Light rail
- ☐ Commuter rail
- ☐ Heavy rail
- ☐ Scooters

10. **What transit infrastructure and technology improvements should the City consider supporting in the next 20 years?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Improve bus stop amenities (Shelters, etc.)
- ☐ Improve pedestrian / bicycle access to bus stop areas
- ☐ Provide bicycle storage at bus stop areas
- ☐ Provide bus stop real-time information displays
- ☐ Support autonomous transit
- ☐ Technology upgrades to city roadways to prioritize the transit system
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

11. **What benefits do you believe could occur as a result of additional transit service in the City and adjacent areas?** (Please select THREE)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More access to jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> More travel options |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less need for parking | <input type="checkbox"/> Less traffic on area roads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saves energy, gasoline | <input type="checkbox"/> Increases mobility for people without cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improves quality of the air we breathe | <input type="checkbox"/> Improves local economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't believe any benefits would occur | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____ |

12. **How would you like to have access to public transit information?** (Select all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smart phone app | <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Printed maps and schedules |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media (Facebook and Twitter) | |

Your Downtown Tomorrow

13. **What type of attractions would you most like to see in Downtown Smyrna?** Rank numerically according to importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important

- More restaurants, casual dining facilities, outdoor cafes
- Entertainment attraction (Performing arts venue, museum, art gallery, etc.)
- Park or other outdoor recreation space (i.e. multi-use open space, amphitheater, splashpad, skatepark, permanent dog park, etc.)
- Indoor recreation facilities (i.e. gymnastics center, natatorium)
- Better variety of retail shops
- Better variety of services (i.e. hair salons, spa, nail salons, dry cleaners, etc.)
- Other (i.e. street vendors, brewery, food hall)

14. **In your opinion, what needs to be addressed to achieve a more vibrant, successful Downtown Smyrna?** Rank numerically according to importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important

- Parking
- Safety
- Accessibility
- Walkability
- More pedestrian / bicycle connectivity
- More downtown events (Festivals, street parties, concerts, etc.)
- Other

Tell Us About Yourself

15. I ... (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Live in Smyrna | <input type="checkbox"/> Work in Smyrna |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit Smyrna | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to school / train in Smyrna |

16. **My age is...**

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 years or younger | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 40 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 41 to 60 years | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 61 years | |

17. **Zip code of my...**

Residence is: _____ Work / School is (If applicable) _____

18. **I have access to a personal vehicle...**

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

19. **My race / ethnic group is...**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian / Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black / African American | <input type="checkbox"/> White / Caucasian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____ | |

20. **I am...**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic / Latino | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic / Latino |
|--|--|

21. **My total household income for 2018 was...**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Between \$25,000 - \$44,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between \$45,000 - \$74,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 or greater |

We may send out occasional project updates. Please provide us with your name and email address.

Name: _____

Email: _____



Encuesta de Opinión Pública

Estudio de Viabilidad y Análisis de Transito de la Ciudad de Smyrna

Tu Tránsito Hoy

1. **¿Usted o un miembro de su hogar ha utilizado los servicios de tránsito disponibles en la ciudad de Smyrna?** (Seleccione todo lo que aplique) **Si la respuesta es NO, avance a la pregunta 6.**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sí, he usado CobbLinc | <input type="checkbox"/> No, nunca he usado el transporte público en la ciudad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sí, he usado MARTA | <input type="checkbox"/> No, no sabía que el transporte público está disponible en esta área |

2. **¿Qué ruta de autobús usa con más frecuencia?** Déjelo en blanco si no es un usuario de transporte público.

Ruta CobbLinc _____

Ruta MARTA _____

3. **¿Para qué tipo de viajes utiliza el transporte público?** (Seleccione todo lo que aplique)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trabajo | <input type="checkbox"/> Educación / Escuela | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitas Medicas | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreacional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compras | <input type="checkbox"/> Social / Religioso | <input type="checkbox"/> Otro (Especifique) _____ | |

4. **¿Con que frecuencia utiliza los servicios de transito disponibles en la ciudad?**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 días a la semana | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 o más días a la semana | <input type="checkbox"/> Algunas veces al mes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Raramente | <input type="checkbox"/> Nunca | |

5. **¿Cómo haría el viaje si los servicios de transito no estuvieran disponibles?**

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manejar | <input type="checkbox"/> Caminar / Bicicleta | <input type="checkbox"/> Viajar con alguien |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi | <input type="checkbox"/> Servicios cooperativos (Uber, Lyft) | <input type="checkbox"/> No haría el viaje |

Tu Tránsito Mañana

6. **¿Cree que hay una necesidad de servicios de transito adicionales/mejorados en la ciudad de Smyrna?**

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Si | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> No lo se |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

7. **¿Qué haría que el tránsito fuera más atractivo para que usted?** (Seleccione todo lo que aplique)

- ☐ Que el autobús salga cada 10-15 minutos en lugar de cada 30-60 minutos
- ☐ Que el autobús circule solo dentro de la ciudad
- ☐ Mas conexiones directas y circuitos de ciudad más pequeños
- ☐ Que la ruta me permita llegar a mi destino rápidamente y sin transferencia
- ☐ Conexiones de tránsito a los sistemas de transporte regionales

8. **¿Qué debe considerar la Ciudad como prioridades de transporte público en los próximos 20 años?**
(Seleccione todo lo que aplique)

- ☐ Servicio de autobuses más frecuente
- ☐ Mas servicio de fin de semana
- ☐ Proporcionar tránsito ferroviario
- ☐ Mas servicio temprano / y en la tarde
- ☐ Servicios cooperativos (Uber, Lyft) a la primera milla, a la última milla que se conecte con el tránsito
- ☐ Servicios de tránsito que proporcionan conexión directa a centros de empleo o entretenimiento (The Cumberland CID o The Battery)
- ☐ Expandir a nuevas áreas que actualmente no se atienden. ¿Donde? _____
- ☐ Autobuses que circulan dentro de la ciudad
- ☐ Servicio regional exprés / Servicio de cercanía
- ☐ Operar autobuses en carriles dedicados
- ☐ Vehículos autónomos en el centro de la ciudad

9. **Además del autobús local/exprés, ¿qué otros modos debería considerar la Ciudad en los próximos 20 años?** (Seleccione todo lo que aplique)

- ☐ Tren ligero
- ☐ Tren de cercanías
- ☐ Riel pesado
- ☐ Autobuses de tránsito rápido
- ☐ Scooters

10. **¿Qué infraestructura de tránsito y mejoras tecnológicas debería considerar la Ciudad apoyar en los próximos 20 años?**

- ☐ Mejorar las comodidades de la parada de autobús (Refugios, etc.)
- ☐ Mejorar el acceso de peatones / Bicicletas a las áreas de la parada de autobús
- ☐ Proporcional almacenamiento de bicicletas en las áreas de parada de autobús
- ☐ Proporcionar pantallas de información de la parada de autobús en tiempo real
- ☐ Apoyar el tránsito autónomo
- ☐ Actualizaciones tecnológicas a las carreteras de la ciudad para priorizar el sistema de tránsito
- ☐ Otro (Especifique) _____

11. **¿Qué beneficios cree que podrían ocurrir como resultado de un servicio de transito adicional en la Ciudad y áreas adyacentes?** (Seleccione solo TRES)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mas acceso a trabajos | <input type="checkbox"/> Menos necesidad de estacionamiento |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mas opciones de viaje | <input type="checkbox"/> Menos tráfico en las carreteras de la zona |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ahorra energía, gasolina | <input type="checkbox"/> Aumenta la movilidad de personas sin automóviles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mejora la economía local | <input type="checkbox"/> Mejora la calidad del aire que respiramos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No creo que se produzcan beneficios | <input type="checkbox"/> Otro (Especifique) _____ |

12. **¿Cómo le gustaría tener acceso a la información de transporte público?**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sitio web | <input type="checkbox"/> Teléfono | <input type="checkbox"/> Aplicación de teléfono inteligente |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mapas y horarios impresos | <input type="checkbox"/> Redes sociales (Facebook y Twitter) | |

Tu Centro Mañana

13. **¿Qué tipo de atracciones te gustaría ver en el centro de Smyrna?** (Clasifique numéricamente según su importancia, 1 siendo el mas impórtate y 7 el menos importante)

- ☐ Mas restaurantes, restaurantes informales, cafés al aire libre
- ☐ Atracción de entretenimiento (Lugar de artes escénicas, museo, galería de arte, etc.)
- ☐ Parque u otro espacio de recreación al aire libre (Espacio abierto de usos múltiples, anfiteatro, salpicadero parque de patinaje, parque permanente para perros, etc.)
- ☐ Instalaciones recreativas interiores (Centro de gimnasia, piscina)
- ☐ Mejor variedad de tiendas minoristas
- ☐ Mejor variedad de servicios (Salones de belleza, spa, salones de unas, tintorerías, etc.)
- ☐ Otros (Vendedores ambulantes, cervecerías, restaurantes)

14. **¿Qué tipo de atracciones te gustaría ver en el centro de Smyrna?** (Clasifique numéricamente según su importancia, 1 siendo el mas impórtate y 7 el menos importante)

- ☐ Estacionamiento
- ☐ La seguridad
- ☐ Accesibilidad
- ☐ Transitable / caminable
- ☐ Mas conectividad peatonal / bicicleta
- ☐ Mas eventos en el centro (Festivales, fiestas callejeras, conciertos, etc.)
- ☐ Otro

Cuéntanos Acerca De Ti

15. **Yo ...** (Seleccione todo lo que aplique)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vivo en Smyrna | <input type="checkbox"/> Trabajo en Smyrna |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visito Smyrna | <input type="checkbox"/> Voy a la escuela / Entreno en Smyrna |

16. **Mi edad es...**

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 años o menor | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 a 24 años | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 a 40 años |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 41 a 60 años | <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor de 61 años | |

17. **Código postal de mi...**

Residencia es _____ Trabajo/Escuela es (Si es aplicable) _____

18. **Tengo acceso a un vehículo personal**

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Si | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|

19. **Mi raza/grupo étnico es...**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nativo Americano / Nativo de Alaska | <input type="checkbox"/> Asiático |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afroamericano | <input type="checkbox"/> Blanco / Caucásico |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Otro _____ | |

20. **Yo soy...**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispano / Latino | <input type="checkbox"/> No Hispano / Latino |
|---|--|

21. **El ingreso total de mi hogar para el 2018 fue...**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Menos de \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Entre \$25,000 - \$44,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entre \$45,000 - \$74,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 o mas |

Podemos enviar actualizaciones ocasionales del proyecto. Por favor proporcione su nombre y su correo electrónico.

Nombre _____

Correo Electrónico _____