City of Smyrna
Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study

Final Report

SMYRNA *Connects*

September 2020

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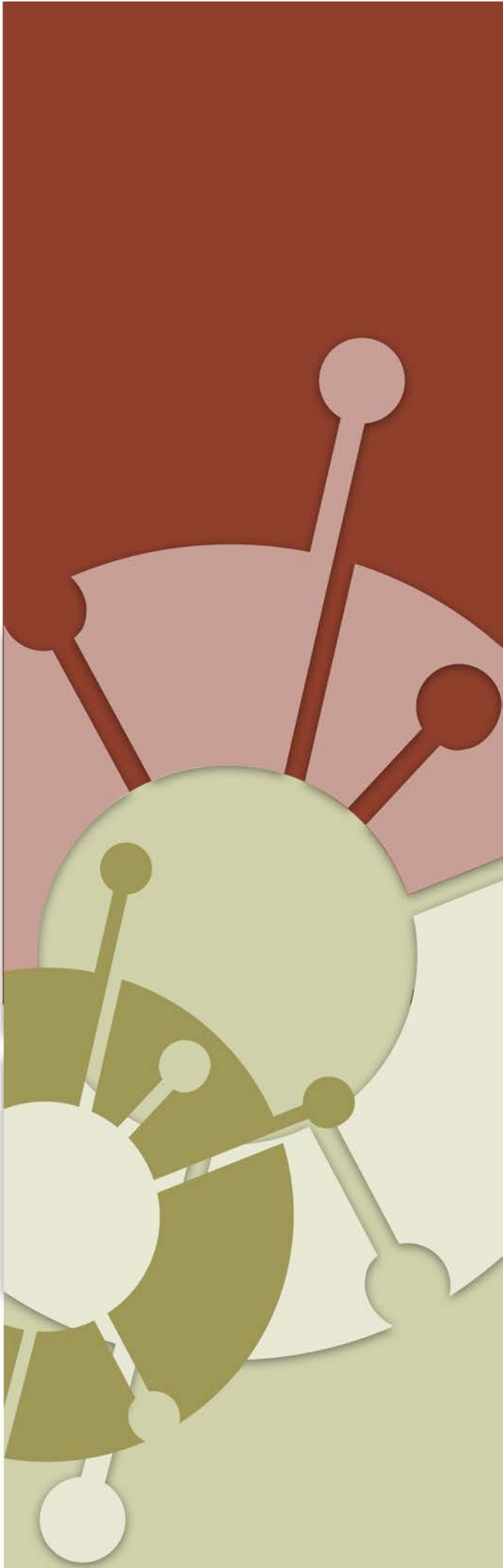

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Section 1: Introduction

The City of Smyrna, Georgia, is conducting a Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study (TAFS), dubbed *Smyrna Connects,* to develop an "overarching, consensus-driven transit vision" for the city and adjacent areas. This transit vision will take into account the City's larger objectives, including economic development, growth management, traffic mitigation, livable communities and corridors, and connected and walkable communities.

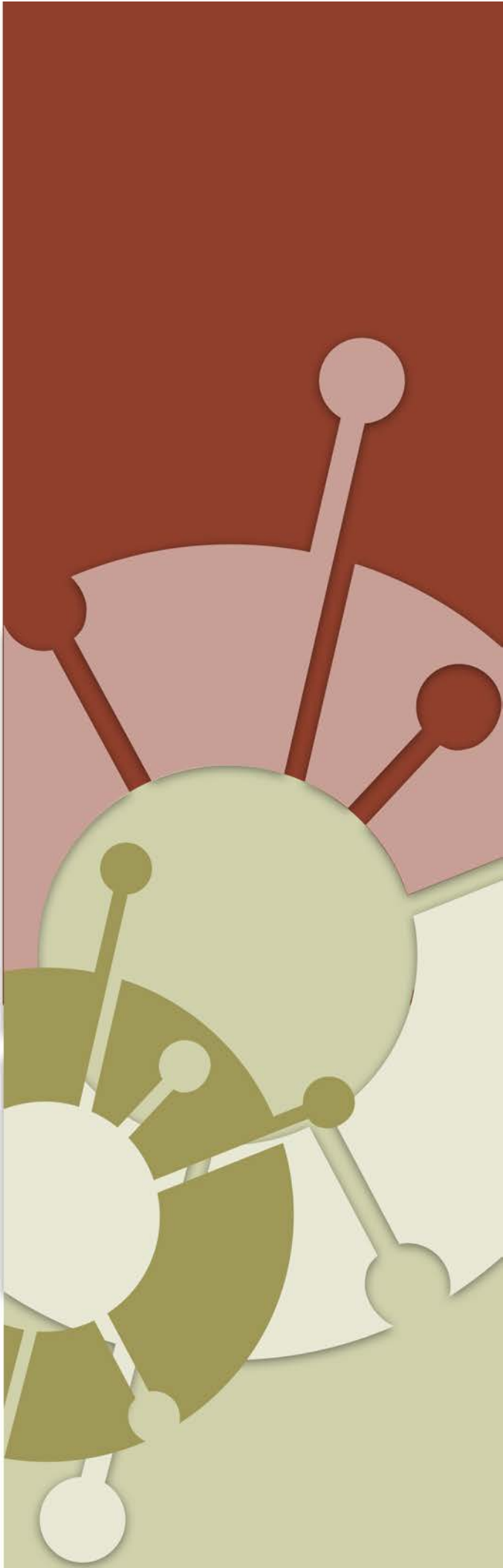
Development of this transit vision for the City is taking place at a critical time. Cobb County has just begun an update to the countywide transportation plan (which will include a countywide transit plan), the newly-created Atlanta-Region Transit Link (ATL) Authority will update the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Concept 3 regional transit plan in late 2019/early 2020, and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is advancing a managed lane project on I-285.

Each of these regional initiatives provides an opportunity for the City to provide input and have influence. In addition, these regional initiatives create the opportunity to examine both local and regional transit needs and opportunities, including the South Cobb Drive corridor, the Spring Road corridor, Cumberland Transit Center opportunities, and new transit funding opportunities.

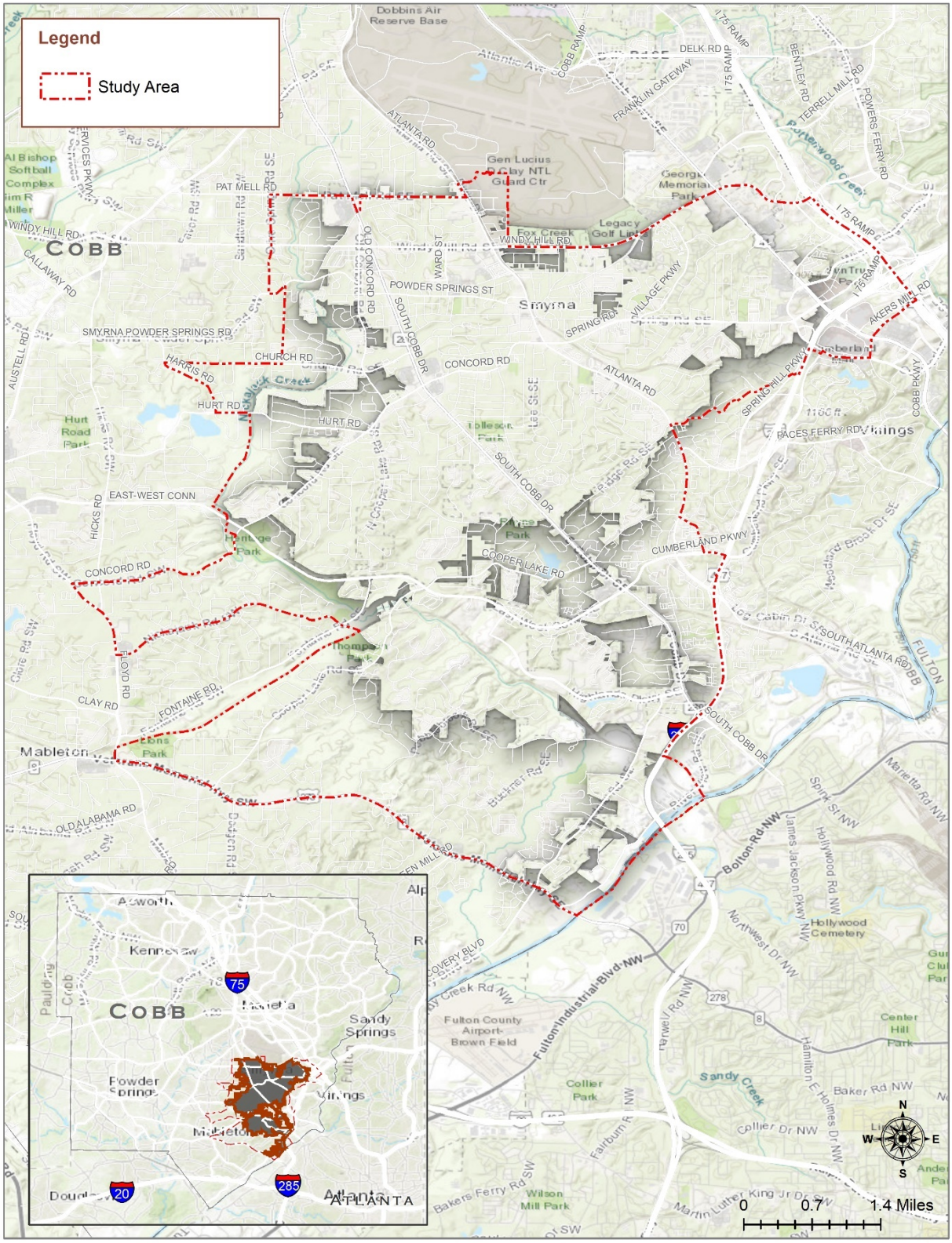
Study Area

Smyrna is located in southeast Cobb County, approximately 10 miles northwest of Atlanta and considered part of the Metro Atlanta area. The city is intersected by major corridors, including US-41, I-285, and the East-West Connector, with I-75 running adjacent. According to the 2010 Census, Smyrna is approximately 15 square miles in size.

Map 1-1 shows the study area for *Smyrna Connects*, which primarily includes the city but has been expanded to capture key activity centers/areas adjacent to the city.



Map 1-1: Smyrna Connects Study Area



Section 2: Existing Transit Services Analysis

This section includes a compilation of available information on existing transit services in Smyrna and its immediate region, concentrating on those operating within and connecting to Smyrna and Cobb County. It includes an analysis of CobbLinc, the public transportation service, facilities to which Smyrna residents have access, and information on other current transportation services in Smyrna.

Overview of Transit in Smyrna

CobbLinc

Fixed-route service has been provided in Cobb County since 1989 and has been expanded multiple times, currently serving the majority of the county (see Map 2-1). With the CobbLinc service revisions and expansions implemented in September 2019, all local CobbLinc routes now operate seven days per week, and express routes operate Monday to Friday. Route frequencies vary based on the route and day of service but typically are 30 minutes during the day and 60 minutes during late/evening hours.

Current CobbLinc services in Smyrna include five local routes (Rapid10, 10, 15, 20, and 25), and the Green and Blue circulators. Weekday bus operation in Smyrna begins at 5:00 AM with routes 10, 15, 20, and 25 and the Rapid10 and ends with the Green Circulator at 2:30 AM. The Blue and Green circulators also serve Smyrna but begin operation at 12:00 PM.

CobbLinc currently operates it services with a total of 705 bus stops; within the Smyrna City limits are 75 bus stops, constituting just over 10 percent of its total bus stops. CobbLinc also operates Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) routes (Xpress) 476 and 480 that connect Cobb County to the region. Xpress routes do not have any stops within or adjacent to the Smyrna City limits.

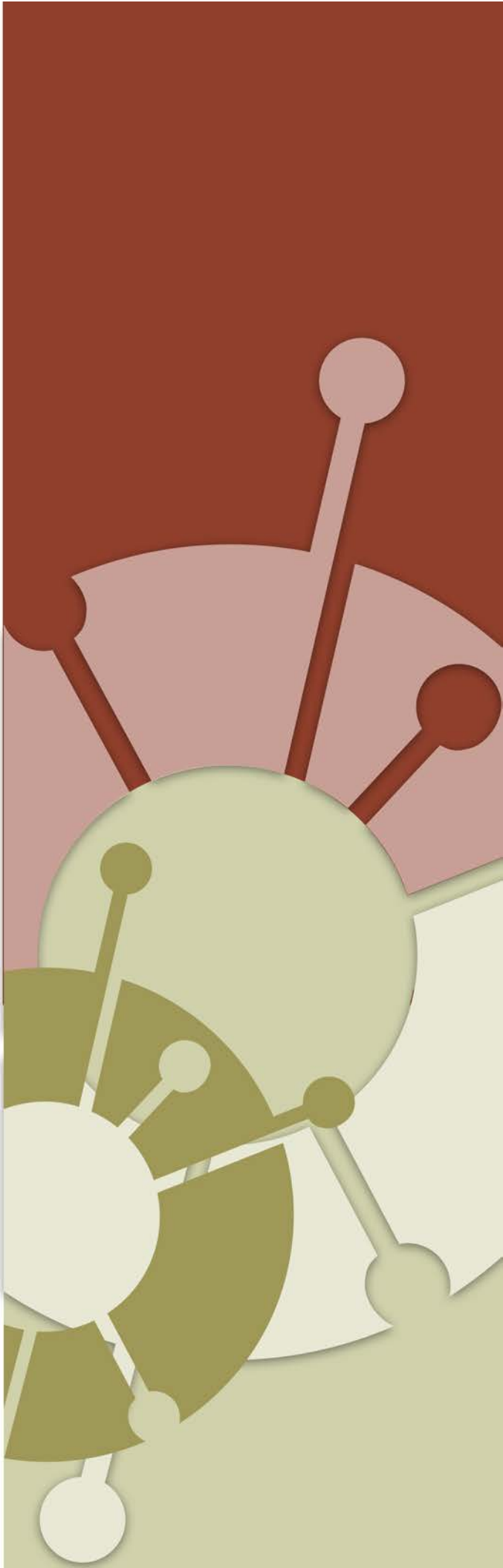


Figure 2-1 is a snapshot of the services provided by CobbLinc and selected performance details. Map 2-1 on the following page shows the existing fixed-route service provided in Cobb County, and Map 2-2 shows the existing fixed-route service provided in Smyrna.

Figure 2-1: CobbLinc Service Summary

MARTA

Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) fixed-route service is the largest fixed-route service in the region, providing service since 1971. Currently, MARTA operates 110 bus routes, 4 rail lines, and 1 streetcar route. It connects with Cobb County with two routes, 12 and 201, one serving the Cumberland area adjacent to Smyrna. Route 12 serves the Midtown Station in Atlanta, connecting to the Cumberland Transfer Center in Cobb County, just outside the Smyrna City limits.

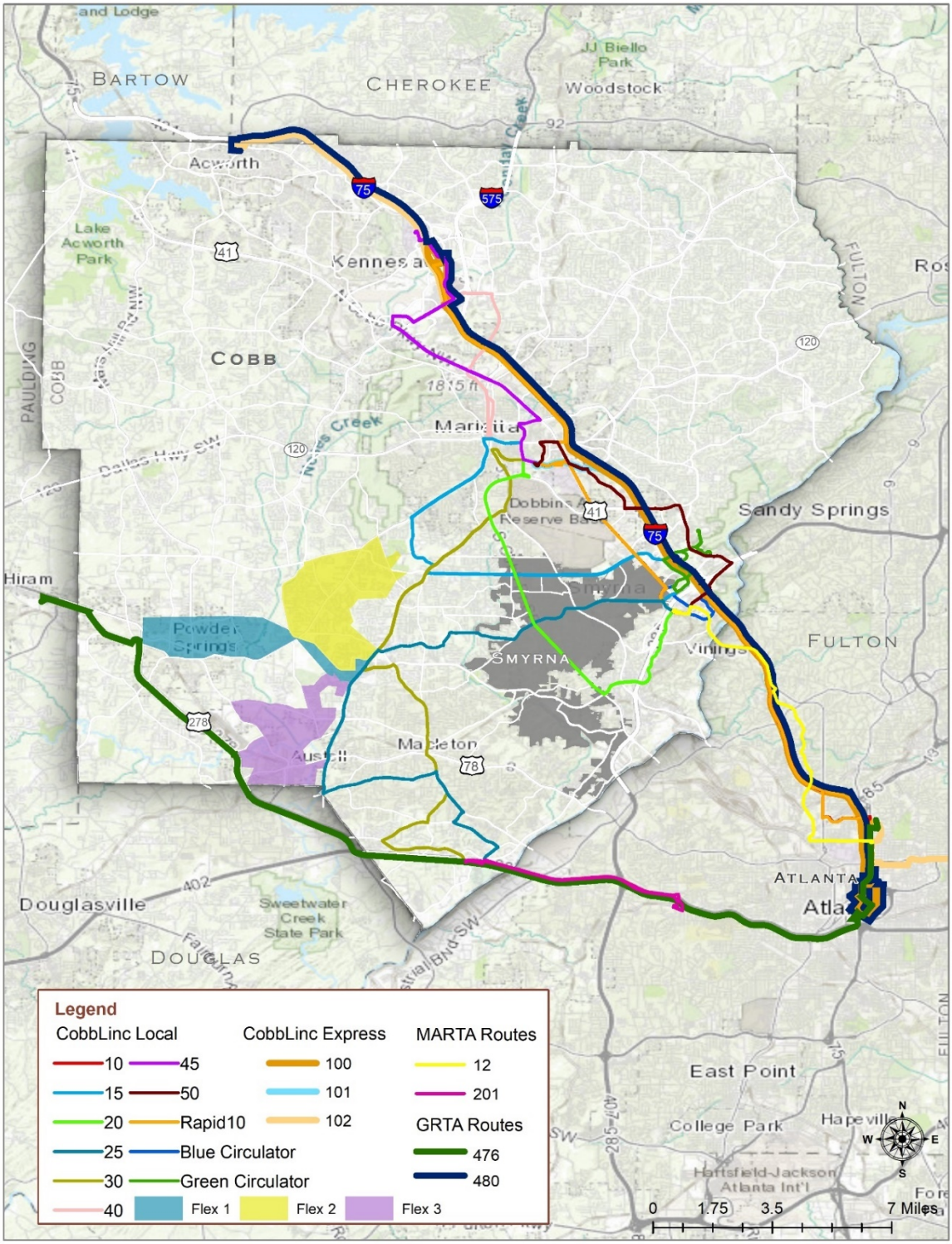
Route 12 operates seven days per week, with a service span of 5:10–12:46 AM on weekdays and 5:37–12:46 AM on weekends at 30-minute intervals. Route 201, which does not operate in or near Smyrna, serves the Hamilton Holmes Station, connecting to Six Flags in Cobb County and operating seven days per week from 8:00–2:00 AM every 30 minutes.

GRTA Xpress

GRTA, a transit agency operated by the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA), provides transit service known as Xpress, connecting Cobb County to the Atlanta region. The park-and-ride-based commuter express service currently does not have any stops in Smyrna.

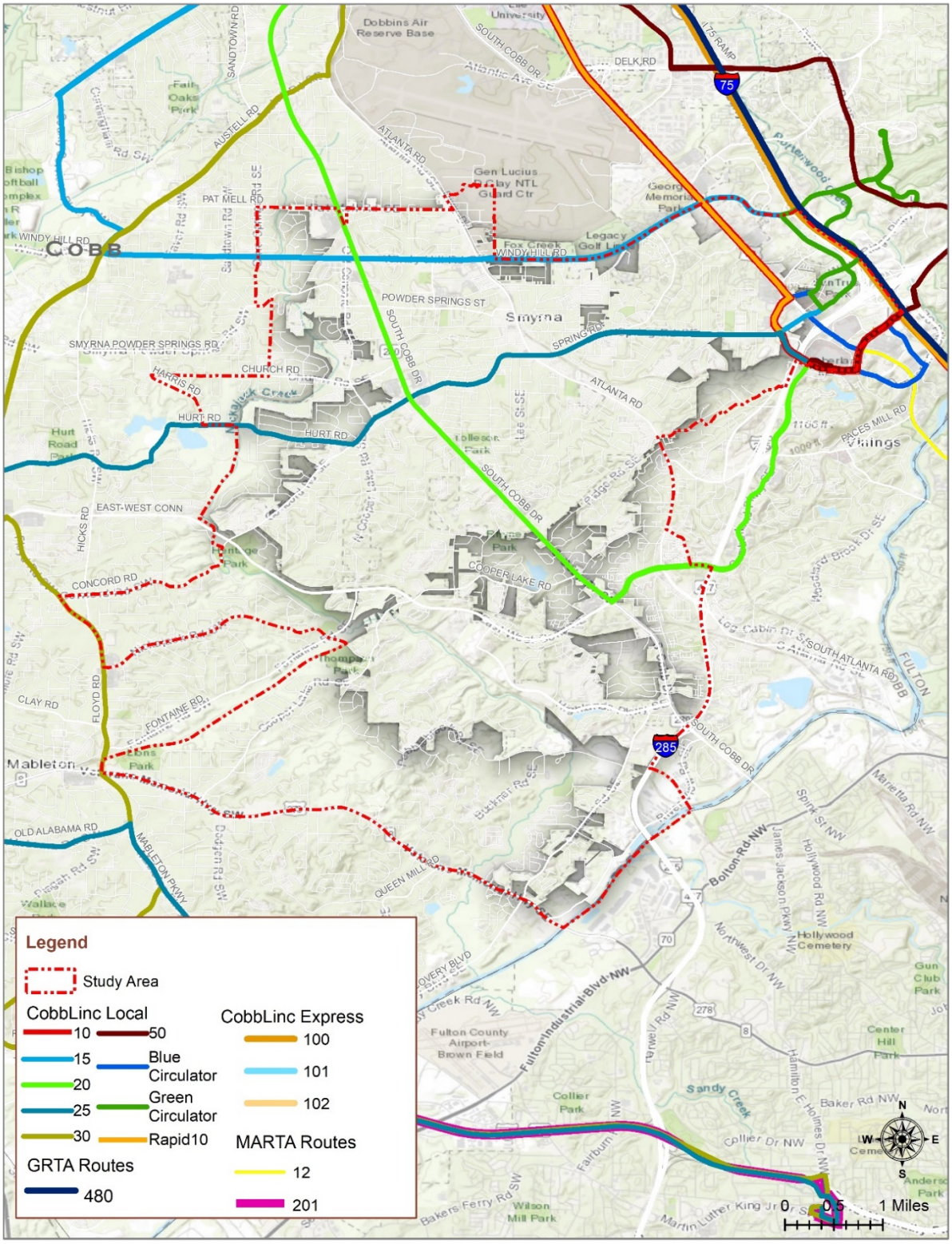
GRTA operates its services in 12 counties in Georgia, including Cobb County, surrounding the metro-Atlanta area with 27 routes and 27 park-and-ride lots scattered throughout the region. As previously noted, CobbLinc operates GRTA Xpress routes 476 and 480, and no Xpress routes serve Smyrna or the Cumberland Transfer Center at this time, but the service operates on I-75 adjacent to Smyrna. The closest connection to Smyrna is in Kennesaw at the Town Center.

Map 2-1: Existing Transit Services, Cobb County



Data Source: CobbLinc

Map 2-2: Existing Transit Services, Smyrna



Data Source: CobbLinc

Transit Service Characteristics and Trends

A review of CobbLinc's current fixed-route services, ridership trends, and transit providers was conducted to learn more about the only public transit provider in Smyrna, as it directly helps to identify any transit needs in the city.

Table 2-1 provides operating details of CobbLinc's 16 routes and 3 flex service zones as well as the routes that serve Smyrna. As shown, the frequencies vary by the route and with service span.

Service Characteristics

Operating characteristics were examined to understand the level of service currently available for the study area. As shown in Figure 2-2, CobbLinc service spans 4:30–2:30 AM, starting with Route 30 and ending with the Green Circulator. Before peak morning service begins at 6:00 AM, eight routes start service between 4:30 and 5:45 AM. During peak morning hours (6:00 AM–9:00 AM), all routes are operating, with exception to the Blue and Green circulators.

Two local routes and two express routes operate with headways (time between transit vehicles) of 15 minutes or better, and only one (Rapid10) intersects within the Smyrna City limits. The remaining routes that serve Smyrna operate on 30–60 minute headways during peak hours, leaving residents with limited options and no higher-frequency services to connect to job/economic opportunities.

During midday on a weekday, the majority of routes maintain their headways at 30 minutes or more, with the exception of the Rapid10 and Route 30. Rapid10 serves riders with 15-minute headways from 3:28 –7:47 PM, and Route 30 operates at 15-minute intervals from 1:00–5:30 PM in preparation for peak afternoon service. During this time period, the Blue and Green circulators start service at 12:00 PM with 30-minute headways. The Blue and Green circulators supply service within Smyrna to SunTrust Park, many business parks and centers, hotels, and restaurants adjacent to the City limits in the Windy Hill corridor. During this time period, all routes that serve Smyrna, except for the Rapid10, operate on 30–60-minute headways.

Table 2-1: CobbLinc Service Characteristics

Route	Key Locations/Corridors Served	Weekday Service Frequency	Weekday Span	Weekend Service Frequency	Weekend Span	Operates in Smyrna?
10	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, KSU-Marietta Campus, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Cumberland Mall, Cumberland Transfer Center, Atlantic Station, MARTA Arts Center Station	30 min	5:00–12:42 AM	30 min (day); 60 min (night)	6:00–12:45 AM Saturday; 7:00 AM–11:45 PM Sunday	✓
15	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, Marietta Square, County Services Parkway, The Battery, Cumberland Mall, Cumberland Transfer Center	30 min (day); 60 min (nights)	5:00 AM–10:52 PM	60 min	7:00 AM-8:52 PM Saturday; 7:00 AM–7:52 PM Sunday	✓
20	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, South Cobb Drive, Cumberland Mall, Cumberland Transfer Center	30 min (day); 60 min (nights)	5:00–12:41 AM	60 min	7:00 AM–10:50 PM Saturday; 7:00 AM–8:50 PM Sunday	✓
25	Cumberland Mall, Cumberland Transfer Center, Hurt Road, Cobb Hospital, MARTA H.E. Holmes Station	60 min	5:00–12:50 AM	60 min	7:00–12:50 AM Saturday; 7:00 AM–8:50 PM Sunday	✓
30	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, Austell Road, WellStar Cobb Hospital, East-West Connector corridor, Floyd Road Park-and-Ride, Mableton Park-and-Ride, Six Flags, MARTA H.E. Holmes Station	15 min (midday); 30 min (peak/ off-peak)	4:30–12:50 AM	30 min (day); 60 min (night)	5:30–12:45 AM Saturday; 6:00 AM–8:45 PM Sunday	
40	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, Marietta Square, Kennestone Hospital, Town Center Mall, Busbee Park-and-Ride, KSU-Kennesaw Campus	60 min	6:00 AM–11:46 PM	60 min	6:00 AM–9:46 PM Saturday; 7:00 AM–7:46 PM Sunday	
45	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, Cobb Place, Barrett Parkway, Town Center Mall, Busbee Park-and-Ride, KSU-Kennesaw Campus	60 min	6:30 AM–10:16 PM	60 min	7:30 AM–10:16 PM Saturday; 8:30 AM–8:16 PM Sunday	
50	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, Cobb Parkway/US-41, Powers Ferry Road, Wildwood, Cobb Galleria, Cumberland Mall, Cumberland Transfer Center	30 min (day); 60 min (nights)	6:00–12:43 AM	60 min	7:00 AM–10:46 PM Saturday; 7:00 AM–7:46 PM Sunday	

Table 2-1: CobbLinc Service Characteristics (cont'd)

Route	Key Locations/Corridors Served	Weekday Service Frequency	Weekday Span	Weekend Service Frequency	Weekend Span	Operates in Smyrna?
Rapid 10	KSU-Kennesaw Campus, Busbee Park-and-Ride, Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, KSU-Marietta Campus, Cumberland Mall, Cumberland Transfer Center, Atlantic Station, MARTA Arts Center Station	15 min (peak*); 30 min (off peak)	5:45 AM–7:47 PM	30 min Sat; 60 min Sun	6:23 AM–7:55 PM Sat; 7:08 AM–7:17 PM Sun	✓
100	Busbee Park and Ride, Town Center Park-and-Ride, MARTA Civic Center Station, MARTA Five Points Station, Downtown Atlanta	15 min	5:25 AM – 8:45 AM/ 3:15 AM –7:32 PM	-	-	
101	Marietta Transfer Center, Marietta Park-and-Ride, MARTA Civic Center Station, MARTA Five Points Station, Downtown Atlanta	25 min	6:10 AM – 8:52 AM/ 3:53 PM –7:33 PM	-	-	
102	Acworth Park and Ride Lot, MARTA Arts Center Station	30 min	5:30 AM – 8:45 AM/ 3:00 PM –6:50 PM	-	-	
Blue Circulator	Akers Mill Square, Cumberland Mall, Cobb Galleria Centre, SunTrust Park	30 min	12:00 PM–2:20 AM	60 min Sat; 60 min Sun	12:00 PM–2:20 AM Sat; 11:30 AM–6:50 PM Sun	✓
Green Circulator	SunTrust Park, Parkwood Circle, Windy Hill area	30 min	12:00 PM–2:30 AM	60 min Sat; 60 min Sun	12:00 PM–2:30 AM Sat; 11:30 AM–7:00 PM Sun	✓
Flex Zone 1	Collection Point: Publix Super Market; service between Macedonia Road, Powder Springs Road, and Florence Road	-	7:00 AM–7:00 PM	-	-	
Flex Zone 2	Collection Point: Horseshoe Bend Plaza; service between Ernest Barrett Parkway and East-West Connector	-	7:00 AM–7:00 PM	-	-	
Flex Zone 3	Collection Point: Downtown Austell; service between Austell Road, Humphries Hill Road, and I-278	-	7:00 AM–7:00 PM	-	-	

**6:00–9:00 am and 3:30–6:30 pm*
Source: CobbLinc

During peak afternoon service, routes begin to operate at higher frequencies, mirroring morning peak characteristics. Route 30 resumes 30-minute frequency after 5:30 PM and express routes operate until approximately 7:30 PM with headways of 15–30 minutes. In the evening, no local routes operate with frequencies better than 30 minutes and express routes do not offer service after 7:30 PM. The circulators offer the latest service, and most routes terminate service around 12:45–1:00 AM. Routes 15 and 20, operating in Smyrna, operate at 30-minute headways until 6:00 PM, and Route 10 operates at 30-minute frequency until 10:00 PM. Route 25 operates on a 60-minute headway until it stops at 1:00 AM, and the Rapid10 terminates high-frequency service at 8:00 PM and operates on a 60-minute headway until 9:00 PM. Although the majority of routes that serve Smyrna operate later, the frequency is low.

Figure 2-3 illustrates the spans for operation on Saturdays. Express routes do not operate on the weekends, and all frequencies are 30 minutes or greater on local routes. Route 30 begins service at 5:30 AM, and most other routes begin at 7:00 AM, with the exception of routes 10, 40, and the Rapid10, which begin operating at 6:00 AM. Similar to weekday service, the circulators do not begin operating until 12:00 PM, with 60-minute headways.

The only routes serving Smyrna with 30-minute headways are Route 10 and the Rapid10. Route 10 begins service at 6:00 AM and ends operation at 1:00 AM. Rapid10 begins service 6:00 AM and ends at 8:00 PM. Routes 15, 20, 25, and the Blue and Green circulators have 60-minute headways throughout their Saturday service span, with Route 15 ending at 8:00 PM, Route 20 ending at 11:00 PM, Route 25 ending at 1:00 AM, and the Blue and Green circulators ending at 2:20 AM and 2:30 AM, respectively .

Service on Sunday is limited to all local routes and circulators, with 60-minute headways. Express routes do not operate on Saturdays or Sundays (Figure 2-3). Route 30 begins service at 6:00 AM, and all other routes begin operation at 7:00 AM, with the exception of Route 45, which begins service at 8:00 AM and both circulators, which begin service at 11:30 AM. Although all service is at lower frequencies, routes that serve Smyrna end service as early as 7:00 PM on the Rapid10 and as late as 12:00 midnight on Route 10. Route 15 ends service at 8:00 PM, and routes 20 and 25 end at 9:00 PM. Overall, the majority of the local routes end service by 9:00 PM.

Map 2-3 illustrates the frequency of the CobbLinc network during its most-used time periods (peak hours). The map shows the headways for each CobbLinc route during peak service on weekdays throughout the region. As shown, only four routes provide higher-frequency service (15-minute headways or better) during peak times during the weekdays; most routes operate at headways of 30 minutes. The only route providing high-frequency service in Smyrna is the Rapid 10.

As shown in Map 2-4, five CobbLinc routes serve Smyrna, with only one route, the Rapid10, operating at high frequency during weekday peak service times. The rest of the routes operate on 30-minute intervals, except for Route 25, which operates at 60-minute headways during peak service times on weekdays.

Figure 2-2: Weekday Span of Service, CobbLinc

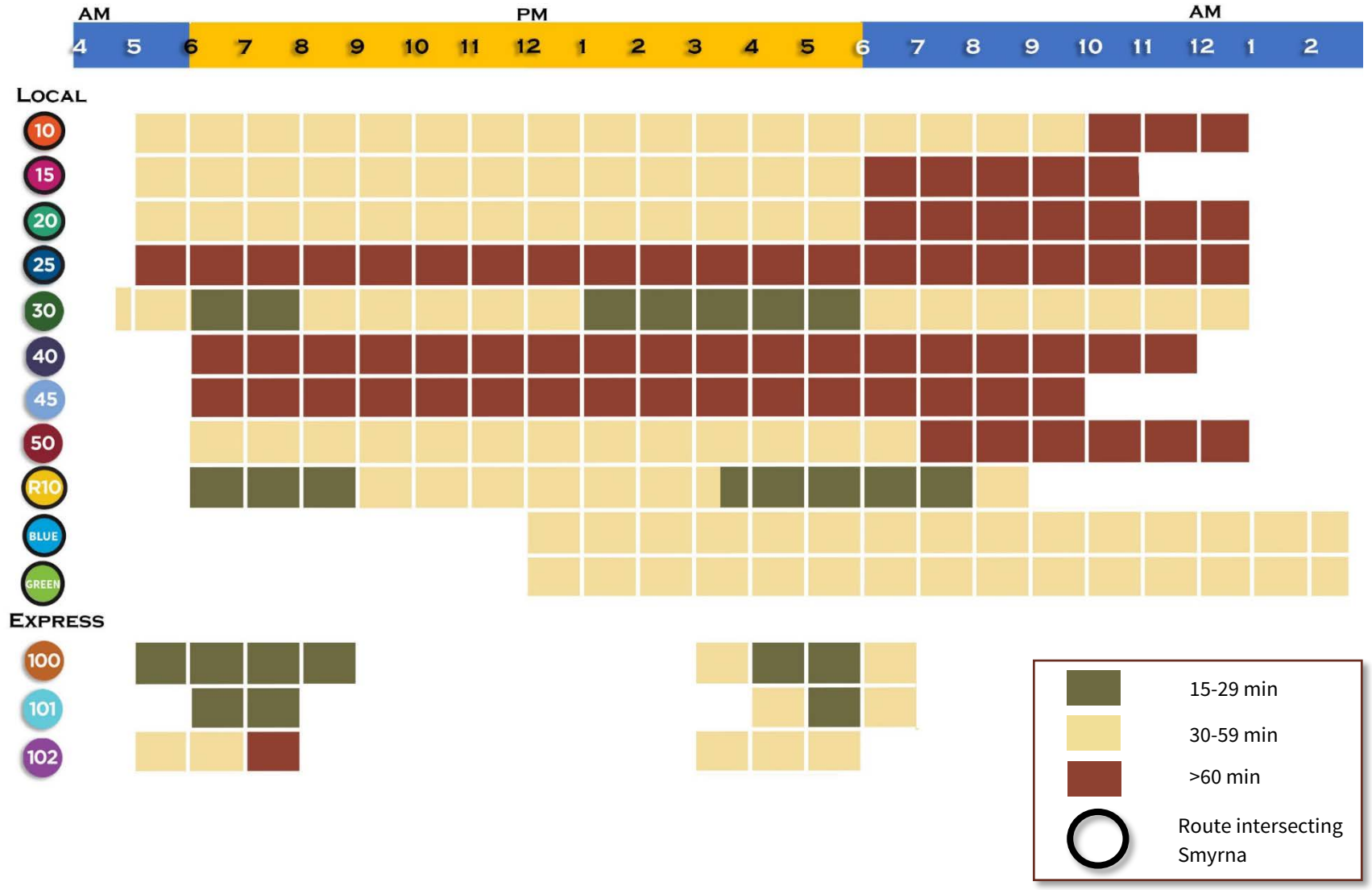


Figure 2-3: Saturday Span of Service, CobbLinc

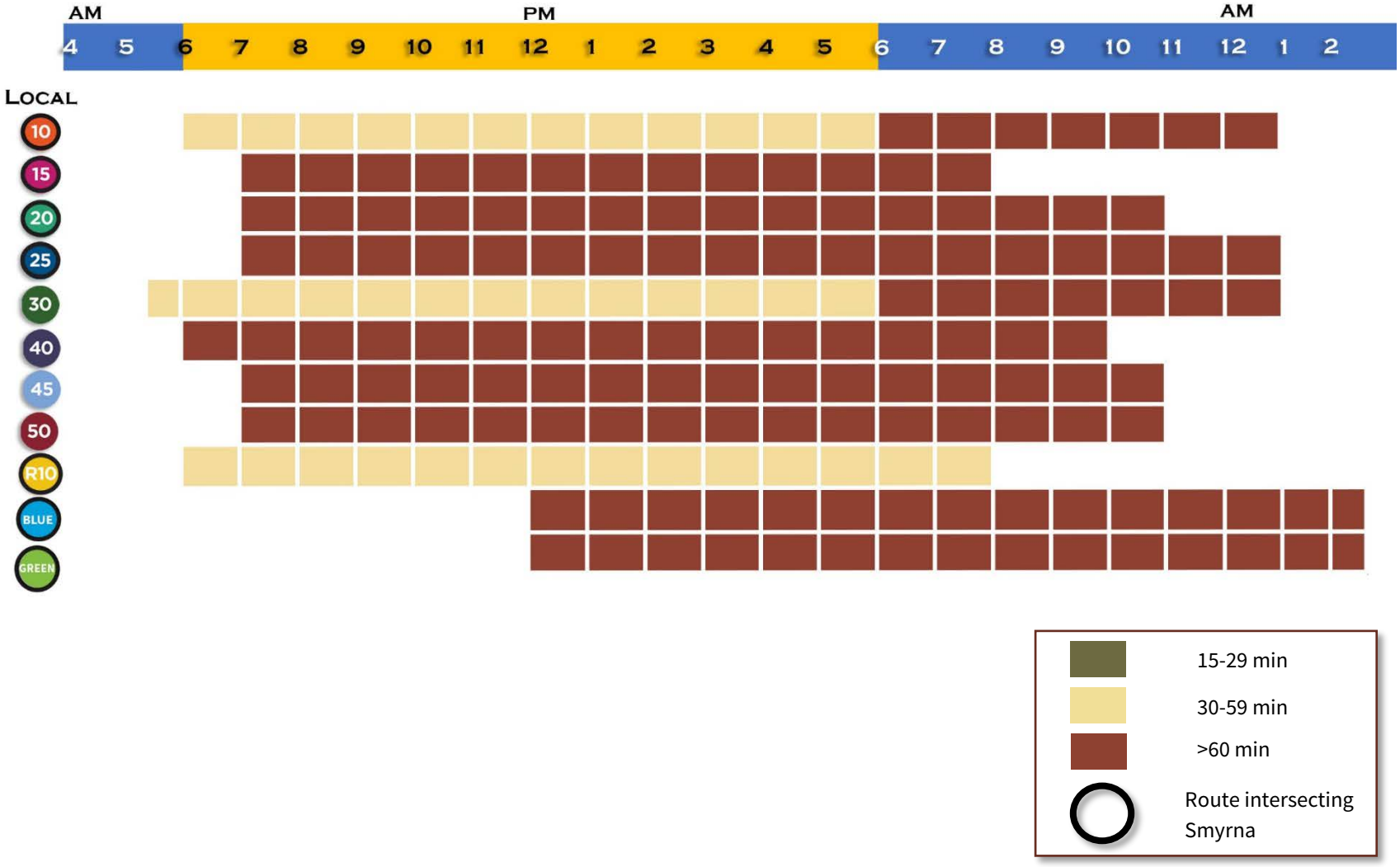
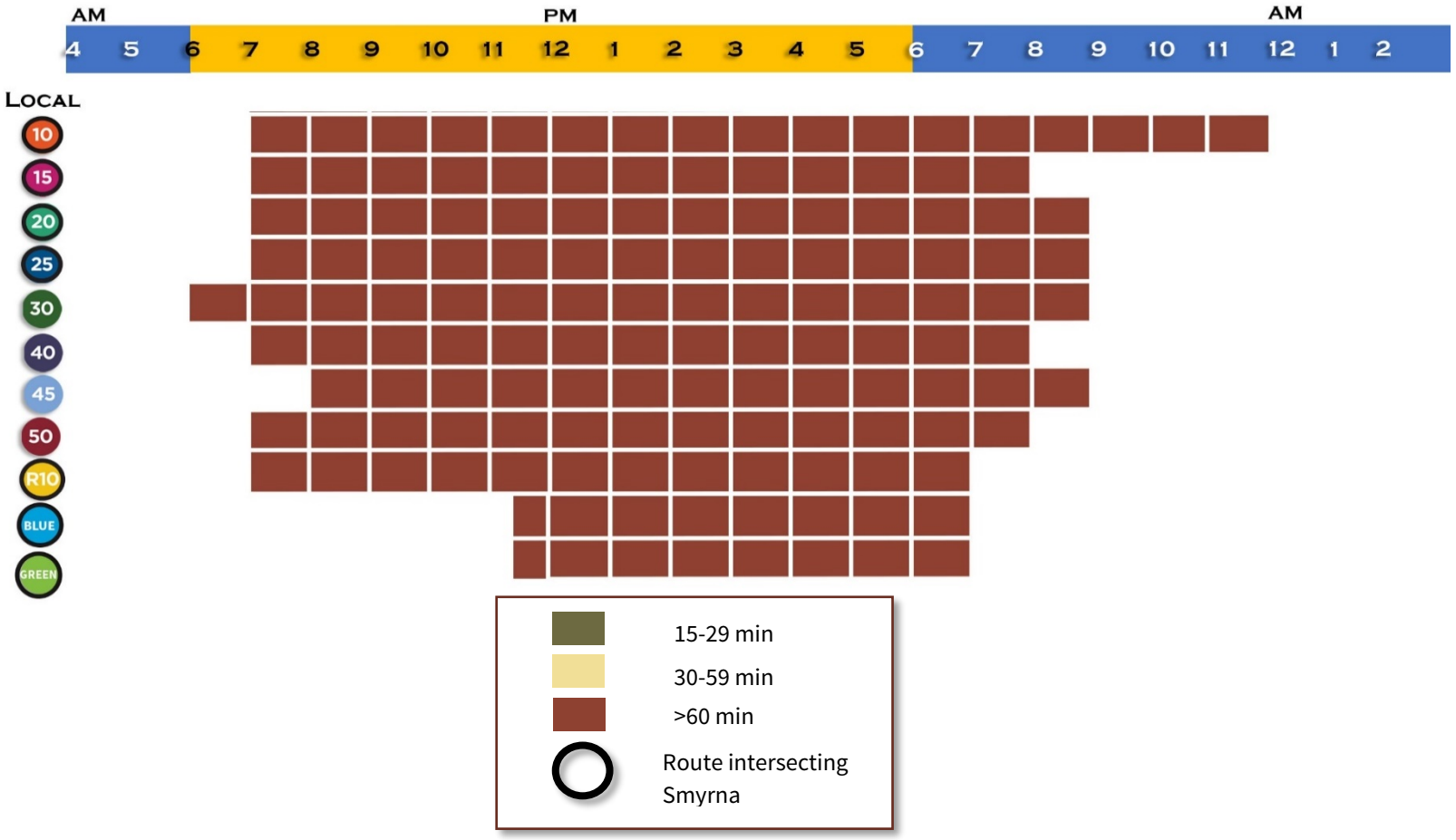
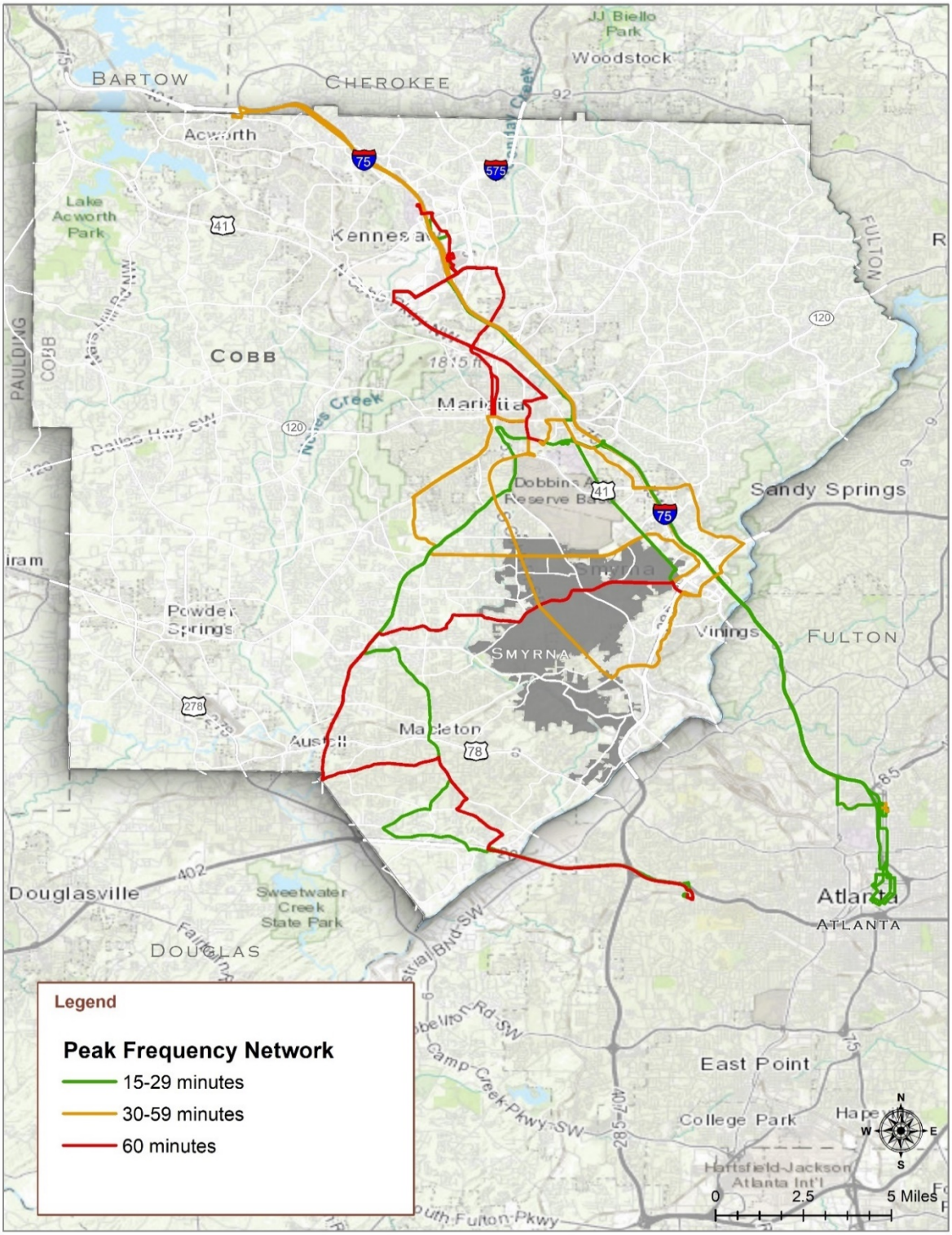


Figure 2-4: Sunday Span of Service, CobbLinc

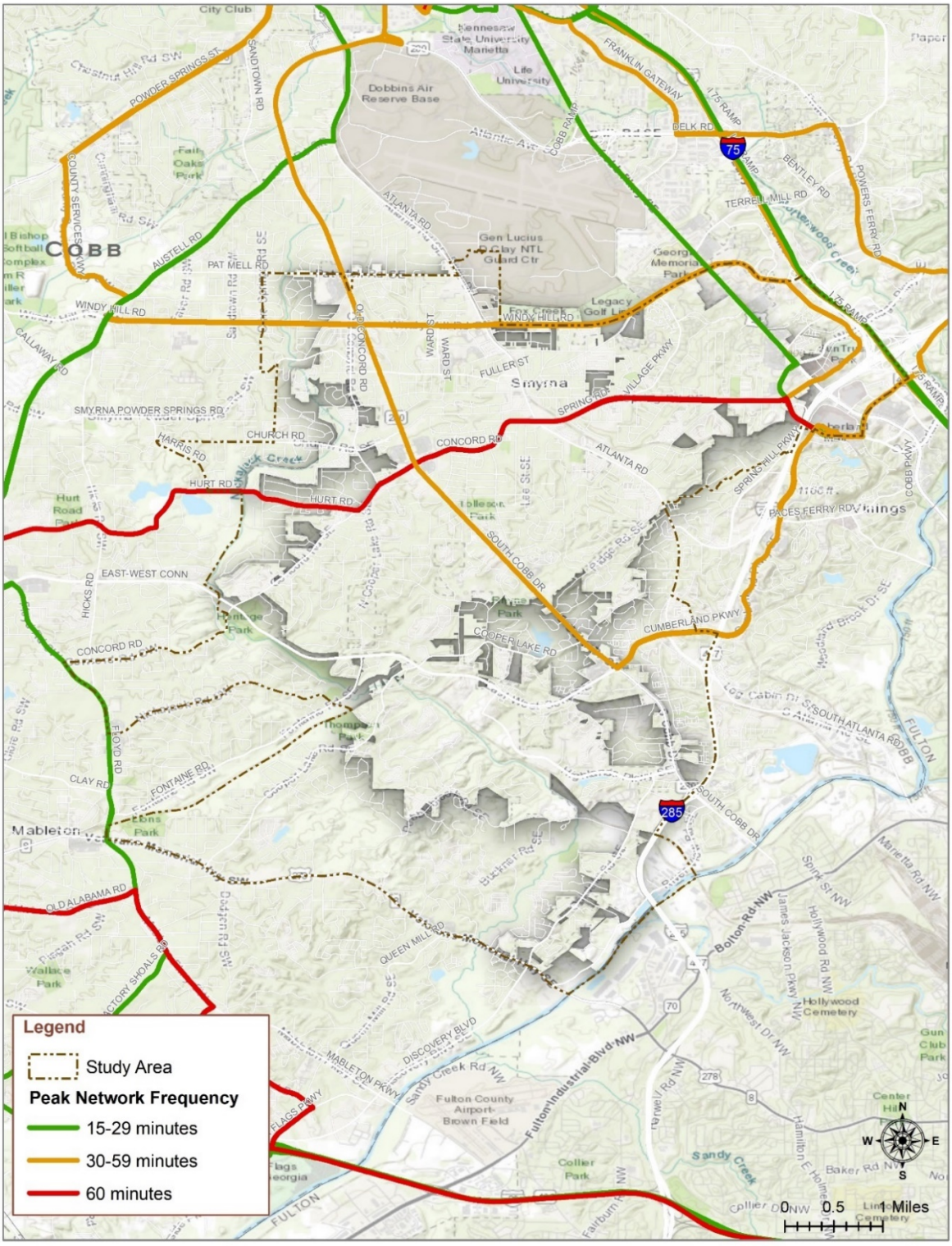


Map 2-3: Peak Service Frequency, Cobb County



Data Source: CobbLinc

Map 2-4: Peak Service Frequency, Smyrna

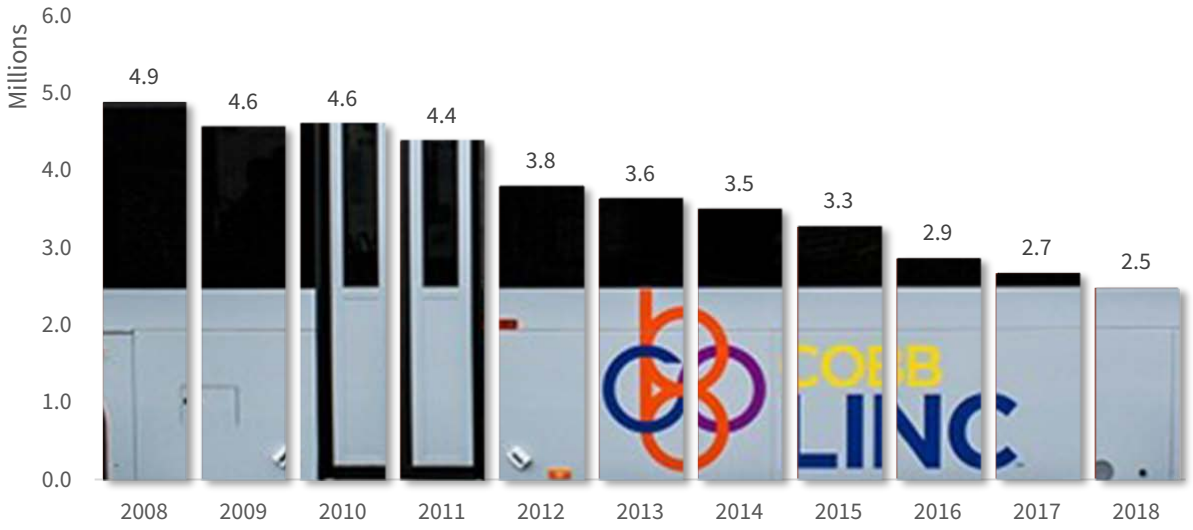


Data Source: CobbLinc

Annual Ridership Trends

CobbLinc ridership trends from 2008 to 2018 are provided in Figure 2-5. Based on the data shown, ridership for the system fluctuated from 2008 to 2010, with a steady decline since 2011, somewhat consistent with the regional and national trend of declining transit ridership. Overall, passenger trips decreased by 56 percent in the 10-year period. However, CobbLinc recently conducted an operations efficiency analysis and has since eliminated some unproductive routes and reconfigured the network to help attract more riders and grow ridership again.

Figure 2-5: CobbLinc Ridership, 2008–2018



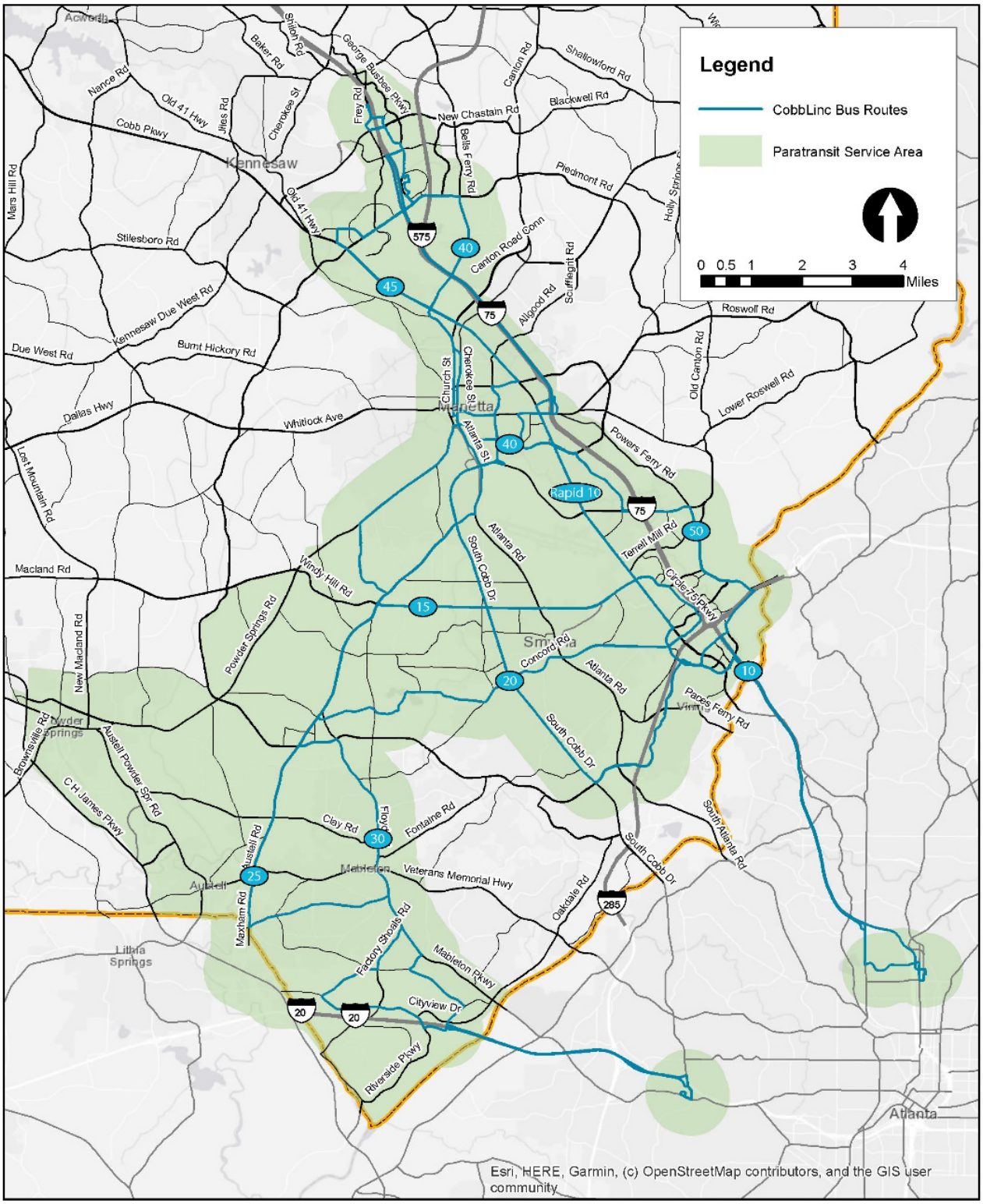
Source: CobbLinc

CobbLinc Paratransit Service

In addition to fixed-route bus, paratransit services for persons qualifying under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are provided in Cobb County, including Smyrna. Paratransit service is a door-to-door service that complements existing fixed-route service for residents who live within ¾-mile on either side of the fixed-route system but are unable to access it due to an eligible disability. CobbLinc provides ADA service and schedules appointments by phone Monday–Sunday 8:00 AM–5:00 PM, with scheduled trips limited to within a ¾-mile buffer of fixed-route service and limited areas of Fulton County.

As shown in Map 2-5, the service area for CobbLinc's paratransit service includes almost the entire city of Smyrna. In addition to covering all areas that are ¾-mile from fixed-route service in Cobb County, the service area includes the area ¾-mile around the Hamilton Holmes Station and MARTA Arts Center Station in Fulton County.

Map 2-5: CobbLinc Paratransit Service Area



Source: CobbLinc

The Cobb County Department of Transportation, in partnership with Cobb County Senior Services, provides a voucher program for those who meet ADA service eligibility requirements but are outside the ¾-mile buffer and may qualify for the CobbLinc Transportation Voucher Program (VTP). This program coordinates with private transportation services for services at a reduced cost for clients. Once enrolled, older adults and persons with disabilities who reside in Cobb County and live outside the paratransit service area can choose a service provider from a pre-approved list of transportation providers and contact them directly to make travel arrangements. Participants use the vouchers to pay the provider fee, and the service provider is reimbursed by Cobb County.

Transit Facilities in and Around Smyrna

Over time, CobbLinc has established several capital facilities to accommodate the transit services it provides in Smyrna and the adjacent Cumberland area, as summarized below.

Major Transfer Center for Smyrna

One of the two major transfer centers for CobbLinc in Cobb County, the Cumberland Transfer Center next to Cumberland Mall is the main and only transfer hub for Smyrna and is located just outside the City limits. The transfer center currently has several large bus shelters with bus pull-outs and is currently served by CobbLinc routes 10, 15, 20, 25, 50, Rapid10, the Blue Circulator, and MARTA's Route 12.

Figure 2-6: Cumberland Transfer Center

Bus Stop Infrastructure

Bus stops play an important role with any transit system, providing riders with a safe and designated place to catch a bus and a way for the transit agency to promote its services. Enhanced bus stops, such as those with a shelter or bench, provide a place to sit, protection from weather, and a feeling of safety and security. Most CobbLinc stops also provide bus route schedule information, which is especially important for people unfamiliar with the service.

There are 75 bus stops in Smyrna, more than 10 percent of the total for the whole CobbLinc service. As the scale and extent of the capital facilities currently included in the city are important to understand for this study, GIS data from CobbLinc were analyzed to identify the facilities currently located within the City limits.

Table 2-2 shows the type of bus stops that serve the CobbLinc routes available and those that contain certain infrastructure/amenities. As shown, 45 percent of stops currently have bus shelters, indicating that nearly half of the stops in the city may have good ridership activity, as transit agencies generally add shelters only at high-activity bus stops. Access to bus stops using sidewalks also is reasonable, at 89 percent.

Table 2-2: Amenities for Bus Stops in Smyrna

Bus Stop Infrastructure	% of Stops in Smyrna
Bus shelter	45%
Trash receptacle	63%
Bench	51%
Concrete pad	52%
Sidewalk access	89%
Streetlight	57%

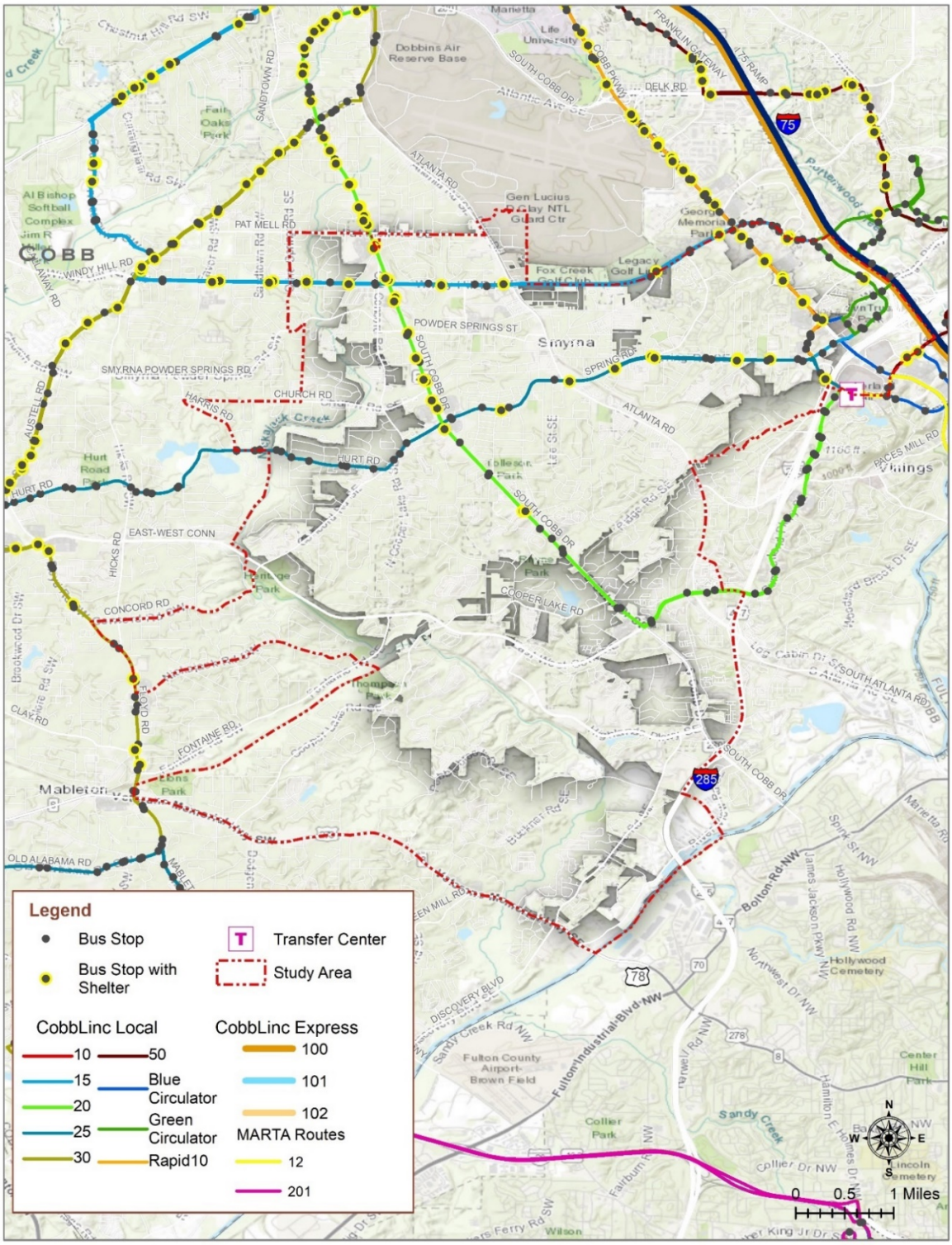
Source: CobbLinc

Map 2-6 shows current bus stops and transfer facilities in Smyrna. Bus stops with shelters are identified to show the geographic distribution and location of such facilities.

Transit Service Area (Walk Access to Transit)

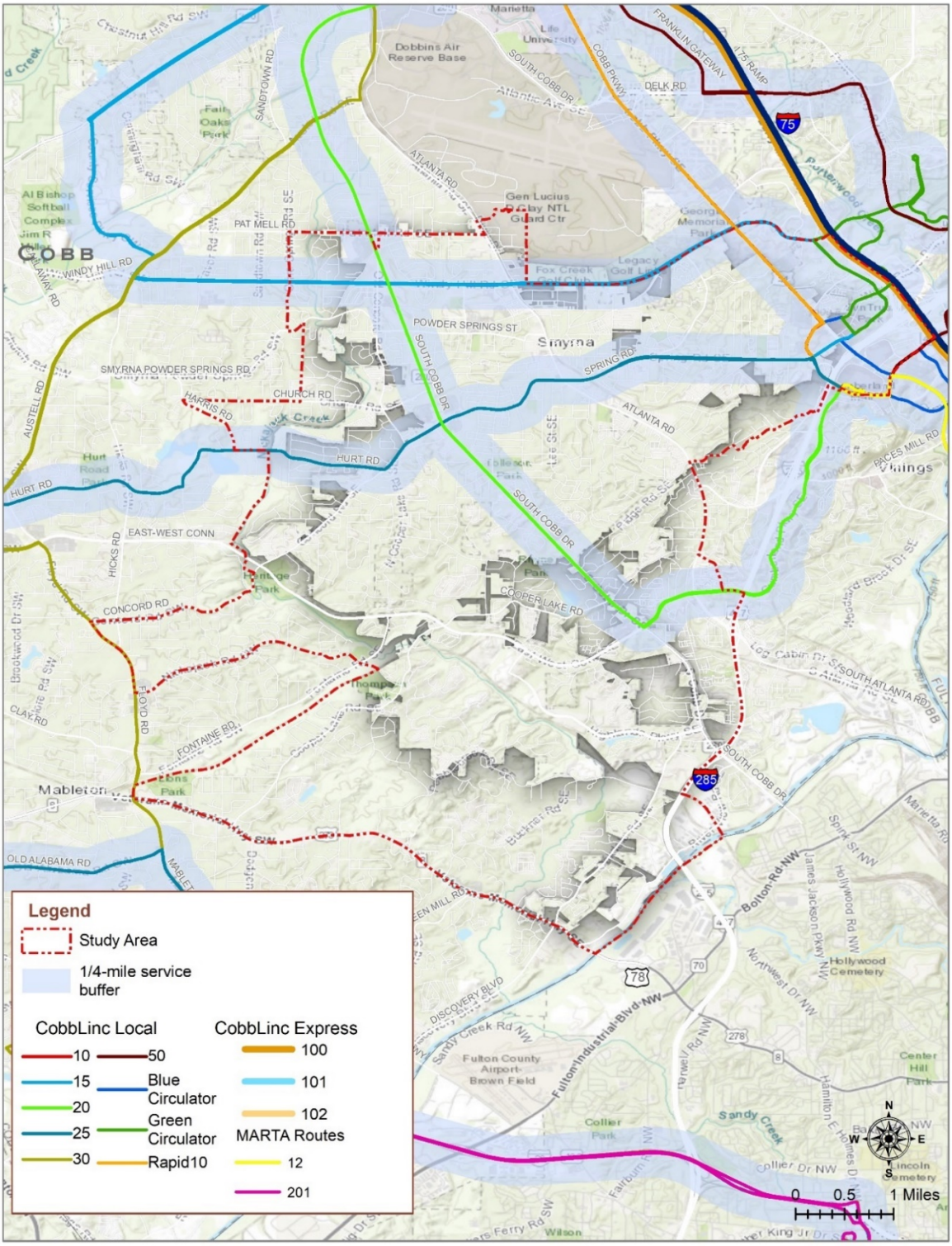
The service area for transit is generally considered as the area within ¼-mile of a bus route for local bus service. Map 2-7 shows the ¼-mile walk access areas for CobbLinc routes serving Smyrna. Currently, approximately 35 percent (20,000) of the city's 56,000 population live within this ¼-mile walk access area.

Map 2-6: Transit Facilities, Smyrna



Data Source: CobbLinc

Map 2-7: Transit Service Area (Walk Access), Smyrna



Data Source: CobbLinc

Regional Coordination

Regional coordination between Smyrna and the region's transit agencies is a necessary element for it to be better connected within and to its surrounding areas. Smyrna's existing CobbLinc service and proximity to MARTA and Xpress routes, along with the city's geographic location within minutes from Atlanta and next to major interstates, lends itself to many opportunities for regional coordination efforts.

As noted, only one MARTA route connects to Smyrna and, although two Xpress routes run adjacent to Smyrna, the city does not currently receive Xpress service. These GRTA routes (476 and 480) run on I-75 from Atlanta to Acworth, with the closest connection to Smyrna in Kennesaw at the Town Center.

Regional coordination may be key to ensuring meaningful transit in Smyrna. Cobb County, which recently initiated an update to its countywide transit plan, and the ATL, which will soon update ARC's regional transit plan, provide valuable opportunities to coordinate regionally.

In addition, the I-285 Top End Study is being conducted by GDOT to improve mobility on I-285. This project includes adding new, optional express lanes to a section of the interstate corridor. The study area runs from Paces Ferry Road to Henderson Road in Cobb, Fulton, and DeKalb counties, providing an opportunity to connect Smyrna to any potential transit services on these new express lanes.

Each of these regional initiatives provides an opportunity for the City of Smyrna to provide input and have influence and to create the opportunity to examine both local and regional transit needs and opportunities.

Section 3: Demographics and Travel Patterns Analysis

An understanding of recent and forecasted demographic trends and travel patterns in Smyrna is an important first step in identifying transit needs and developing potential projects to address those needs.

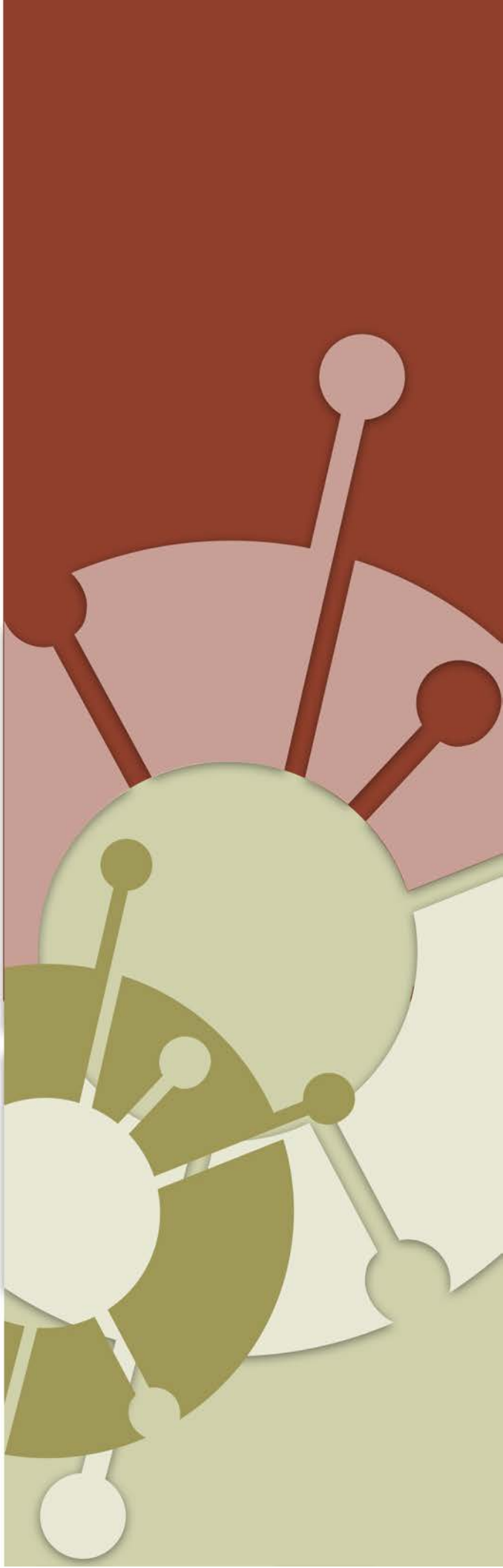
Study Area Description

The study area for the demographic and travel pattern analysis encompasses Smyrna and extends slightly past its borders due to limitations of the Census and travel demand model data sets. The specific geographic areas used for the analysis of demographics and travel patterns are further detailed in their respective sections.

Demographic Characteristics and Trends

An overview of population characteristics in the study area is important to gain an understanding of the potential market for transit services. For the demographic characteristics and trends analysis, data from the U.S. Census Bureau were used. Every 10 years, a decennial census is conducted that counts 100 percent of the U.S. population. For this analysis, the most recent decennial census, conducted in 2010, was used as a baseline to establish trends in the study area and compare them to the Atlanta region. During the interim years, the American Community Survey (ACS) samples a portion of the population to estimate socioeconomic characteristics. For this analysis, ACS five-year data were used, as they generally have the lowest number of sampling errors. The most recent ACS five-year data set available at this time is for 2017.

For this analysis, decennial census and ACS data at the block group level, the smallest area of geography available, were used. In specific cases, data were available only at the tract level this is noted as appropriate.



Existing Population and Households

An overview of the city, study area, and regional population and household trends is important to understand the potential market for transit services. According to decennial census and ACS, population in the study area increased by 8.6 percent between 2010 and 2017. City population also increased during this time by more than 10 percent, slightly more than the study area. In comparison, the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area (Atlanta MSA) also grew, but at a slightly slower rate. This trend of population growth at the study area and regional levels indicates that the potential market for transit riders is increasing. Population density, which supports transit, is also increasing. Table 3-1 provides population figures for Smyrna, the study area, and the Atlanta MSA.

Table 3-1: Smyrna, Study Area, and Regional Change in Population, 2010–2017

Geography	2010	2017	% Change
Smyrna	50,242	55,467	10.4%
Study Area	77,468	84,158	8.6%
Atlanta MSA	5,268,860	5,700,990	8.2%

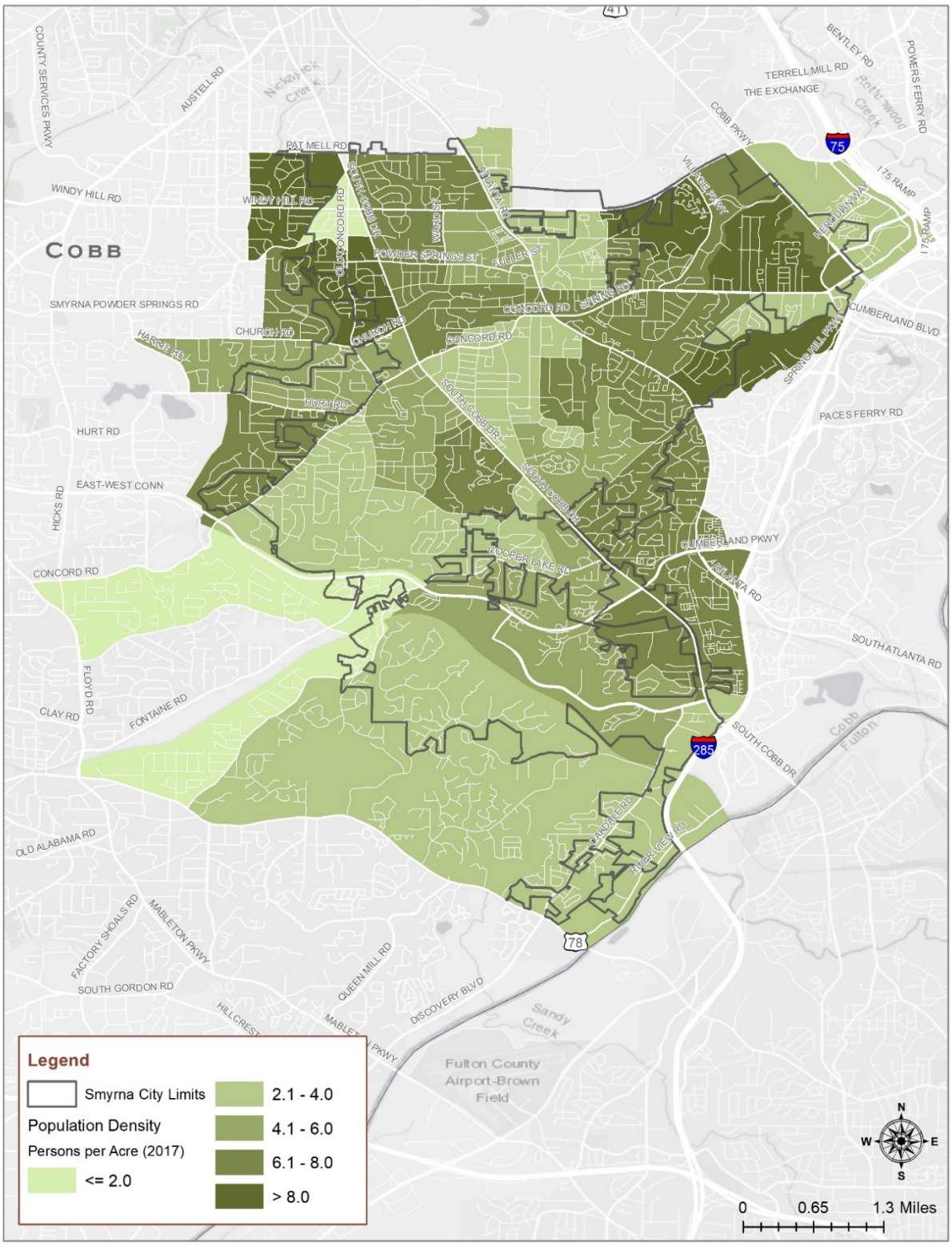
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

Higher population densities correlate with increased use of transit services. Using population data at the census block group level for 2017, study area population densities were calculated and mapped, as shown in Map 3-1.

In 2017, the population density of the study area was 4.7 persons per acre, a slight increase in population density from 4.3 persons per acre in 2010. The portions of the study area with the highest densities are in the north, with lower densities in the central and southern parts. Specifically, high population densities of eight or more persons per acre are located:

- NW of intersection of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) and Church Road
- SW of Village Parkway and Windy Hill Road
- NW of Spring Road and Cumberland Boulevard
- E of Atlanta Road and Campbell Road

Map 3-1: Study Area Population Density, 2017



Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Consistent with the population trend, the number of households in Smyrna and the study area grew at a faster rate than the Atlanta MSA between 2010 and 2017, with both adding households during this period. Similar to population density, household density in the city and the study area increased from 2010 to 2017. The Atlanta MSA also added households from 2010 to 2017, but at a slower rate than the study area. As with the population trend, household growth at the city, study area, and regional levels indicates an increasing market for potential transit riders. Table 3-2 shows household numbers for the study area, Smyrna, and Atlanta MSA.

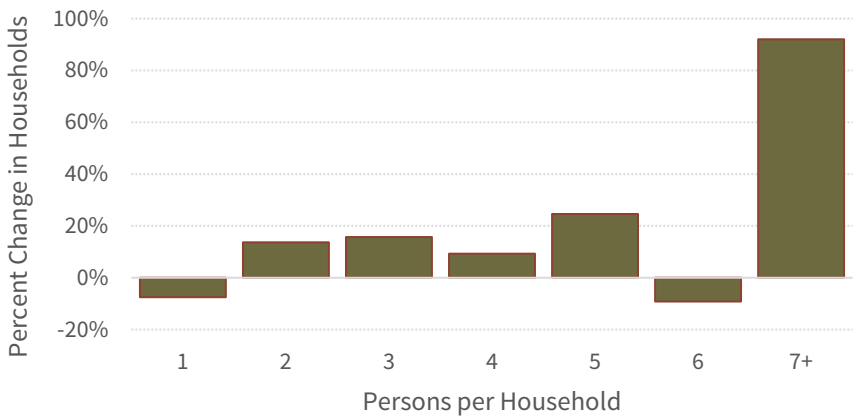
Table 3-2: Smyrna, Study Area, and Regional Change in Number of Households, 2010–2017

Geography	2010	2017	Percent Change
Smyrna	22,914	24,253	5.8%
Study Area	33,756	35,746	5.9%
Atlanta MSA	1,937,225	2,029,045	4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

The number of occupants per household is an indicator of transit market potential, as larger households may have more travelers than available vehicles. Recent trends indicate a decline in the number of one- and six-person households in Smyrna between 2010 and 2017. In 2017, Smyrna had 649 fewer one-person households and 24 fewer six-person households than in 2010. However, this was offset by growth in 2–5-person households, with the study area adding 1,920 households in this category. Households in Smyrna with seven or more people increased by 92 between 2010 and 2017. Figure 3-1 shows the percentage change in the number of persons per household in Smyrna from 2010 to 2017.

Figure 3-1: Change in Number of Persons per Household by Size, Smyrna, 2010–2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

One- and two-person households made up most of the city in 2017; however, households with three or more persons accounted for 31 percent of the study area. Table 3-3 provides a detailed breakdown of household size.

Table 3-3: Smyrna Household Size Distribution, 2017

Household Size	Households	Percent of Total
1 Person	8,027	33.1%
2 Persons	8,755	36.1%
3 Persons	3,503	14.4%
4 Persons	2,722	11.2%
5 Persons	816	3.4%
6 Persons	238	1.0%
7 Persons or More	192	0.8%

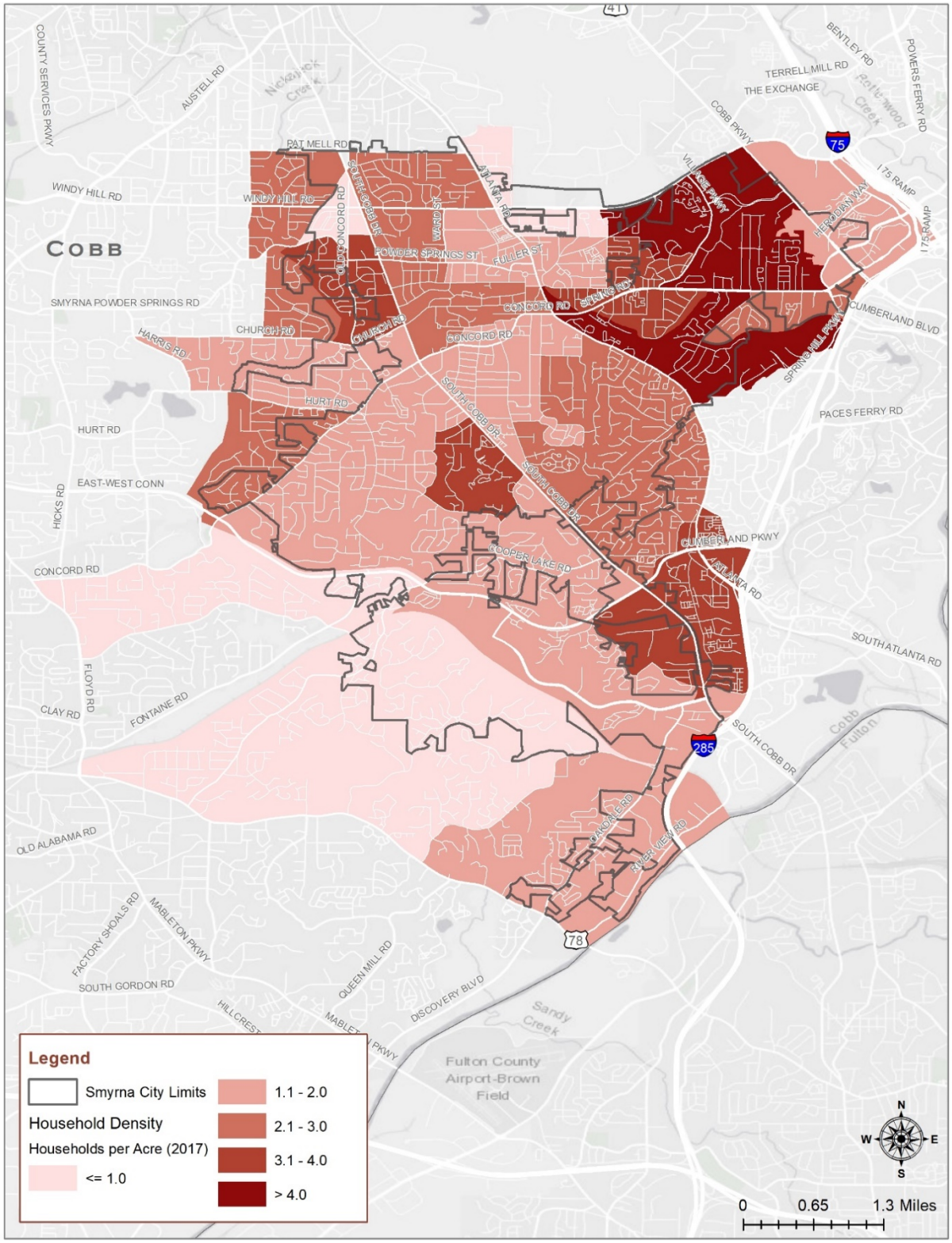
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

As noted, household density is an indicator of transit propensity and is useful for identifying the types of transit service that can be supported in an area. The *Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual* specifies general household density thresholds that are supportive of various service frequencies and types; however, this is a broad indicator, and other demographic factors such as age, vehicle availability, and income are also important. In keeping with the suburban character of the study area, household densities are generally low, with an average of two households per acre.

Study area household densities are shown in Map 3-2 and roughly correspond to population density, with the highest household densities between Atlanta Road and US-41 (Cobb Parkway). Areas with household densities over four units per acre include:

- Both sides of Village Parkway between Spring Road and Windy Hill Road
- N of Atlanta Road from Jane Lyle Road to Spring Road

Map 3-2: Study Area Household Density, 2017



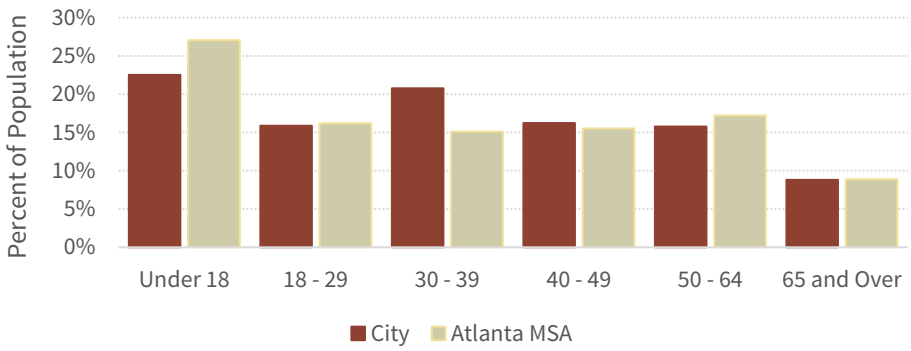
Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Age Distribution

Persons under age 18 and age 65 and over tend to drive less than the overall population, albeit for different reasons. Younger persons under age 16 are not licensed to drive, and those between ages 16 and 18 are likely to have less access to a vehicle than other age cohorts. Persons age 65 and over tend to drive less as they exit the work force and potentially face age-related health issues.

Smyrna has a lower share of residents under age 18 compared to the Atlanta MSA, with 23 percent of the study area population under age 18 compared to 27 percent of the region. In contrast, persons age 65 and over make up 9 percent of the city and regional population. Figure 3-2 compares the Smyrna and Atlanta MSA age cohorts.

Figure 3-2: Age Distribution of Population, Smyrna and Atlanta MSA, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

The population in Smyrna is currently slightly younger than that in the region, with a median age of 35.3, as compared to 36.4 for the region. Smyrna anticipated to remain younger than the region, as trends from 2010 to 2017 indicate that the population under age 18 years is increasing at a faster rate in the city. Additionally, during the same time period, the number of persons age 65 and over increased 35 percent in the Atlanta MSA, compared to a 33 percent increase in Smyrna. Table 3-4 presents trends in the age-based traditional transit markets in Smyrna, the study area, and the Atlanta MSA. Traditional transit markets include persons under age 18 or age 65 and over.

Table 3-4: Persons in Traditional Transit Markets by Age Group, Smyrna, Study Area, and Atlanta MSA, 2010–2017

	Under 18			65 and Over		
Area	**2010**	**2017**	**Percent Change**	**2010**	**2017**	**Percent Change**
Smyrna	10,537	12,491	18.5%	3,689	4,888	32.5%
Study Area	17,857	19,442	8.9%	6,218	7,721	24.2%
Atlanta MSA	1,396,352	1,436,505	2.9%	471,753	635,508	34.7%

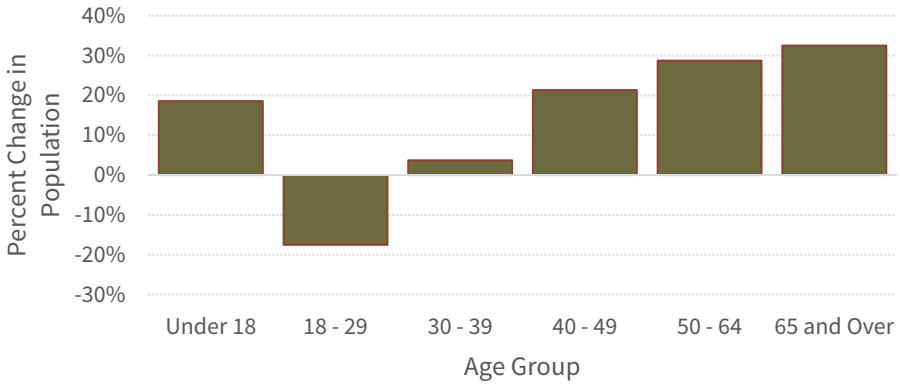
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

Although Smyrna skews slightly younger, it is growing older as current residents age and new residents over age 40 move in. Recent trends based on census data from 2010 and 2017 show that the fastest-growing age groups in percentage terms in Smyrna are as follows:

- Ages 65 and over – 33 percent increase
- Ages 50–64 – 29 percent increase
- Ages 40–49 – 21 percent increase

Only the population ages 18–29 decreased in Smyrna, which declined by 18 percent between 2010 and 2017. Figure 3-3 provides more detail about trends in Smyrna age groups.

Figure 3-3: Change in Population by Age Group, Smyrna, 2010–2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

As shown in Table 3-5, approximately 28 percent of the study area population (14,500 persons) are in age groups that are considered traditional transit markets—those including under age 18 and age 65 and over.

Table 3-5: Smyrna Population by Age Group, 2017

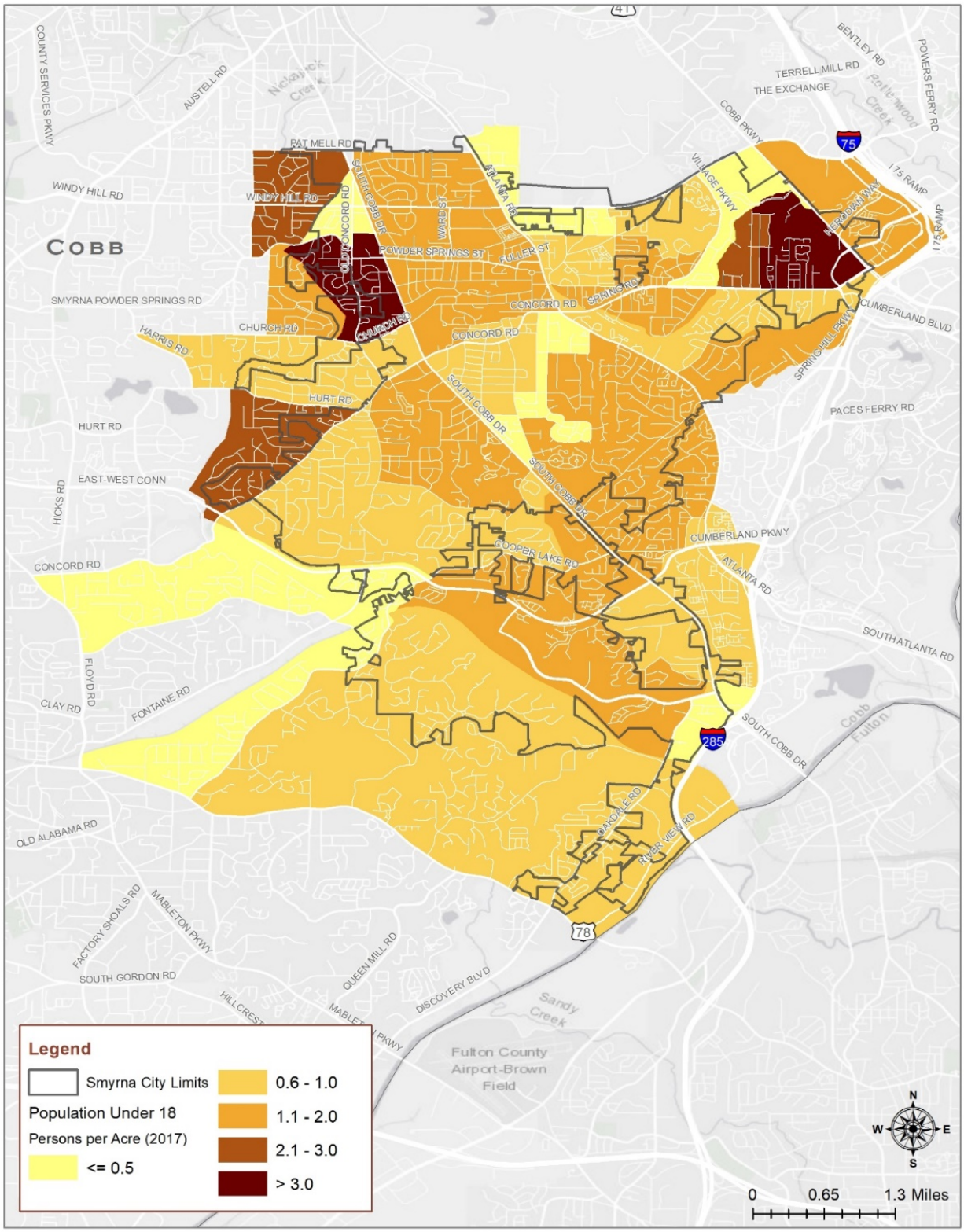
Age Group	Persons	Percent of Total
Under 18	**12,491**	**23.8%**
18–29	8,812	16.8%
30–39	11,522	21.9%
40–49	9,000	17.1%
50–64	8,754	16.6%
65 and Over	2,010	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Map 3-3 shows the population density of persons under age 18. Within the study area, higher densities of persons under age 18 include areas:

- W of intersection of US-41 (Cobb Parkway) and Spring Road to Carolyn Drive
  NW of Church Road and SR-280 (South Cobb Drive)

Map 3-3: Study Area under Age 18 Population Density, 2017

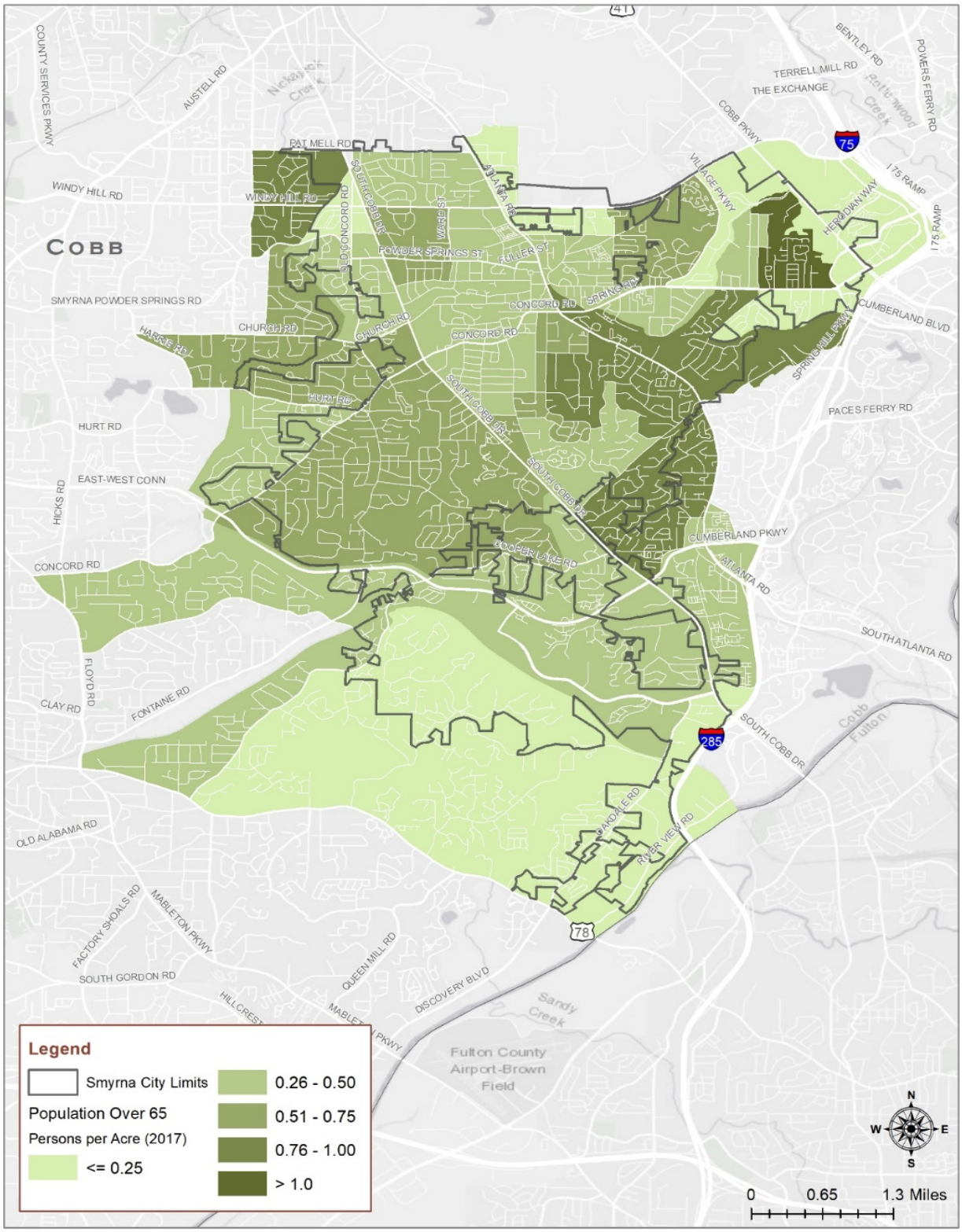


Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Map 3-4 shows the population density of persons age 65 and older. Higher densities of these persons in the study area are located:

- Along both sides of Windy Hill Road from Olive Springs Road to Benson Poole Road
- NW of Spring Road and Cumberland Boulevard
- Along Atlanta Road from Ridge Road to Spring Road

Map 3-4: Study Area Age 65 and Over Population Density, 2017

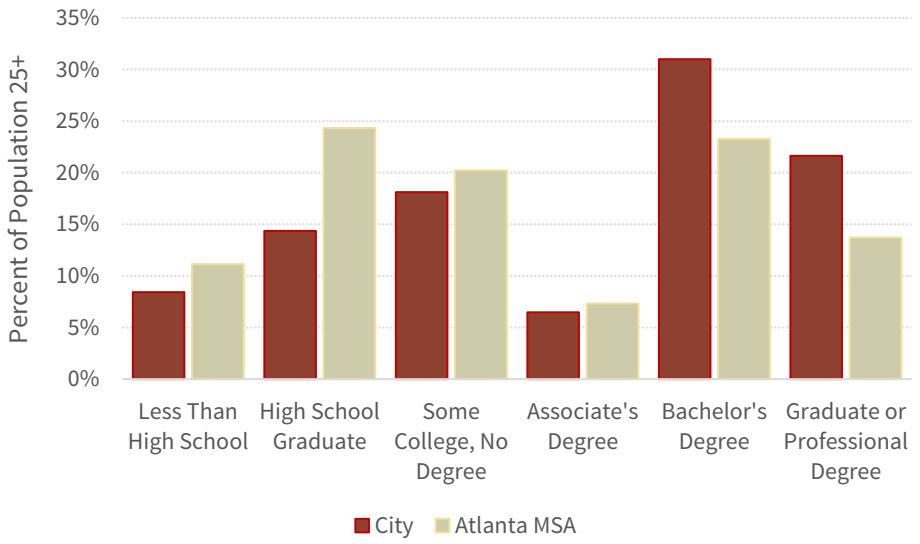


Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment in Smyrna for the population age 25 and older is higher than the Atlanta MSA as a whole. In Smyrna, 53 percent of residents over age 25 have achieved a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 37 percent of the Atlanta MSA. In contrast, eight percent of Smyrna residents have not obtained a high school diploma, which is slightly less than the 11 percent of the Atlanta MSA population. Figure 3-4 graphically compares education levels in Smyrna and the region.

Figure 3-4: Educational Attainment for Population Age 25 and Over, Smyrna and Atlanta MSA, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Historically, lower levels of education indicated a higher propensity for transit. More recently, highly-educated millennials have expressed a preference for transit and tend to locate in more densely-populated areas that are well-served by public transit. As shown in Table 3-6, a significant portion of the Smyrna population (approximately 23,200, 59%) has a college degree.

Table 3-6: Educational Attainment for Population Age 25 and Over, Smyrna, 2017

Educational Attainment	Persons	Percent of Total
Less than high school	3,298	8%
High school graduate	5,628	14%
Some college, no degree	7,094	18%
Associate's degree	2,533	6%
Bachelor's degree	12,142	31%
Graduate or professional degree	8,475	22%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Population with Disabilities

Offering or improving transit service to groups that need it is important to the identification of viable transit alternatives because of higher rates of dependency on mobility service and alternative transportation modes within this demographic. Persons with disabilities tend to use transit at a higher rate than the population in general. Some persons with disabilities may be unable to drive themselves and depend on transit services to meet their mobility needs. Factors that may prevent persons with disabilities from using transit services include longer distances to access stations, lower service frequency, high number of transfers, limited hours of service, and barriers in the pedestrian environment. These items should be considered when identifying potential transit alternatives.

In 2017, more than 9 percent of the study area population was persons with a disability, compared to almost 11 percent of the Atlanta MSA population. A total of 8,833 persons with disabilities resided in the study area in 2017.

Data for persons with disabilities is available only at the census tract level. Map 3-5 shows the percentage of population with disabilities for each census tract in the study area. High concentrations of persons with disabilities in the study area are located:

- Along both sides of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) from Concord Road to Pat Mell Road
- N of Spring Road from Atlanta Road to US-41 (Cobb Parkway)

Zero-Vehicle Households

Households without access to an automobile are a traditional transit market that benefits significantly from new or improved transit service; persons in these households are far more likely to use transit than those with access to automobiles. The percentage of zero-vehicle households in Smyrna is lower than in the Atlanta MSA. In Smyrna, approximately four percent of households lack access to a vehicle; six percent of households in the Atlanta MSA have no automobile available. Table 3-7 shows the number of households in Smyrna, the study area, and Atlanta MSA that lack access to a vehicle. Zero-vehicle households increased in both the study area and the Atlanta MSA from 2010 to 2017; however, the rate of increase in Smyrna and the study area was significantly higher.

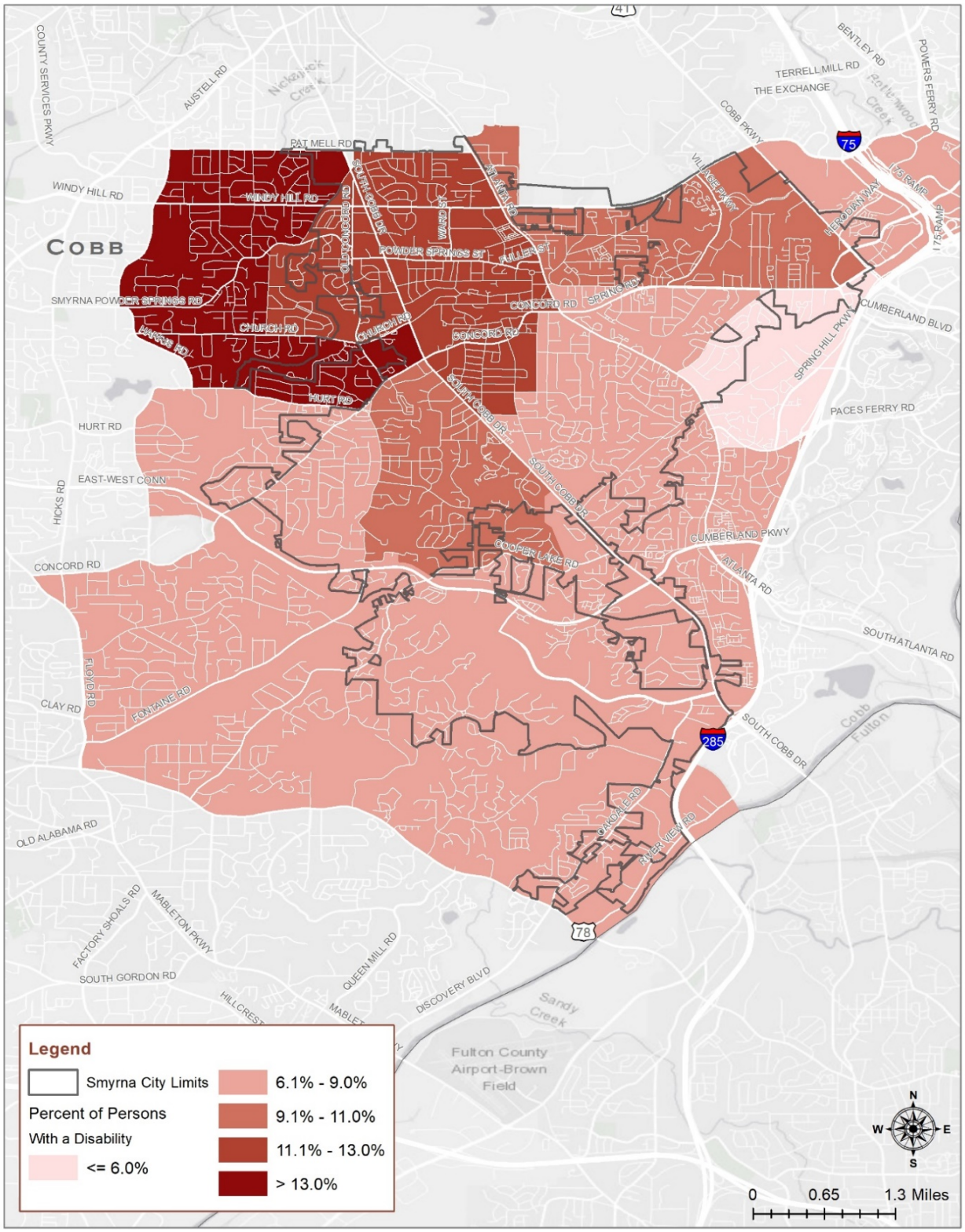
Table 3-7: Zero-Vehicle Households, Smyrna, Study Area, and Atlanta MSA, 2010–2017

Geography	2010	2017	Percent Change
Smyrna	735	896	21.9%
Study Area	1,140	1,361	19.4%
Atlanta MSA	115,190	121,997	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

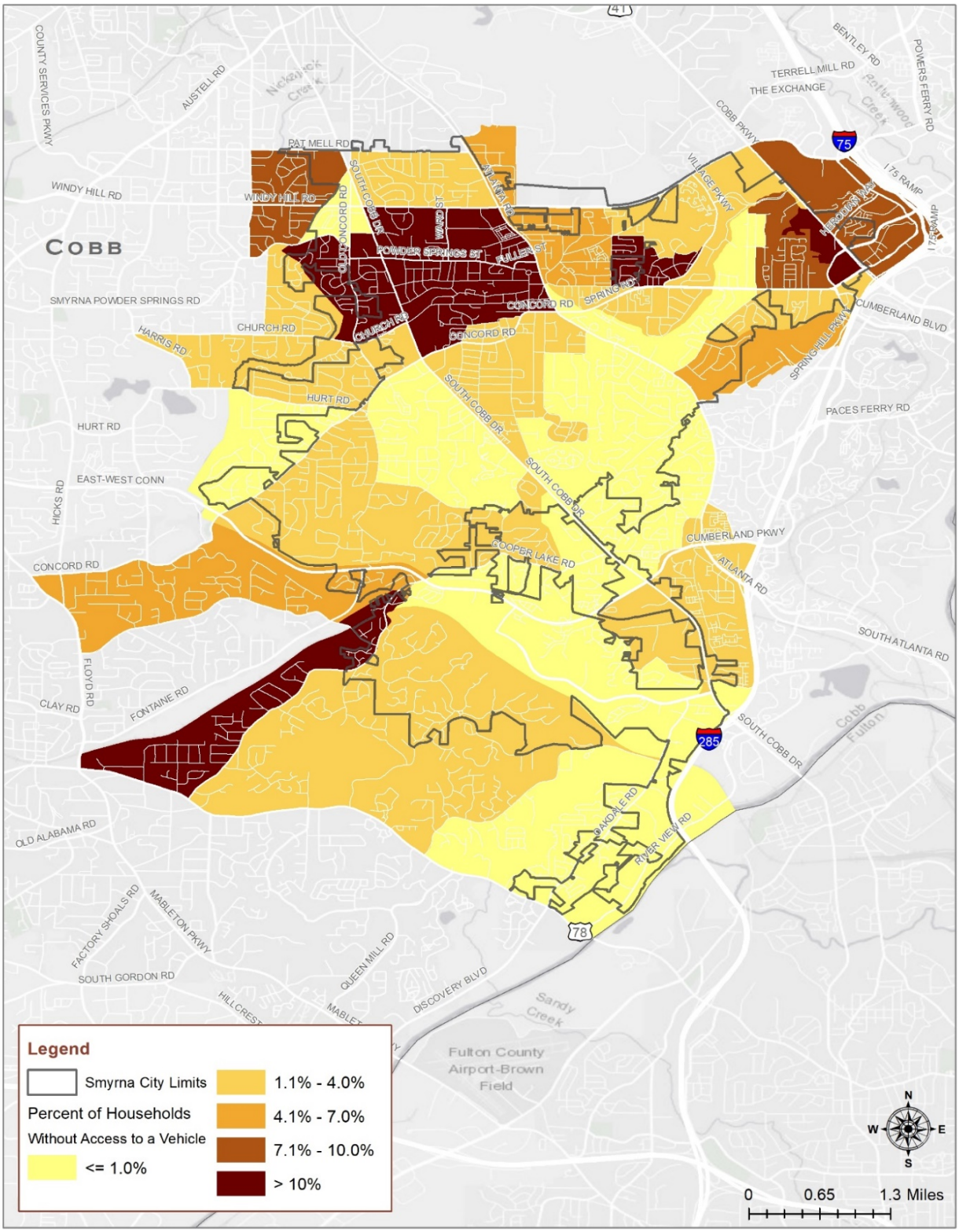
Zero-vehicle households are not distributed evenly throughout the study area; they are concentrated along the Spring Road corridor north of the study area. In contrast, the percentage of zero-vehicle households in the southern half of the study area south of Spring Road is generally low. Map 3-6 illustrates the percentage of zero-vehicle households by census block group within the study area.

Map 3-5: Population with Disabilities, 2017



Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Map 3-6: Zero-Vehicle Households, 2017



Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Household Income and Poverty

Income characteristics and the location of low-income households in the study area are important to define transit markets and understand where populations are located that would most likely to benefit from new or increased transit service. As with zero-vehicle households, low-income households are a good indicator of propensity to use transit; persons with annual incomes below $25,000 are the most likely to ride transit.

Median household income in Smyrna is higher than in the Atlanta MSA. Additionally, between 2009 and 2016 (no 2010 or 2017 data available), the median household income in Smyrna increased 29 percent, a much higher rate than the increase of 7 percent for the Atlanta MSA. Table 3-8 compares median household income in Smyrna and the Atlanta MSA.

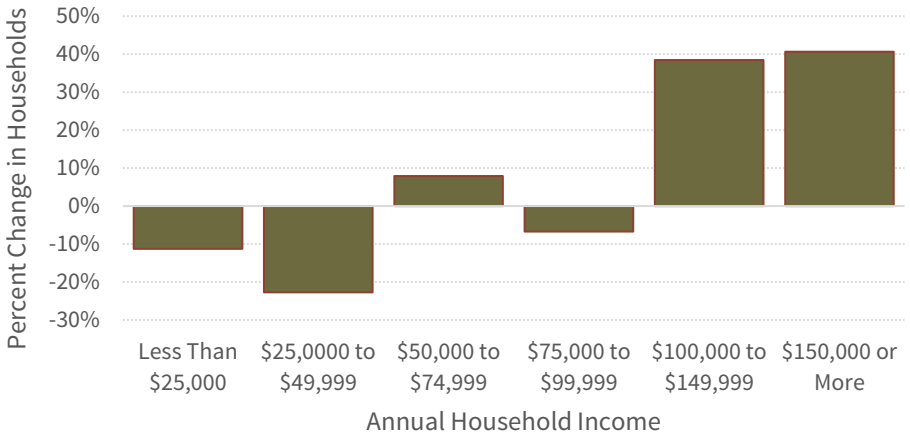
Table 3-8: Median Household Income, Smyrna and Atlanta MSA, 2009–2016

Geography	2009	2016	Percent Change
Smyrna	$54,603	$70,547	29.2%
Atlanta MSA	$57,550	$61,733	7.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

Whereas median household income is important for a broad understanding of conditions, a more detailed picture of potential transit markets emerges by comparing households by income bracket. Income distribution in Smyrna changed between 2009 and 2016, in line with the increase in median income. At the lower end of the income range, Smyrna households with incomes less than $25,000 annually declined by 466 (11%). The largest decline was for households in the $25,000–$49,999 income bracket , at 1,400 (23%). Households with incomes of $100,000–$149,999 had the largest increase in total numbers, increasing by 1,256 households (38%). In percentage terms, households with incomes of $150,000 or more increased the most, 41 percent (1,077 households). Figure 3-5 illustrates the change in household income in Smyrna.

Figure 3-5: Change in Household Income, Smyrna, 2009–2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

Almost two-thirds of households in Smyrna earn more than $50,000 annually; 35 percent earn less than that. Table 3-9 presents the number of households in Smyrna by income bracket and their share of the total.

Table 3-9: Household Income Distribution, Smyrna, 2016

Annual Household Income	Households	Percent of Total
Less than $25,000	3,675	15%
$25,0000–$49,999	4,765	20%
$50,000–$74,999	4,515	19%
$75,000–more	3,048	47%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Trends in poverty level are important to identify potential transit markets, as these persons have a high need for transit service. For this report, persons in poverty are defined as those living in a household with a median income below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty line, which varies based on household size, from $11,880 for a household of one to $40,809 for a household of eight in 2016. The Census tabulates the number of persons in poverty at the MSA, place, and block group levels.

The number of persons in poverty in Smyrna increased 2 percent between 2009 and 2016, in contrast to the Atlanta MSA, where they increased 23 percent. As a percentage of Smyrna's population, the number of persons in poverty declined only slightly, from about 13 percent in 2009 to approximately 12 percent in 2016. In contrast, the number of persons in poverty increased slightly for the Atlanta MSA population from roughly 12 percent in 2009 to almost 14 percent in 2016. Table 3-10 shows the total number of persons in poverty in Smyrna, the study area, and the Atlanta MSA.

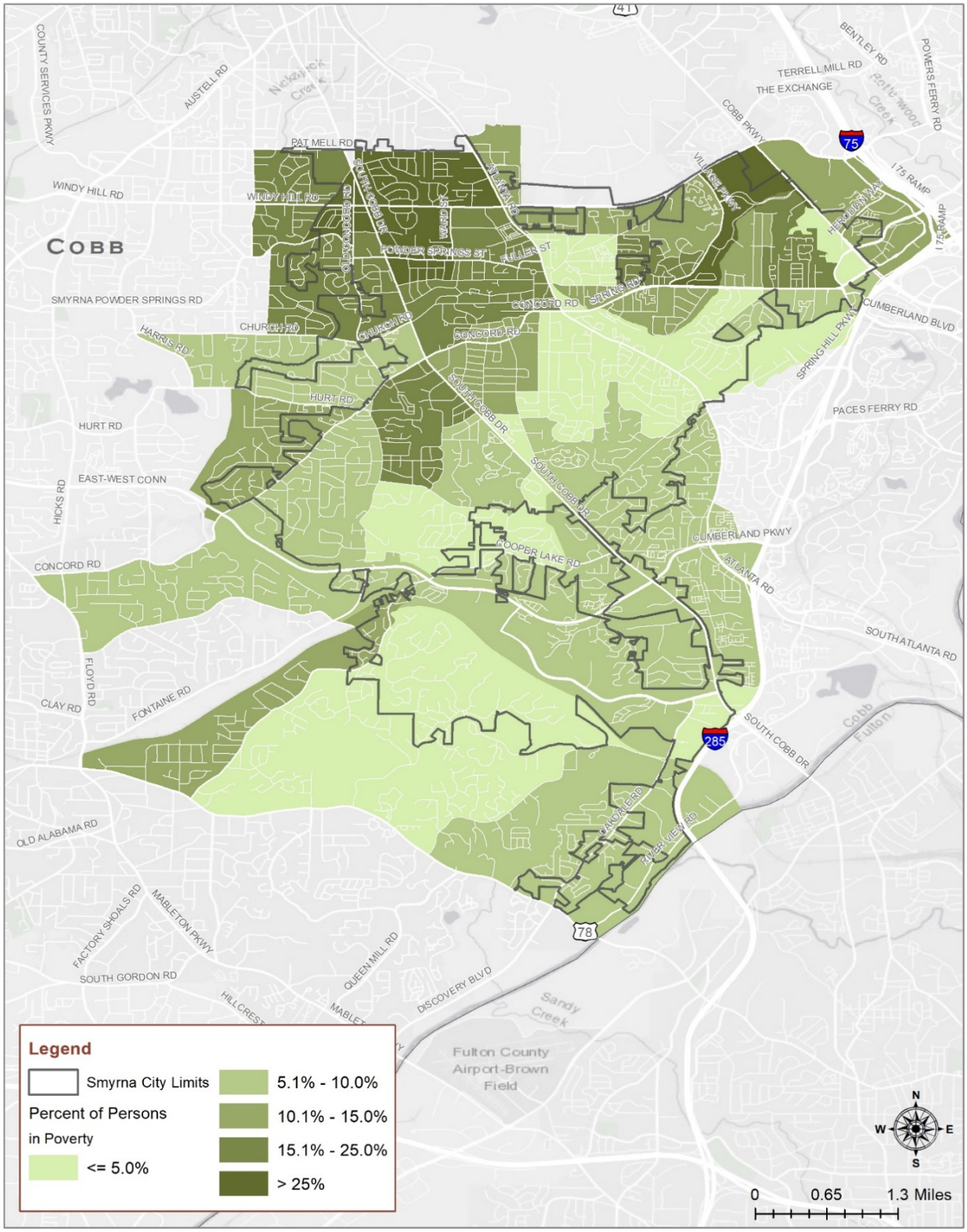
Table 3-10: Persons in Poverty, Smyrna, Study Area, and Atlanta MSA, 2009–2016

Geography	2009	2016	Percent Change
Smyrna	6,414	6,542	2.0%
Study Area	11,164	9,849	-11.8%
Atlanta MSA	635,003	780,843	23.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

The distribution of the number of persons in poverty in the study area roughly corresponds to zero-vehicle households, with the highest concentrations north of Spring Road. In contrast, the percentage of persons in poverty in the southern half of the study area is generally low. Map 3-7 shows the percentage of persons in poverty in the study area at the census block group level.

Map 3-7: Population in Poverty, 2017



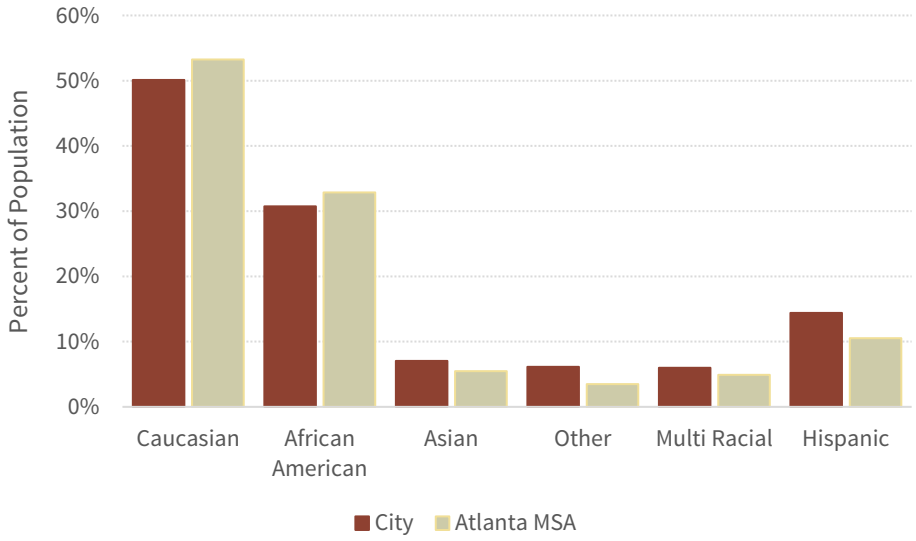
Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Minority Population

An understanding of minority populations in terms of race and ethnicity is critical to transit planning efforts. Environmental justice (EJ) considerations are important to federally-funded transportation improvements. Disproportionately high negative effects of transportation projects on minority populations must be avoided, minimized, or mitigated. Conversely, benefits to minority populations from improvements cannot be prevented, reduced, or significantly delayed. Identifying locations with a high concentration of minority populations is key to targeting outreach to those communities and identifying potential transit markets.

Smyrna is similar the Atlanta MSA in terms of racial and ethnic composition. Caucasians made up approximately half of the study area in 2017, accounting for 50 percent of the population; in comparison, they made up 53 percent of the Atlanta MSA population. African Americans are the second largest group in Smyrna, accounting for 31 percent of the population, similar to their share of the Atlanta MSA, at 33 percent. Hispanics comprise 14 percent of the populations in Smyrna and 11 percent in the Atlanta MSA. Figure 3-6 graphically compares racial and ethnic and racial compositions of Smyrna and the Atlanta MSA.

Figure 3-6: Racial and Ethnic Composition, Smyrna and Atlanta MSA, 2017

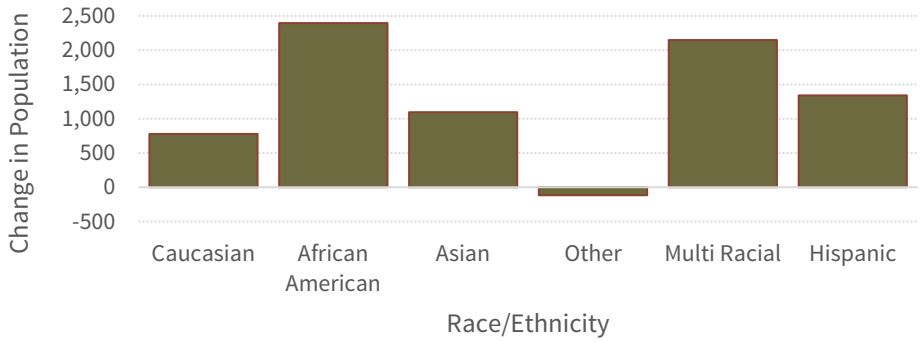


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Between 2010 and 2017, the racial and ethnic composition of Smyrna changed; the African American population increased 16 percent (2,396 persons) and Caucasians increased only 3 percent (778 persons). Persons identifying as multi-racial also increased substantially, adding 2,148 persons. With an increase of 1,094 persons, the Asian population in Smyrna grew more than Caucasians but less than African Americans or multi-racial persons. The Hispanic population in Smyrna increased by 1,340

(20%) from 2010 to 2017, and the Other[1] group decreased at by 3 percent (117 persons). Figure 3-7 illustrates the change in the population groups, and Table 3-11 shows the breakdown by race and ethnicity.

Figure 3-7: Area Change in Race and Ethnicity, Smyrna, 2010–2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2019

Table 3-11: Population by Race and Ethnicity, Smyrna, 2017

Race/Ethnicity	Persons	Percent of Total
Caucasian	28,649	50%
African American	17,574	31%
Asian	4,024	7%
Other	3,507	6%
Multi-Racial	3,426	6%
Hispanic	7,988	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

For this analysis, minority populations are defined as any race except Caucasian and do not include Hispanics, which are considered an ethnicity and area discussed separately. Minority populations are not evenly distributed throughout the study area; the highest densities of minority populations are in the northern section of the study area. The following areas have a high concentration of minority populations:

- N of Spring Road from Jonquil Drive to US-41 (Cobb Parkway)
- S of Spring Road from Atlanta Road to Highland Drive
- N of Windy Hill Road
- NW of SR-280 (South Cobb Parkway) and Church Street

Map 3-8 shows minority populations in the study area at the census block group level, and Map 3-9 shows Hispanic populations at the census block group level. In contrast to minority populations,

[1] Other is defined as American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, or another race not specified.

Hispanic populations are concentrated in a few distinct parts of the study area. The highest densities of Hispanic populations are in the following areas:

- NW of US-41 (Cobb Parkway) and Spring Road, extending W to Carolyn Drive
- W side of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) from King Springs Road to Concord Road
- Both sides of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) from Church Street to Pat Mell Road

Future Population and Households (2040)

Population and household forecasts for the study horizon year of 2040 are analyzed in this section. Future year data presented in this section are from the ARC Series 15 population and employment forecasts. Within the travel demand model, these forecasts were disaggregated to the individual traffic analysis zone (TAZ) level, and the data were used to determine forecasts for the study area and for mapping purposes.

Forecasted Population (2040)

Consistent with existing trends, the ARC model forecasts population growth through 2040 in the Atlanta Region and the study area. In contrast to current trends, the study area population is anticipated to grow at a much slower rate than the Atlanta Region. Table 3-12 shows existing and forecasted population for the study area and Atlanta region. (No data could be extracted exclusively for Smyrna as the model data are developed at the TAZ level.)

Table 3-12: Study Area and Regional Forecasted Population, Study Area and Atlanta Region, 2015–2040

Geography	2015	2040	Percent Change
Study Area	58,907	63,638	8.0%
Atlanta Region	5,509,877	7,935,581	44.0%

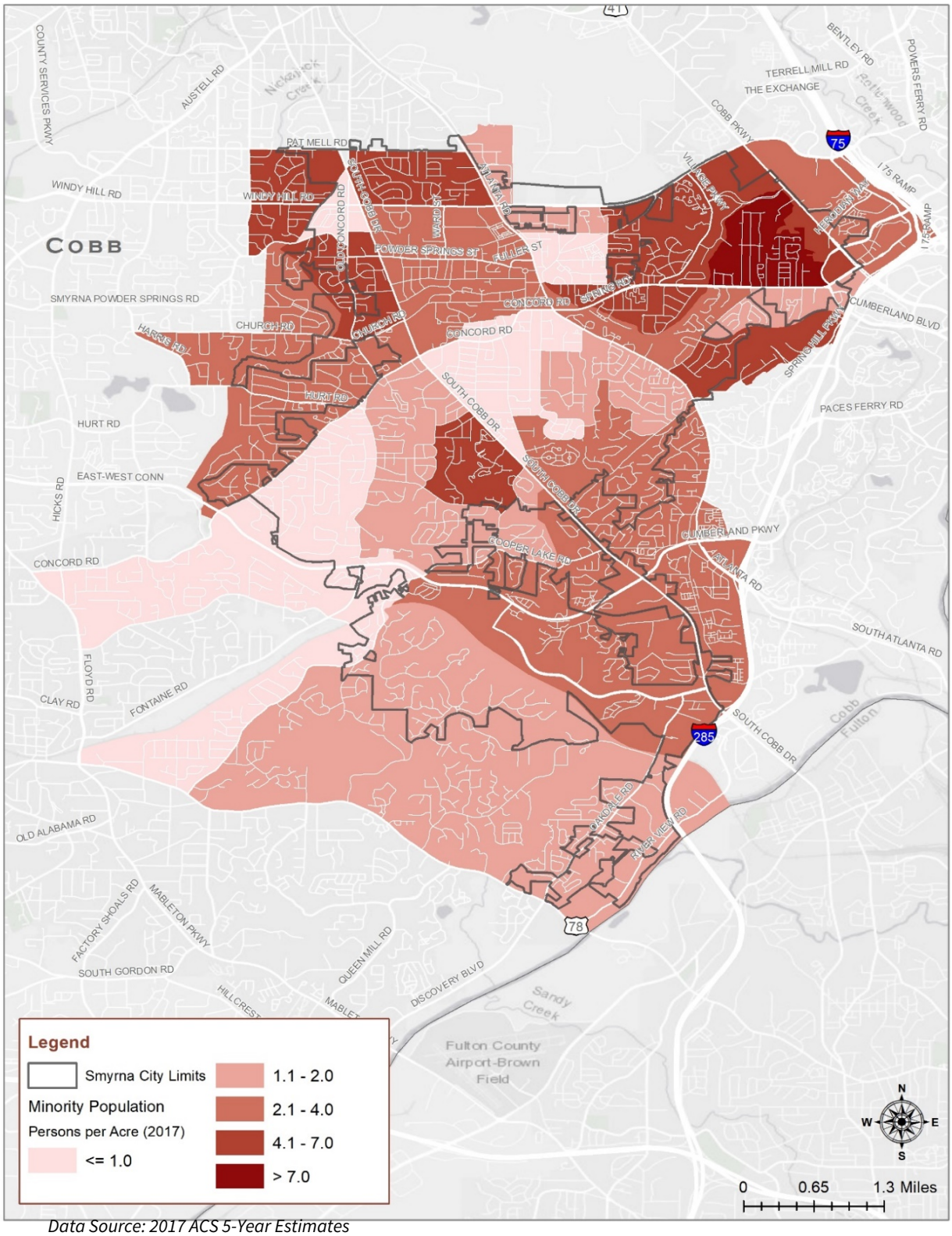
Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

In 2040, the population density of the study area is forecasted to be 5.3 persons per acre, an increase of 13 percent from 2015. The portions with the highest densities are anticipated to be similar to 2017. Specifically, high population densities of eight or more persons per acre are located in the following areas:

- NW of intersection of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) and Church Road
- N of Spring Road from Matthews Street to US-41 (Cobb Parkway)
- W of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) between East-West Connector and CSX railroad tracks

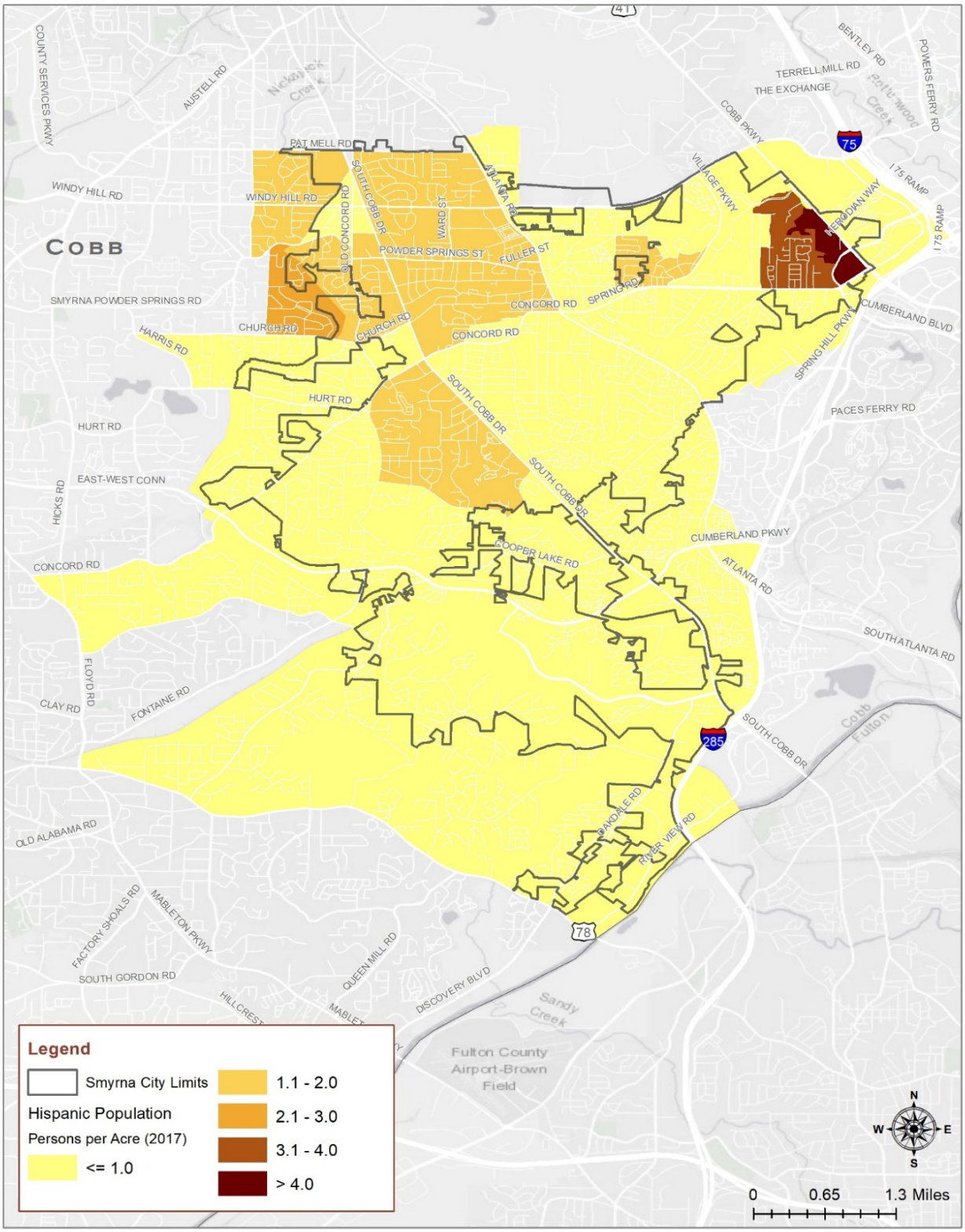
Map 3-10 shows the anticipated future population by TAZ for the study area.

Map 3-8: Minority Population Density, 2017



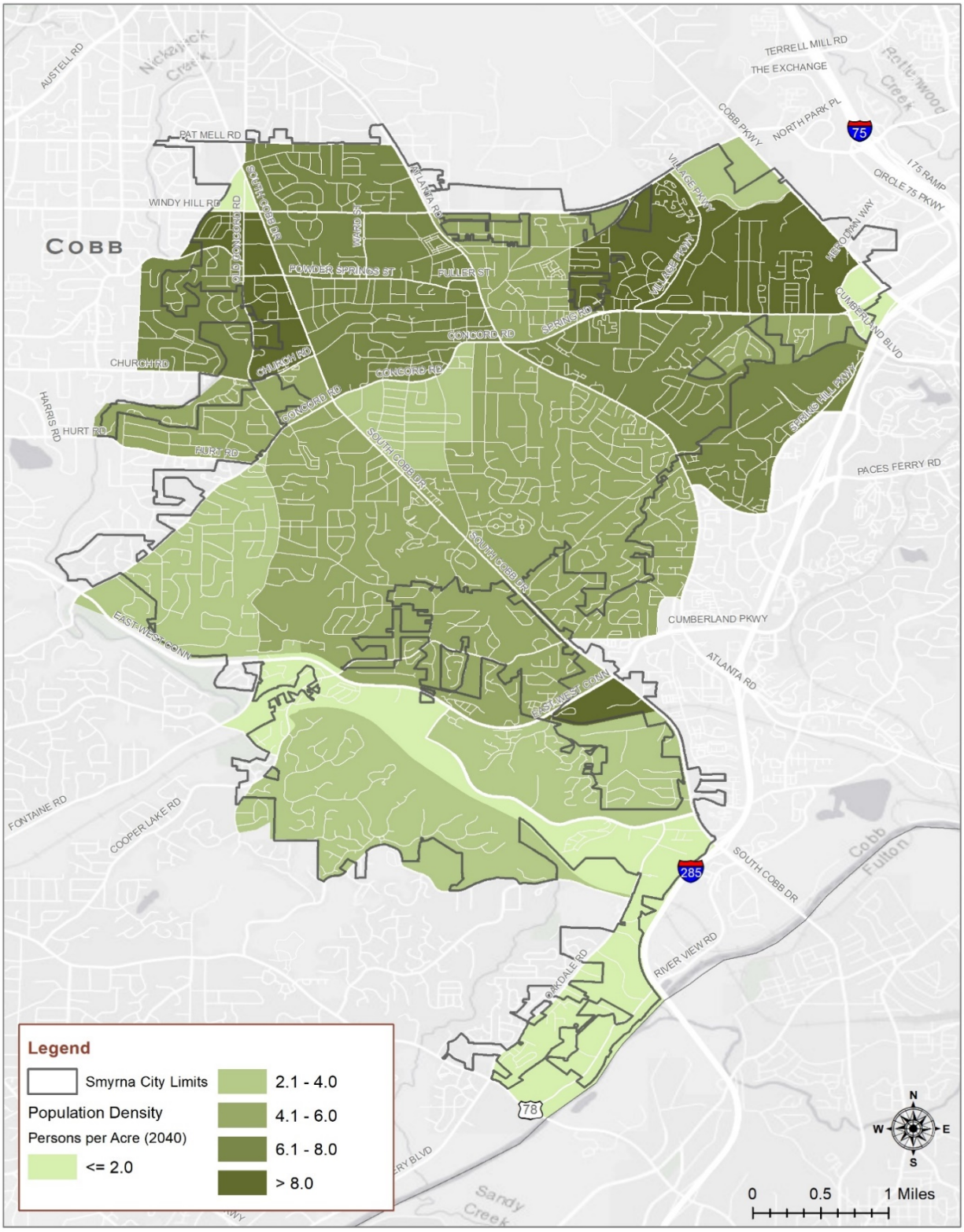
Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Map 3-9: Hispanic Population Density, 2017



Data Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Map 3-10: Study Area Forecasted Population Density, 2040



Data Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

Forecasted Households (2040)

The ARC model was used to forecast household growth through 2040 in the Atlanta Region and the study area, which is consistent with current trends and the forecasted population growth. The number of households in the study area is forecasted to grow at a significantly slower rate than in the Atlanta Region, which is also similar to existing trends. Table 3-13 shows the anticipated change in study area and regional households through 2040.

Table 3-13: Study Area and Regional Forecasted Households, Study Area and Atlanta Region, 2015–2040

Geography	2015	2040	Percent Change
Study Area	27,143	30,322	11.7%
Atlanta Region	2,115,033	3,130,823	48.0%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

In keeping with the suburban character of the study area, household densities are generally low, but are anticipated to be 2.5 households per acre in 2040, a 27 percent increase over 2015.

Anticipated study area household densities are shown in Map 3-11. Household densities roughly correspond to population density, with the highest household densities between Atlanta Road and US-41 (Cobb Parkway). Areas with forecasted household densities over four units per acre include:

- Both sides of Village Parkway between Spring Road and Windy Hill Road
- N of Atlanta Road from Jane Lyle Road to Spring Road
- W of SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) between the East-West Connector and the CSX railroad tracks

Employment

The journey to work is a key indicator of the need for transportation services. Knowledge of key employment locations in the study area is important to understand the potential transit market. This section includes an analysis of current and projected employment in the study area.

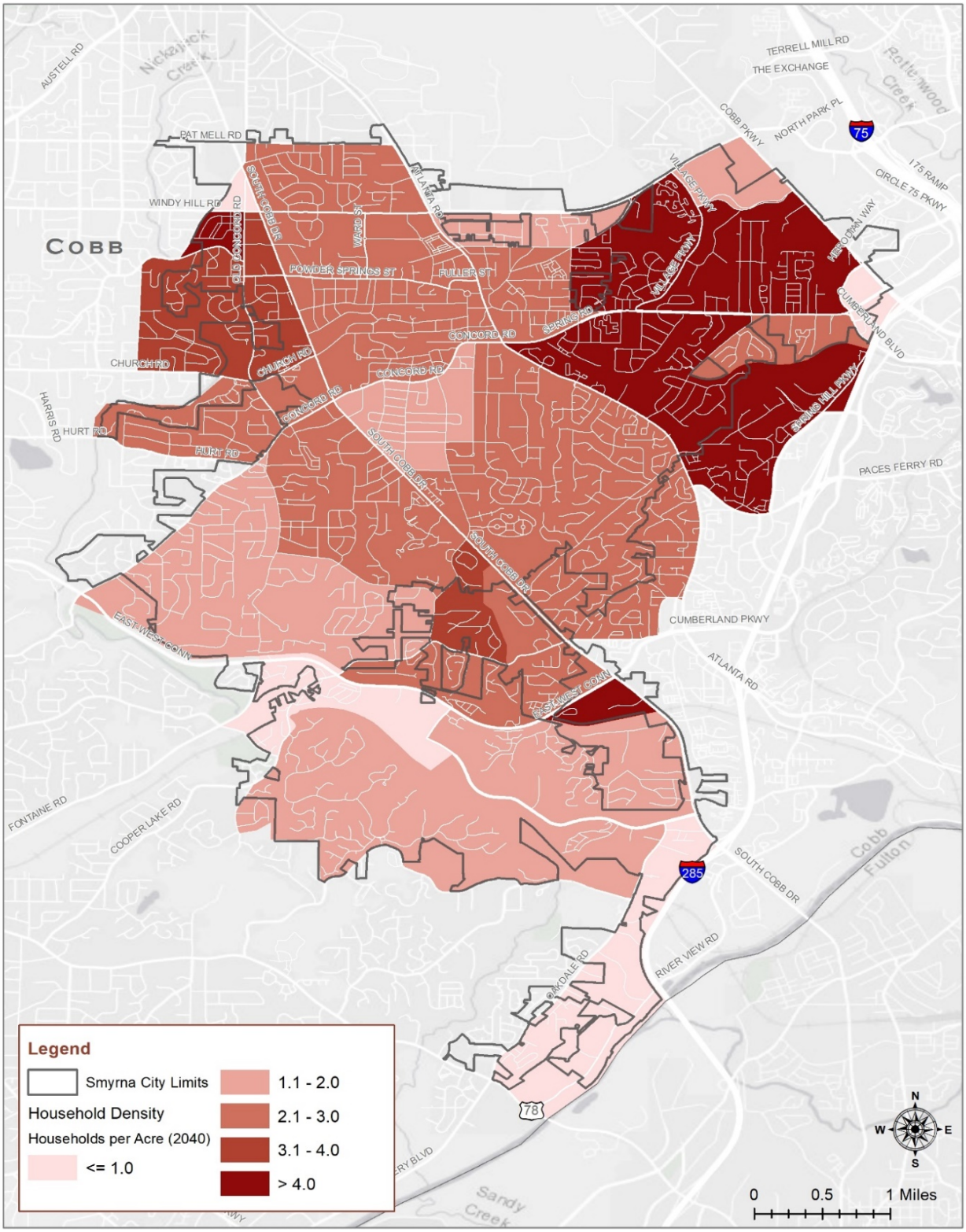
Existing Employment Density (2015)

Data for existing population densities were analyzed using the regional ARC model data. Based on the analysis, the existing employment density within the study area low, on average, at 2.4 jobs per acre. However, parts of the study area that have pockets of high-density employment, with more than six jobs per acre, include the following:

- W of I-285 and SR-280 (South Cobb Drive Interchange
- US-41 (Cobb Parkway) at Spring Road
- US-41 (Cobb Parkway) at Windy Hill Road

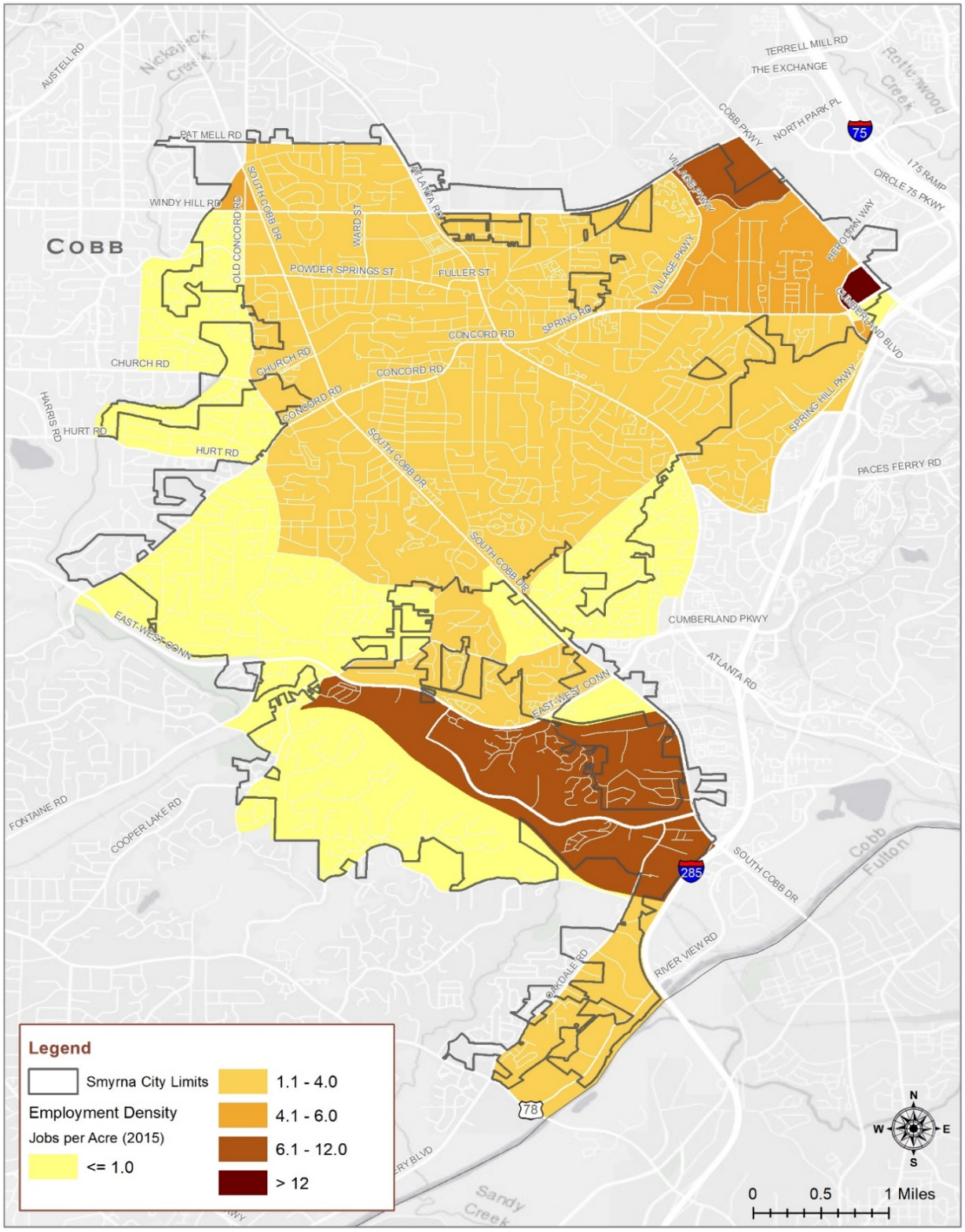
Map 3-12 shows existing jobs per acre in the study area by TAZ.

Map 3-11: Study Area Forecasted Household Density, 2040



Data Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

Map 3-12: Study Area Employment Density, 2015



Data Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

Future Employment Density (2040)

According to the ARC model, employment is forecasted to increase through 2040 in the Atlanta Region and the study area. Study area employment is anticipated to grow at a rate similar to the Atlanta Region. The total forecasted increase in study area employment by 2040 is 9,926 jobs.

Table 3-14: Study Area and Regional Forecasted Employment, Study Area and Atlanta Region, 2015–2040

Geography	2015	2040	Percent Change
Study Area	29,012	38,938	34.2%
Atlanta Region	2,923,940	3,965,194	35.6%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

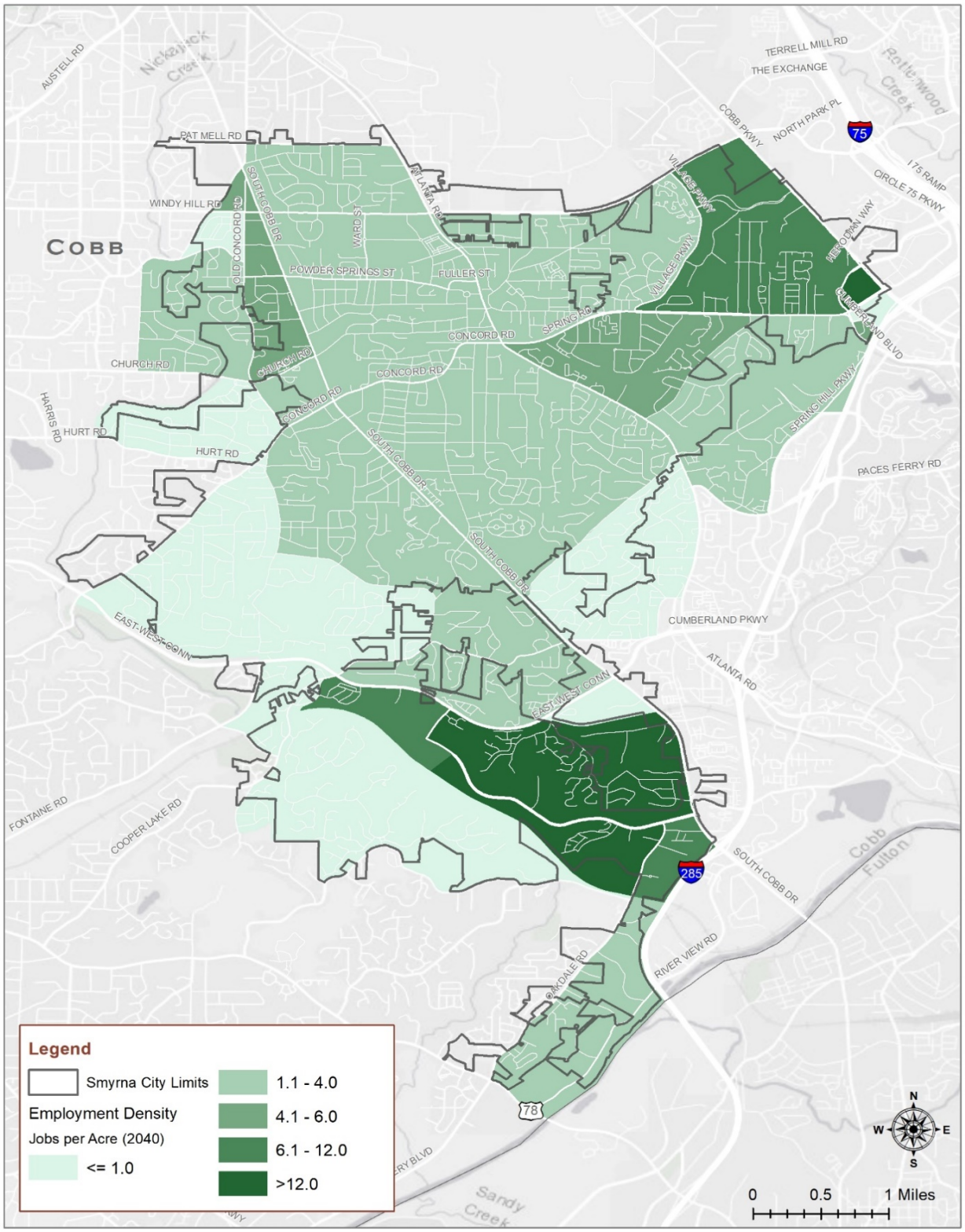
Employment density in the study area is forecasted to increase by 34 percent by 2040, to 3.2 jobs per acre. Map 3-13 shows the anticipated jobs per acre in 2040 by TAZ. The distribution of jobs throughout the study area is anticipated to remain essentially the same between 2015 and 2040, with existing job centers increasing slightly in employment density.

Demographics Analysis Key Findings

Key findings regarding population characteristics in the study area include the following:

- Study area population is growing, indicating that the market for transit is increasing.
- Household density is increasing gradually in the study area, which is supportive of transit.
- Population and household densities are highest in the northern half of the study area.
- Populations of persons under age 18 and age 65 and over have been increasing in the study area, indicating increased transit propensity.
- Educational attainment in the study area is higher than in the Atlanta region, which is neutral indicator for transit propensity.
- In 2017, more than 9 percent of study area residents were persons with disabilities.
- The study area has a lower percentage of households without access to a vehicle than the Atlanta region, which is negative for transit propensity; however, the number of zero-vehicle households increased from 2010 to 2017.
- Median annual household income in the study area increased between 2009 and 2016 and was higher than the median for the Atlanta Region, which is negative for transit propensity.
- The number of persons in poverty in the study area decreased between 2009 and 2016.
- The study area became more diverse between 2010 and 2017, with African American and multi-racial groups increasing by more than 4,000 persons each.
- Population and households in the study area are forecasted to increase by 8 and 12 percent, respectively, between 2010 and 2040, which is supportive of transit.
- Study area employment is forecasted to increase by just over 34 percent between 2010 and 2040, which is positive for transit.

Map 3-13: Study Area Forecasted Employment Density, 2040



Data Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model

Land Use

Land use and development patterns are affected by and interact with travel demand and transportation improvements in an ongoing cycle. Generally, new development or increased land use intensities lead to higher travel demand, which spurs transportation improvements, which increases adjacent land values and leads to higher intensities—and the cycle repeats. This section documents existing and future land uses in the study area and current and anticipated development patterns.

Current Land Use

Most of Smyrna is currently developed, with a significant portion set aside as park land. According to ARC Landpro data, 90 percent of the study area currently is developed and 9 percent is reserved as park land. Within the study area, low-, medium-, and high-density single-family residential categories make up approximately 52 percent of existing land uses; multi-family residential is 13 percent. This is consistent with the relatively low household densities throughout the study area discussed previously.

Another key land use in the study area is commercial uses, accounting for 14 percent of the total area. Table 3-15 shows the total acres and percent of the study area by land use category, and Map 3-14 shows the location of land use by categories.

Table 3-15: Study Area Existing Land Use, 2012

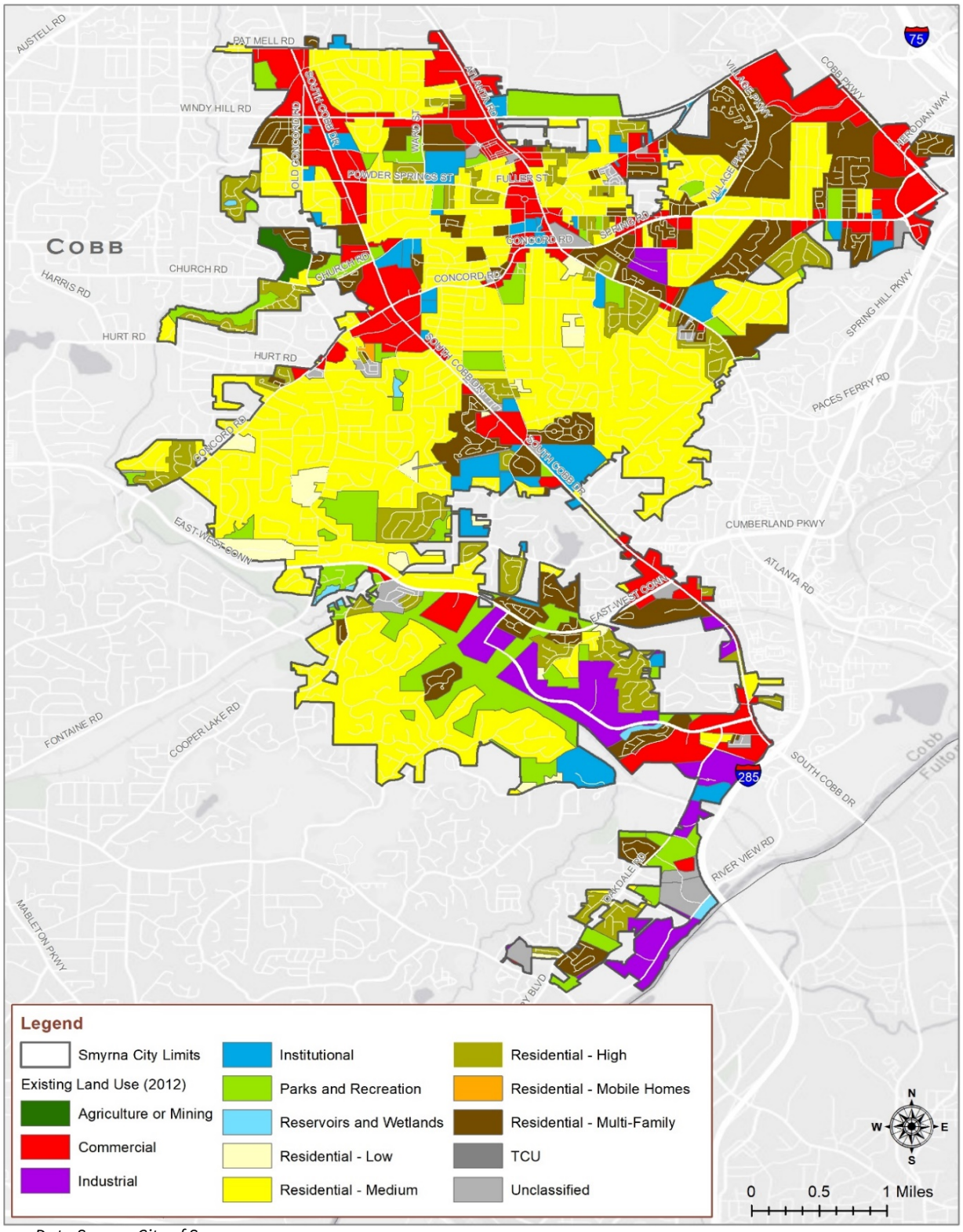
Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential – Medium	4,225	42.8%
Commercial	1,383	14.0%
Residential – Multi-Family	1,329	13.5%
Parks and Recreation	868	8.8%
Residential – High	751	7.6%
Institutional	445	4.5%
Industrial	430	4.4%
Residential – Low	165	1.7%
Other	209	2.1%
Agriculture or Mining	36	0.4%
Reservoirs and Wetlands	31	0.3%
Residential – Mobile Homes	5	0.1%
TCU	1	0.0%

Source: ARC

Future Land Use

As discussed in the sections on Future Populations and Households and Future Employment Density, study area densities are anticipated to increase through 2040. However, the future land use and development pattern in the study area is anticipated to remain suburban, with a mix of single- and multi-family and commercial developments.

Map 3-14: Smyrna Existing Land Use, 2012



Data Source: City of Smyrna

The *Guide Smyrna* 2040 Comprehensive Plan (October 2017) includes a policy map that describes the character and function of activity hubs, major transportation routes, and residential neighborhoods. The area near The Battery was identified as a major hub and appropriate for higher-density development. Additional policy map features likely to be transit-supportive include the following:

- Minor Hubs (medium density):
  - Riverview Hub in southern part of the city between Oakdale Road and Chattahoochee River
  - West Village Hub at I-285 and Atlanta Road
  - Vinings Gateway at I-285 and Paces Ferry Road
  - Smyrna Center west of Atlanta Road between Spring Road and Windy Hill Road
- Local Hubs (lower density) – identified along SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) at the following cross streets:
  - Highlands Parkway
  - East West Connector
  - King Springs Road
  - Concord Road
  - Windy Hill Road

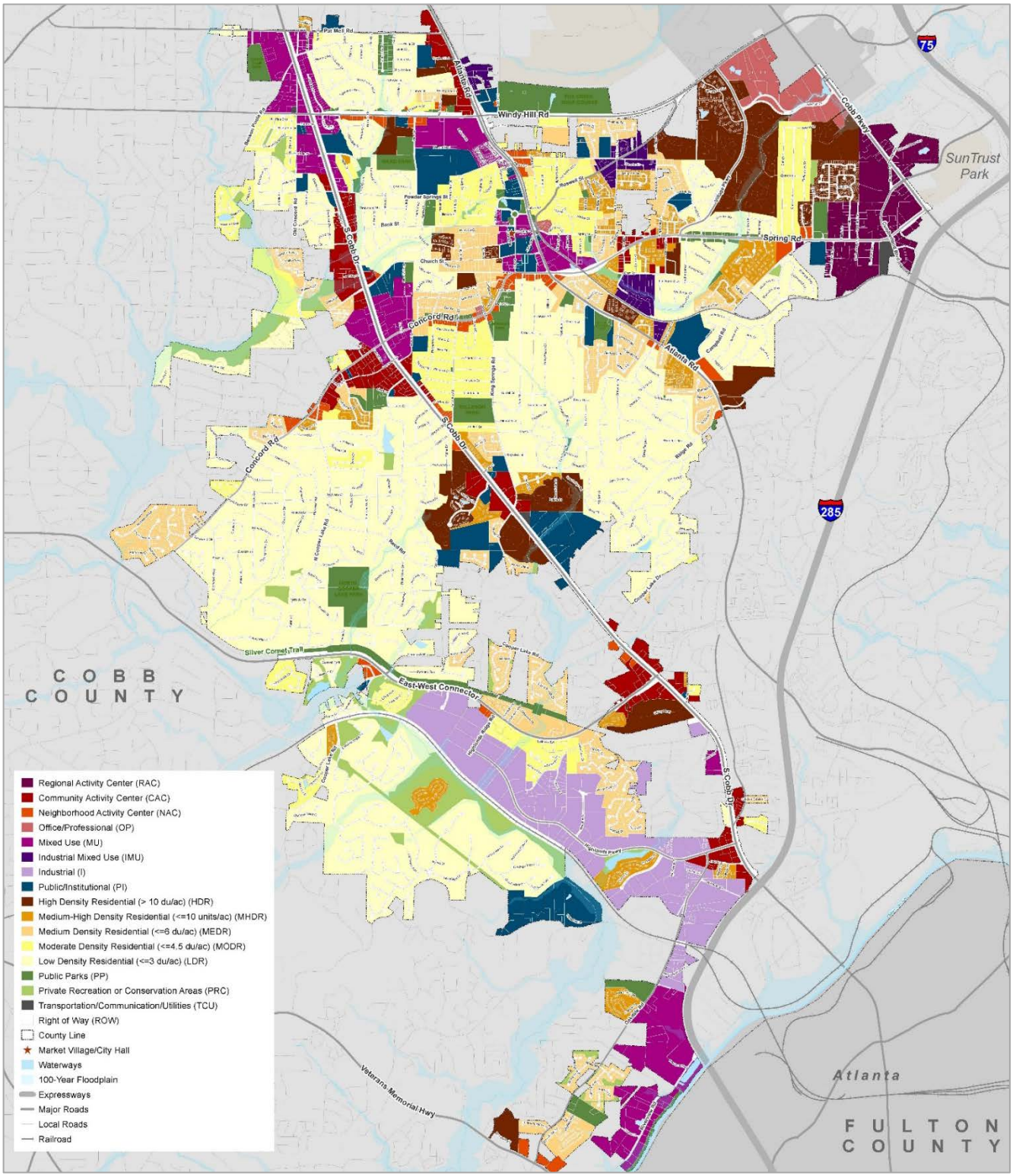
Atlanta Road from Spring Road to Windy Hill Road and Spring Road from Atlanta Road to US-41 (Cobb Parkway) were identified as signature corridors. Additionally, Highlands Parkway was identified as an employment corridor.

The 2040 Future Land Use Map builds on these general definitions and provides the following character areas with transit-supportive densities:

- Medium-High-Density Residential (6–10 dwelling units [du] per acre) is primarily in the northeast part of the city along Atlanta Road and Spring Road.
- High-Density Residential (10 or more du/acre) is concentrated in the northeast part of the city near US-41 (Cobb Parkway) and Windy Hill Road, with smaller pockets along Atlanta Road and SR-280 (South Cobb Drive).
- Community Activity Centers are located along SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) at Highlands Parkway, East West Connector, Kings Springs Road, and Concord Road.
- Mixed Use is located in the southern part of the city, SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) at Concord Road and Windy Hill Road, and at Atlanta Road and Spring Road.
- The Battery is defined as a Regional Activity Center.
- Employment Center Character Areas are located in the southern part of the city along Highlands Parkway (Industrial), in the central part near Atlanta Road and Spring Road (Industrial Mixed Use), and at US-41 (Cobb Parkway) and Windy Hill Road (Office/Professional).

Map 3-15 shows the anticipated future land uses.

Map 3-15: Smyrna Future Land Use



Source: City of Smyrna

Key Activity Centers and Travel Patterns

An understanding of key activity centers and travel patterns is important for identifying origins and destinations and travel desires that potentially can be served by transit. Information in this section was derived using several tools and data sources to identify where Smyrna residents are traveling to now as well as forecasted future travel patterns. Additionally, the study area was segmented into transit market segments to gain insight as to potential transit markets in Smyrna to identify potential transit alternatives to serve them and meet their travel needs.

Methodology and Data

Data and discussions in this section are based on information derived from output of ARC's activity-based model (ABM) platform. ARC's new model outputs divide information on activity and travel behavior by market segments (e.g., income group, number of workers per household, vehicles available per household, etc.). By looking at each market segment individually, new insights can be developed into the mode, trip lengths, and trip frequency for the various market segments to, from, and within the study area.

The ARC model is based on the principle that travel demand is derived from people's daily activities and travel patterns and predicts which activities are conducted, when, where, for how long, for and with whom, and the travel mode choices they will make to complete them. Model runs for existing conditions were for 2015 and were run on the network as it existed in 2015. Model runs for future conditions were for 2040 and include the existing transportation network plus the improvements included in ARC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), for which funding has been identified.

The ARC model offers much greater detail in demographic information, resulting in enhanced analysis of different travel markets. At the core of the model is a technique that enables it to predict the characteristics of each individual household in the region, including family structure, ages, income, number of vehicles, and type of employment/school for each person. This demographic detail allows the analysis to include a much more targeted group of travelers and provides a better understanding of how different market segments of the population move within the study area.

Trip Desire

Determining existing and future trip desires for Smyrna travelers is an important step in identifying needed transit connections. To develop an understanding of major trip desires to, from, and within Smyrna, a technical process to identify origins and destinations, analyze key travel pairs, and review existing regional commute patterns was undertaken. Additionally, detailed information on transit market segments from the ARC model was analyzed to provide further insight to potential transit needs.

Origins and Destinations

The travel demand model used for analyzing trip desire divides Smyrna into approximately 37 TAZs. Within the model, the Atlanta region includes more than 5,000 TAZs.

Definition of Travelsheds

To better understand the ARC model outputs that track trips between each TAZ in Smyrna, TAZs were aggregated into larger units, referred to as travelsheds. For this analysis, it was determined that the City ward designation would be a convenient and easily-identifiable method to accumulate trip-making characteristics for each travelshed within the city. There are seven distinct travelsheds in Smyrna, as defined by the City ward boundaries for this process and shown on Map 3-16.

Regional Destinations

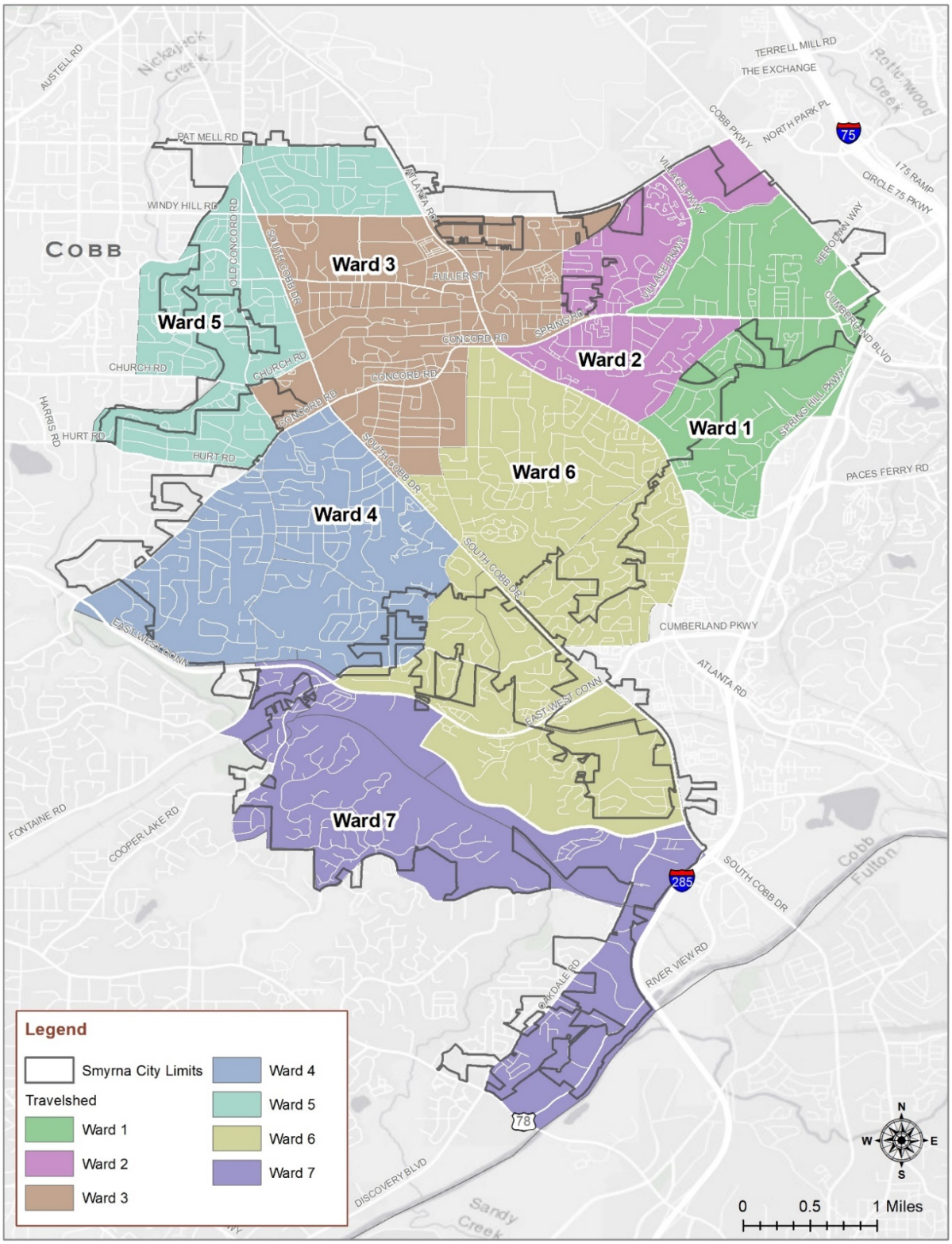
After defining the travelsheds in Smyrna, the next step was to identify significant destinations across the whole region. Regional activity centers are defined as traditional downtown areas and major employment centers such as the Cumberland/Galleria area or the Central Perimeter. For this analysis, a total of 16 regional destinations were identified. Table 3-16 shows the major activity centers that were defined for the purpose of this analysis. Although Smyrna commuters are likely travel to a wide variety of destinations across the region, the following were found to have the highest travel flows to and from Smyrna:

- Downtown/Midtown Atlanta
- Buckhead
- Cumberland/Galleria
- The Battery/Circle 75
- Northwest Atlanta

Table 3-16: Key Regional Destinations

Major Activity Centers
The Battery/Interstate North
Cumberland/Galleria
Town Center/Barrett Parkway
Central Marietta
KSU-Marietta/Life University
KSU-Kennesaw
Cobb County Government (South Marietta Pkwy)
Dobbins Airforce Base
Downtown/Midtown Atlanta
Northwest Atlanta
Buckhead
Perimeter Center/Medical Center
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
Kennestone Hospital
WellStar Cobb (Austell)
Emory/CDC

Map 3-16: Smyrna Travelsheds



Analysis of Existing and Future Key Travel Pairs

Using the travelsheds previously defined for Smyrna and the regional destinations, an analysis of key travel pairs was undertaken to identify origins and destinations with the highest trip demand between them. To accomplish this, the regional trip tables from the ARC model, including all origin and destination vehicle trips, were consolidated into the travelsheds and regional destinations. The model was then used to identify the top travel pairs between the travelsheds and regional destinations in 2015, representing existing conditions, and the horizon year, 2040. Because commute trips place the highest demand on the transportation system, morning peak period trips were used for this analysis.

Existing Travel Pairs (2015)

Table 3-17 shows the top 10 existing travel pairs. Key findings regarding existing trip pairs include the following:

- Within Smyrna, the highest number of trips are within Ward 6, which includes significant residential areas and commercial land around the South Cobb Drive/East-West Connector intersection.
- The second highest number of trips within Smyrna to and from Ward 1 includes the dense commercial districts around The Battery development and Cobb Parkway.
- The highest trip pair from Smyrna to an activity center outside of the City is between Ward 1 and the adjacent Cumberland/Galleria district.
- Significant travel demands are seen between Smyrna and Downtown/Midtown Atlanta as well as Buckhead and Northwest Atlanta.

Table 3-17: Existing Top Travel Pairs, Morning Peak, 2015

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Number of Trips (AM Peak, 2015)
Ward 6	Ward 6	1,300
Ward 1	Ward 1	800
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	750
Ward 6	Downtown/Midtown	700
Ward 3	Ward 3	650
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	650
Ward 1	Ward 2	650
Ward 1	Downtown/Midtown	600
Ward 3	Ward 5	600
Ward 6	Buckhead	550

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Future Travel Pairs (2040)

Table 3-18 shows the top 10 forecasted future travel pairs. Key findings regarding existing trip pairs include the following:

- Generally, the ARC model suggests little change in trip patterns between 2015 and 2040.
- The highest number of trips continue to be within Ward 6, which accounts for increased commercial development around the South Cobb Drive/East-West Connector intersection.
- The highest number of trips from Smyrna to an activity center outside the city is forecasted to be between Ward 1 and The Battery/Circle 75 development area, indicating increased trip attractions associated with The Battery and Cobb Parkway development growth.
- There continue to be high forecasted trips between Smyrna and the Cumberland/Galleria area, as seen in existing conditions.
- There continue to be significant forecasted travel demands seen between Smyrna and Downtown/Midtown Atlanta as well as Buckhead and Northwest Atlanta.

Table 3-18: Forecasted Top Travel Pairs, Morning Peak, 2040

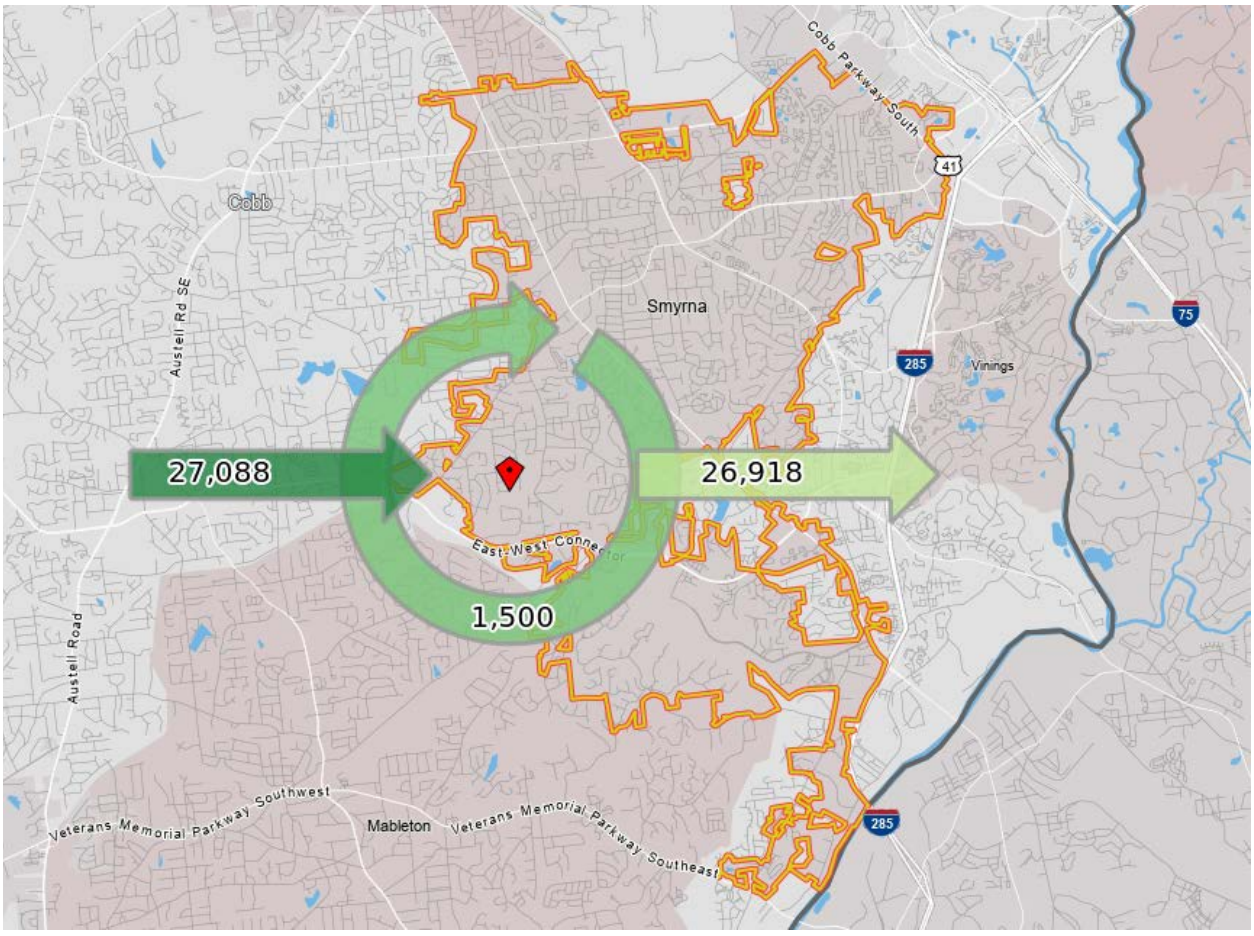
Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Number of Trips (AM Peak, 2040)
Ward 6	Ward 6	1,400
Ward 1	Battery/Circle 75	800
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	700
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	700
Ward 6	Downtown/Midtown	650
Ward 3	Ward 3	650
Ward 1	Ward 1	650
Ward 1	Ward 2	600
Ward 1	Downtown/Midtown	600
Ward 3	Ward 5	600

Existing Commute Patterns

An understanding of where people are currently commuting to and from is important for developing transit alternatives to meet existing home to work travel needs. Census OnTheMap software is a powerful tool that provides dynamic information on workers, employers, and jobs through an online user interface. The U.S. Census Bureau aggregates Unemployment Insurance data and Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data shared by the states and combines them with additional administrative data from censuses and surveys to provide statistics on employment, earnings, and job flows. OnTheMap data were used for analysis of existing commute patterns.

Commuter flows into the study area are slightly higher than the number of residents leaving the study area for work. Of all work trips originating or ending in the study area, 49 percent are residents from elsewhere in the Atlanta region, 48 percent are study area residents commuting to jobs throughout the Atlanta region, and 3 percent live and work within the study area. Figure 3-8 shows the number of commuters entering, leaving, and staying within the study area. More than 55,500 daily commute trips occurred in 2017, indicating a strong demand for transportation to and from work.

Figure 3-8: Study Area Existing Daily Commuter Flows, 2017



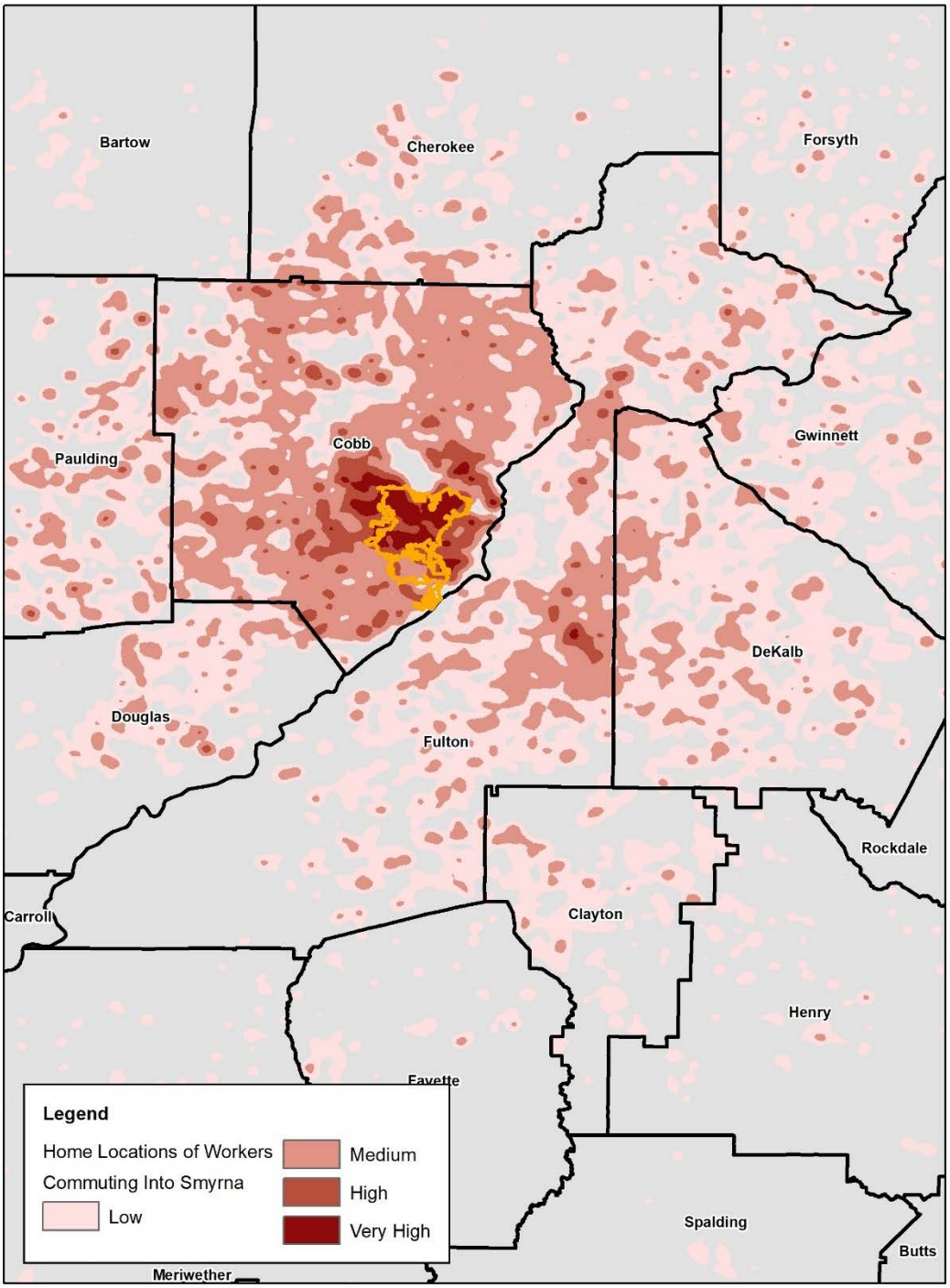
Source: Census on the Map, 2017

Home Locations of Workers Commuting into Smyrna

The home locations of workers commuting into Smyrna are generally disbursed throughout the Atlanta region; however, some patterns emerge from the data. Map 3-17 shows where commuters traveling to employment in Smyrna live. Darker colors show a higher number of commuters originating from that area.

For all workers in Smyrna, the highest concentrations of home locations are in Cobb County near Smyrna. A substantial number of homes are in east and south Cobb County, with a slightly lower concentration in west Cobb County. Additional areas where high concentrations of study area workers live are to the southeast, in Downtown and Midtown Atlanta, and to the northeast, in Sandy Springs and Dunwoody near Perimeter Center.

Map 3-17: Home Locations of Workers Commuting into Smyrna, 2017



Data Source: Census on the Map, 2017

Work Locations of Smyrna Residents

Data analysis showed that Smyrna residents commute to jobs throughout the Atlanta region, with several key regional employment centers attracting a high proportion of Smyrna residents. Areas where high concentrations of Smyrna residents are employed include:

- Cumberland Galleria
- Perimeter Center
- Buckhead
- Emory/CDC
- Midtown and Downtown Atlanta
- Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Smyrna residents also commute to jobs along the I-75 corridor in Cobb County and to Marietta and the Town Center Area. Map 3-18 shows where Smyrna residents commute to in the Atlanta region.

Roadway and Traffic Conditions

This section summarizes information on existing and forecasted travel conditions on study area transportation facilities. This is accomplished by using the ARC activity-based model to analyze travel times between key origins and destinations on existing and future roadway facilities.

Travel Time Reliability

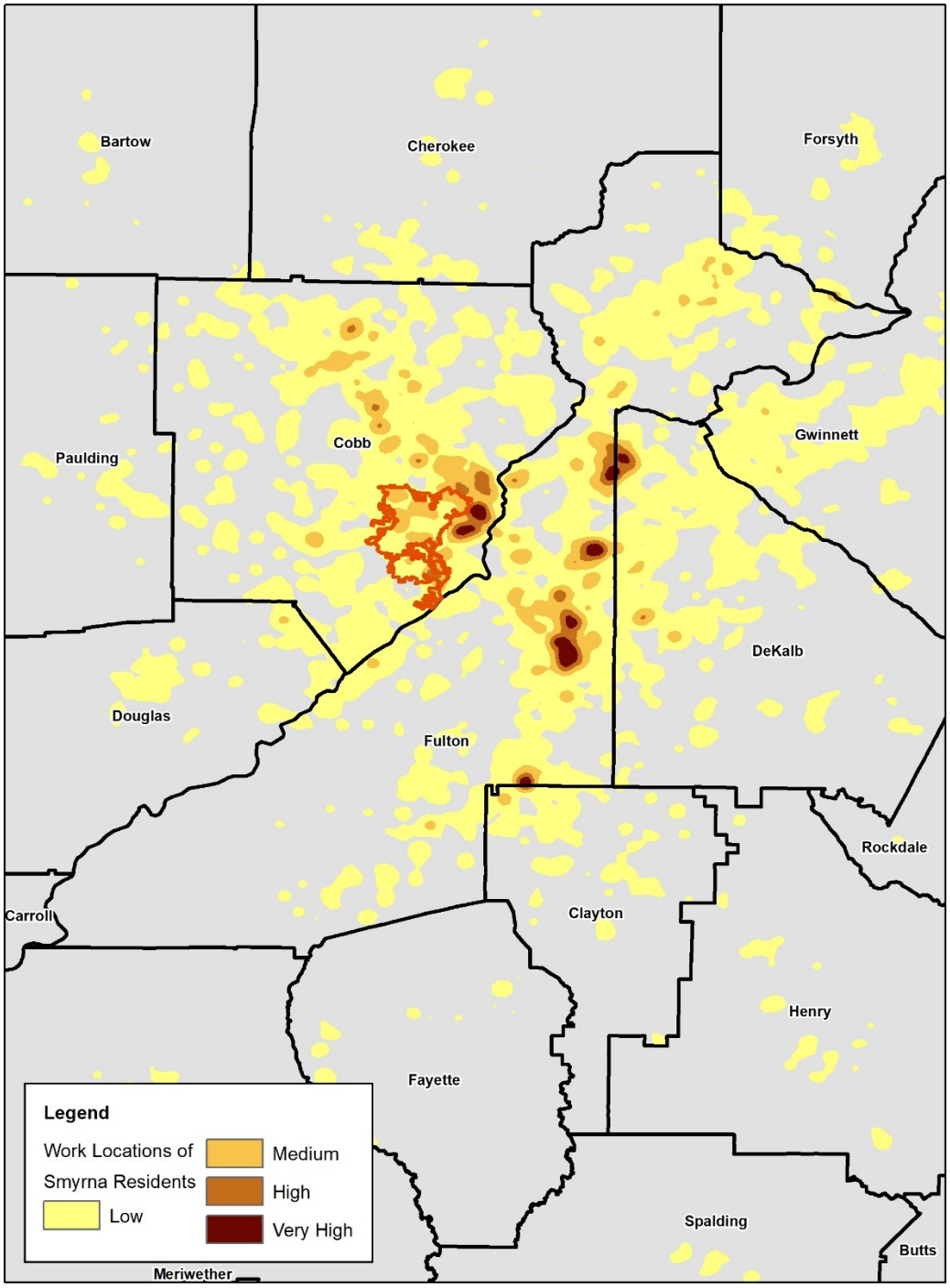
Travel time reliability is a key measure of how well the transportation network is functioning. To identify existing conditions and forecast future conditions, ARC's activity-based regional model was used. Travel time analyses were conducted for automobiles and transit separately.

Travel times for the top 10 existing and future travel pairs previously identified in the Trip Desire summary were calculated. Due to forecasted changes in travel patterns, 9 of the top 10 travel patterns were consistent between 2015 and 2040; Lithonia to Downtown Atlanta was no longer in the top 10, and Dunwoody to Sandy Springs entered the top 10. Therefore, comparisons between existing and future travel times exclude Lithonia to Downtown Atlanta and Dunwoody to Sandy Springs.

Automobile Travel Times

Existing and future automobile travel times were analyzed to identify both existing and forecasted future issues with travel time reliability. In the future, total travel times between the top five trip pairs are forecasted to increase seven percent. However, some variation between trip pairs exists, with some trip pairs having higher-than-average forecasted increases in travel times and some predicting a lower than average increase. Forecasted automobile travel times did not decrease for any of the top five trip pairs. The following sections provide a detailed analysis of existing and future travel times by trip pair.

Map 3-18: Work Locations of Smyrna Residents, 2017



Data Source: Census on the Map, 2017

Existing Automobile Travel Times (2015)

The ARC model was used to estimate automobile travel times among the top five travel pairs in 2015 during the AM peak period. Table 3-19 shows the existing travel times for the top five trip pairs. Forecasted travel times range from 20 to 35 minutes for the top five travel pairs.

Table 3-19: Existing Automobile Travel Times Between Top Five Trip Pairs (2015, AM Peak)

From	To	Travel Time (min)
Smyrna	Downtown/Midtown Atlanta	35
	Buckhead	31
	Cumberland/Galleria	20
	The Battery/Circle 75	23
	Northwest Atlanta	21

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Future Automobile Travel Times (2040)

The ARC model was used to forecast automobile travel times between the top five travel pairs in 2040 during the AM peak period. Table 3-20 shows the future travel times for the top five trip pairs for 2040. As expected, automobile travel times will increase by 2040, but only moderately, with trip times ranging from 21 to 38 minutes for the top five travel pairs.

Table 3-20: Future Automobile Travel Times Between Top Five Trip Pairs, (2040, AM Peak)

From	To	Travel Time (min)
Smyrna	Downtown/Midtown Atlanta	38
	Buckhead	33
	Cumberland/Galleria	21
	The Battery/Circle 75	25
	Northwest Atlanta	22

Source: ARC

Consistent with forecasted growth in population and employment in the study area and the Atlanta Region, automobile trip times are forecasted to increase between 2015 and 2040. The highest increases in percentage terms were identified on the following trip pairs:

- 9 percent increase from Smyrna to The Battery/Circle 75 between 2015 and 2040.
- 9 percent increase from Smyrna to Downtown/Midtown Atlanta between 2015 and 2040.
- 7 percent increase from Smyrna to Buckhead between 2015 and 2040

Travel pairs with higher increases in travel times have the most potential to be served by transit investments that provide reliable travel times. However, forecasted travel time increases from 2015 to 2040 for the top five trip pairs ranged from only one to three minutes, which means new transit services will need to be well-designed to serve the needs of transit markets to be competitive with automobile travel times.

Transit Travel Times

The ARC model was used to calculate existing (2015) and future (2040) transit travel times between the top five travel pairs. The activity-based regional model reports travel times for different modes of access to transit, which include riders getting dropped off at the station or stop (kiss-and-ride), riders driving to stations and parking in associated park-and-ride lots (drive to transit), and riders walking to stations or stops (walk to transit).

Existing Transit Travel Times (2015)

Table 3-21 shows current transit travel times during the AM peak period on the three methods previously mentioned. Overall, accessing transit by kiss-and-ride has the shortest transit travel times, followed by drive to transit. Walk to transit has the longest travel times.

Table 3-21: Existing Transit Travel Time between Top Five Trip Pairs (2015, AM Peak)

From	To	Kiss-and-Ride (min)	Drive to Transit (min)	Walk to Transit (min)
Smyrna	Downtown/Midtown Atlanta	40	40	76
	Buckhead	44	54	65
	Cumberland/Galleria	21	n/a	45
	The Battery/Circle 75	30	n/a	50
	Northwest Atlanta	43	n/a	107

N/a = not applicable, no drive to transit trips for these trip pairs.
Source: ARC

Kiss-and-ride access to transit travel times are quicker than walk to transit and drive to transit and may suggest a need for improved first/last-mile connectivity. For trip pairs with a large discrepancy between driving and walking to transit times, potential needs are additional feeder bus service, additional station locations, and/or line extensions. Also, the lack of drive to transit trips between Smyrna and nearby destinations indicates a need for new park-and-ride facilities in Smyrna.

Future Transit Travel Times (2040)

To forecast future transit travel times and mode splits, the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan network was used, which includes all transit projects currently in the ARC's fiscally constrained plan (i.e. all projects with funding sources). Table 3-22 shows future transit travel times for AM peak, similar to the three modes of transit access previously identified. In comparison to automobile trip times, future transit travel times show significant variation between 2015 and 2040. Key differences between 2015 and 2040 transit trip times are as follows:

- Smyrna to Downtown/Midtown Atlanta had an increase of 10 percent for kiss-and-ride and drive to transit trips between 2015 and 2040, likely caused by increasing travel times on the roadway network.
- The largest increase in transit travel times was from Smyrna to The Battery/Circle 75, with 27 percent for kiss-and-ride and 70 percent for walk to transit

- The second largest increase in transit travel times between 2015 and 2040 was 9 percent from Smyrna to Buckhead for walk to transit.
- The Smyrna to Northwest Atlanta trip pair showed a 33 percent decrease in kiss-and-ride trip time and a 54 percent decrease in walk to transit trip time, likely due to planned future transit lines in the area

Similar to existing conditions, these future data also indicate a need for more first/last-mile connections to transit.

Table 3-22: Future Transit Travel Times Between Top Five Trip Pairs, (2040, AM Peak)

From	To	Kiss-and-Ride (min)	Drive to Transit (min)	Walk to Transit (min)
Smyrna	Downtown/Midtown Atlanta	44	44	72
	Buckhead	45	54	71
	Cumberland/Galleria	22	30	41
	The Battery/Circle 75	38	49	85
	Northwest Atlanta	29	n/a	49

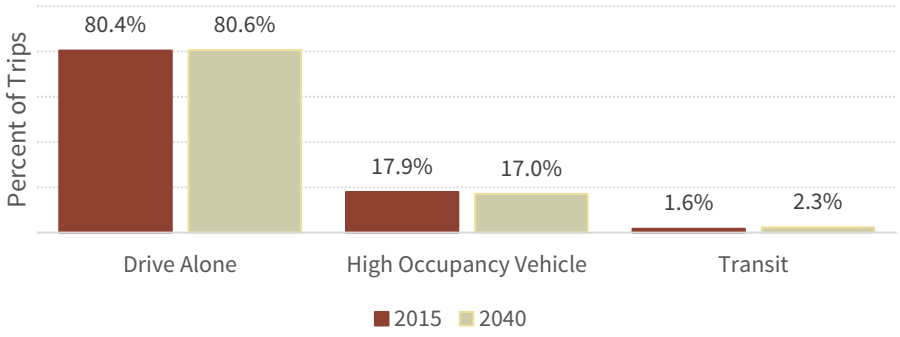
N/a indicates not applicable, no drive to transit trips for these trip pairs.
Source: ARC

Mode Split

Modal split or mode share reflects the percentage of travelers using a particular type of travel mode. Figure 3-9 shows the existing and projected mode split for all trips to, from, or within the study area. These data were extracted from ARC's activity-based regional model. Trips are categorized by major mode type, which include driving alone (single-occupancy vehicle, SOV), automobiles with two or more people (high-occupancy vehicle, HOV), and transit.

A comparison of the existing and projected mode split shows very little change between travel modes over time in the study area. Driving alone is forecasted to remain essentially the same between 2015 and 2040. A small decline of just less than 1 percent is forecasted for HOVs, and a slight increase of 0.7 percent is anticipated for transit trips. The lack of substantial changes in mode split between 2015 and 2040 suggests significant investments in transit service and infrastructure may be needed to promote higher levels of transit use and achieve a more balanced mode split. A more detailed discussion of mode split by transit market segments is provided later.

Figure 3-9: Mode Split for Study Area Trips, 2015 and 2040



Source: ARC

Transit Market Segments

In addition to examining the origins and destinations of travelers, an understanding of their demographic characteristics is important to identify potential needs. The regional model allows for the segmentation of various demographic groups, which permits study of their unique travel patterns. Three key transit market segments were analyzed to determine how these populations travel to, from, and within the study area:

- *Low-Income Populations* – For the purpose of this analysis, includes individuals with limited mobility options, such as people living in zero-car households, lower-income households (those earning less than $25,000), and households with fewer cars than workers. Traditionally, individuals in these population segments have a higher propensity to use transit and often are dependent on transit for traveling, so it is important to understand their needs in the planning process.
- *Commuters* – Includes full-time and part-time workers. A thorough understanding of this market segment's travel patterns is critical to planning transit services that effectively connect workers to employment centers. Due to the consistency with which they use transit, this group is very important to the transit planning process.
- *Students and Retirees* – Includes university students and retirees. These market segments have unique transit needs that could be served through a variety of transit technologies and modes. The day-to-day travel patterns for members of this group typically vary more than the individuals in the commuter category.

The analysis of transit markets shows how these groups travel within the county and throughout the region.

Low-Income Populations

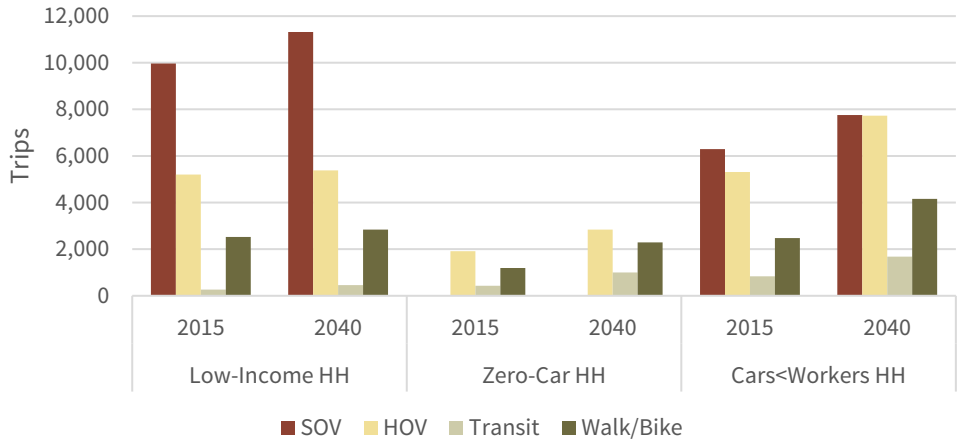
Figure 3-10 illustrates the number of trips made by persons in this market to, from, or within the study area and the mode of travel currently or predicted to be used as calculated by the regional model. For low-income households, projections show modest increases in trips between 2015 and 2040 for SOVs

(14%), HOVs (3%), and walking/biking (12%). More significant increases are projected for transit trips (74%) for this demographic group. This increase shifts the mode split for transit trips in this market segment from 1.5 to 2.3 percent between 2015 and 2040.

In zero-car households, between 2015 and 2040, HOV trips are projected to increase by 49 percent, walking/biking by 93 percent, and transit trips by 134 percent. The mode split also shifts to a higher percentage of transit trips from 12.1 to 16.3 percent in this time period.

In households in which the number of cars is fewer than the number of workers, trips via SOV are projected to increase by 23 percent, HOV trips by 45 percent, and walking/biking by 68 percent. Transit trips are expected to increase at a much higher rate, 101 percent. Mode split for transit is expected to increase modestly, from 5.6 percent to 7.9 percent of all trips.

Figure 3-10: Mode Split for Low Income Populations, 2015 and 2040



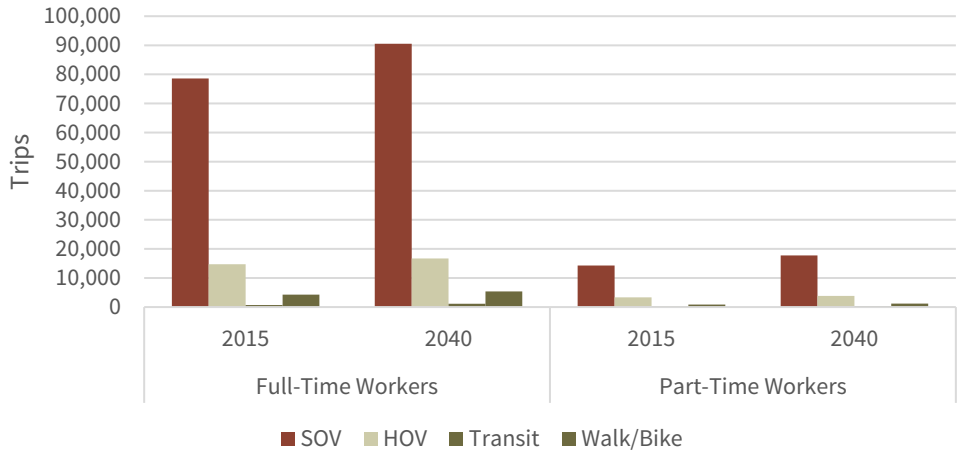
Source: ARC

Commuters

Figure 3-11 details existing and projected trips to, from, and within the study area for the commuter transit market segment. Full-time worker trips via SOV are anticipated to increase by 15 percent between 2015 and 2040. Trips via HOV are projected to increase by 13 percent, walking/biking by 26 percent, and transit trips by 60 percent. The transit mode share is expected to stay relatively the same, with a slight uptick in transit from 0.7 to 1.0 percent for commuters employed full-time.

Between 2015 and 2040, part-time worker SOV trips are forecasted to increase by 24 percent, HOV trips by 15 percent, and walking/biking by 32 percent. The largest rise is seen in transit trips, anticipated to increase 84 percent. The mode share change between 2015 and 2040 projects a small uptick in transit trips, from 1.0 percent to 1.4 percent.

Figure 3-11: Mode Split for Commuters, 2015 and 2040



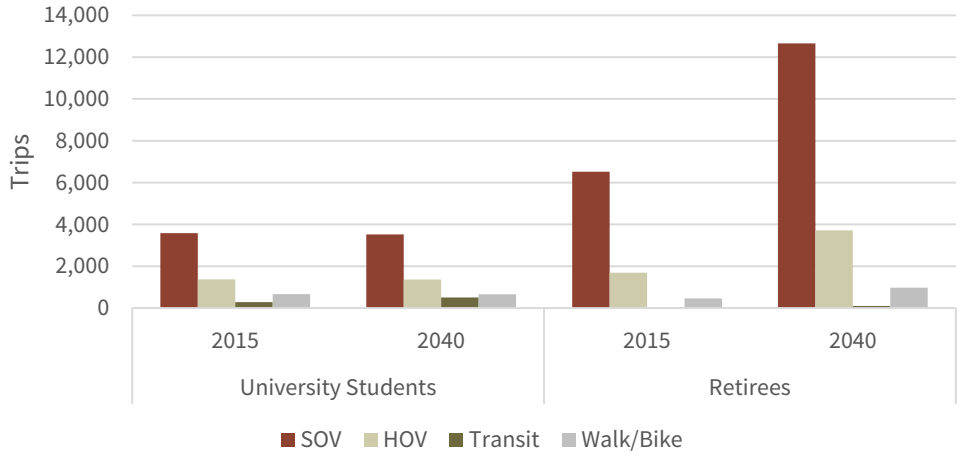
Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Students and Retirees

Figure 3-12 illustrates the number of existing and projected university students and retirees traveling to, from, or within the study area. University student SOV trips are forecasted to decline 2 percent between 2015 and 2040, trips via HOV are projected to remain flat, walking and biking trips are forecasted to decrease slightly (1%), and transit ridership is anticipated to increase 76 percent. The transit mode split is forecasted to increase from 4.8 to 8.3 percent for university students.

For retirees, trips via SOV are projected to increase by 94 percent, HOV trips by 119 percent, walking/biking by 114 percent, and transit trips by 292 percent. However, mode split for transit is expected to increase modestly, from 0.3 percent to 0.6 percent, for all trips for retirees.

Figure 3-12: Mode Split for Students and Retirees, 2015 and 2040



Source: ARC

Key Activity Centers and Travel Patterns Findings

The following key travel needs were identified:

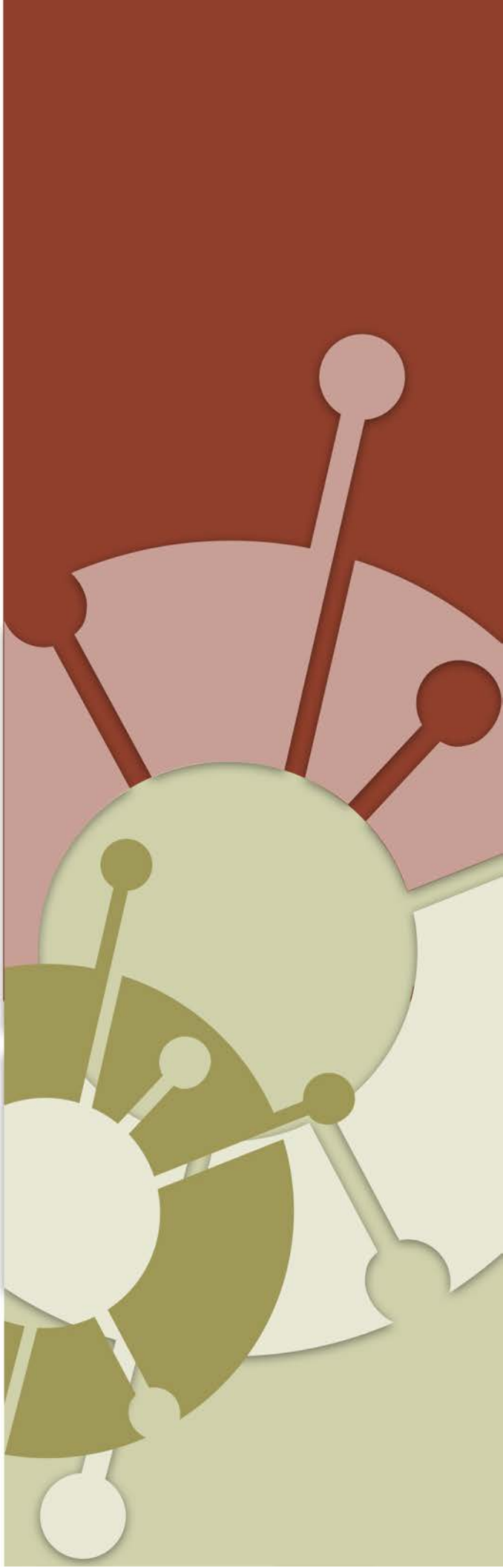
- Existing commute patterns show a need for regional connectivity to and from the study area.
- Connectivity to the rest of Cobb County, Midtown and Downtown Atlanta, and Sandy Springs and Dunwoody is important, based on the home locations of commuters traveling to jobs in the study area.
- The longest travel times are currently from Smyrna to Downtown/Midtown Atlanta and Buckhead, travel pairs that also are forecasted to have the longest travel times in 2040, indicating potential for long-haul transit service operating in its own guideway.
- Current and forecasted transit travel times between Smyrna and regional activity centers are significantly longer than automobile travel times, indicating an opportunity for improved services to meet travel needs.
- Transit mode split for the city is lower than the regional average; however, this was expected, as Atlanta has a robust and attractive transit network. This means that attractive transit options may be needed to grow the local transit market share,
- Although the traditional transit market in Smyrna is limited, based on the demographic analysis, the transit market segment analysis shows a strong market for traditional transit users.
- The commute patterns for Smyrna show very low internal circulation and overwhelming needs to connect to and from the region. This shows that commuter transit market has substantial room for growth, and travel patterns between Smyrna and key regional employment centers indicate that a well-designed transit service could increase the share of commuters using transit.

Section 4: Plans Review

Numerous transportation, land use, and economic development studies have been completed, with recommendations potentially impacting transit services in Smyrna. These plans and studies include city comprehensive plans, strategic plans, Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) studies, blueprints, transit service plans, countywide comprehensive transportation plans (CTPs), and State and regional plans. Studies with findings likely to be applicable to the Smyrna were obtained and reviewed.

The following local, regional, and State plans and studies were reviewed as part of this effort:

- **City of Smyrna**
  - Smyrna Comprehensive Plan Update/Guide Smyrna 2040
  - Smyrna Strategic Vision Plan
  - Spring Road Corridor LCI Master Plan
  - South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study
- **Cumberland Community Improvement District**
  - Blueprint Cumberland 3.0
- **Cobb County**
  - CobbLinc Forward Transit Service Plan
  - 2040 Cobb County Comprehensive Plan
  - Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update 2040
- **MARTA**
  - Comprehensive Operations Analysis
- **ARC**
  - Regional Transportation Plan
  - Transportation Improvement Program
  - Regional Transportation Demand Management Plan
  - Regional On-Board Transit Survey
- **ATL Authority**
  - Regional Transit Plan
- **GDOT**
  - I-285 Westside and Top End Express Lanes



Findings from each study that can inform or might potentially impact the development of transit solutions for Smyrna are summarized as follows.

City of Smyrna

The City of Smyrna recently adopted several plans with findings and recommendations applicable to the Smyrna Transit Feasibility Study. These plans are summarized below, with key findings and recommendations noted.

Guide Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Guide Smyrna is a comprehensive plan and was adopted by the City of Smyrna in October 2017. The purpose of *Guide Smyrna 2040* is to serve as a reference for City officials and staff when making capital investment decisions. Key recommendations from Guide Smyrna applicable to this study include the following:

- Coordinate transit planning and services with CobbLinc and GRTA.
- Undertake a transit feasibility study including an evaluation of shuttle service between commercial districts in Smyrna and the Atlanta Braves Stadium using the circulator system envisioned for the Cumberland Galleria area.
- Advocate for alternative transportation options that can alleviate congestion.

Smyrna Connects is the transit feasibility study recommended in *Guide Smyrna* and will fit within the framework established by *Guide Smyrna* by evaluating the existing CobbLinc circulator in the Cumberland Galleria area to identify opportunities to connect with commercial districts in Smyrna, identifying transit options that can mitigate congestion, and coordinating with key partners such as CobbLinc, SRTA/GRTA, and the ATL throughout the process.

Smyrna Strategic Vision Plan

The Smyrna Strategic Vision Plan is a strategic plan that was adopted by the City Council in November 2014. The purpose of the Strategic Vision Plan is to outline the community's goals for the future of the city. The *Guide Smyrna 2040* Comprehensive Plan, discussed in the previous section, incorporates the goals of the Strategic Vision Plan. Key findings from the Strategic Vision Plan include the following:

- Advocate for alternative transportation options that can alleviate congestion for Smyrna residents.
- Explore opportunities to provide shuttle service to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.
- Become the first community outside of I-285 to connect with the BeltLine.
- Evaluate the feasibility of shuttle service between commercial districts in Smyrna and the Atlanta Braves Stadium using the using the circulator system being envisioned for the Cumberland Galleria area.

Two of these recommendations were included in *Guide Smyrna*—advocating for alternative transportation options and evaluating the feasibility of shuttle service connecting Smyrna commercial districts with the stadium. Potential shuttle services to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport should be studied as part of the Smyrna Transit Feasibility Study.

Spring Road Corridor Livable Centers Initiative Master Plan

The Spring Road Corridor LCI Master Plan was completed in April 2017. The purpose of the plan is to guide redevelopment along Spring Road and identify appropriate public investment projects to enhance aesthetics and functionality of the corridor to create a true gateway into the city. Key findings and recommendations from the Spring Road Corridor LCI Master Plan include the following:

- Provide alternative transportation options to help reduce vehicular congestion.
- Improve traffic flow during peak periods.
- Develop street networks to improve local and regional connectivity – new roads parallel to Spring Road to improve connections and provide alternative options.
- Implement a parallel street connection on the south side of Spring Road from Cumberland Boulevard to Argyle Elementary School that can accommodate local buses currently destined for the CobbLinc transfer center.
- Connect Cumberland and Smyrna Market Village with improved local transit on Spring Road.
- Continue coordinating with CobbLinc on the planning and development of a new transfer center location.

South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study

The South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study was completed in May 2017. The purpose of the study is to provide a foundation for implementing improvements to enable SR 280 (South Cobb Drive) to accommodate needs of residents in the area, provide safety and efficiency for all users, add value to surrounding neighborhoods, and enhance the economic vitality of the region. The study area included SR 280 (South Cobb Drive) from Concord Road to Windy Hill Road. Recommendations of the study include the following:

- Construct a multi-use path along both sides of SR 280 (South Cobb Drive).
- Provide sidewalk connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Intersection improvements at Powder Springs Street.
- Pull-offs to accommodate CobbLinc buses.

Cumberland Community Improvement District

The Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID) is adjacent to Smyrna, and several key transportation corridors connect city residents to employment opportunities within the CID. However, no parts of the Cumberland CID fall within the Smyrna city limits.

Blueprint Cumberland 3.0

Blueprint Cumberland 3.0 was completed in September 2017 and is the second update of the original Blueprint Cumberland initially published in 2001. Blueprint Cumberland 3.0 is a comprehensive vision and plan to transform the Cumberland CID into a more walkable, dynamic, live-work-shop-play urban center. Key findings and recommendations from Blueprint Cumberland 3.0 include the following:

- Work closely with Cobb County DOT and CobbLinc to relocate the Cumberland Transfer Center, ideally close to the existing interstate with a connection to Cumberland's greatest concentration of destinations.
- Work with nearby transit advocates, including the City of Smyrna and Atlanta Braves management to connect to the region with high capacity transit, potentially along I-285 to Perimeter Center or I-75 to Midtown Atlanta.

Cobb County

At the county level, Cobb County DOT and CobbLinc are responsible for transit planning. The County and CobbLinc have adopted and are undertaking plans that potentially impact transit service in Smyrna. These plans are summarized below.

CobbLinc Forward Transit Service Plan

The CobbLinc Forward Transit Service Plan (*CobbLinc Forward*) is a short-term plan to meet public transportation needs for Cobb County residents, workers, and businesses. Phase I recommendations from the *CobbLinc Forward* Transit Service Plan were implemented September 8, 2019. Key recommendations from *CobbLinc Forward* are:

- New Rapid10 service along Cobb Parkway and I-75 connecting the Kennesaw State University (KSU) Kennesaw and Marietta campuses with a stop at the Cumberland Transfer Center
- New Sunday service
- Elimination of routes 10A, 10B, and 10C – riders can now use the new Rapid10

Cobb Forward Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The *Cobb Forward* Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is an update to *Cobb In Motion*, the County's previous CTP completed in 2015. *Cobb Forward* is currently underway and is anticipated to be completed and adopted by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners by 2021. The purpose of the CTP is to identify a community vision for transportation, align projects with funding sources, and use taxpayer dollars responsibly. As *Cobb Forward* was recently initiated, findings and recommendations have not been developed yet.

2040 Cobb County Comprehensive Plan

The 2040 Cobb County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in November 2017. Its purpose is to bring together all stakeholders in the county, including citizens, businesses, and non-profit organizations,

to develop a growth strategy that aims to make Cobb County an attractive place to invest, conduct business, and raise families. Key findings and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan are:

- Provide alternate transportation for those who can no longer drive safely.
- Invest in a multi-modal transportation system to serve all users.

MARTA

MARTA currently operates one bus route (Route 12) that terminates in Cobb County at the Cumberland Transfer Center and provides service to the Midtown MARTA station. The route follows Akers Mill Road and US-41 (Cobb Parkway) in Cobb County.

Comprehensive Operations Analysis

MARTA's Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) was completed in May 2016. Its purpose is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the MARTA system by responding to changes in demographics and population growth by introducing new service or realigning existing services. Key findings and recommendations from the COA include the following:

- Route 12 is in the frequent local service tier, intended to serve as the backbone of the bus network, with weekday daytime frequencies of 15 minutes, stop spacing of ¼ mile, and next-trip displays at selected higher volume stops.
- Nine buses are proposed to operate in peak service on Route 12.

ARC

ARC is responsible for transportation planning in the 10-county region, including Cobb. The Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program include federally-funded transportation projects for the region. Additionally, ARC completed an on-board transit survey to gather data about transit ridership throughout the region.

Regional Transportation Plan/Transportation Improvement Program

The following projects relevant to the Smyrna Transit Feasibility Study are included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and/or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

- Project CO-464: Windy Hill Boulevard Widening and Complete Streets – Widening from 4 to 6 lanes currently programmed for 2021; project limits are SR-280 (South Cobb Drive) and US-41 (Cobb Parkway); multi-use paths and bike lanes will be provided on both sides of the roadway.
- Project AR-475: Connect Cobb/Northwest Atlanta Transit Corridor Bus Rapid Transit from Midtown Atlanta to Kennesaw – Currently included in the RTP as a long-range project; funding has not been identified.

Regional On-Board Transit Survey

ARC recently conducted an on-board survey of all transit agencies in the region, including CobbLinc. The 2019 survey, conducted by Kennesaw State University, asked questions of 5,450 people across 13 counties about key quality-of-life issues. Applicable highlights of the survey include the following:

- Transportation remains metro Atlanta's top concern. When asked to name the biggest problem facing the region, 28 percent of respondents said transportation; this was the sixth straight year this concern topped the list, followed by crime at 18 percent, and public education at 10 percent.
- A total of 25 percent said they frequently lacked transportation to get where they needed to go.
- A total of 48 percent said expanding public transit offers the best long-term solution to the region's traffic challenges.

ATL Authority

The ATL is a new agency tasked with overseeing transit planning for the 13-county Atlanta region, promoting collaboration among transit partners, and partnering with regional stakeholders to address long-term mobility.

Regional Transit Plan

Per State legislation, the ATL is required to develop and regularly update a Regional Transit Plan, incorporating existing and future transit services, facilities, and projects to provide a coordinated region-wide approach and enhance connectivity for riders. The ATL Board adopted a framework in 2019 for development of this plan, which will be used to measure transit projects by a set of specific, objective criteria. These criteria reflect the ATL's commitment to the six governing principles previously adopted by the Board, including:

- Economic Development and Land Use
- Environmental Sustainability
- Equity
- Innovation
- Mobility and Access
- Return on Investment

Recommendations relevant to the City of Smyrna and CobbLinc include adding transit signal priority technologies in Cobb County, ensuring ADA-compliant sidewalks, relocating the Cumberland Transfer Center and enhancing the Marietta Transfer Center, expanding the South Cobb Transfer Center, and enhancing the Marietta Maintenance Facility.

GDOT

GDOT is currently planning two express-lane projects with potential impacts to Smyrna. In both cases, the planning process recently was initiated, and recommendations have not been determined. The projects generally consist of managed lanes along I-285 from I-20 W to I-85 N that will allow transit use, such as express bus. At this time, access points to the proposed managed lanes have not been determined.

Key Findings/Considerations

From the review of previous plans, several common themes emerged, including the following:

- Coordination between the City of Smyrna and agency partners such as CobbLinc, ARC, SRTA, and the ATL is important for transit implementation.
- High-capacity transit connecting Smyrna and the Cumberland Galleria activity center to regional destinations is desired.
- A shuttle from Smyrna to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport has been identified as a need.
- A transit connection between Smyrna, particularly commercial areas, and The Battery is desired.
- A Smyrna Market Village to Cumberland Galleria transit connection along Spring Road has been identified.
- Relocation of the Cumberland Transfer Center to better connect with existing development patterns and improve transit service is a need.
- Transportation options such as transit are desired to mitigate congestion and provide transportation alternatives for non-drivers.
- Quality-of-life, Complete Streets, and walkability improvements are recommended in several of the plans reviewed; these projects can provide vital first/last-mile connections to transit services.

This study provides an opportunity to further develop the ideas and projects identified in previous studies to improve transit in Smyrna in a comprehensive manner.

Section 5: Transit Market Analysis

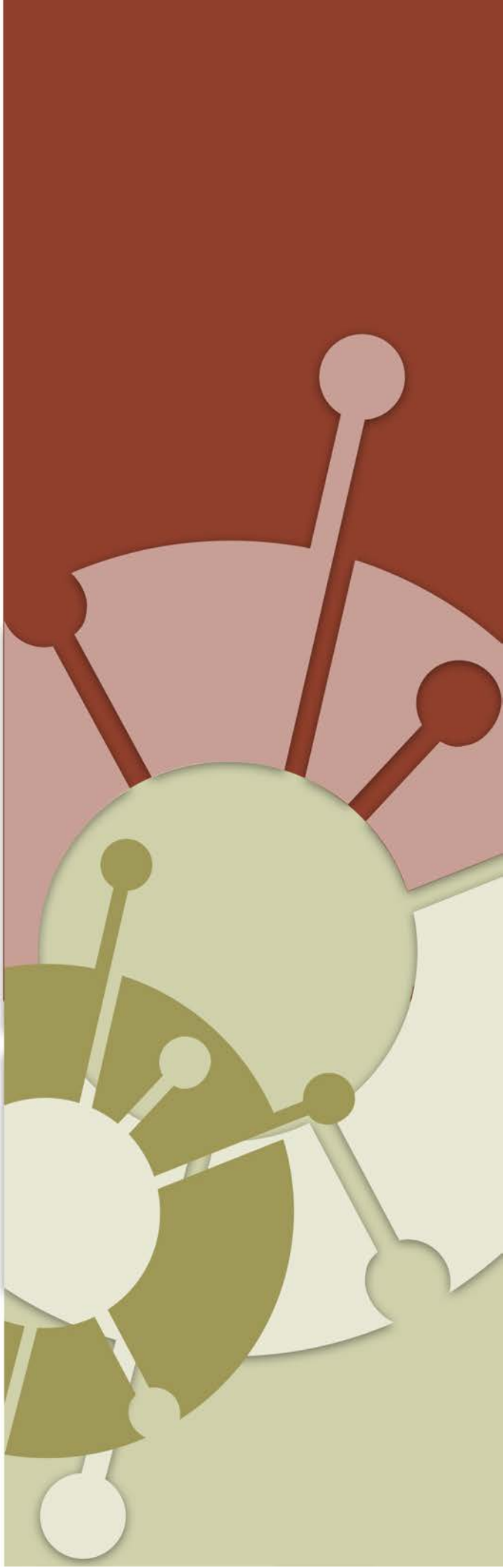
An important aspect of any transit planning process is to ensure that the resulting future vision for transit accommodates areas within the operating environment that are not served (or are underserved) but have latent ridership demand for transit services. To address the possibility of unserved/underserved demand, a latent demand analysis was completed that also serves as a continuation of other data collection and analyses performed for this study.

The demand analysis conducted for *Smyrna Connects* included several innovative and transit-specific planning strategies and market analysis tools that assisted in identifying transit-supportive populations and travel markets. These tools were used to analyze the latent demand from two key travel markets for Smyrna, including:

- Local/internal travel markets
- Regional/commuter travel markets

Local/Internal Markets

Demand from specific transit markets within the study area was carefully analyzed to identify the potential need for public transportation services. Data show that a significant portion of transit trips in Smyrna are used for non-work purposes such as recreation and shopping, indicating that users take shorter trips than lengthier commute trips that may take riders out of the study area. To identify these travel markets in the study area, an internal market analysis was conducted that included an evaluation of the study area from three perspectives. The traditional and choice rider markets—the two predominant ridership markets for transit service—and the internal travel market were identified and analyzed using the travel flow data between various areas of the study area. These markets are described as follows:



- **Traditional rider markets** are population segments that historically have had a higher propensity to use transit or are dependent on public transit for their transportation needs. Traditional transit users typically include older adults, youths, and households that are low-income or have zero vehicles for use. Analytical tools that uses spreadsheet models and GIS were used to assess this market.
- **Choice rider markets** are potential riders living in higher-density areas that may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative. The analysis conducted used industry-standard density thresholds to identify the areas within the study area that exhibit transit-supportive residential and employee density levels today as well as in the future.
- **Internal travel markets** are Smyrna residents and visitors traveling within the city. Trip tables/matrices from the regional travel model, prepared for forecasting all key modes of travel in the region, were used to identify travel patterns by different population groups.

These tools were used to determine whether existing transit routes are serving areas considered to be transit-supportive for the corresponding transit market.

Traditional Transit Market

The traditional rider market includes population segments that historically have had a higher propensity to use transit or are dependent on public transit for their transportation needs. For some individuals, the ability to drive is greatly diminished with age, so they must rely on others for their transportation needs. Likewise, younger persons not yet of driving age but who need to travel to school, employment, or for leisure may rely more on public transportation until they reach driving age. For lower-income households, transportation costs are particularly burdensome, as a greater proportion of income is used for transportation-related expenses than for higher-income households. Households with restricted income may be without an operable vehicle and are more likely to rely on public transportation.

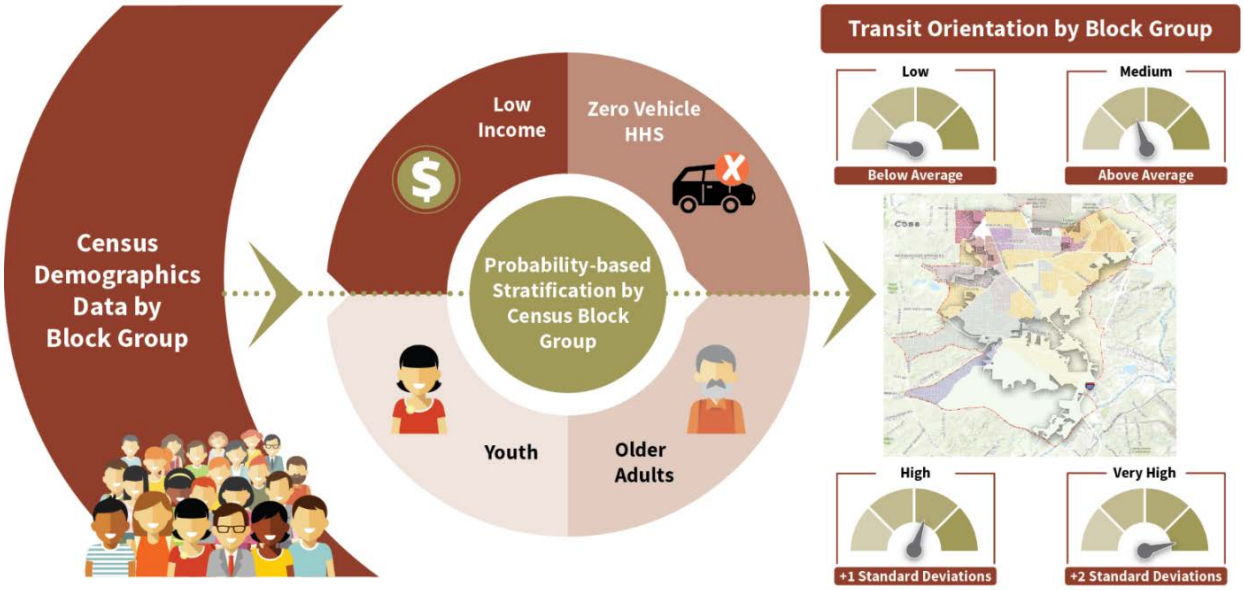
The demographic segments identified as traditional transit users include:

- Youths – persons age 14 and under
- Low-income – persons in a four-person household with a combined annual income of $25,000 or less
- Zero-vehicle households
- Older adults – persons age 65 and over

Transit Orientation Index Development Methodology

A Transit Orientation Index (TOI) was developed to assist in identifying residential areas of the city where traditional rider markets exist. To create the TOI for this analysis, demographic data from the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates (2013–2017) were analyzed at the block group level for the selected demographic variables. The methodology and benchmarks are shown in Figure 5-1 and discussed in detail thereafter.

Figure 5-1: TOI Methodology and Benchmarks



Census block groups representing the study area were selected, and the percent distributions for each demographic characteristic previously identified were compiled for each. These proportions were then ranked in descending order. Using the TOI methodology, an average proportion and standard deviation for each demographic characteristic was computed. (A standard deviation measures the extent to which the actual percent values for each block group vary from the average percent value. With a normal "bell-shaped" distribution, approximately 68 percent of the values will be within 1 standard deviation of the average percent and 95 percent will be within 2 standard deviations of the average.) The proportions were stratified into three segments—average percent, average percent plus 1 standard deviation, and average percent plus 2 standard deviations.

The resulting percent values for each block group were placed into one of four categories for each demographic characteristic—Below Average (Low), Above Average but within 1 Standard Deviation (Medium), Above Average but between 1 and 2 Standard Deviations (High), and Above Average but more than 2 Standard Deviations (Very High). The scores were assigned using a comparative probability distribution methodology by first estimating the probability that a block group would be within a given category for a given demographic characteristic.

All individual category scores were summed to obtain a composite score for each block group, and the block groups were ranked by composite score. Block groups with the highest scores were indicated as having a "Very High" orientation for transit use based on the four demographic characteristics. Other categories were indicated as having "High," "Medium," and "Low" orientations, respectively. Using this composite ranking, each study area Census block group was ranked as "Very High," "High," "Medium," or "Low" in their levels of transit orientation.

Understanding the intensity of population density also is important when considering transit service for a block group with orientation towards transit. If a block group has a high orientation towards

transit but is very low in population density, a transit agency may find it difficult to justify allocating its limited resources to serve that area. Likewise, an agency can benefit if it knows a certain area that is very highly oriented towards transit also is highly dense in population. As a result, TOI categories were cross-tabulated with area density to maximize the effectiveness of the TOI developed for the study area. In addition, a "Very Low" TOI category was created to identify the lowest-density areas from this analysis.

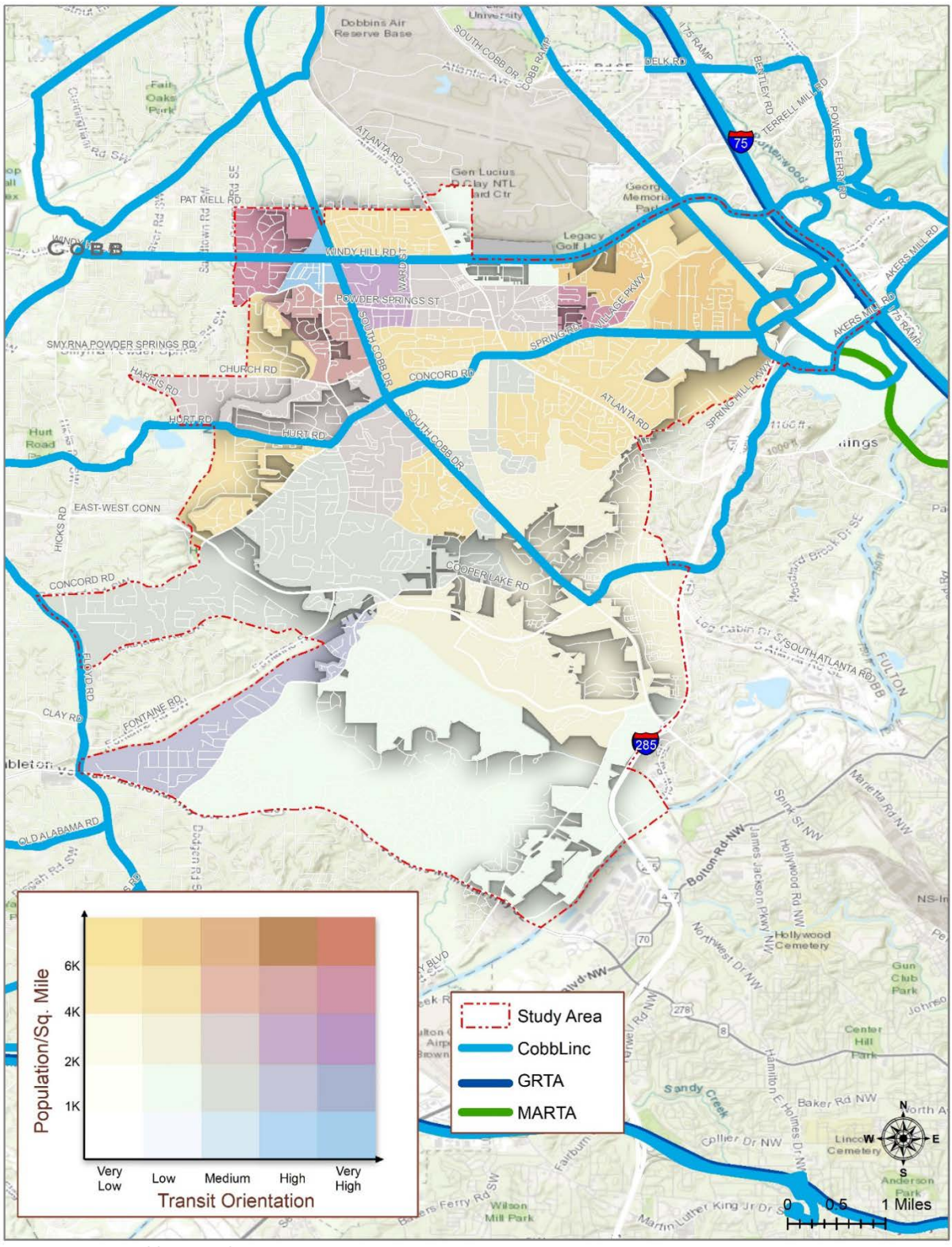
Map 5-1 illustrates the 2017 TOI in terms of population density, reflecting areas throughout Smyrna with varying traditional market potential. Transit orientation maps for each demographic category also were developed and are provided in Appendix A.

Traditional Market Summary

Results from the traditional transit market analysis are as follows:

- **Traditional Market Demand North of Concord/Spring Road**
  - Most areas with a high or very high orientation towards transit live in the northern parts of the city along major roadways and are served by existing transit services.
  - Block groups identified as having a high orientation towards transit are along South Cobb Drive and in two neighboring block groups—south of Windy Hill Road and north of Church Road.
  - Two block groups with a very high orientation towards transit and a high population density are served by existing transit services—the area between Spring Road and Village Parkway south of Windy Hills Road, served by Route 25, and the area west of South Cobb Drive on the north and south sides of Windy Hill Road, served by routes 15 and 20.
- **Traditional Market Demand South of Concord/Spring Road**
  - No areas south of Concord/Spring Road have a very high orientation towards transit.
  - Most areas of block groups that have a medium orientation towards transit along Concord/Spring Road and South Cobb Drive are served by multiple existing routes.
  - Only one block group in the southwestern part of the study area has a high orientation—the area adjacent to Cooper Lake Road. Most of this block group is outside the City limits and generally is not served by existing transit services.

Map 5-1:Traditional Markets and Transit Orientation Benchmarks



Data Source: CobbLinc and 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Choice Rider Markets

The choice rider market includes potential riders living and/or working in higher-density areas that may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative. A Density Threshold Assessment (DTA) was conducted, which uses industry-standard density thresholds to identify areas within the study area that exhibit transit-supportive residential and employee density levels today as well as in the future. Socioeconomic data for the study area, including dwelling unit and employment data developed for the regional travel demand model, were used to conduct the DTA.

Density Threshold Assessment Methodology

Regionally-developed socioeconomic data, including dwelling unit and employment data at the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) level, were obtained for the analysis. Using these data variables through a process of interpolation, existing (2020) and future (2040) dwelling unit and employment data were derived and analyzed.

Three density thresholds, developed based on industry standards/research, were used to indicate whether an area is characterized by enough density to sustain some level of fixed-route transit operations:

- **Minimum investment** reflects minimum dwelling unit or employment densities to consider basic fixed-route transit services (i.e., hourly local fixed-route bus service).
- **High investment** reflects increased dwelling unit or employment densities that may be able to support higher levels of transit investment (i.e., increased frequencies, express bus, premium transit) than areas meeting only the minimum-density threshold.
- **Very high investment** reflects very high dwelling unit or employment densities that may be able to support more significant levels of transit investment (i.e., very high frequency services, high-capacity premium transit services, etc.) than areas meeting the minimum or high-density thresholds.

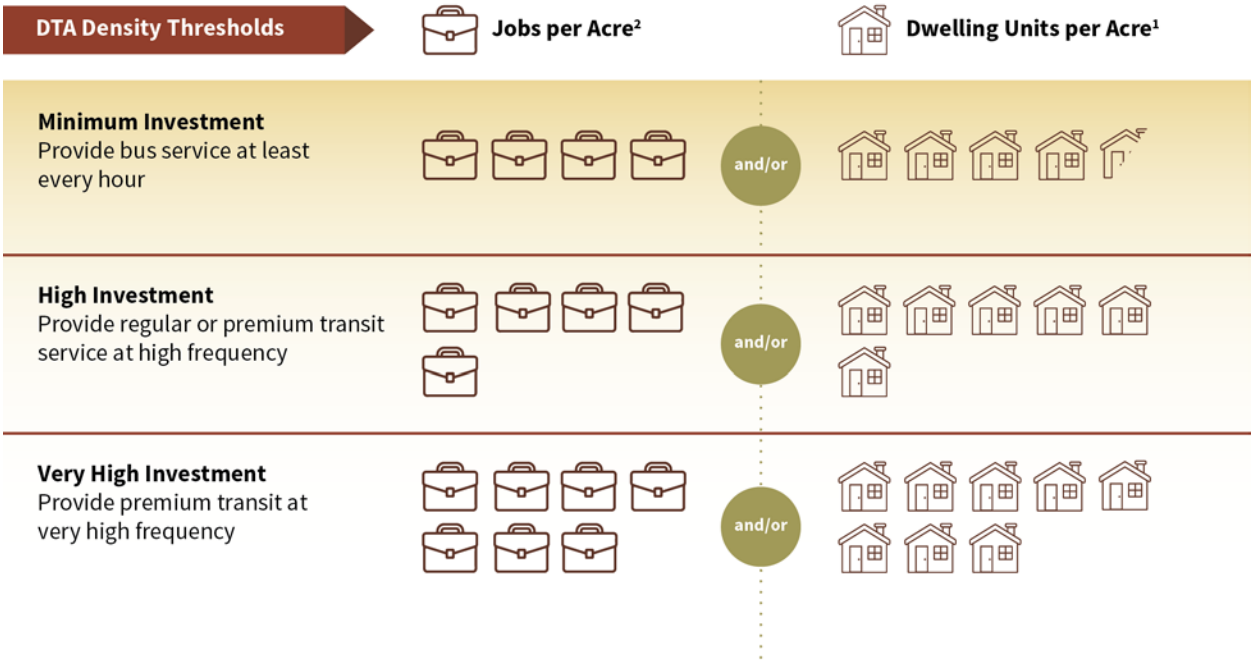
Table 5-1 summarizes and Figure 5-2 illustrates the dwelling unit and employment density thresholds associated with each transit investment.

Table 5-1: DTA Density Thresholds

Level of Transit Investment	Dwelling Unit Density Minimum /Threshold[1]	Employment Density Minimum/Threshold[2]
Minimum Investment	4.5–5 dwelling units/acre	4 employees/acre
High Investment	6–7 dwelling units/acre	5–6 employees/acre
Very High Investment	≥8 dwelling units/acre	≥7 employees/acre

[1] TRB, National Research Council, TCRP Report 16, Volume 1 (1996), "Transit and Land Use Form," November 2002, MTC Resolution 3434 TOD Policy for Regional Transit Expansion Projects.
[2] Based on review of research on relationship between transit technology and employment densities.

Figure 5-2: DTA Density Thresholds



¹ TRB, National Research Council, TCRP Report 16, Volume 1 (1996), "Transit and Land Use Form," November 2002, MTC Resolution 3434 TOD Policy for Regional Transit Expansion Projects.
² Based on review of research on relationship between transit technology and employment densities.

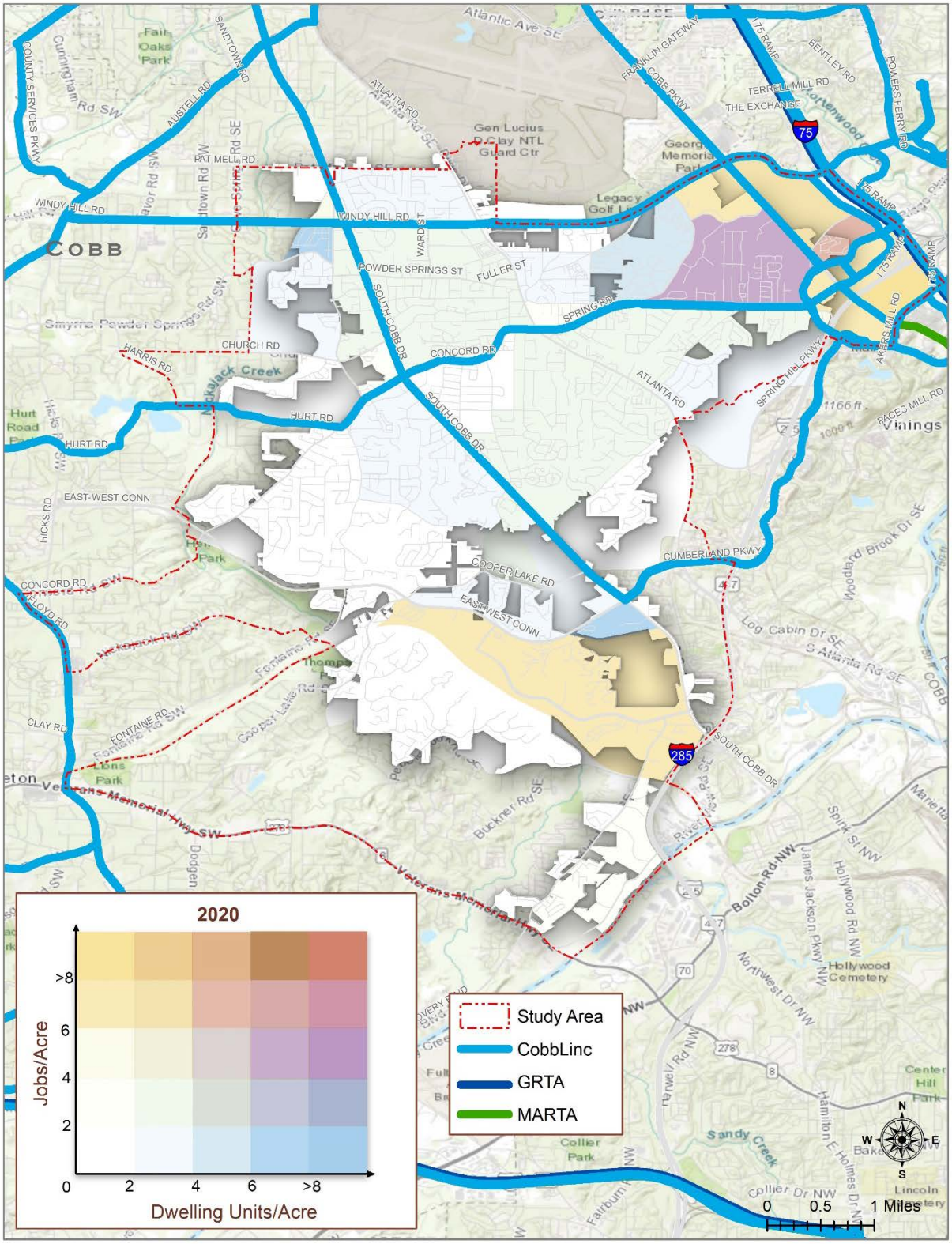
Density Threshold Assessment Summary

Maps 5-2 and 5-3 illustrate the results of the 2020 and 2040 DTA analyses conducted for the study area, identifying areas that support different levels of transit investment based on existing and projected dwelling unit and employment densities. As shown, the difference between the 2020 and 2040 employment and population density threshold maps are minimal, except for the Cumberland CID area, where job and dwelling density increases by 2040, as expected. These maps also show the existing transit network to gauge how well current transit services cover the areas of the study area that are considered supportive of at least a minimum level of transit investment.

The DTA analysis indicates that the choice transit markets in Smyrna are clustered primarily in the Cumberland area where there are high employment densities. The findings are summarized as follows:

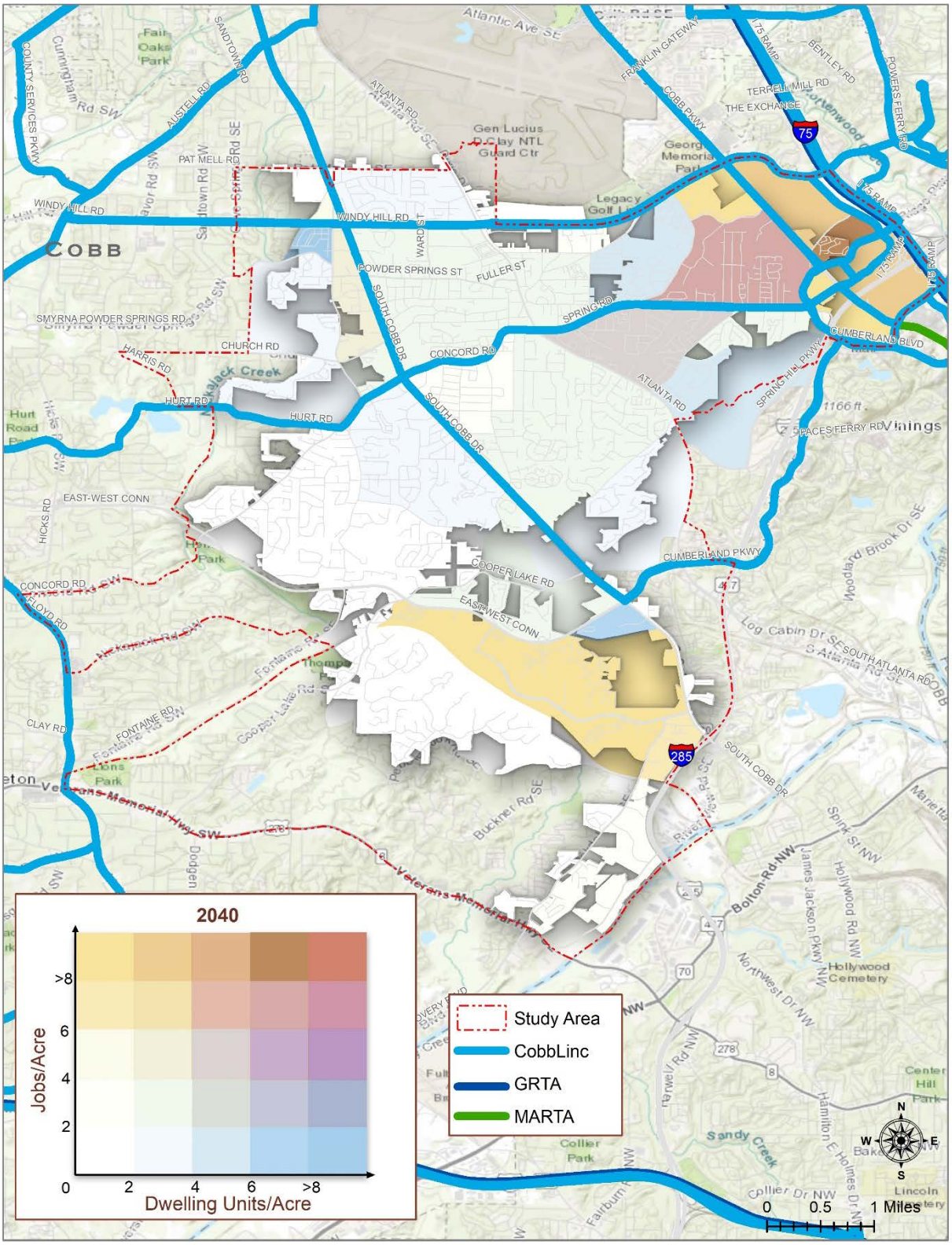
- **Choice Market Demand North of Spring Road/Concord Road**
  - Areas with higher levels of dwelling unit density in 2020 and 2040 are located between the East-West Connector and South Cobb Drive, adjacent to Windy Hill Road and South Cobb Drive, and between Windy Hill Road and Spring Road. Many parts of these areas that meet dwelling unit density thresholds for high and very high transit investment are already served by existing transit services.

Map 5-2: Choice Markets and Density Thresholds, 2020



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Map 5-3: Choice Markets and Density Thresholds, 2040



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

- Areas that meet the high or very high employment density thresholds are located east of the Cobb Parkway between Windy Hill Road, Circle 75 Parkway, and Akers Mills Road in the Cumberland/Galleria area. The areas that meet the high or very high dwelling unit thresholds are located north of Spring Road between Village Parkway and Cobb Parkway and south of Windy Hill Road west of South Cobb Drive.
- Current areas that are considered high or very high for both dwelling unit thresholds and employment thresholds for transit investments are contiguous and located adjacent to Spring Road and Cobb Parkway and between Cobb Parkway and Circle 75 Parkway.
- Based on the 2040 DTA, the above area would remain at the high and very high employment and dwelling unit thresholds. The areas that will experience the most growth in both employment and dwelling unit density are located east of Village Parkway on Spring Road and in the Cumberland/Galleria area.

- **Choice Market Demand South of Spring/Concord Road**
  - Areas that meet the high or very high employment thresholds are located adjacent to I-285 and South Cobb Drive along the East-West Connector.
  - Areas that meet the high or very high dwelling unit thresholds are located between the East-West Connector and South Cobb Drive.

Based on the 2040 DTA, these areas remain at the high and very high employment and dwelling unit thresholds. New areas in 2040 that will meet the minimums for employment or dwelling unit density are located south of Spring Road, adjacent to Atlanta Road, and adjacent to I-285 and Atlanta Road.

Internal Travel Markets

An understanding of travel flows is important for identifying origin and destination (OD) pairs with potential for new or increased transit services. The Internal Travel Markets analysis builds on the analysis of key activity centers and travel patterns documented previously by identifying overall travel flows for the study area and flows for the following specific market segments:

- **Low-income populations** are travelers with low incomes who have no vehicles available or who live in a household with more workers than available vehicles.
- **Full-time workers** are travelers who commute to full-time jobs on a regular basis.
- **Part-time workers** are travelers who commute to part-time jobs and may work irregular hours and schedules.
- **University students** are travelers enrolled in colleges and universities that travel to campus and may have irregular schedules.
- **Retirees** are travelers who no longer commute to full- or part-time employment and may have irregular schedules.

Each transit market segment identified above has different travel needs and desires that affect their preferences about transit services. The purpose of a travel flow analysis is to identify origin-destination (OD) pairs with high travel demand for each market segment to inform the needs/gap

analysis and ultimately provide a basis for recommending transit service strategies and improvements.

Methodology and Data

The data and discussions in this section are based on information derived from ARC Activity-Based Model (ABM) platform (often referred to as "the regional model"). Model runs for future conditions are for 2040 and include the existing transportation network plus the improvements included in ARC's RTP for which funding has been identified. This analysis takes advantage of increased demographic detail available through the ABM to identify targeted groups of travelers and provide a better understanding of how different market segments of the population move within the study area.

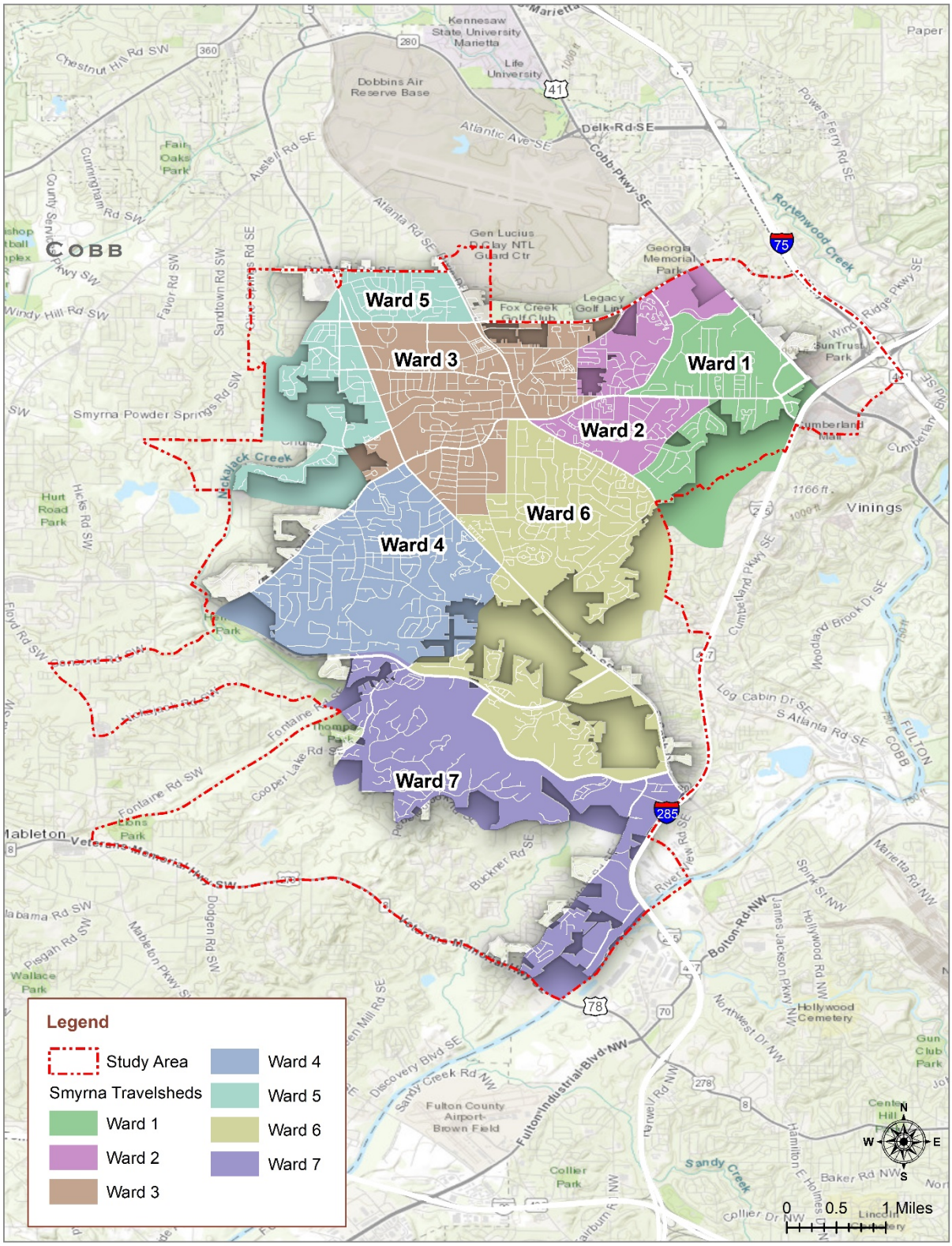
As defined previously, City ward-based travelsheds were used for this analysis. This City ward designation is a convenient and easily-identifiable method to accumulate trip-making characteristics for each travelshed within the city. There are seven distinct travelsheds, as defined by the City ward boundaries for this process and shown on Map 5-4.

Overall Internal Travel Flows

Prior to analyzing market segments, travel OD data for all trips were used to develop an overall understanding of forecasted travel within Smyrna. Table 5-2 shows the top 10 forecasted travel pairs within Smyrna for all trips. Key findings for travel within Smyrna include the following:

- Six of the top 10 travel pairs are internal to the wards, showing a strong demand for short trips and circulation within Smyrna.
- Travel from Ward 5 to Ward 3 is the sixth-highest flow and is likely driven by the mix of residential and commercial destinations in each ward as well as the proximity of the wards to each other.
- The seventh-highest flow is from Ward 2 to Ward 1, both of which have a mix of commercial and residential destinations like Wards 5 and 3.
- Ward 6 to Ward 1 is the eighth-highest flow, likely caused by residents traveling to employment opportunities in the commercial areas in Ward 1.

Map 5-4: Smyrna Travelsheds



Data Source: ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Table 5-2: Total Top Travel Pairs within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 6	Ward 6	4,310
Ward 1	Ward 1	2,880
Ward 3	Ward 3	2,390
Ward 5	Ward 5	1,330
Ward 2	Ward 2	1,240
Ward 5	Ward 3	1,240
Ward 2	Ward 1	1,100
Ward 6	Ward 1	1,010
Ward 1	Ward 2	960
Ward 4	Ward 4	920

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB.

Low-Income Market Segment

Table 5-3 shows the top 10 forecasted travel pairs for travelers within Smyrna who have low incomes, have zero available vehicles, or live in a household with more workers than available vehicles. Key travel flow insights for the low-income travel market within Smyrna include the following:

- The highest travel flows are internal to Ward 6, which includes industrial land uses around Highlands Parkway and South Cobb Parkway as well as single- and multi-family homes throughout the travelshed.
- The second- and third-highest flows are internal to Ward 1 and Ward 3, both of which have significant commercial land uses as well as single- and multi-family homes.
- The fourth-highest travel flows are internal to Ward 5, which has a mix of commercial and residential uses like Wards 1 and 3.
- Ward 5 to Ward 3 is the fifth-highest travel flow, and both travelsheds have a mix of commercial and residential uses.

Table 5-3: Low-Income Transit Market Top Travel Pairs within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 6	Ward 6	950
Ward 1	Ward 1	870
Ward 3	Ward 3	790
Ward 5	Ward 5	370
Ward 5	Ward 3	340
Ward 2	Ward 2	330
Ward 2	Ward 1	310
Ward 1	Ward 2	300
Ward 3	Ward 2	240
Ward 6	Ward 1	230

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB.

Full-time Worker Market Segment

Table 5-4 shows the top 10 forecasted travel pairs for commuters with full-time jobs in Smyrna. Key travel flow insights for this segment include the following:

- Like the low-income transit market, the top three travel flows are internal to Wards 6, 1, and 3.
- The third- and fourth-highest flows are internal to Wards 2 and 7, respectively.
- All top 10 full-time worker flows that are not internal to wards are between adjacent wards, indicating short trip lengths.

Table 5-4: Full-time Worker Market Top Travel Pairs within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 6	Ward 6	2,490
Ward 1	Ward 1	1,160
Ward 3	Ward 3	910
Ward 2	Ward 2	620
Ward 7	Ward 7	600
Ward 6	Ward 7	540
Ward 2	Ward 1	480
Ward 5	Ward 5	460
Ward 7	Ward 6	440
Ward 5	Ward 3	420

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Part-time worker Market Segment

Table 5-5 shows the top 10 forecasted travel pairs for commuters with part-time jobs. Key travel flow insights for this market include the following:

- The top three trip pairs for the part-time worker market are the same as those for the low-income transit market and full-time worker market, and the fourth-highest trip pair for the part- time worker market is the same as the low-income transit market.

Table 5-5: Part-time Worker Market Top Travel Pairs within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 6	Ward 6	570
Ward 1	Ward 1	310
Ward 3	Ward 3	270
Ward 5	Ward 5	160
Ward 5	Ward 3	150
Ward 2	Ward 1	140
Ward 2	Ward 2	140
Ward 1	Ward 2	110
Ward 4	Ward 4	110
Ward 7	Ward 7	90

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

University Student Market Segment

Table 5-6 shows the top 10 forecasted travel pairs for university students in Smyrna. Key travel flow insights for this segment include the following:

- The university student market segment was the smallest in terms of daily trip numbers, and all top 10 trips for this segment are internal to the wards or between adjacent wards.
- Like the low-income and full-and part-time worker markets, the top three travel flows are internal to Wards 6, 1, and 3.

Table 5-6: University Student Market Top Travel Pairs within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 6	Ward 6	110
Ward 1	Ward 1	100
Ward 3	Ward 3	80
Ward 1	Ward 2	50
Ward 2	Ward 2	40
Ward 5	Ward 5	40
Ward 3	Ward 2	30
Ward 5	Ward 3	30
Ward 2	Ward 1	30
Ward 4	Ward 4	20

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Retiree Market Segment

Table 5-7 shows the top 10 forecasted travel pairs for retirees. Key travel flow insights for this segment include the following:

- The number of retiree market trips is just below that of the part-time worker market.
- Like the low-income and full-and part-time worker markets, the top three travel flows are internal to Wards 6 and 1.

Table 5-7: Retiree Market Segment Top Travel Pairs within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 6	Ward 6	470
Ward 1	Ward 1	400
Ward 3	Ward 3	210
Ward 5	Ward 5	180
Ward 4	Ward 4	140
Ward 2	Ward 1	140
Ward 2	Ward 2	130
Ward 5	Ward 3	130
Ward 6	Ward 1	110
Ward 1	Ward 2	90

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Regional/Commuter Markets

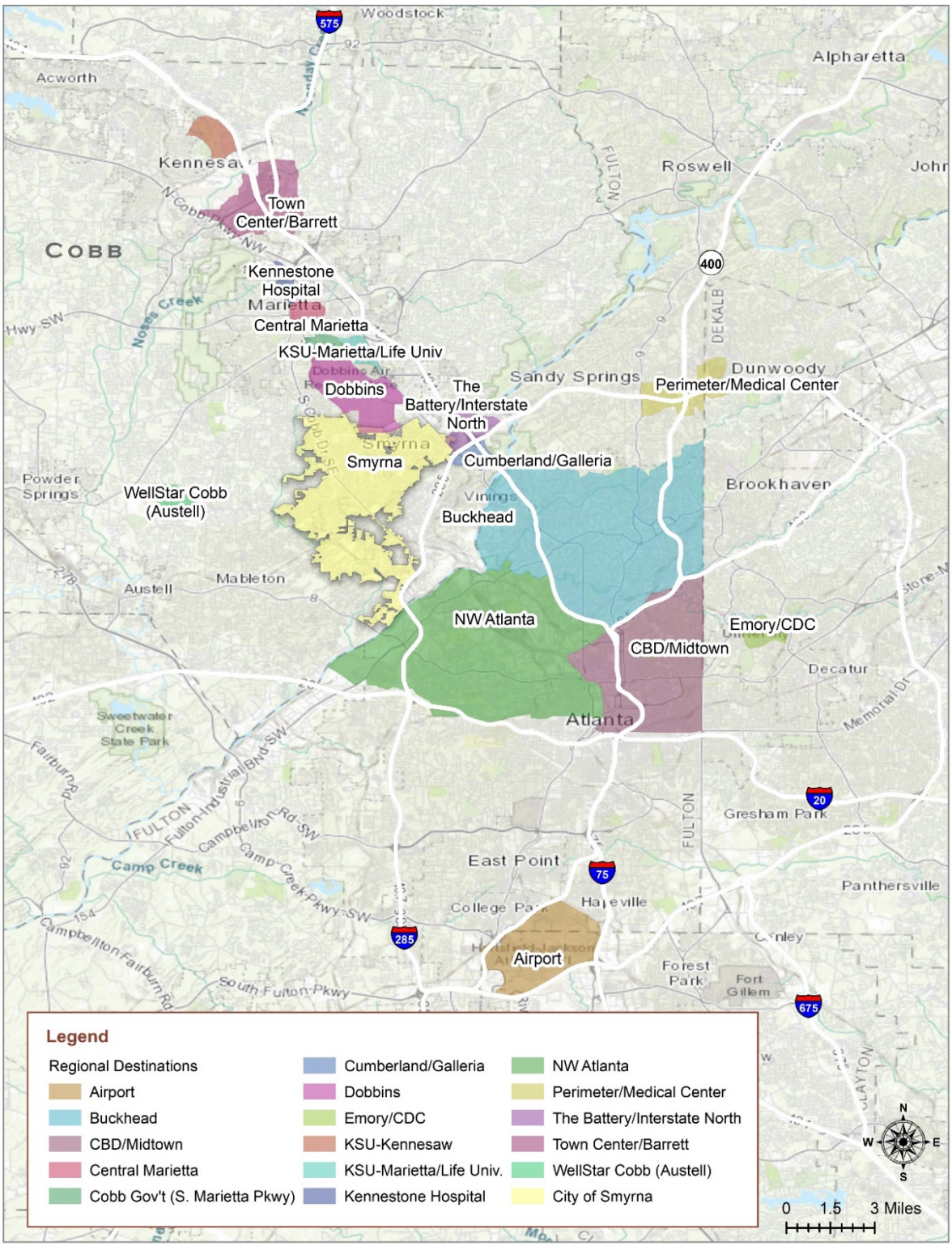
Because Smyrna is an integral part of the larger metropolitan Atlanta region, travel flows between Smyrna and key regional destinations also were identified and analyzed. An understanding of regional trip flows is important for determining the most popular travel pairs and coordinating with partner transit agencies such as MARTA and SRTA/GRTA to increase regional connectivity.

Regional Activity Centers/Destinations

Regional destinations are defined as traditional downtown areas and major employment centers such as the Cumberland/Galleria area or the Central Perimeter. For this analysis, 16 regional destinations were identified, as listed below; Map 5-5 shows the locations of these regional destinations/activity centers:

- The Battery/Interstate North
- Cumberland/Galleria
- Town Center/Barrett Parkway
- Central Marietta
- KSU-Marietta/Life University
- KSU-Kennesaw
- Cobb County Government (South Marietta Parkway)
- Dobbins Airforce Base
- Downtown/Midtown Atlanta
- Northwest Atlanta
- Buckhead
- Perimeter Center/Medical Center
- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
- Kennestone Hospital
- WellStar Cobb (Austell)
- Emory/CDC

Map 5-5: Regional Activity Centers/Destinations



Data Source: ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Total Regional Travel Flows

Prior to dividing the regional travel flows into sub-markets, total trips between Smyrna and regional activity centers were analyzed to gain an understanding of overall trip patterns. Table 5-8 shows the top 10 origins and destinations for all regional trips. Key insights from the analysis of regional travel flows include the following:

- The highest travel flow from Smyrna to the region is from Ward 1 to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, likely for employment opportunities in the commercial and office developments in The Battery/Interstate North Parkway travelshed.
- The second-highest flow is from Ward 1 to Cumberland/Galleria, which is adjacent to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, which also has high density commercial land uses.
- Travel from The Battery/Interstate North Parkway to Ward 1 is the third-highest flow and the reverse of the top travel flow, indicating strong trip demand in both directions between these two travelsheds. The residential component of the mixed-use developments in The Battery/Interstate North Parkway traveling to commercial areas in Ward 1 likely drive this flow.
- Ward 6 has substantial trip flows to CBD/Midtown, Buckhead, and Northwest Atlanta, indicating a strong flow to employment destinations in Atlanta from Smyrna.

Table 5-8: Total Top Regional Travel Pairs (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 1	The Battery/Interstate North	1,620
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	1,440
The Battery/Interstate North	Ward 1	1,110
Ward 6	CBD/Midtown	1,080
Ward 6	Buckhead	1,060
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	1,050
NW Atlanta	Ward 6	940
Ward 1	Buckhead	920
Cumberland/Galleria	Ward 1	880
Ward 5	Cobb Govt (S Marietta Pkwy)	870

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB.

Low-Income Market Segment

Travel pairs between Smyrna and key regional activity centers for the low-income transit market were analyzed, and the results are shown in Table 5-9. Key findings from this analysis of trips between Smyrna and the region include the following:

- Ward 1 to The Battery/Interstate North has the highest travel flow between Smyrna and the regional activity centers and likely is comprised of residents in the single- and multi-family developments in Ward 1 traveling to employment opportunities in The Battery and along Interstate North Parkway.

- Northwest Atlanta to Ward 6 is the second-highest travel flow and likely is driven by the industrial and commercial land uses in Ward 6 attracting workers living in Northwest Atlanta.
- Ward 1 to Cumberland/Galleria is a similar travel pattern to The Battery/Interstate North and is the third-highest travel flow.
- The fourth- and fifth-highest flows are the reverse of the Ward 1 to The Battery/Interstate North and Cumberland/Galleria flows.

Table 5-9: Low-Income Transit Market Top Travel Pairs between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 1	The Battery/Interstate North	430
NW Atlanta	Ward 6	400
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	330
The Battery/Interstate North	Ward 1	270
Cumberland/Galleria	Ward 1	230
Ward 5	Cobb Govt (S Marietta Pkwy)	220
NW Atlanta	Ward 7	210
Ward 1	Buckhead	210
Ward 1	CBD/Midtown	180
Ward 3	Cobb Govt (S Marietta Pkwy)	150

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Full-time Worker Market Segment

For the full-time worker transit market, travel pairs between Smyrna and key regional activity centers were analyzed, and the results are shown in Table 5-10. Key findings from the analysis of full-time worker trip flows between Smyrna and the region include the following:

- The highest flow is Ward 1 to The Battery/Interstate North. Conversely, the fourth-highest flow is from The Battery/Interstate North to Ward 1, indicating a strong travel demand in both directions for full-time workers.
- The second-highest flow is from Ward 1 to Cumberland/Galleria, which is adjacent to The Battery/Interstate North.
- The third-highest flow is from Ward 6 to the Central Business District (CBD)/Midtown, and the sixth-highest flow is from Ward 1, which is adjacent to Ward 6, and CBD/Midtown, indicating a strong flow from Smyrna to employment opportunities in the core of the region.
- The fifth-highest flow is from Ward 6 to Northwest Atlanta, which extends west to Fulton Industrial Boulevard.

Table 5-10: Full-time Worker Market Top Travel Pairs between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 1	The Battery/Interstate North	850
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	840
Ward 6	CBD/Midtown	760
The Battery/Interstate North	Ward 1	660
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	650
Ward 1	CBD/Midtown	620
Ward 6	Buckhead	600
Cumberland/Galleria	Ward 1	520
Ward 1	Buckhead	480
NW Atlanta	Ward 6	470

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Part-time Worker Market Segment

Travel flows between Smyrna and key regional activity centers were analyzed for the part-time worker market. Table 5-11 shows the results of this analysis. Key findings regarding part-time worker trips between Smyrna and the region include the following:

- The highest travel flow for the part-time worker market from Ward 1 to Cumberland Galleria is the same as for the full-time worker market, indicating a strong connection between residential areas in Ward 1 and employment opportunities in the Cumberland/Galleria activity center.
- The third-highest flow is from Northwest Atlanta to Ward 6, which also has a high trip flow for the low-income market, indicating this may be a reverse commute flow.
- The fourth-highest trip is from Ward 6 to NW Atlanta, showing strong two-way travel demand.

Table 5-11: Part-time Worker Market Top Travel Pairs between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 1	The Battery/Interstate North	200
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	170
NW Atlanta	Ward 6	150
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	120
The Battery/Interstate North	Ward 1	110
Cumberland/Galleria	Ward 1	100
Ward 6	CBD/Midtown	100
Ward 1	CBD/Midtown	100
Ward 1	Buckhead	100
Ward 2	Cumberland/Galleria	90

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

University Student Market Segment

For the university student market, travel pairs between Smyrna and key regional activity centers were analyzed, and the results are shown in Table 5-12. Key findings include the following:

- The highest travel flow is from Ward 1 to KSU-Marietta/Life University, and the sixth-highest flow is from Ward 2 to the same destination.
- The second-highest flow is forecasted to be from Ward 6 to CBD/Midtown, and the third-highest flow is from Ward 1, which is adjacent to Ward 6, to CBD/Midtown.
- Ward 1 to The Battery/Interstate North and Cumberland/Galleria are the fourth- and fifth-highest flows.

Table 5-12: University Student Market Top Travel Pairs between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 1	KSU-Marietta/Life Univ	60
Ward 6	CBD/Midtown	60
Ward 1	CBD/Midtown	50
Ward 1	The Battery/Interstate North	50
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	50
Ward 2	KSU-Marietta/Life Univ	40
Ward 6	KSU-Marietta/Life Univ	40
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	30
Ward 6	KSU-Kennesaw	30
Ward 3	KSU-Marietta/Life Univ	30

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB

Retiree Market Segment

As shown in Table 5-13, trip activity for travel pairs between Smyrna and regional activity centers for the retiree market were analyzed. Key findings from this analysis include the following:

- The highest travel flow is from Ward 1 to Cumberland Galleria and the second-highest is from Ward 1 to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, indicating high demand between Ward 1 and these adjacent activity centers.
- Conversely, the fourth-highest flow is from The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, which mirrors the second-highest flow and can potentially increase transit service productivity.
- The third-highest flow is between Northwest Atlanta and Ward 6.

Table 5-13: Retiree Market Top Travel Pairs between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)

Origin Travelshed	Destination Travelshed	Daily Trips
Ward 1	Cumberland/Galleria	220
Ward 1	The Battery/Interstate North	180
NW Atlanta	Ward 6	110
The Battery/Interstate North	Ward 1	100
Ward 6	Buckhead	100
Ward 2	The Battery/Interstate North	80
Ward 6	NW Atlanta	80
Ward 2	Cumberland/Galleria	80
NW Atlanta	Ward 7	70
Ward 1	Buckhead	70

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model, VHB.

Section 6: Gap Analysis

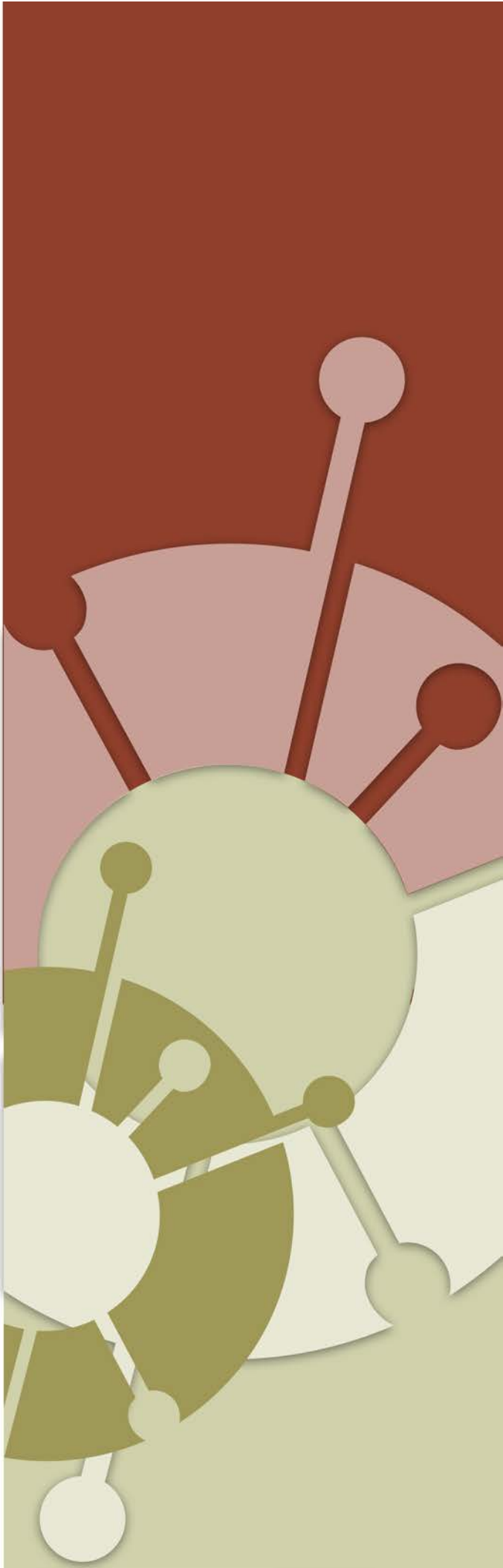
Most transit agencies strive to ensure appropriate coverage of their routes and services for essential community services such as employment, affordable housing, educational facilities, and medical/social service facilities, among others. However, it often is the case that connectivity gaps occur as underlying demand and travel patterns change in reaction to the continuing evolution of a community's growth and development patterns.

As such, it is important to continue to assess potential connectivity gaps to ensure access to major origins and destinations, both internally and regionally. To this end, criteria-based methods were developed with appropriate locally-adjusted thresholds to assess connectivity to essential travel hot spots.

A service gap analysis was conducted for the two main travel markets, local (internal) and regional (external), identified previously. This was done to ensure that the study clearly identifies the connectivity gaps internal to the study area apart from gauging regional connectivity gaps. Regional/external gaps were analyzed using a different methodology that may not capture local needs.

Local/Internal Gap Analysis

Local gap analysis focused on gaps in service within the study area, mainly including Smyrna and some selected key areas adjacent to the city. Although this area is currently served mainly by CobbLinc and by MARTA to some extent, there may be spatial or temporal needs that either are not served or are underserved that should be considered for service. A key objective of this part of the study was to identify these local gaps of service so improvement strategies can be developed in the next steps to meet internal connectivity needs today and in the future. The local gap analysis used GIS-based tools and criteria/methodologies to identify the gaps in the traditional and choice rider markets in the city and the surroundings areas.



Traditional Rider Market Gaps

It is important for any suburban transit system to adequately serve its traditional rider market, which includes low-income, older-adult, and youth populations and zero-car households, as they are the "base" ridership upon which most suburban and rural transit systems can depend. As this market traditionally provides a higher percentage of riders than choice markets in rural and/or suburban areas such as Smyrna, identifying where these current and potential riders are located and connecting them to their desired destination is key to capturing this base ridership.

A methodology that uses selected levels of traditional market intensity and existing services was used to identify the gaps in service in traditional transit market, as summarized below.

Traditional Market Gap Analysis Methodology

The TOI, which identified the locations of traditional transit markets, was used to support the gap analysis. To prioritize and emphasize areas that may have the most demand, only areas with high and very high transit orientation were used for this analysis.

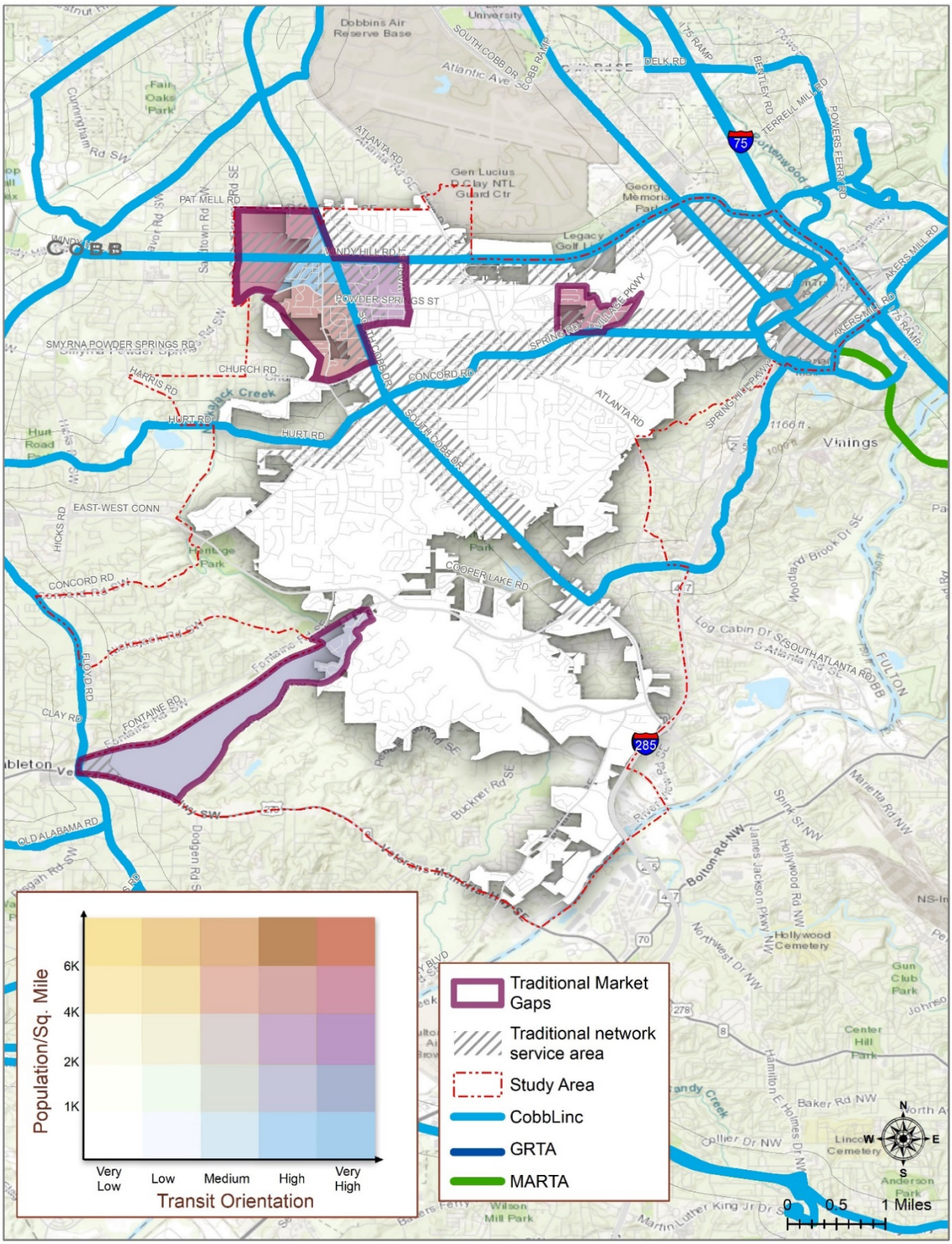
A review of the current services also was conducted, and any fixed-route bus service that provides 60-minute or better service frequency was considered as meeting the minimum traditional market needs. Using GIS, all current CobbLinc and MARTA services that operate in the study area and meet the criteria for serving traditional markets (areas with very high and high transit orientation) are assumed to be served by transit today. All routes currently operating in Smyrna, including CobbLinc routes 10, 15, 20, 25, and Rapid 10 and the two circulators, meet these criteria.

The service area for the routes was defined as a ¼-mile buffer around each route and included only the areas with walk access to transit. The resulting traditional market areas (areas currently not served or underserved) were flagged for further analysis.

After analysis of the whole study area, each gap in service was analyzed to identify the underlying demand generators that may indicate need for new transit or more transit. This allowed for understanding the demographic category or categories needing service in these areas. For example, is it an area with very high older-adult population or an area with a combination of two or more traditional markets? Distinguishing this information can help to better meet their needs.

Results of the analysis are illustrated in Map 6-1 and summarized thereafter.

Map 6-1: Gaps in Traditional Markets



Data Source: CobbLinc and 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Traditional Market Gap Analysis Results

Findings from this analysis are summarized as follows.

- **Gaps North of Concord/Spring Road**
  - Four block groups north of Concord/Spring Road are considered to have a high or very high orientation towards transit, and three are clustered near the Windy Hill Road and South Cobb Drive, making that area a potential candidate for a circulator/flex-type transit service as a feeder to the existing arterial transit services.
  - A block group south of Windy Hill Road and on South Cobb Drive is considered to have a high orientation, primarily due to a higher percentage of zero-vehicle households and a significant percentage of older adults in that area. This block group also has a population density of 2,000–4,000 persons per square mile. Currently, 30-minute frequency service is accessible to a majority of this block group via South Cobb Drive or Windy Hill Road.
  - Adjacent to the previous block group on the western side of South Cobb Drive and south of Windy Hill Road is a block group considered to have a high orientation towards transit with a population density of 4,000–6,000 persons per square mile. This block group, intersected by Powder Springs Street, has a higher percentage of youths and a significant number of zero-vehicle households. Approximately only half of this block group has access to existing transit services (30-minute frequency service) via South Cobb Drive.
  - A northern block group intersected by Windy Hill Road and west of South Cobb Drive is considered to have a very high orientation towards transit with a population density of 4,000–6,000 persons per square mile. The gap is composed of a higher percentage of older adults and zero-vehicle households and even higher percentage of households in poverty. A majority of this block group has access to existing services via South Cobb Drive or Windy Hill Road that are higher frequency.
  - The block group north of Spring Road and west of Village Parkway is considered to have a very high orientation towards transit due to a high percentage of youths and a significant number of zero-vehicle households. The block group has a population density of 4,000-6,000 persons per square mile and has access to existing transit services via Spring Road at a lower frequency of 60 minutes.
- **Gaps South of Concord/Spring Road**
  - Only one area south of Concord/Spring Road corridor is considered to have a high or a very high orientation towards transit; this block group is located south of the East-West Connector and adjacent to Fontaine Road and Veteran Memorial Highway and has a relatively low population density of 1,000–2,000 persons per square mile but a higher older-adult population and a significant number of zero-vehicle households. Transit is not accessible to a majority of this block group, except on the western portion via Floyd Road; this area may be a candidate for on-demand flex-route-type transit.

Choice Market Gaps

Whereas identifying latent demand from traditional rider populations may be key to attracting and building the base ridership for a transit service, service growth and attractiveness usually relies on expanding ridership to include choice riders. These riders not only help a transit system set higher ridership goals and improve farebox proceeds, but they are a key tool to breaking down some negative perceptions about transit and its use and role in the community. Attracting the choice market is key to improving transit's impact on business and economic development and making transit a viable alternative to auto travel in Smyrna.

The choice market gap analysis methodology, as summarized below, used the findings from the DTA assessment previously described in combination with transit service data for the city and its immediate surroundings.

Methodology for Redefining Choice Markets

Although the DTA defined any area with 4.5 dwelling units or 4 jobs as transit-supportive, this minimum threshold was adjusted for this analysis to 6 dwelling units and/or 6 jobs to be considered a choice transit market for this gap analysis. This adjustment was made because to be attractive to choice riders, transit services will need to provide service more frequent than a bus coming every 60 minutes.

A threshold of 4.5 dwelling units or 4 jobs corresponds to hourly service, and 8 dwelling units or 7 jobs corresponds to a very high transit investment such as exclusive-lane BRT or light rail with 15-minute or more frequency. For this analysis, areas with at least 6 dwelling units and/or 6 jobs were identified as choice market areas needing at least 30-minute service.

Once these adjusted thresholds were set, areas meeting these density threshold for job and dwelling units in the 2040 DTA were defined as choice markets and used for the analysis. The 2040 DTA was used instead of 2020 DTA to ensure that *Smyrna Connects* plans for future conditions.

Methodology for Defining Choice Network

Like the traditional market gap analysis, a review of current services in the study area was conducted to determine the bus service network applicable to the choice market. However, as the needs and habits of the choice markets can be different, the following transit factors were considered before determining the criteria that meet the choice market needs:

- **Service Frequency** – Choice riders are generally more sensitive to service quality, especially frequency. For the purpose of this analysis, routes with service frequencies of 15 minutes or better, at least during AM and PM peak hours, were considered as attractive to draw choice riders. In addition, routes with 30-minute frequency also were included. Lower-frequency routes were excluded, as choice riders have alternative mobility options available.
- **Accessibility, Amenities, and Wait Times** – Transit industry research has shown that regardless of the market a transit system serves, use increases as bus stops become more accessible and wait times are lower. Although it is common sense that longer wait times at

bus stops discourage transit use, past research into elasticities of demand for public transit also has shown that passenger demand increases with increases in accessibility and decreases in waiting time. Therefore, these factors also were considered to determine the route network that meets the needs of the choice riders in Smyrna.

- *Wait Times* – Assuming that CobbLinc's real-time bus tracking app technologies have minimized the wait time at bus stops and made transit more attractive, routes with 30-minute frequency were considered to draw choice riders in the study area.
- *Accessibility and Amenities* – Bus stop data were analyzed to gauge the level of accessibility and available amenities by route frequency. The data show that 40 percent of bus stops in Smyrna served by routes with 30-minute or better frequency have a bus shelter and more than 80 percent have sidewalk access.

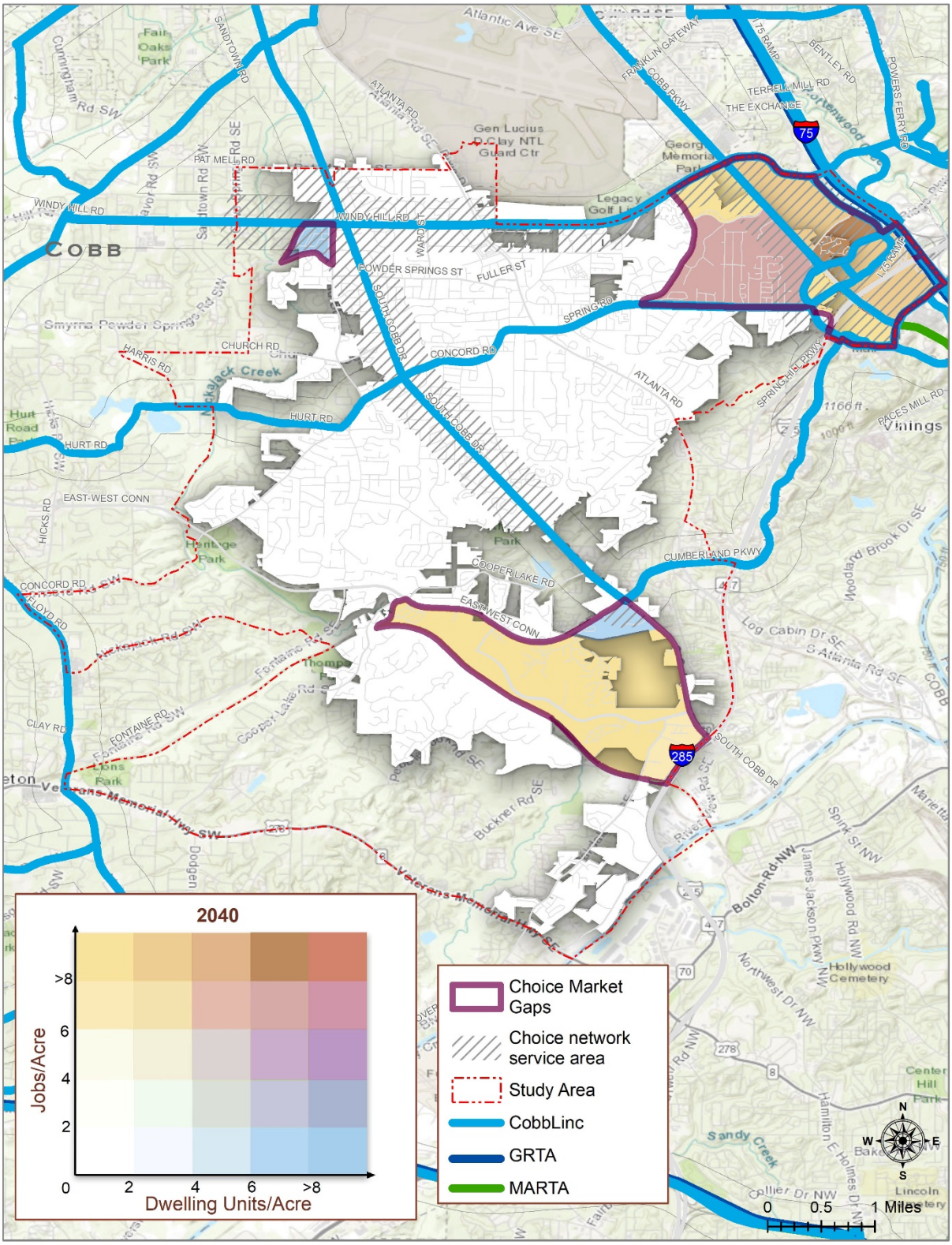
Based on these factors and a review of current transit services in the study area, CobbLinc routes 10, 15, 20, and Rapid 10, and the Cumberland Circulators were selected as the network that meets choice market needs. These routes and their ¼-mile walk access service area buffers were overlaid to determine the choice markets meeting the above criteria that are currently served by transit, and the resulting choice market gaps were flagged. Map 6-2 presents the results for the choice market gap analysis.

Choice Market Gap Analysis Results

Results of the Choice Market Gap Analysis include the following:

- **Gaps North of Concord/Spring Road**
  - The area west of South Cobb Drive and south of Windy Hill Road has more than 8 dwelling units per acre, but fewer than 2 jobs per acre. A vast majority of this area has access to transit service that is every 30 minutes or better.
  - To the east of Atlanta Road, north of Spring Road, and adjacent to Cobb Parkway are nine TAZ areas with a high density of jobs, mainly in the Cumberland/Galleria area. To the east of the Cobb Parkway and adjacent to Circle 75 Parkway is an area that has more than 8 jobs per acre and 6–8 dwelling units per acre. Adjacent to the previously-mentioned area is another high-density area containing 6–8 dwelling units and jobs per acre.
  - All other immediate areas in the Cumberland/Galleria area have more than 6 jobs per acre but fewer than 6 dwelling units per acre. A substantial number of these areas has access to transit with headways of 30 minutes or less. High-frequency service (every 15 minutes during peak hours) is available via Cobb Parkway. However, most of the area north of Spring Road and west of the Cobb Parkway does not have access to high-frequency service. This area may be a candidate for circulator or on-demand shared-ride service; whatever the option, it should have high-frequency service to serve this choice rider market.

Map 6-2: Gaps in Choice Transit Markets



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

- **Gaps South of Concord/Spring Road**
  - Five TAZ areas south of Concord/Spring Road have a high density of jobs or dwelling units (6 or more per acre). Between South Cobb Drive and the East-West Connector is an area with low employment density but more than 6 dwelling units per acre. Along the East-West Connector between South Cobb Drive and I-285 are areas with more than 8 jobs per acre but low dwelling unit density. Most of these areas do not have high-frequency service, which may be necessary to attract choice riders. The most-southern areas with a very high density of jobs but lower density dwelling units have no access to transit services. These areas may be candidates for high-frequency circulator or on-demand shared-ride service.

Local/Internal Travel Market Gaps

Daily travel flows within Smyrna can provide an understanding of internal, short-distance travel needs. Therefore, low-income population, full-time and part time workers, university students, and retiree transit markets in Smyrna were further analyzed and mapped to identify the internal short distance travel needs of each market. Mapped travel flows were compared to existing transit coverage and frequencies to identify potential gaps in service coverage.

Overall Internal Flows

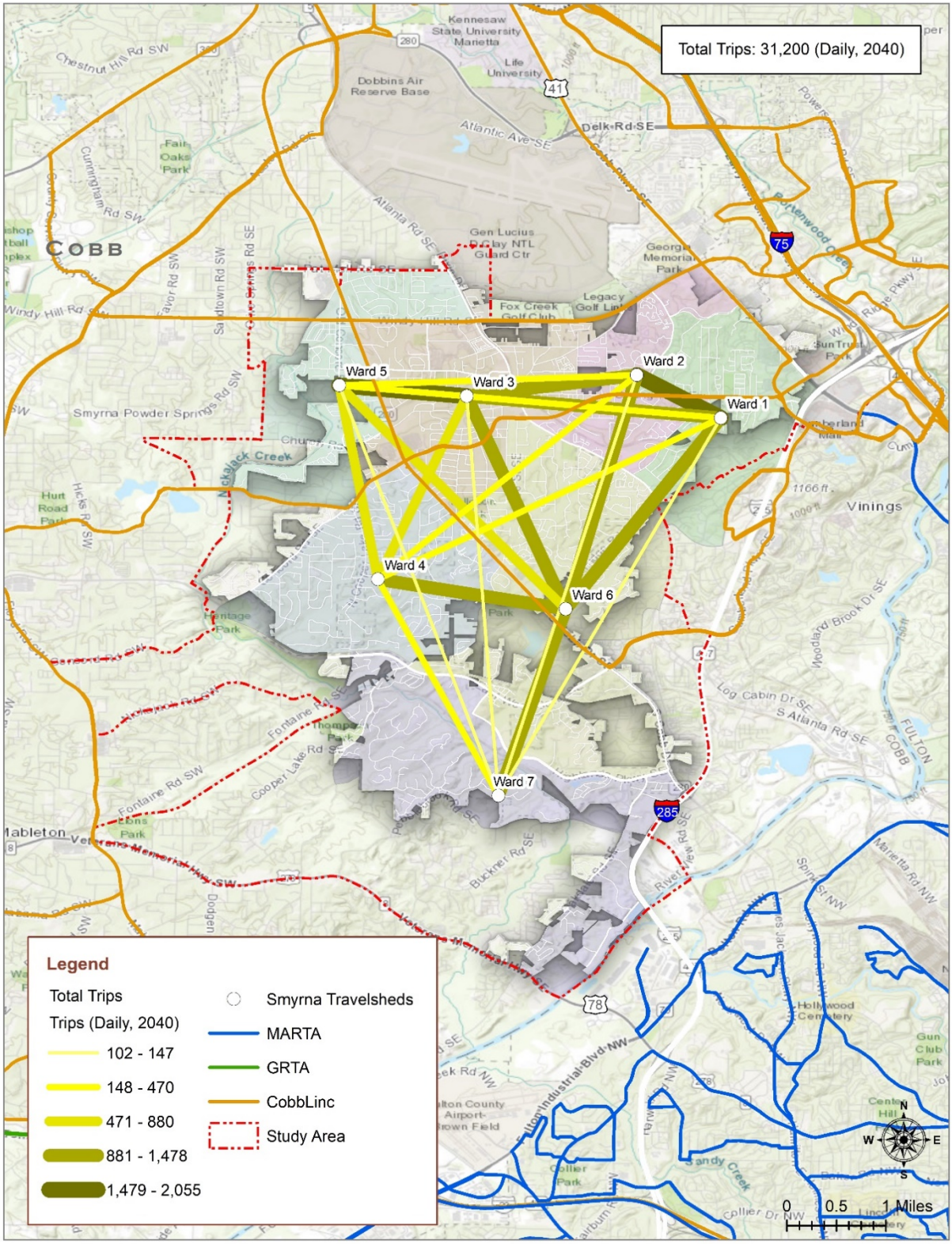
Travel flows for all ward-to-ward trips in Smyrna were mapped, as shown in Map 6-3. The northern part of Smyrna has high trip flows, which indicate potential for east-west transit due to significant travel demand. Additionally, flows to Ward 6 from Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 show potential for a mobility hub.

- Travel flows tend to be short, either within travelsheds or to adjacent travelsheds or activity centers.
- An opportunity may exist for circulator or flex-style transit service that makes short trips connecting employment and shopping opportunities with residential areas based on the high demand between adjacent travelsheds.

Based on the analysis of top internal travel flows, key findings are as follows:

- Current east-west service is provided by routes 15 and 25, which operate in the northern part of Smyrna. Route 15 frequency is currently 30 minutes, and Route 25 is 60 minutes. North-south service is provided along SR-280 (South Cobb Parkway) with a 30-minute headway, but no direct transit connection exists between the southern parts of Wards 6 and Ward 1.

Map 6-3: Overall Internal Travel Flows within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Low-Income Transit Market Segment

Travel flows for the low-income transit markets were mapped, as shown in Map 6-4. High trip flows in this market between wards in the northern part of Smyrna indicate potential for east-west transit. Additionally, flows to Ward 6 from Wards 1 and 3 show potential for north-south transit connections.

Based on the analysis of top internal travel flows for the traditional transit market, key findings are as follows:

- Travel flows for the low-income transit market tend to be short, either within travelsheds or to adjacent travelsheds or activity centers.
- The low-income transit market represents an opportunity for circulator or flex style transit service making short trips that connects employment and shopping opportunities with residential areas.
- High trip flows for the low-income transit market between Wards 1, 2, 3, and 5 indicate demand for an east-west transit connection in the northern part of Smyrna.

Current east-west service is provided by routes 15 and 25, which operate in the northern part of Smyrna. The frequency of Route 15 is currently 30 minutes, and Route 25 is 60 minutes. North-south service is provided along SR-280 (South Cobb Parkway) with a 30-minute headway, but there is no direct transit connection between southern parts of Wards 6 and Ward 1.

Full-time Worker Market Segment

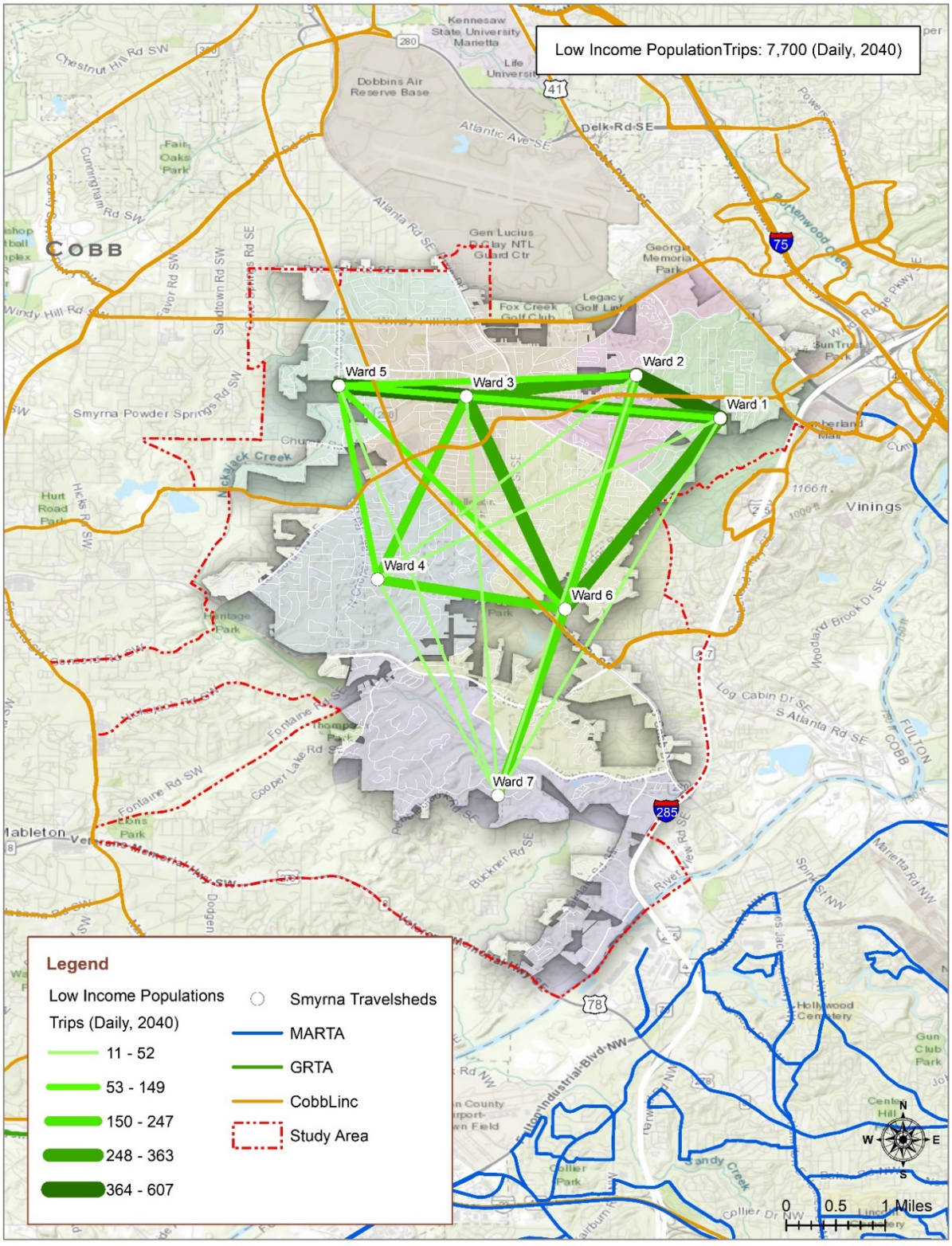
Travel flows for the full-time worker market segment were mapped, as shown in Map 6-5. High trip-flow patterns between wards indicate potential for improved north-south transit service. Additionally, Ward 6 has high travel flows to Wards 1, 3, 4, and 7, which may make it a natural location for another major transfer center (in Smyrna).

Based on the analysis of top internal travel flows for the full-time worker market, key findings are as follows:

- All top 10 full-time worker flows that are not internal to wards are between adjacent wards, indicating short trip lengths.
- The top full-time worker travel flows are shorter trips that could be served by a high-frequency service that can attract these short trips.

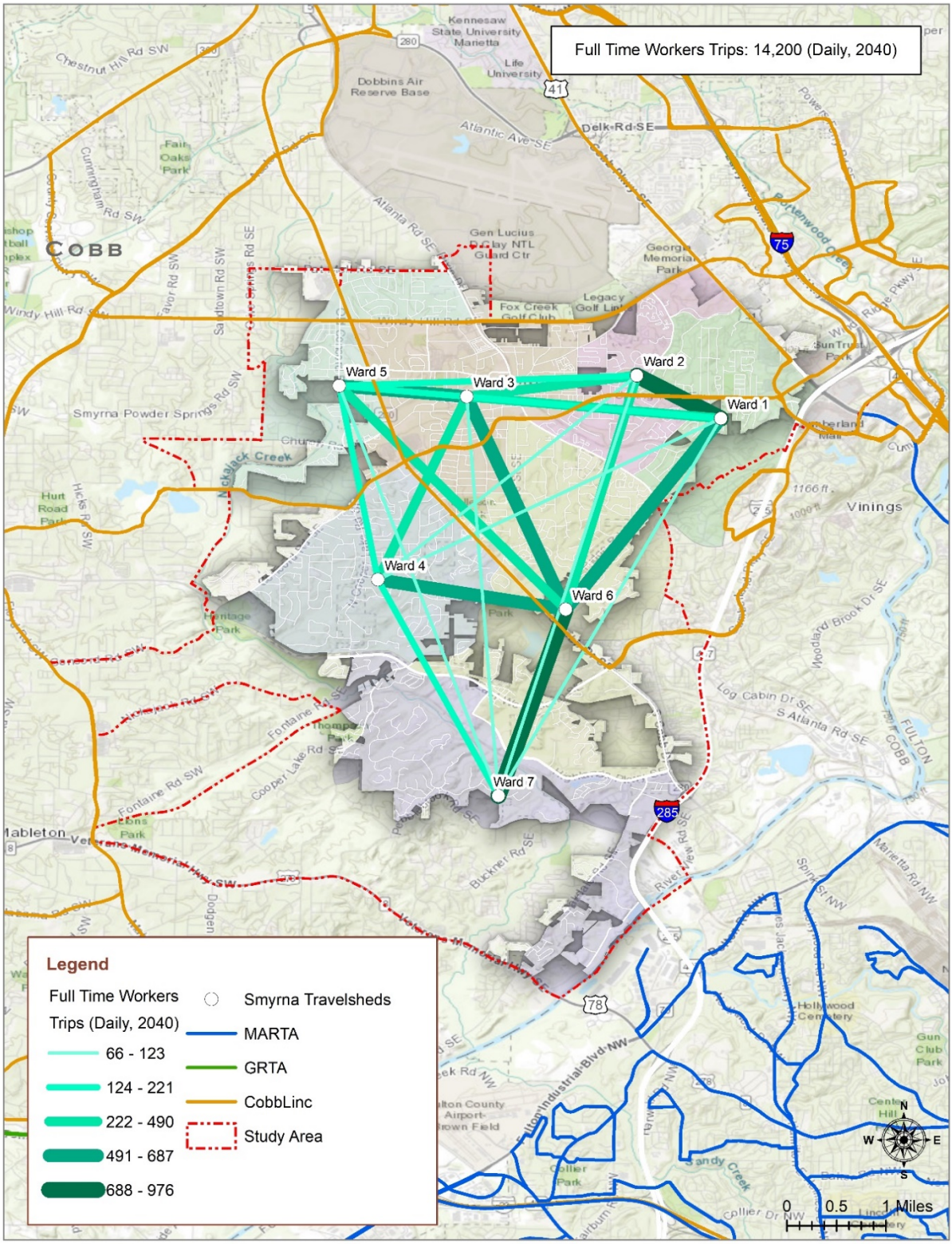
Current east-west service is provided by routes 15 and 25, which operate in the northern part of Smyrna. Route 15 frequency is currently 30 minutes, and Route 25 is 60 minutes. Route 25 frequency is likely too low to serve workers traveling between Wards 1 and 2. North-south service is provided along SR-280 (South Cobb Parkway) with a 30-minute headway, but there is no direct transit connection between Wards 6 and 7.

Map 6-4: Low-Income Transit Market Travel Flows within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Map 6-5: Full-time Worker Market Travel Flows within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Part-time Worker Market Segment

Travel flows for the part-time worker market were mapped, as shown in Map 6-6. These trip flows are similar to both the traditional transit and the full-time worker market flows and indicate potential for east-west and north-south transit service in Smyrna.

Based on the analysis of top internal travel flows for the part-time worker market, key findings are as follows:

- Total number of trips made by the part-time worker market is less than for the full-time worker and low-income markets.
- The top three trip pairs for the part-time worker market are the same as for the traditional transit and full-time worker markets.
- The fourth-highest trip pair for the part-time worker market is the same as for the traditional transit market.
- Based on the overlap in trip pairs between the part-time worker, full-time worker, and traditional transit markets, there is opportunity for transit routes to serve all three markets; however, hours of service and frequency may need to be expanded/adjusted to accommodate non-traditional schedules of the part-time worker market.

Current east-west service provided by Route 25 is likely too low to serve part-time workers traveling between Wards 1 and 2. Additionally, part-time worker travel demand between Wards 3 and 5 is likely not well-served by Route 25 due to its low frequency. In addition, as noted, there is no direct transit connection between Wards 6 and 7.

University Student Market Segment

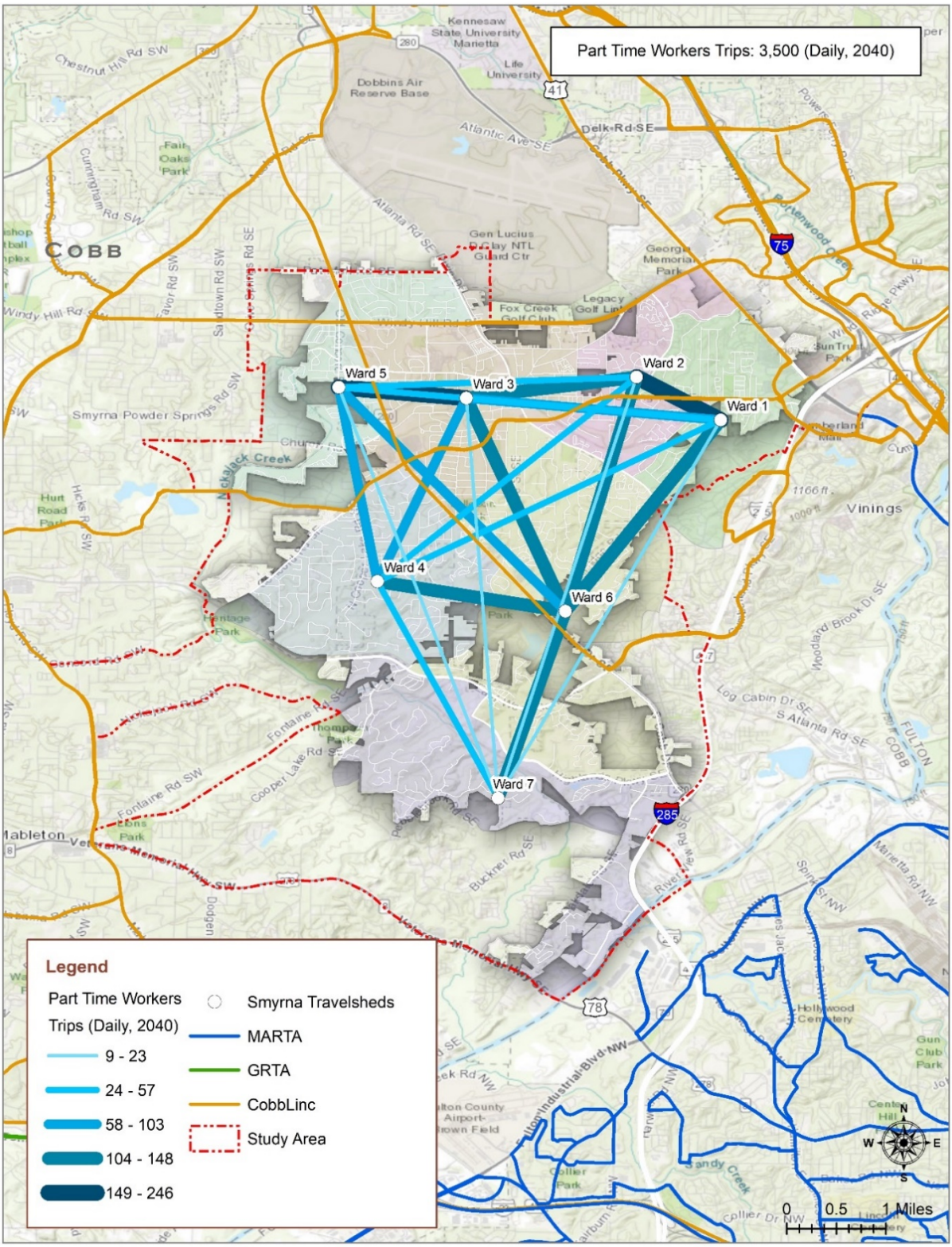
Map 6-7 shows the travel flows for university students. High trip flows in the university student market between wards in the northern part of Smyrna may indicate the need for more attractive east-west transit. Additionally, flows to Ward 6 from Wards 3 show potential use on a north-south transit connection.

Based on the analysis of internal travel flows for the university student market, key findings are as follows:

- The strongest internal trip pair for university students is between Wards 1 and 2.
- University student travel desired between Wards 2 and 3, 2 and 6, and 3 and 6 is also high.

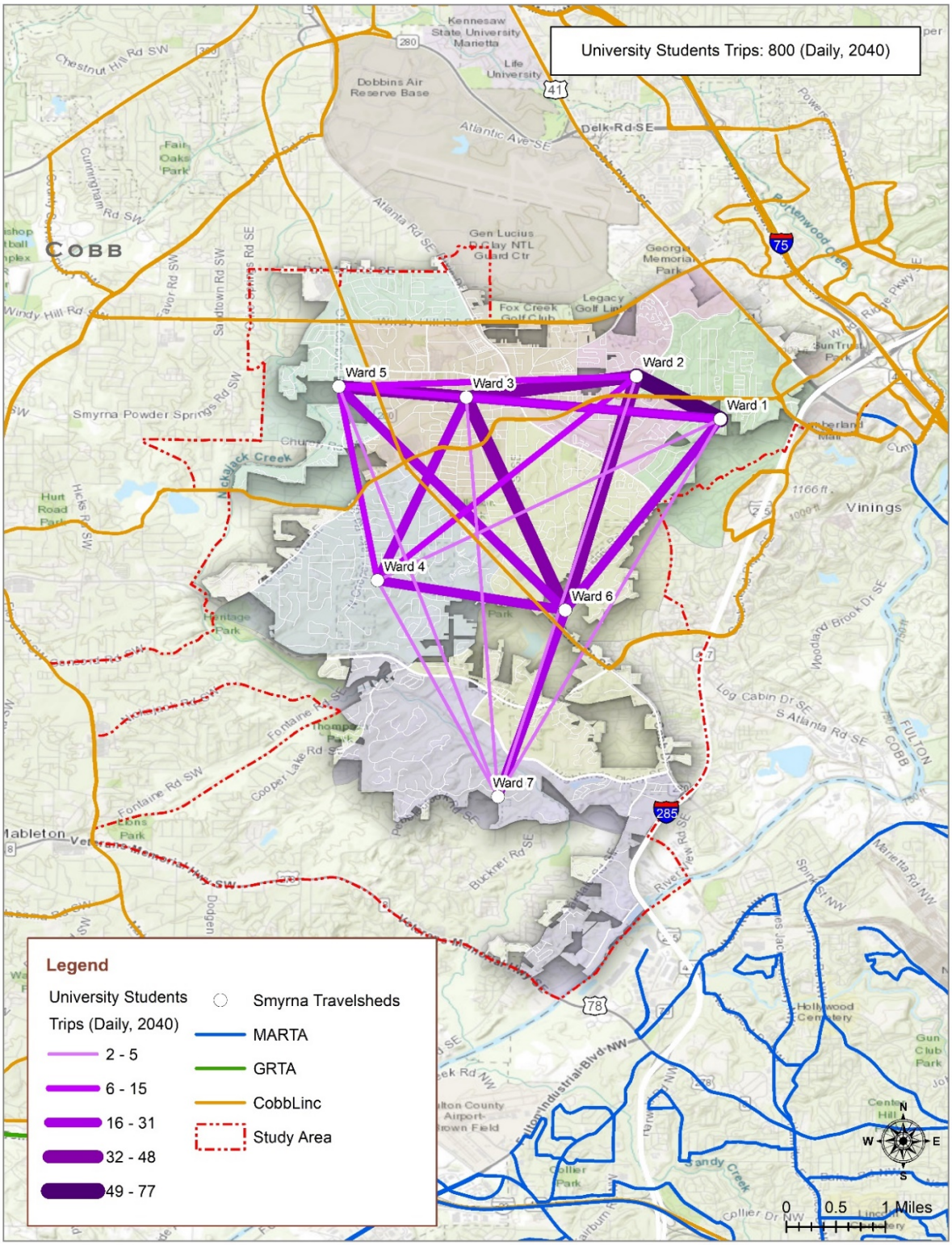
Current east-west service on Route 25 may not be attractive to university students traveling between Wards 1 and 2. University student travel demand between Wards 3 and 5 is also likely not well-served by Route 25 at current levels.

Map 6-6: Part-time Worker Market Travel Flows within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand

Map 6-7: University Student Market Travel Flows within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

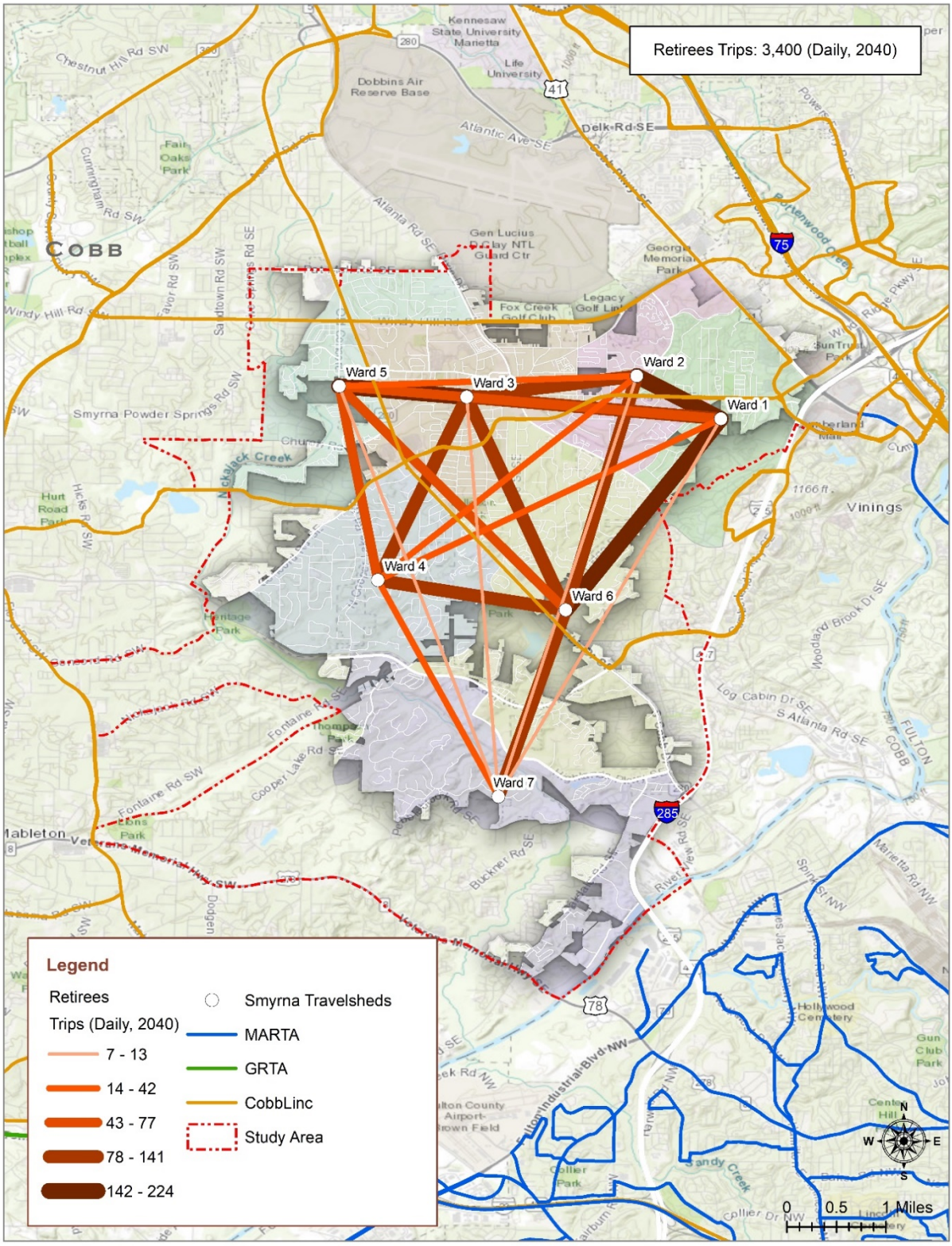
Retiree Market Segment

Travel flows for the retiree market were mapped, as shown in Map 6-8. In contrast to the other market segments that show distinct top-tier patterns, retiree travel flows are much more diverse, indicating a need for transit service throughout the city for this market. However, the retiree market does show strong travel demand across the northern part of the city and along the eastern part, similar to other market segments.

Based on the analysis of internal travel flows for the retiree market, key findings are as follows:

- The total number of retiree market trips is just below that of the part-time worker market.
- All top 10 travel flows for the retiree market are either within travelsheds or to adjacent travelsheds or activity centers, indicating potential for a flex/circulator or on-demand shared-ride service to serve this market segment.

Map 6-8: Retiree Market Travel Flows within Smyrna (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Regional Gap Analysis

Travel demand to destinations in the northwest Atlanta region from Smyrna were analyzed to identify the interregional gaps in transit services and facilities. The analysis is summarized below.

Total Regional Travel Flows

Desire line maps showing total travel flows between Smyrna and key regional activity centers were created to identify the most important travel patterns. Map 6-9 shows the travel flows between Smyrna and the regional activity centers. The following common travel patterns emerged:

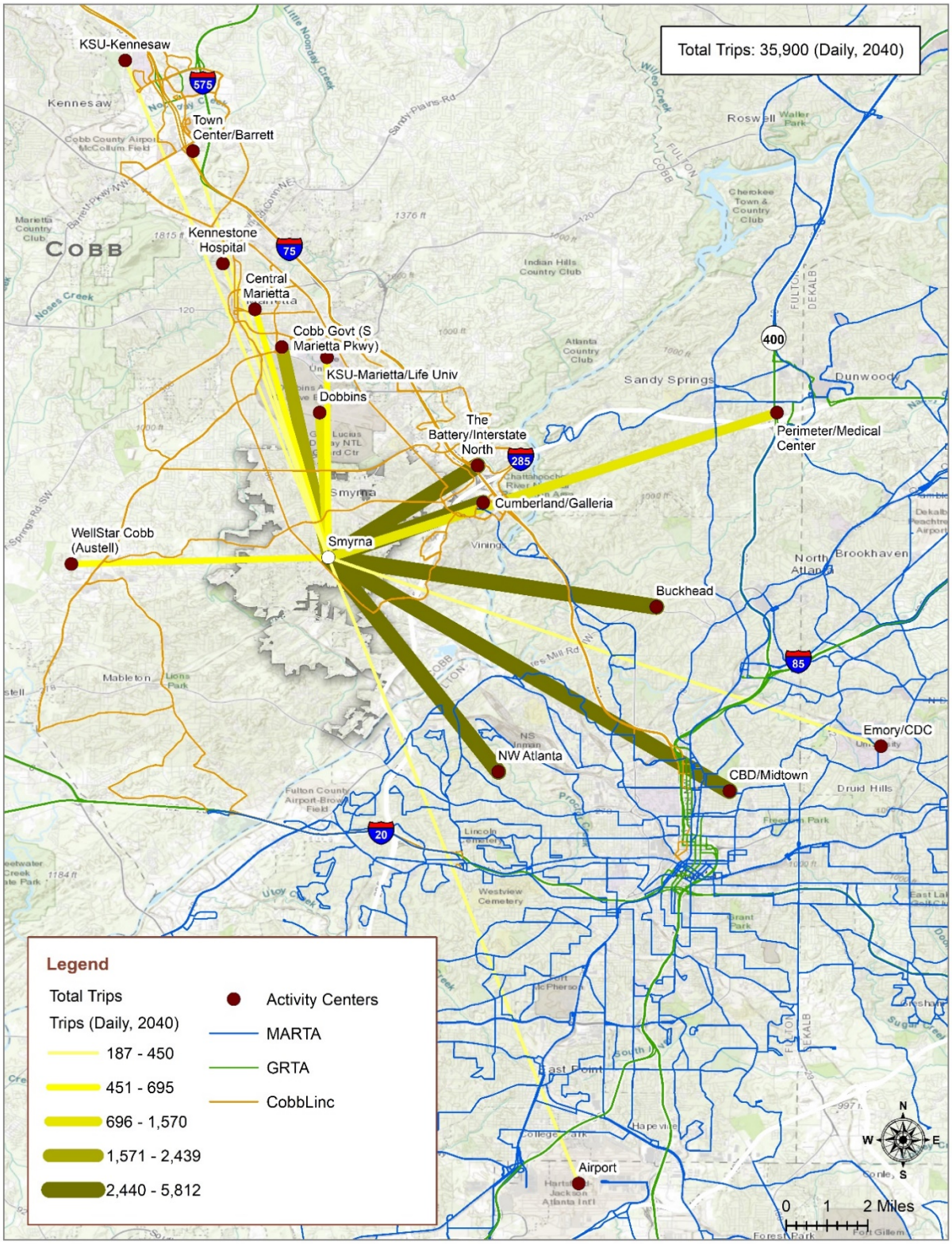
- The highest flows are between Smyrna and The Battery/Interstate North Parkway.
- Buckhead has the second-highest total trip flow.
- Cumberland/Galleria is adjacent to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway and has the third-highest trip flows.
- The connection between northwest Atlanta and Smyrna has the fourth-highest trip flows.
- CBD/Midtown has the fifth-highest travel flows.
- The second tier of travel flows is between Smyrna and Dobbins, Cobb Government (South Marietta Parkway), and Perimeter/Medical Center.
- Limited trip flows are forecasted to Atlanta International Airport, Emory/CDC, and KSU-Kennesaw from Smyrna.
- Regional connections to the Cumberland area (Galleria, The Battery, and Interstate North) account for more than 11,000 total trips and should be maintained or improved to continue driving economic growth in and around Smyrna.
- Atlanta is a key regional destination for Smyrna, with many residents likely traveling to jobs in Buckhead, Northwest Atlanta, and CBD/Midtown.

Low-Income Market Segment

To provide more detailed insight into travel patterns between each ward and the regional activity centers, desire lines showing the travel flows for the low-income transit market were mapped and are shown in Map 6-10. Although the strongest trip flows varied by ward, the following common themes emerged for the low-income transit market:

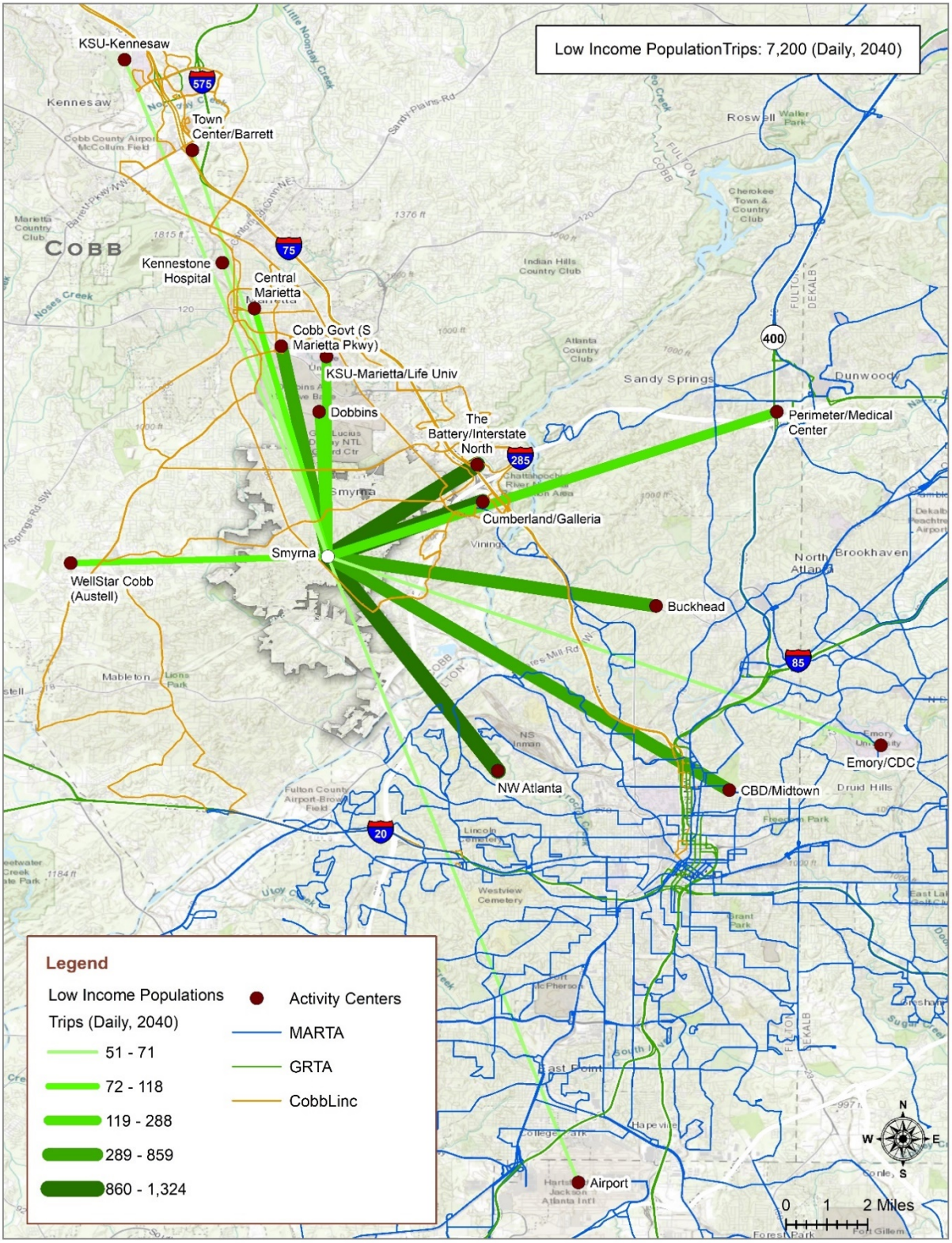
- The highest flows are between Smyrna and The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, Cumberland/Galleria, and Northwest Atlanta.
- The second tier of travel flows is between Smyrna and Dobbins, Buckhead, CBD/Midtown, and Cobb Government (South Marietta Parkway).
- The third tier includes Perimeter/Medical Center and KSU-Marietta/Life University.
- Limited trip flows are forecasted to the Atlanta International Airport and Emory/CDC.
- Regional connections to the Cumberland area (Galleria, The Battery, and Interstate North) should be maintained or improved to continue attracting this market segment.

Map 6-9: Total Regional Travel Flows (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Map 6-10: Low-Income Market Trip Flows between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Full-time Worker Market Segment

A desire line map showing travel flows for the full-time worker market between Smyrna and key regional activity centers was created to identify the most important travel patterns, as shown in Map 6-11. Although each ward was slightly different, the following common travel patterns emerged for the full-time worker market:

- The highest travel flows are to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, Cumberland Galleria, Buckhead, CBD/Midtown, and Northwest Atlanta.
- The second tier of travel flows are to Dobbins, Perimeter Center/Medical Center, and Cobb Government (South Marietta Parkway), and the third tier includes Central Marietta, Kennestone Hospital, Town Center/Barrett Parkway, WellStar Cobb (Austell), and Atlanta International Airport. KSU-Kennesaw and Emory/CDC had limited trip flows.
- The full-time worker market is key to increasing choice ridership, so improved connections to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway and Cumberland Galleria are needed. In addition, connections to Buckhead, CBD/Midtown, and Northwest Atlanta need to be improved with enhanced modes and frequencies to attract more regional riders.

Part-time Worker Market Segment

A desire line map showing travel flows for the part-time worker market was created and is shown in Map 6-12. Like the other markets, the strongest trip flows varied by ward, but the following common themes that are similar to the full-time worker market emerged from the analysis:

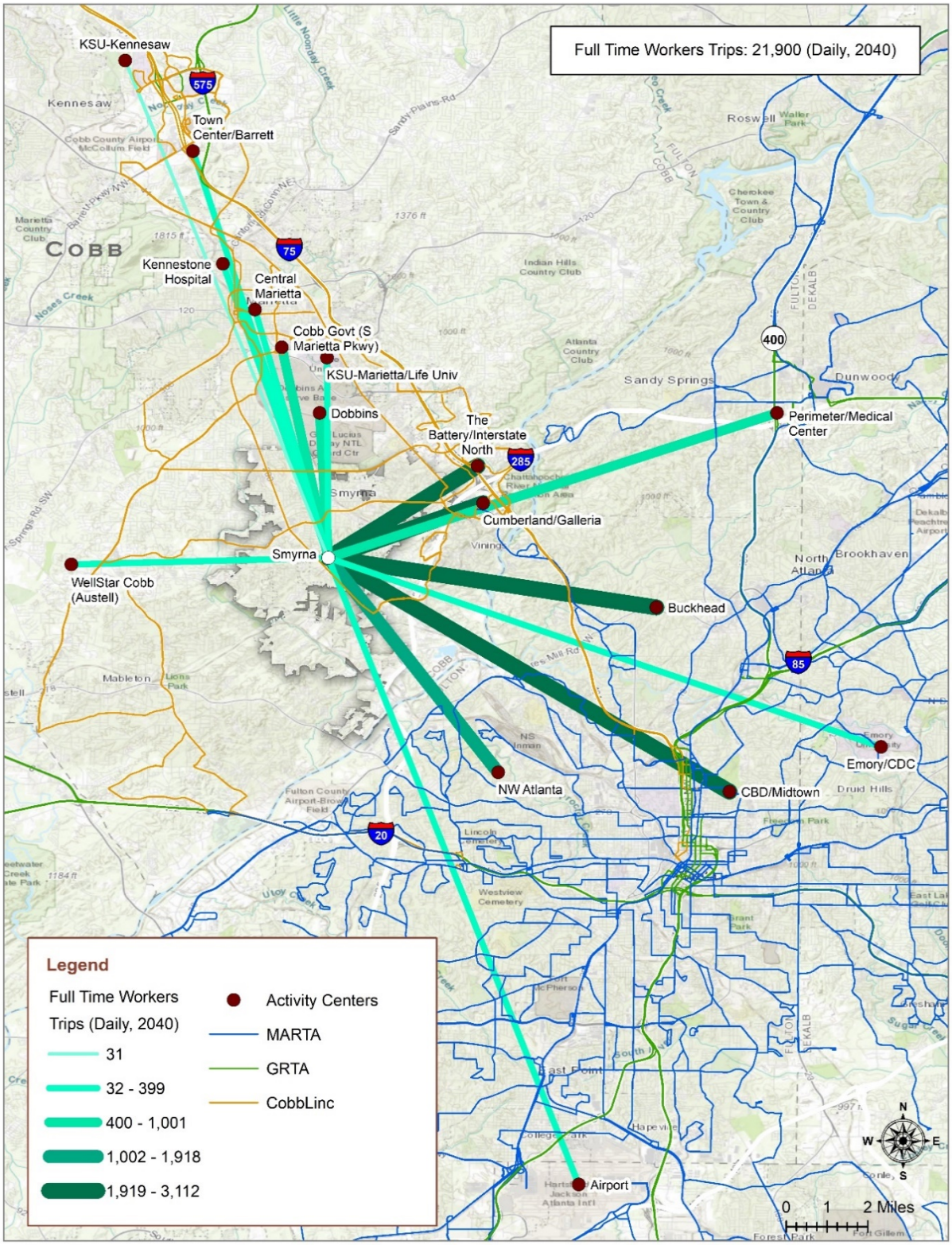
- The highest travel flows are to The Battery/Interstate North Parkway, Cumberland Galleria, Buckhead, and Northwest Atlanta, and the second tier of travel flows are to CBD/Midtown, WellStar Cobb (Austell), Dobbins, Perimeter Center/Medical Center, and Cobb Government offices (South Marietta Parkway)
- The third tier includes Central Marietta and Atlanta International Airport; KSU-Kennesaw and Emory/CDC had limited trip flows.

University Student Market Segment

A desire line map showing travel demand between Smyrna and regional activity centers for the university student market was created to provide insight into key travel flows, as shown in Map 6-13. Key findings include the following:

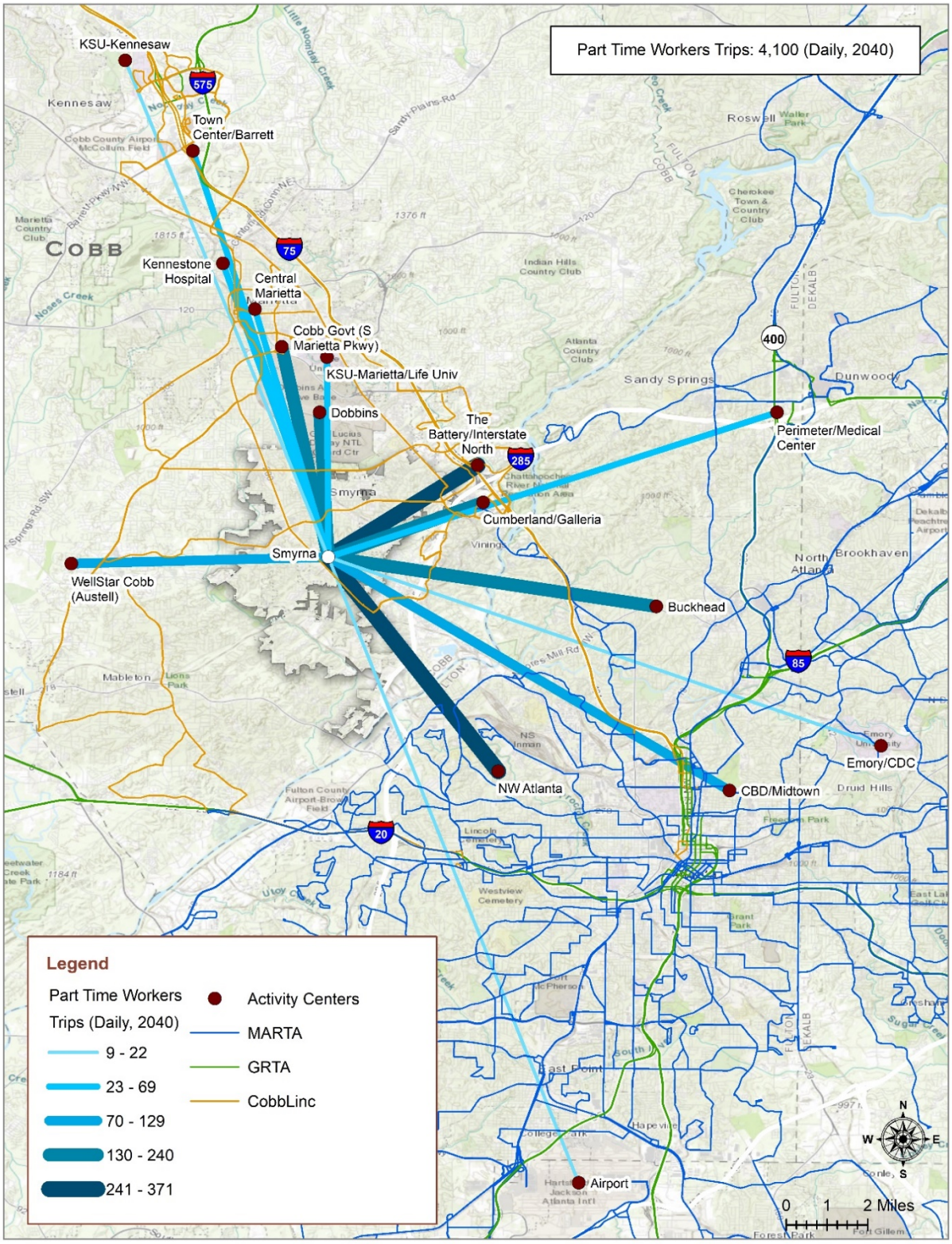
- KSU-Marietta/Life University and CBD/Midtown comprise the top tier of regional destinations for the university student market.
- KSU-Kennesaw and Northwest Atlanta are second-tier destinations.

Map 6-11: Full-time Worker Market Trip Flows between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)



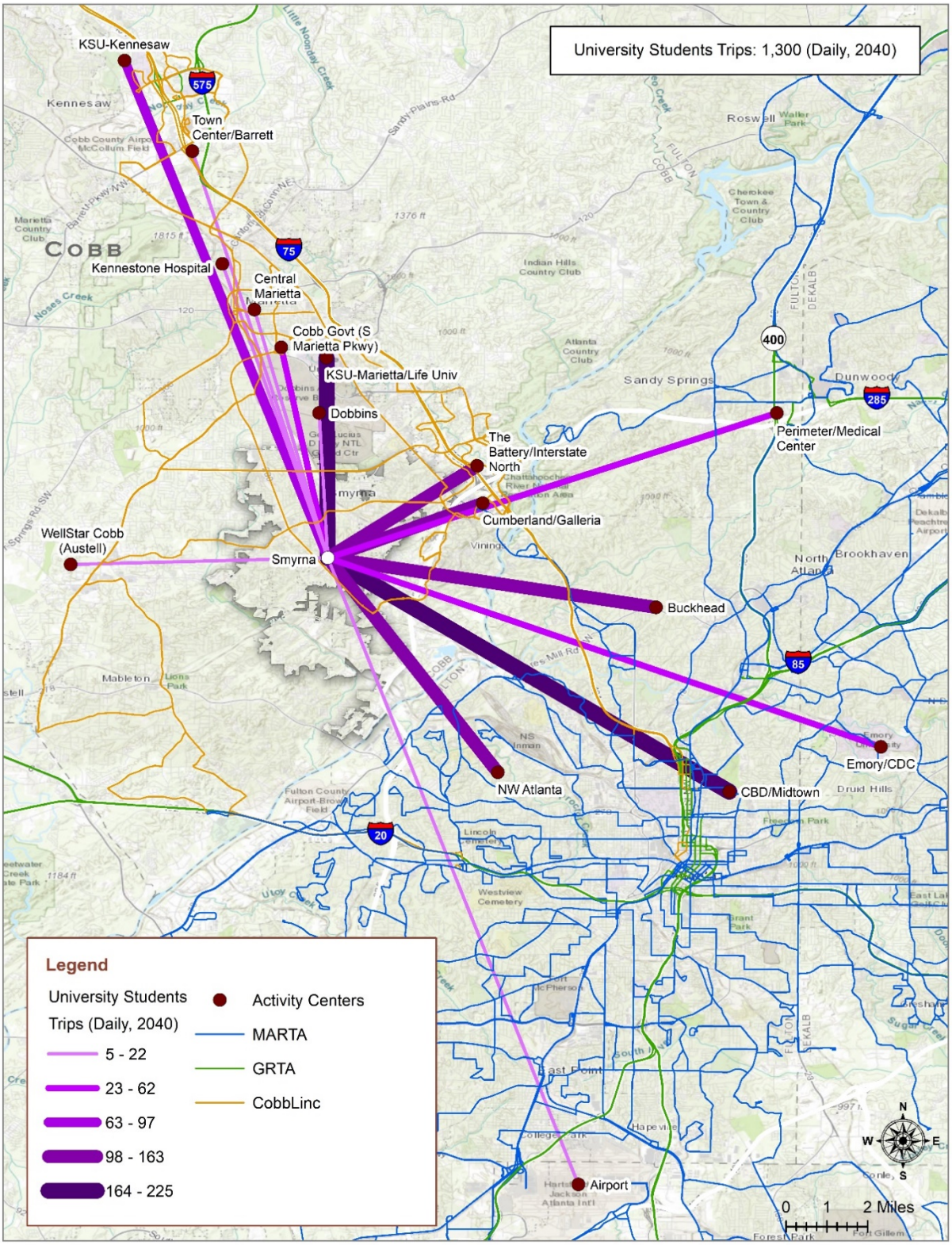
Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Map 6-12: Part-time Worker Market Travel Desire between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Map 6-13: University Student Market Travel Desire between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

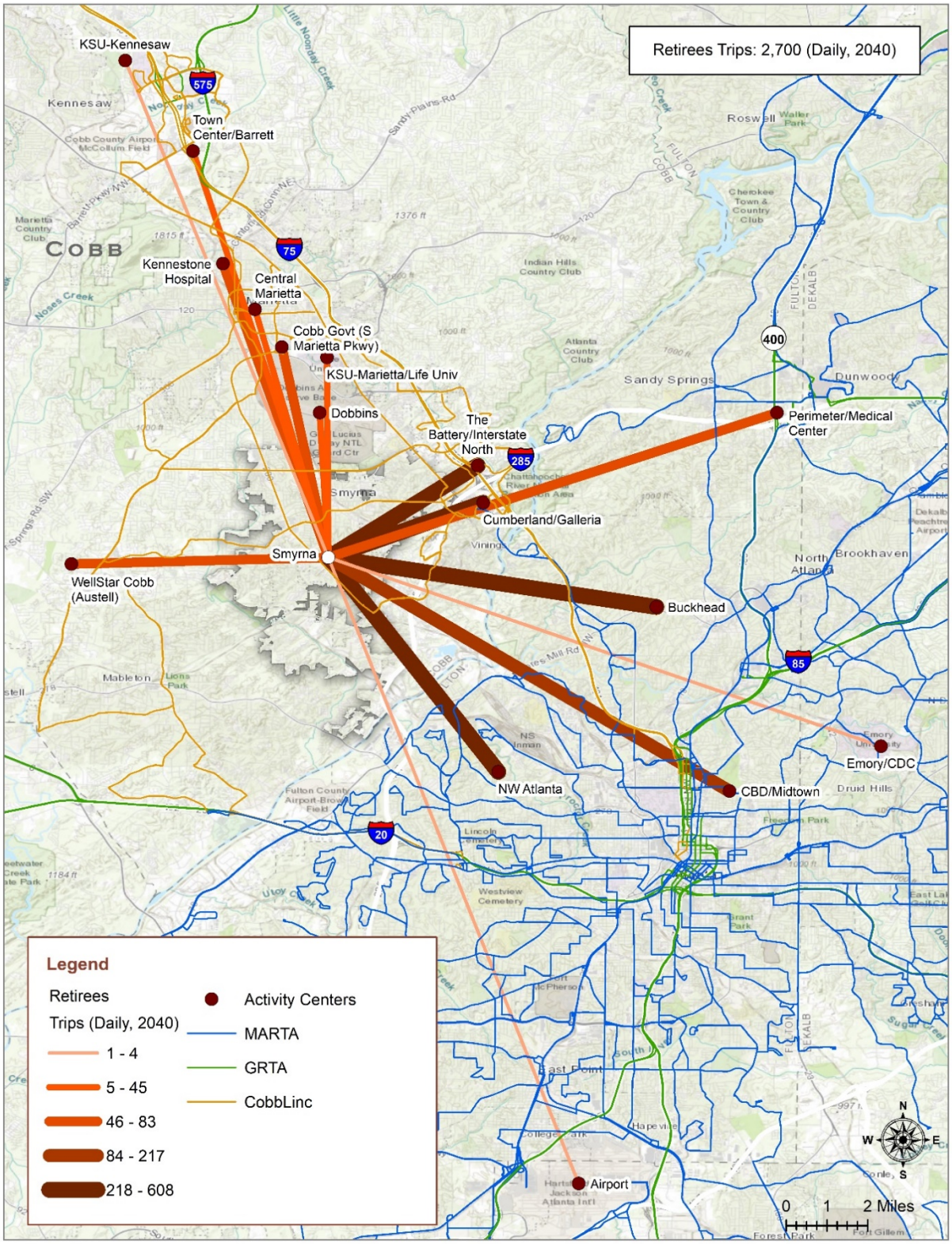
Retiree Market Segment

Regional travel for the retiree market was analyzed, and a desire line map was created, as shown in Map 6-14. Although travel flows varied by ward, the following common patterns emerged for the retiree market:

- Northwest Atlanta, Buckhead, Cumberland/Galleria, and The Battery/Interstate North Parkway are the top tier destinations.
- The CBD/Midtown is the only second tier destination for retirees.
- Third tier destinations are WellStar Cobb (Austell), Kennestone Hospital, Cobb Government offices (South Marietta Parkway), and Perimeter/Medical Center.
- Atlanta International Airport, Emory/CDC, and KSU-Kennesaw all have limited trip demand from the retiree market segment.

In addition to total regional travel flows for the city, regional travel flows for each ward also were mapped for each of these travel markets, as included in Appendix B.

Map 6-14: Retiree Market Travel Desire between Smyrna and Region (Daily, 2040)



Data Source: CobbLinc and ARC Activity Based Demand Model

Transforming Gaps to Opportunities

Even with its limited operating budget, CobbLinc has strived to ensure continued coverage of services in Smyrna. However, it often is the case that connectivity gaps, both spatial and temporal, occur as underlying demand and travel patterns change in reaction to the continuing evolution of a community's needs, growth, and development patterns.

The gap analyses assessed these potential connectivity gaps. However, these gaps can be transformed into opportunities that ensure improved transit access internally within the city as well as regionally.

Transit Opportunity Framework

Prior to the development of needs, a transit opportunity framework was used to identify the transit opportunities in Smyrna and to support the incremental development of a transit vision for the city. This framework is illustrated in Figure 6-1 and summarized thereafter. The framework is based on the functions that various transit services and technologies serve in relation to the mobility and accessibility needs of a community and how these services and technologies come together in a vision to connect Smyrna internally and with the region.

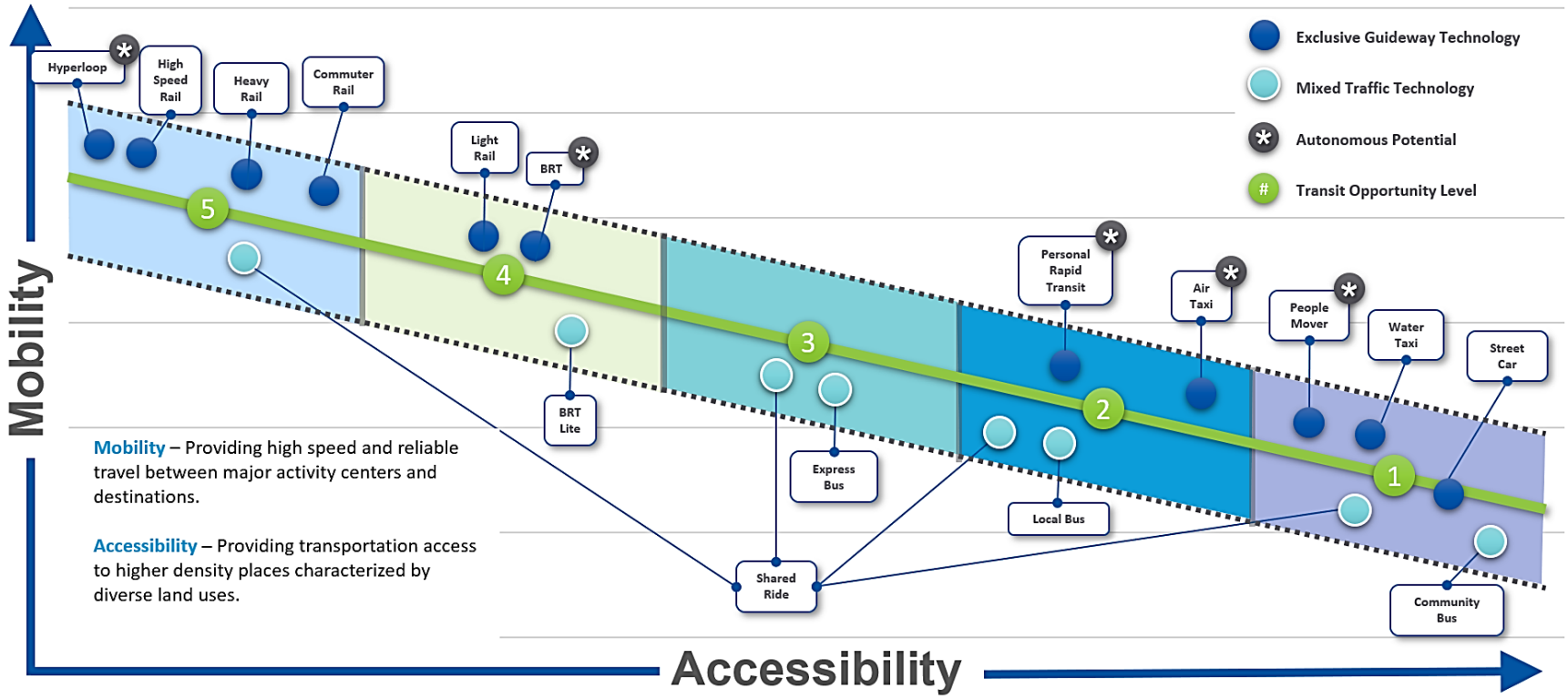
Figure 6-1 depicts an inverse relationship between mobility and accessibility—as a transit technology provides increased mobility, it inherently provides less accessibility, and vice versa. To ensure an understanding of the framework, definitions of mobility and accessibility are as follows:

- **Mobility** – Providing high-speed and reliable travel between major activity centers and destinations; the focus is to get from one place to another as quickly as possible and typically is characterized by longer trips.
- **Accessibility** – Providing access to and circulation within higher-density places that are characterized by diverse land uses; the focus is to provide convenient connections to land uses and typically is characterized by shorter trips and circulation within activity centers.

The framework for *Smyrna Connects* defines five levels of transit opportunity, with each level derived from a different mix of mobility and accessibility, as summarized below:

- **Level 1 Transit Opportunity** – Service/technology gaps are characterized by the need for very low mobility and very high accessibility/circulation. This may include areas or corridors with low population and/or employment density but very high traditional rider market density. Modes considered for meeting these needs include community circulators and trolley/streetcar service that serve at low frequencies. Some level of shared-ride options may also be included.
- **Level 2 Transit Opportunity** – Service/technology gaps are characterized by the need for low mobility and high accessibility. This may include areas or corridors with low population and/or employment density and high traditional rider market density. Additional modes, such as local fixed-route bus, are expected to meet the needs of this opportunity level.

Figure 6-1: Transit Opportunity Framework: Mobility vs. Accessibility



- **Level 3 Transit Opportunity** – Service/technology gaps are characterized by the need for a balance of mobility and accessibility. This may include areas or corridors with medium population and/or employment density and medium traditional rider market density. In addition, this may also include regional destinations with a high number of commute trips. At this opportunity level, express buses may be added as well as enhanced shared-ride options.
- **Level 4 Transit Opportunity** – Service/technology gaps are characterized by the need for high mobility and low accessibility. This may include areas or corridors with high population and/or employment density and low traditional rider market density. This may also include regional destinations with a very high number of commute trips. Addition of premium transit such as bus rapid transit (BRT) (in mixed traffic or exclusive lane) and light rail may be considered at this level of transit opportunity.
- **Level 5 Transit Opportunity** – Service/technology gaps are characterized by the need for very high mobility and very low accessibility. This may include areas or corridors with high population and/or employment density and low traditional rider market density. In addition, this may include regional locations with the highest number of commute trips. Exclusive-lane BRT and high-capacity premium transit such as commuter rail, heavy rail, or high-speed rail may be considered at this level of transit opportunity.

Transit Opportunities for Smyrna

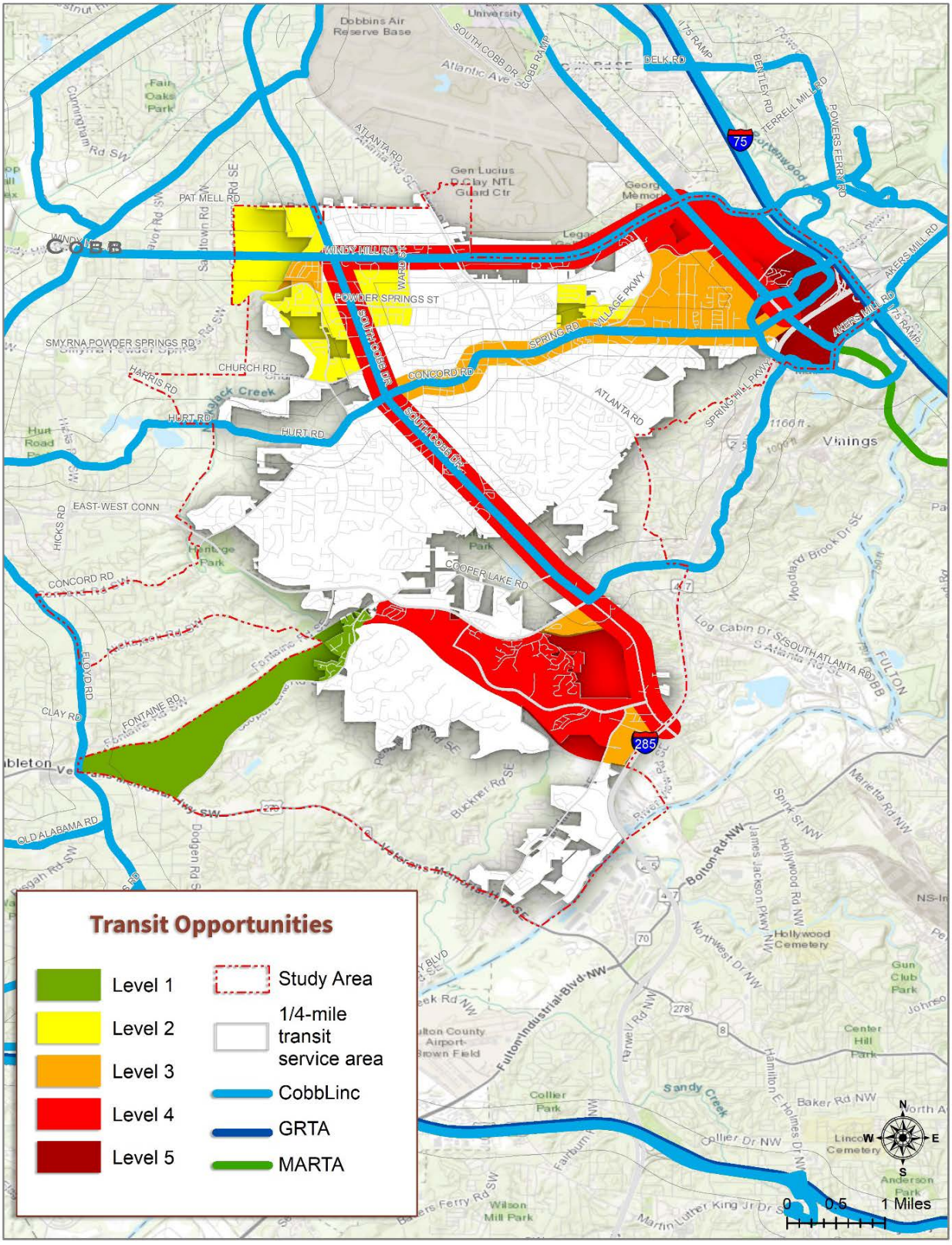
Using the results of the inter-local and intra-regional gap analyses and the transit opportunity framework, opportunities for improving transit in the study area were identified. These opportunities are expected to assist the City in identifying the necessary transit technologies/modes in addition to areas for transit spatial improvements (such as adding new coverage areas) and temporal improvements (such as adding service frequencies and span) to already-existing services. In addition, and even more important, these opportunities will help develop a roadmap for improving transit in Smyrna and its immediate surroundings so resources can be allocated where and when needed.

Internal and Adjacent Area Opportunities

After analyzing traditional and choice markets, internal travel markets, and other relevant data, the resulting areas within the study area, which includes Smyrna and key adjacent areas such as the Galleria and The Battery, were classified by levels of opportunity. Map 6-15 shows these internal and adjacent transit opportunities:

- **Level 1 Transit Opportunity Areas (*green*)**
    - The service gap on the southwest side of the city adjacent to Veterans Memorial Highway and Floyd Road is classified as Level 1 due to its very high accessibility need and its high percentage of older adults and zero-vehicle households. This high traditional market but low population density area should be considered for low-frequency service, potentially for on-demand/flex-route transit or shared-ride options.

Map 6-15: Smyrna Internal and Adjacent Transit Opportunities



- **Level 2 Transit Opportunity Areas (*yellow*)**
  - A cluster of areas around South Cobb Drive and the Windy Hill intersection is identified for Level 2 transit opportunities. These areas comprise high levels of traditional markets such as households in poverty, older adults, and zero-vehicle households, while also having a high population density. These areas provide an opportunity for a transit circulator service that can also serve as a feeder to shuttle riders for the 30-minute service that operates on South Cobb Drive and Windy Hill Road. In addition, app-based shared-ride transit could be considered to serve this area.
- **Level 3 Transit Opportunity Areas/Corridors (*orange*)**
  - Areas mostly located in the north part of the study area have a high density of dwelling units but a low density of employment. The area west of Village Parkway on Spring Road to the Cumberland area provides an opportunity for a high-frequency circulator that may also serve the Cumberland area, including the Galleria and The Battery.
  - The corridor of Concord Road/Spring Road from South Cobb Drive to Cobb Parkway could serve as an east-west connector, quickly linking west of Smyrna and Cobb County to the Cumberland area. Route 25 provides service on this corridor but only once per hour.
  - Other small pockets on the south side of the City could be covered as part of more higher-level opportunities in that area.
- **Level 4 Transit Opportunity Areas/Corridors *(red)***
  - Using Level 4 service and technology opportunities for Smyrna may provide the best opportunity for making transit a truly viable mode. Several areas and corridors are identified in the next 20 years.
  - Areas in the Cumberland CID with very high job density offer an opportunity for premium transit such as BRT, fed by very high frequency circulators operating in that area, which may have the potential to be operated by autonomous transit vehicles.
  - The South Cobb Drive corridor provides the most practical and feasible opportunity for BRT service in the future. As a State road with ample right-of-way, there is potential for fully-exclusive-lane BRT which, at a minimum, should be considered for segments between Windy Hill and Concord and the segment south of East West Connector to I-285.
  - With roadway improvements planned under the 2016 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), Windy Hill Road also provides an option for a high-frequency transit service, premium or otherwise. SPLOST improvements will make the segment from South Cobb to Atlanta Road an uninterrupted flow, making this corridor an excellent option to connect Level 2 opportunity areas quickly to the Cumberland area or to any future BRT on Cobb Parkway.
  - The area in the southern portion—south of the East-West Connector and west of South Cobb Drive—also provides an opportunity for a technology-based high-frequency feeder/ circulator service that would connect area residents and jobs to potential high-frequency services on South Cobb Drive.

- South Cobb Drive in this area, located closer to I-285 future managed lanes, may be a candidate for establishing a major transfer facility that could also be served by a park-and-ride facility. The city currently has no park-and-ride facilities; the closest is in Mableton, southwest of Smyrna.

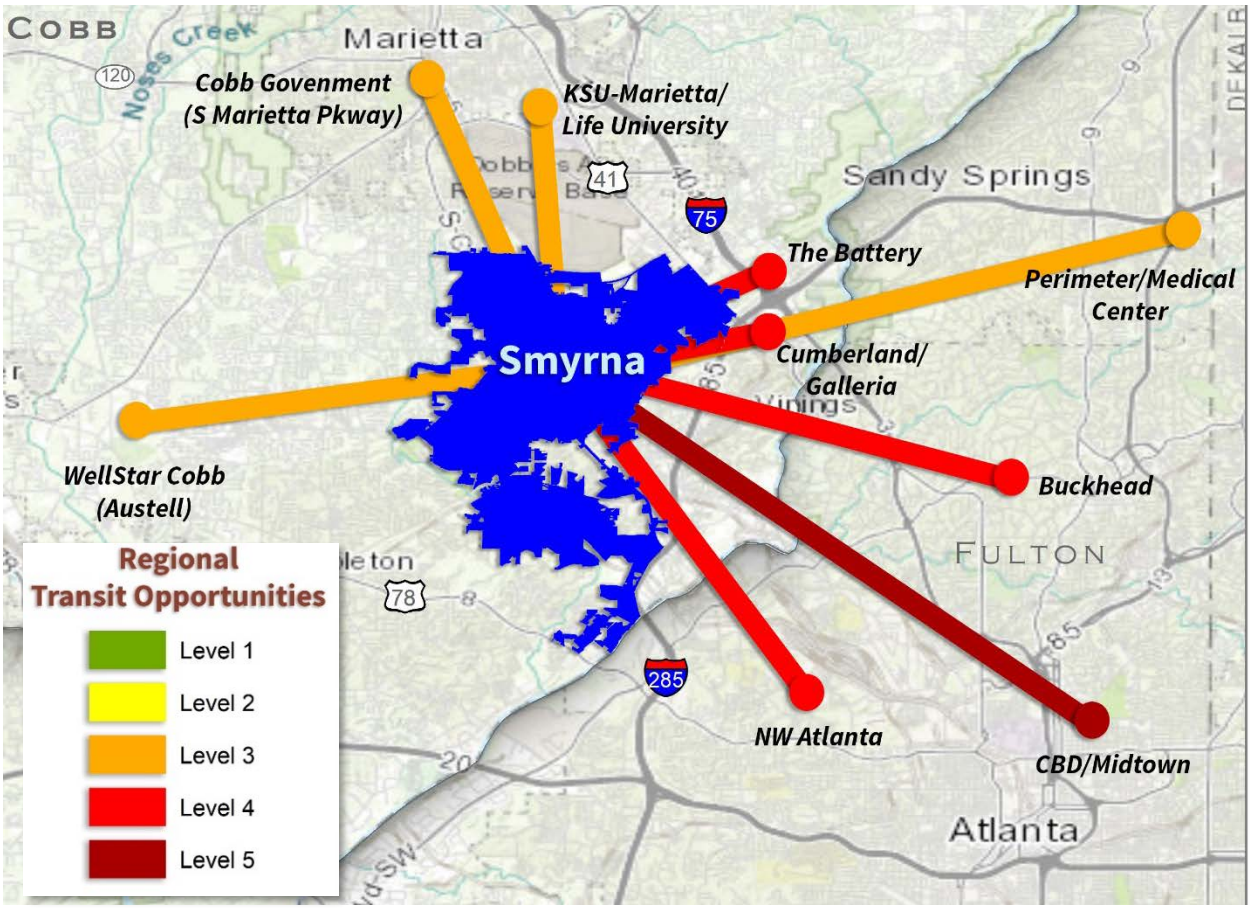
- **Level 5 Transit Opportunity Areas/Corridors**
  - This highest level of transit opportunity warrants high-capacity premium transit such as commuter rail or heavy rail. Areas identified in the Cumberland CID as Level 5 opportunity areas include very high job density and significant dwelling density that may support high-capacity transit. However, although rail may be supported by public outreach and data analyses, it continues to be a challenging policy decision due to its cost and the need for substantial regional and Federal support. Nonetheless, this plan identifies the opportunity for such service in/to Smyrna, as the attractiveness that rail provides as a transit mode is unmatched. A regional rail connection would link people to jobs in this area and provide an attractive travel alternative to the many visitors to SunTrust Park, The Battery, and the Galleria.

Regional Opportunities

Providing good and abundant regional connections is an important part of making transit a desirable option in Smyrna. Commute flow data for Smyrna indicate a high flow of regional travel from and to the city, highlighting the need for regional transit connections. Regional opportunities that should be considered as part of improving transit in Smyrna are identified in Map 6-16 and summarized below. (It should be noted that there are no Level 1 or 2 opportunities identified, as the focus is providing services that are truly regional in nature—services that are fast, stop less, are direct/less circuitous, and are commuter market-based).

- **Level 3 Transit Opportunity Areas/Corridors**
  - Connect Smyrna to the Perimeter/Medical Center, WellStar Cobb in Austell, Cobb Government offices on South Marietta Parkway, and KSU Marietta/Life University.
  - Currently, there are existing transit services that serve WellStar Cobb, Cobb Government offices, and KSU Marietta/Life University. CobbLinc routes 10 and the Rapid 10 serve KSU-Marietta/Life University and Cobb Government offices; Route 25 connects Smyrna to WellStar Cobb.
  - No transit services that serve the Perimeter/Medical Center exist. As there is a high number of commuter trips to these areas, express buses may be considered, or current connections should be enhanced to promote using transit to these locations.

Map 6-16: Regional Transit Opportunities for Smyrna



Note: No Level 1 or 2 regional connection opportunities were identified for Smyrna.

- **Level 4 Transit Opportunity Areas/Corridors**
  - Regional connections to Northwest Atlanta, Buckhead, the Cumberland/Galleria area, and The Battery areas are identified as Level 4 transit opportunities.
  - Although geographically regional, the Galleria area and The Battery are identified as internal/adjacent opportunities due to their very close proximity to Smyrna. Although several CobbLinc routes regionally connect this area, with service ranging from 15- to 60-minute frequency, no premium transit is available. A regional BRT service is planned for Cobb Parkway, but the timeline remains uncertain.
  - Other areas that the city may benefit from regional connection include the Northwest Atlanta and Buckhead areas. A high number of commute trips are made to these areas, so premium options such as BRT, in mixed traffic or in an exclusive lane, may help attract a portion of these trips.
- **Level 5 Transit Opportunity Areas/Corridors**
  - If rail can made available for Smyrna and the northwest region, it should link the CBD/Midtown of Atlanta due to the large number of daily commuter trips. Although a mix

of regular transit options connect this area directly to Smyrna, the attractiveness of a high-capacity premium transit technology such as rail may be the best connection if affordable in the future.

Identification of these transit internal and external connection opportunities provides a stable foundation for identifying and developing the future transit needs in Smyrna. These needs, identified in the next section, may assist the city in becoming a driver to promote viable transit in the northwest quadrant of the Atlanta region.

Section 7: Transit Needs

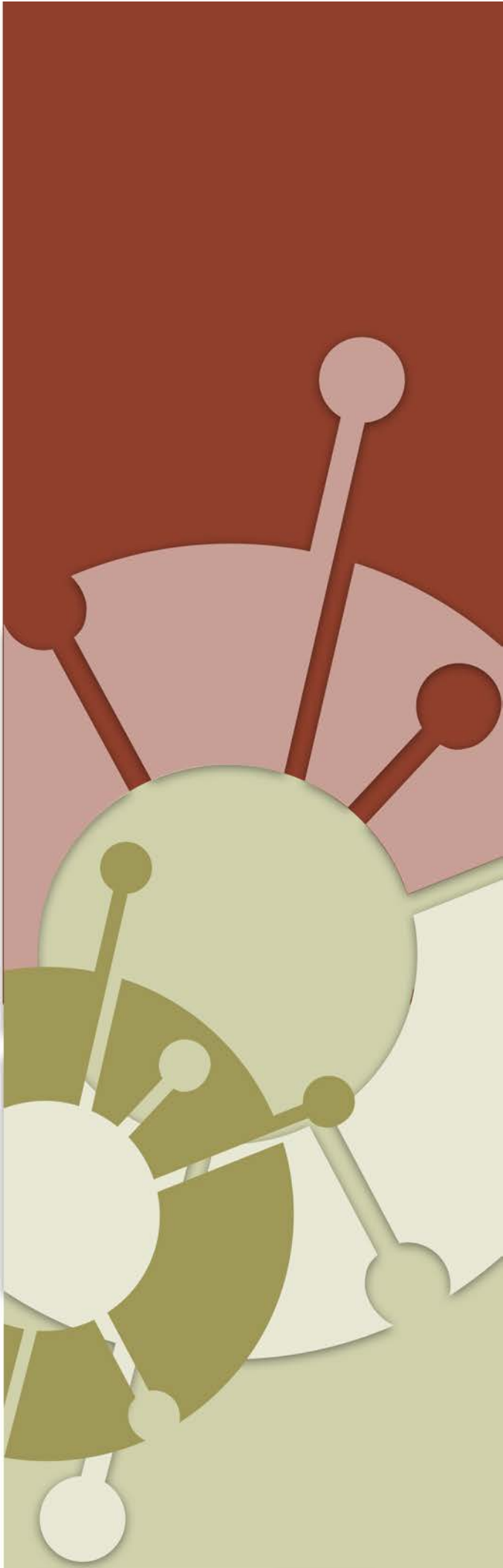
A wide spectrum of transit needs was developed for Smyrna to ensure the preparation of a practical, implementable, and "living" plan that truly reflects a vision for Smyrna's growth and improvement over time. As a strategic plan, a transit vision plan should strive to identify needs in an unconstrained fashion and accommodate service recommendations for which currently there is no funding. However, it also should acknowledge local and regional fiscal realities for the growth and development of transit services over the course of the 20-year plan horizon. Therefore, mode technologies such as rail, although publicly-supported and certain to attract far more riders, may need to be reconsidered for inclusion as a mobility solution. With these factors in mind, a set of needs was developed for Smyrna, as summarized in the remainder of this section.

Guiding Goals and Objectives

The goal of this effort is developing a truly implementable transit plan for Smyrna that is tailored primarily to the needs of the study area and, at the same time, considering the needs of the emerging regional transit system envisioned by the ATL. The key objectives outlined by the City of Smyrna for this study are as follows:

- Develop a consensus-driven transit vision.
- Reinforce the City's broader objectives, including sustainability, economic development, growth management, traffic mitigation, livable communities and corridors, and connected and walkable communities.
- Communicate the City's transit vision to Cobb County and the ATL.

The transit needs identified in the remainder of this section were developed with this goal and objectives in mind and with understanding of the City's current conditions and its desire for a consensus-driven transit vision.



Developing Transit Needs

This section summarizes the process used to develop transit needs for the city of Smyrna for the next 20 years. It should be noted that these needs were developed without consideration of funding constraints to reflect the true needs of the community.

Each technique used to develop these needs is summarized below, followed by the list of needs.

Community Needs & Vision – Many direct and indirect public outreach techniques were used to obtain public input on transit vision and corresponding needs throughout the *Smyrna Connects* planning process. Local and regional stakeholder interviews, public input surveys, open house public workshops, and web-based communications, including a project website and social media efforts, were conducted to gather input from the community. In addition, a set of more focused outreach efforts was conducted with selected groups, including moderated group discussions with the business community, social services agencies, and riders who live in and/or visit Smyrna.

Guiding Committee Feedback– Input from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that was formed to help the City guide *Smyrna Connects* also was key to identifying the transit needs for Smyrna. As regional leaders who guide the transit planning process and policy, the TAC's perspective and direction will continue to fine-tune these needs and the resulting strategies to address these needs.

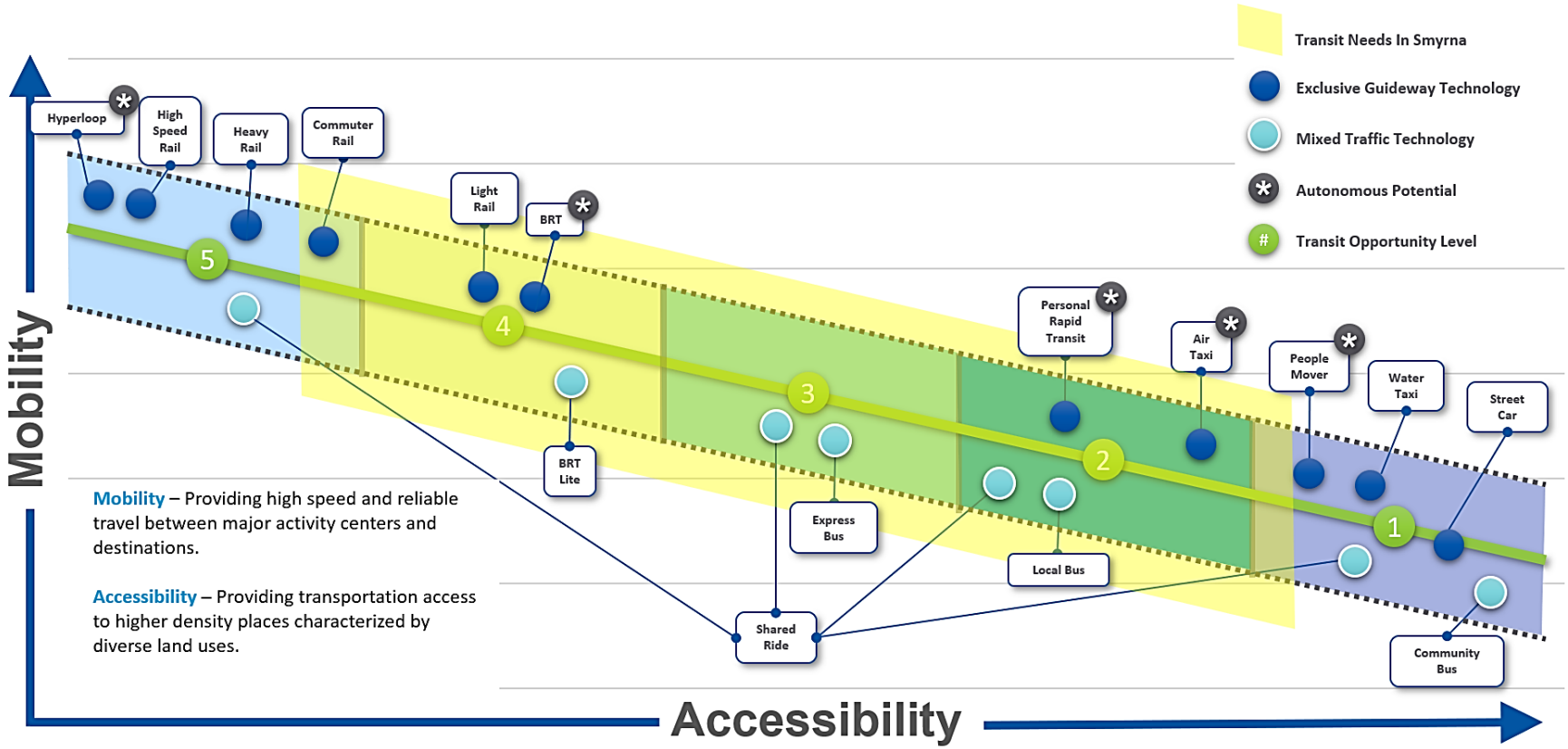
City and Regional Policy Direction – Policy direction often provides insight into transit needs within a community or a region and the potential means to meet them. Whereas support related to scale, technology, or timing may not always be the same, the clear goal of the City and its regional partners is to make transit a desirable mode of travel to connect its communities locally and with each other. These and other goals/policy direction from key local and regional policy-makers were reviewed and considered.

Transit Demand/Gaps/Opportunities Assessment – Findings from the transit demand assessment conducted for *Smyrna Connects* were used, including the use of various GIS-based analytical tools and methodologies to analyze demographic data that are conducive to transit and regional travel/commuter data. These findings, together with the baseline conditions assessment and performance reviews, helped identify the areas with transit-supportive characteristics and the scale of needs in Smyrna.

20-Year Transit Needs

The needs identified in the remainder of this section set the foundation for preparing a comprehensive set of transit strategy solutions to meet the wide variety of mobility needs throughout the city. This will result in a set of practical and implementable mode/technology strategies from most categories of the transit opportunity spectrum, as shown in Figure 7-1.

Figure 7-1: Transit Opportunities and Needs for Smyrna



Transit needs for Smyrna were developed within this framework but without consideration of funding constraints. These needs aim to realize the local and regional vision for an attractive and well-connected transit network and are summarized below.

Develop a High-Frequency Commuter Network

Develop a network of high-frequency routes throughout high-ridership/high density-corridors in the city at every 15 minutes or less. This network of premium and regular transit routes should connect to a regional network of premium/express transit services and facilities.

Rationale and Implications – This need was frequently requested by stakeholders and supported by the public input survey, discussion groups, and regional plans. Significant percentages of outreach respondents wanted to reach their destinations quickly and said transit would be more appealing if a bus came every 10–15 minutes instead of every 30–60 minutes. Feedback from discussion groups echoed this sentiment. Stakeholders also repeatedly mentioned that frequency would attract riders, citing the Rapid 10 as an example of service to which the community has been responsive. Local and regional plans also support developing a commuter network through high-density corridors to and from activity centers.

Services and Technology Targets – Implement high-frequency bus service on key arterials in the short term, connecting Smyrna within and to the Atlanta region to the south and Marietta to the north. In the mid and long terms, implement premium transit on supportive corridors with BRT technology on both exclusive-lane and mixed traffic, depending on the feasibility. Autonomous BRT should be considered in the long term. For mixed-traffic BRT, deploy bus preferential treatment technologies as applicable.

Establish Rapid Internal and Adjacent Hub Connectivity

Establish a new "SmyGo"-branded shuttle/van service with fast connectivity for intra-city travel and to the Galleria and The Battery.

Rationale and Implications – Forming an internal network of direct and fast connectivity within key areas in Smyrna and quick links to the Galleria/The Battery areas were often cited as a priority by stakeholders, in the public survey, and in the discussion groups. The gap analysis echoes the need for internal connectivity within Smyrna. Public input indicated the need for more direct connections with smaller loops within the city. The gap analysis also illustrated areas that are underserved or not connected to the current grid of services. Bridging these gaps may increase ridership on a high-frequency arterial transit network while helping to reduce traffic and parking issues in addition to the City's efforts to make it a more walkable public space.

Services and Technology Targets – Implement medium- to high-frequency transit service to connect Smyrna residents/visitors on short/quick trips. Establish app-based micro-transit with smaller, non-transit-looking vehicles as feeders to major line-hail services and provide first/last-mile service where

needed. Much lower demand areas may be served by on-demand flex-type services. Where applicable, autonomous transit technology should be considered in the mid and long term.

Improve Transit Infrastructure/Capital Facilities

Relocate the current Cumberland Transfer Center to provide an easy, convenient, and safe transfer experience. In addition, establish a new transfer/park-and-ride facility on the South Cobb Drive/I-285 interchange area and improve transit infrastructure across Smyrna.

Rationale and Implications – A growing need was identified to enhance the transfer experience at the current Cumberland Transfer Center, which serves as the key hub for routes serving Smyrna. Safety to access the facility has become an issue. The current location also creates operational challenges, as its bus bays are directed eastbound, requiring westbound buses to travel through Cumberland Mall, thereby creating travel time delays for most routes. In addition, public outreach indicated there is need for more transfer facilities in the city in addition to park-and-ride facilities that are accessible to Smyrna residents to help connect to regional transit services more conveniently.

Services and Technology Targets – Implement state-of-the-art transfer hubs that are located strategically and offer amenities and that use new technologies for smoother local/regional transfers. Establish availability of park-and-ride facilities and better amenities and bus stops located to also connect with the city's popular trails network.

Implement an "All Hands on Deck" Transit Marketing Campaign

A carefully-coordinated marketing strategy that includes participation of various stakeholders in the city will promote the value and benefits of using transit to travel within Smyrna and connect regionally.

Rationale and Implications – Lack of awareness of available local transit services was mentioned repeatedly by *Smyrna Connects* stakeholders. During discussion groups, both business and social services agency representatives agreed that many residents are not aware of or know only a little about transit services that are available to them. Public outreach also revealed that people do not understand how to use the services, so more education may be needed. However, any marketing/awareness campaign by the City must be a collaborative effort with all key regional partners. With regional collaboration, its strategic location regionally, and its unique demographic and socioeconomic diverse population, Smyrna has an opportunity to promote transit as a truly viable option locally and in the region.

Develop a TNC-Based Program for After/Later Hour Rides

A voucher program for using ride-hailing services from Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) should be developed to get around when regular service is not available. The feasibility of this approach is being explored by Cobb County.

Rationale and Implications – Input from *Smyrna Connects* survey, discussion groups, and local and regional stakeholders indicated the need for travel options for transit users after regular bus service

hours, especially on weekends. Even if a program that provides TNC-based travel options after bus service hours is not used heavily, as most CobbLinc routes operate past 12:00 midnight on most days, such a program would make transit an option that is available 24/7 for city residents and visitors.

Next – Developing Improvement Strategies

Transit is seen as a practical and cleaner remedy to mitigate the traffic gridlock that is becoming increasingly worse in the region every year. However, local and regional guidance is clear—transit strategies that incorporate new and advanced modes/technologies but are affordable and appealing are needed. The needs identified herein provide the basis for developing those necessary strategies, which will be presented next.

Section 8: 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 C 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 8-1 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.

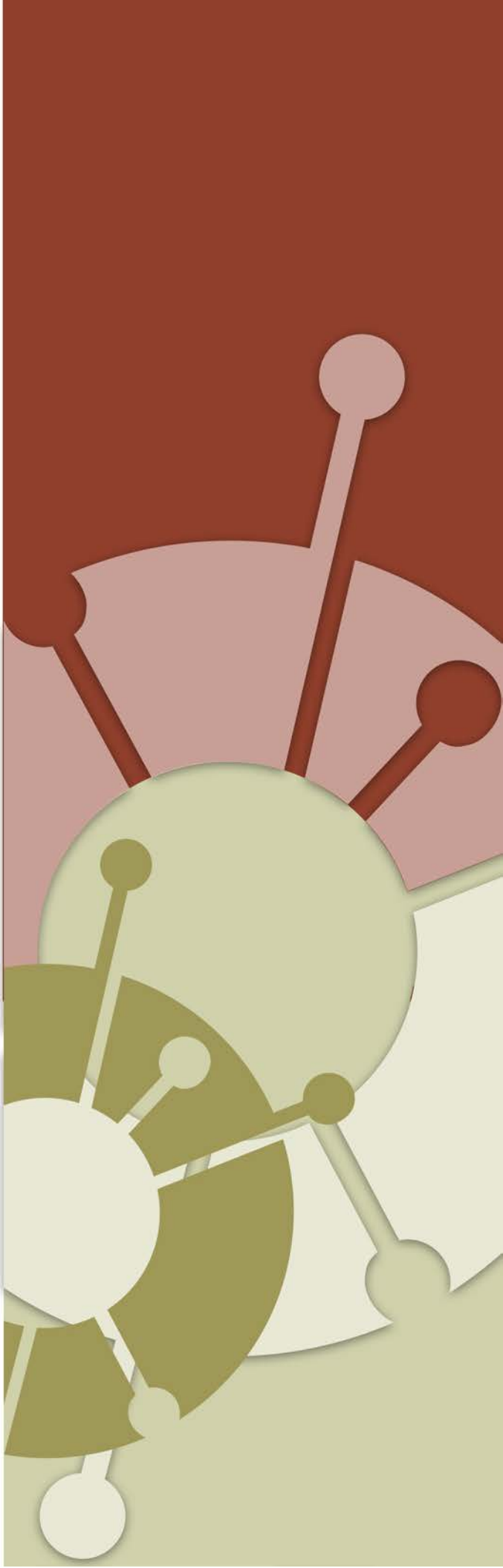
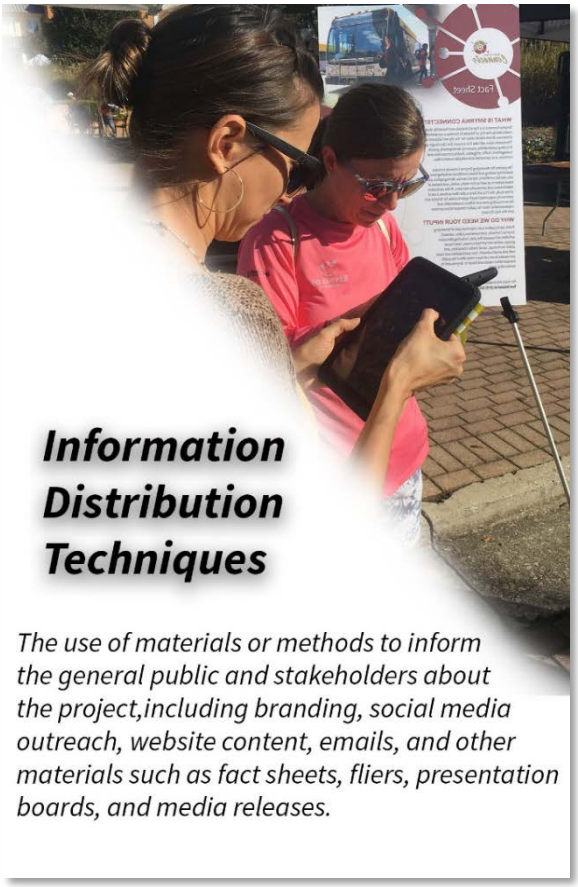


Figure 8-1: Public Involvement Techniques for Smyrna Connects



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.

COVID-19 Impact on Public Outreach

It should be noted that due to social distancing requirements resulting from the COVID-19-related public health crisis that was unfolding during the second phase of *Smyrna Connects* public involvement, some outreach activities such as public workshops and committee meetings were conducted virtually via the internet. However, every effort was made to ensure that the use of an array of online platforms to provide easy and equitable public participation methods for reaching the public and receiving their feedback.

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 8-1.

Table 8-1: Public Involvement Activities

Outreach Event	Timeline	Engaged
Stakeholder Interviews		
Stakeholder Interviews	August–December 2019	41
Surveys		
Public Input Survey	August–December 2019	1,038
Transit Priorities Survey	April -May 2020	195
Public Workshops		
Workshop #1: REV Coffee Shop	October 2019	4
Workshop #2: Jonquil Festival	October 2019	176
Workshop #3: Virtual Workshop (views)	April – May 2020	2,104
Discussion Group Workshops		
Business/Economic Development Community	October 2019	7
Social Service Agency Representatives	October 2019	9
Bus Riders	November 2019	24
Cobb Transit Advisory Board	November 2019	25
Technical Advisory Committee Meetings		
TAC Meeting #1	August 2019	18
TAC Meeting #2	November 2019	Same
TAC Meeting #3	February 2020	Same
TAC Meeting #4	June 2020	Same
Other Efforts		
Email	August–November 2019	75
Grassroots Outreach	December 2019	25
Facebook	August 2019 – May 2020	4,469
Project Website	August 2019 – May 2020	Many
	Total	**8,210+**

Note: Total does not include all website, all social media engagements, or public participation at 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 8-2.

Table 8-2: 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

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.
- **TAC Meeting #3: Transit Strategies Discussion** –The TAC met on February 26, 2020, at Brawner Hall to discuss the proposed transit strategies and other project outreach details. Attendees discussed the strategies, how some of proposals could be integrated with other regionally-significant projects, and the best methods to communicate the vision to the community.

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 8-3 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

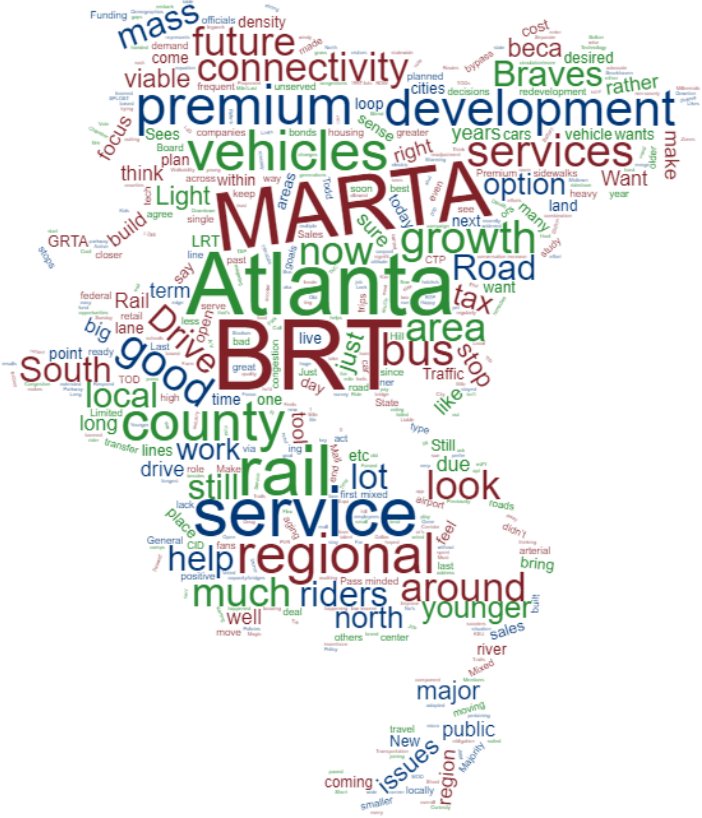
Each stakeholder was provided the same questions and topics; the script is provided in Appendix C. Input received during these interviews was reviewed, and major themes were identified and are summarized in the following sections. Overall, interviewees indicated the need for quick and easy connections 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 8-3: 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 Gulledge	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

Conditions Today

- **Traditional markets** – Stakeholders mentioned that the current perception of transit in Smyrna is that it is for traditional markets (those who do not have access to a personal vehicle or are low-income, older adults, or youth). Some stakeholders also commented that the existing services currently do not fully serve the traditional markets in Smyrna. Stakeholders believed that there is not as much ridership from outside the traditional markets currently, but some mentioned that a portion of choice riders (those who may have their own cars but choose to ride transit) use it to avoid traffic.



- **Awareness** – Stakeholders agreed that most residents know that there is a transit service that operates in Smyrna but do not know much about where it goes or how often it runs. It was frequently mentioned that there is a need for an education/marketing campaign to inform residents and visitors of current bus services and facilities. Distributing easy-to-understand educational materials also was mentioned as being helpful, as current bus schedules are not always easy to understand for those unfamiliar with the system.
- **Changing demographics** – Stakeholders regularly commented that the demographics of Smyrna were changing from older adults to younger adults, primarily in the southern part of the city. It was noted that this demographic change brings a change of mindset, one that is seeking out alternative modes of transportation and the need for multiple modes of travel and desire for better transit technologies.
- **Existing services** – Currently, service in Smyrna is not seen as a viable transportation alternative for choice riders. It was consistently mentioned that commuters may desire premium transit options such as BRT or rail rather than traditional local bus service. The current perception of traditional bus service is not all positive and may be impeding choice ridership. However, most stakeholders agreed that CobbLinc is doing a good job and 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.

- **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 8-2 illustrates selected input from *Smyrna Connects* study stakeholders.

Figure 8-2: 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.

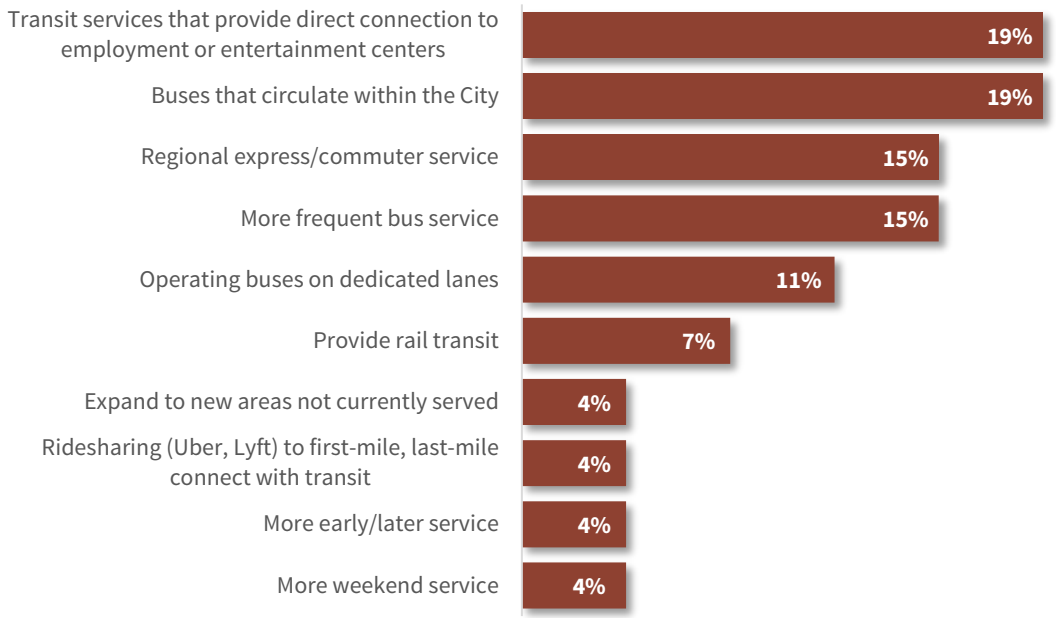
A key focus of the discussion was transit needs for the city going forward. Attendees emphasized the need for transit to better and quickly connect Smyrna's residents and visitors to major employment and shopping hubs. Regional connections were also a key need, as were routes that serve only the city. 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 8-3 shows this group's top transit priorities for the next 20 years.

Figure 8-3: 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:

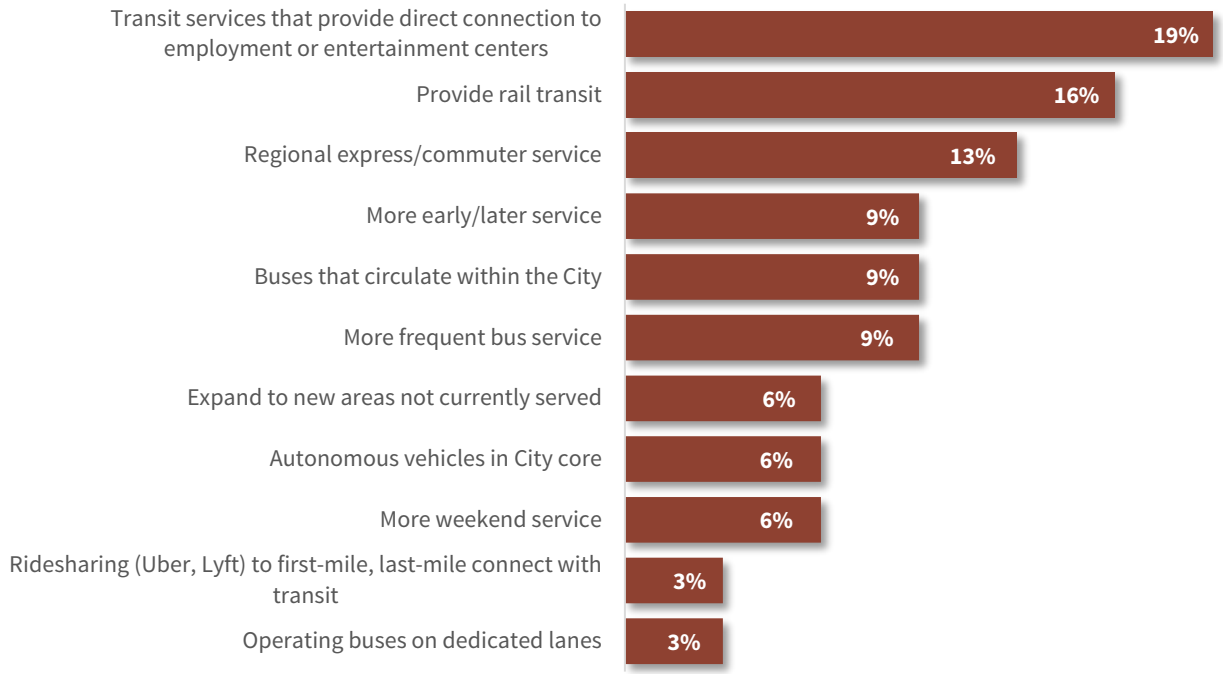
- More than half said they were familiar with the services and have used transit available in the area, mostly for recreational purposes.
- The group overwhelmingly agreed that there is a need for additional or improved transit services within the City limits and noted the need for quick and direct connections 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:

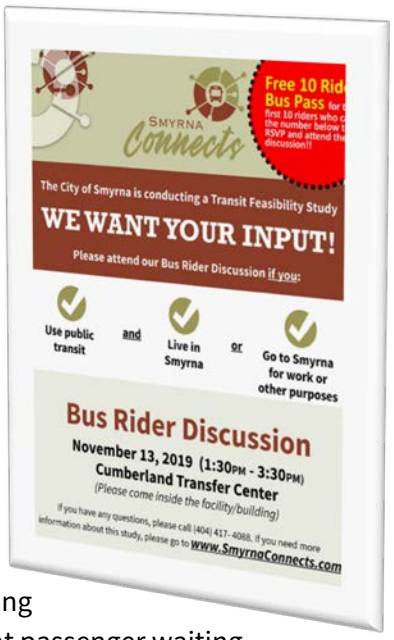
- Awareness and marketing efforts need to be broadened; branding is important.
- Current transit is not compatible with service industry needs—need earlier and later hours.
- More desire than ever from community for transit, particularly in the southern portion of the county.
- Focus on northwest Smyrna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

The Business and Economic Development shows this group's top transit priorities for the next 20 years in Figure 8-4.

Figure 8-4: 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.

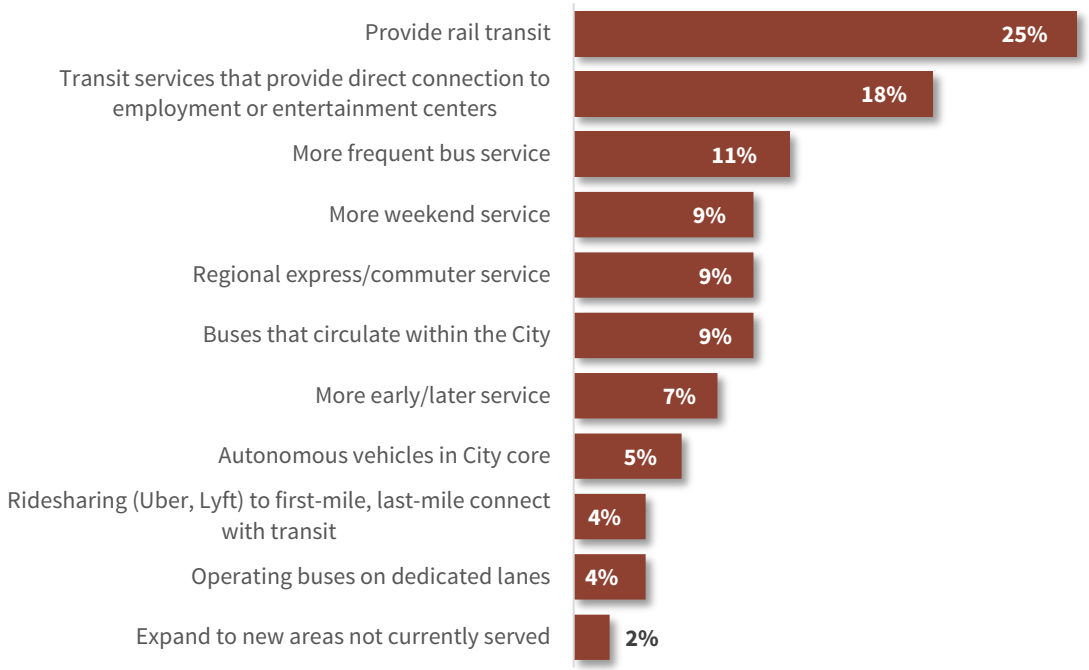
The workshop was timed to ensure that it would start after most routes converge at the transfer facility. The same format and structure as the other discussion group workshops were used to gather information on current and future transit needs from the existing riders. In addition to this workshop, project 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 8-5.

Figure 8-5: 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 *Smyrna Connects* 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.

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 C.

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

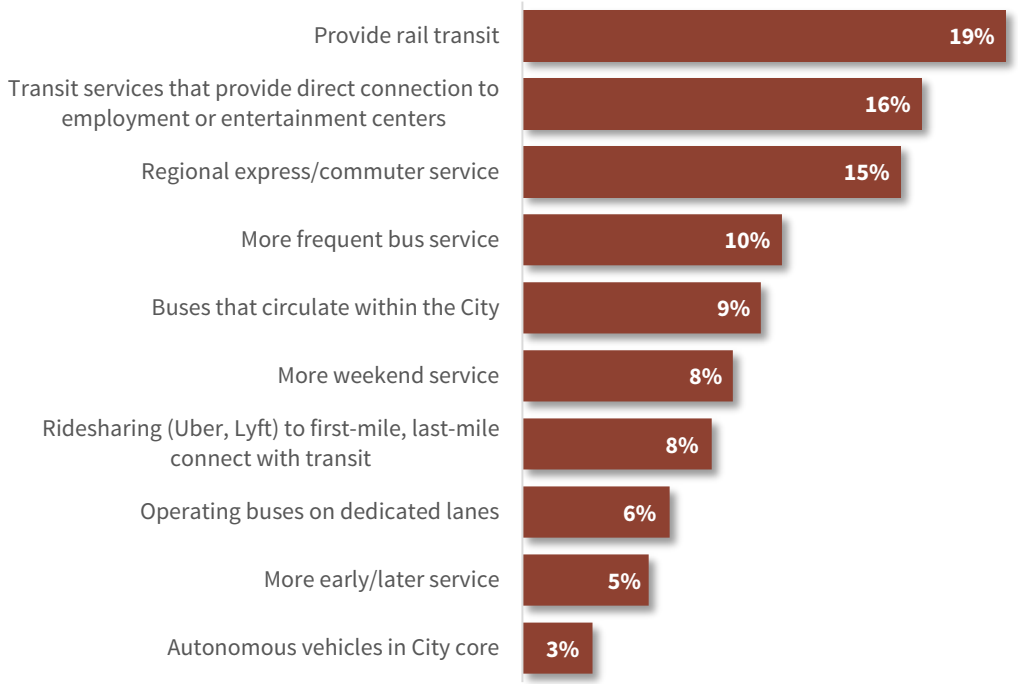
The second *Smyrna Connects* public workshop was held over two days at the Jonquil Festival at Village Green in October 2019 from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM and from 12:00–5:00 PM. The workshop was attended by 176 participants who asked questions and provided input. In addition to engaging participants, a tablet-based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

Highlights of input from the workshop are summarized below:

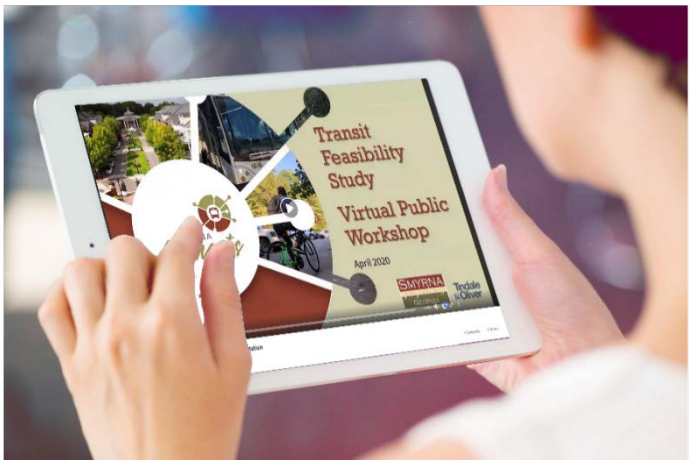
- Many participants or members of their households had used or were familiar with existing transit services in Smyrna.
- The majority agreed that there is a need for additional transit services in Smyrna, and almost half agreed that regional connections would make transit more appealing.
- Less traffic, 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 8-6 shows the transit priorities/needs expressed by the workshop participants at this workshop.

Figure 8-6: Top Transit Priorities at Workshop #2



Virtual Public Workshop



As previously noted, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting social distancing requirements, public workshops in the second phase of *Smyrna Connects* public outreach process were held virtually.

A video presentation was prepared to present the proposed 20-year transit strategies and the phases of potential implementation. First, the video described the overall study objectives, the regional planning process, findings from the first public involvement phase, and the 20-Year Needs. Subsequently, the video reviewed details of the transit strategies included in the short-term, mid-term, and long-term phases. The presentation also reviewed the technological, capital, and planning/policy needs for each phase. The video presentation was promoted on multiple social media platforms and projects and City websites from April 2020 to May 2020.

This virtual public workshop video has reached 4,408 people, was viewed 2,104 times, and garnered many shares to other various social media groups and entities within Smyrna. Viewers of the video also were encouraged to take an online survey to provide feedback on the proposed strategies.

Feedback from the viewers on various social media platforms where collected and reviewed. Some of the applicable comments/feedback are listed below.

Service Related Comments

- Increasing Route 25 frequency is very important. Higher frequency, 15 minutes or less, should be considered the goal for most routes as this will encourage ridership.
- BRT is a great idea and dedicated bus lanes are needed for transit services.
- Although rail is expensive, it should be considered in the next 20 years. Rail is important for regional connection. A connection between Atlanta and Smyrna would be considered key and could possibly eliminate the need for other bus routes proposed in the mid-term and long-term strategies.
- Rail could transform Smyrna into a transit hub for the northwest metro-Atlanta region.
- There needs to be transit for all major north, east, west, and south corridors. Connectivity to the Cobb Hospital from the Cumberland Parkway, via express route, is needed.

Capital/Infrastructure/Technology Related Comments

- The Downtown Smyrna Transit Center is a good idea. The Cumberland Mall could be converted into a transit-oriented development/mixed use space. This would include dwelling units, parking, amenities, major transit center, and bus maintenance building.
- The South Smyrna Transfer Center may not be a productive transit center as there is not as much high-density housing and it is not very walkable.
- The need for discussion about bus stops is urgent as the contract for the agency that maintains the shelters is expiring in 2020. Development of a standard bus stop, including amenities expected, should be decided and implemented. As bus stops improvements are mentioned in the short-term and mid-term strategies, the City should consider negotiating with the agency sooner to benefit the City and its residents. Private-public partnerships should be considered for the improvements.
- Benches and shelters are needed as part of bus stops improvements and should be included in bus stop amenities considerations that already include bicycle and sidewalk connectivity.
- Queue jumps and Transit Signal Priority (TSP) will help prove efficiency, consistency, and dependability for transit.

Marketing/Other Related Comments

- A Mobility Advisory Committee should be formed as a permanent advisory committee. This Committee would be tasked and focus on improving mobility within Smyrna. Although a dedicated city employee to advocate for transit is great, a transportation advisory board would be better to foster citizen input.
- The community, such as business leaders, stakeholders, and advocates, should be included in the transit discussion. Property developers should include bus shelters in their developments

and business owners should encourage and incentivize employees and customers to use transit within the City.

- Implementation of routes needs to be attractive and positive as the perception of riding the bus needs to be changed. Marketing efforts should include rebranding the route names, such as the Jonquil Line. Educational campaigns, a part of the marketing efforts, should be oriented towards high school students.
- Walking, bicycling, and scooters should be integrated as first mile and last mile options from transit. This will create a multimodal network.
- Land use and walkability provide the basis for a successful transit service. Increasing ridership includes making smart land use decisions to support it.
- The transit app needs to be updated and become more user-friendly.

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 Surveys

This section discusses the two surveys that were conducted for Smyrna Connects. The first survey, the Transit Needs Survey, was available from October to December 2019. This survey collected current travel pattern information, preferred 20-Year priorities, and socio-demographic information. The second survey, the Transit Priorities Survey, was available from April to May 2020. The Transit Priorities Survey intended to prioritize strategies derived from the requests of the first survey, quantitative transit data, and demand.

Transit Needs Survey

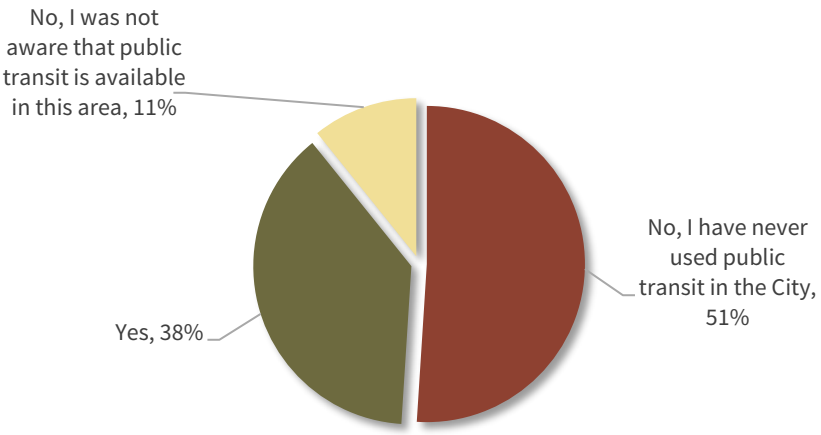
The first online public survey was available from October to December 2019 via social media platforms created for the study, email blasts, and the *Smyrna Connects* website as well as during the public workshops. In total, 22 questions were asked to gather opinions about current services,

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 C.

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 8-7).

Figure 8-7: 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 8-8.

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

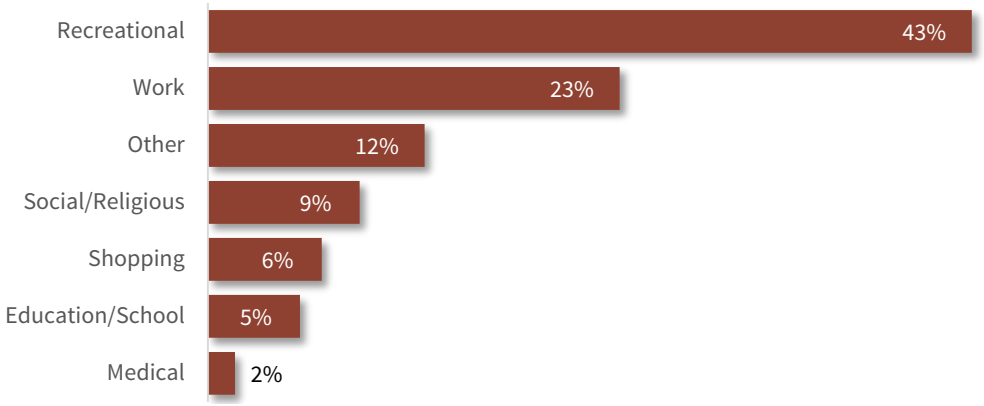
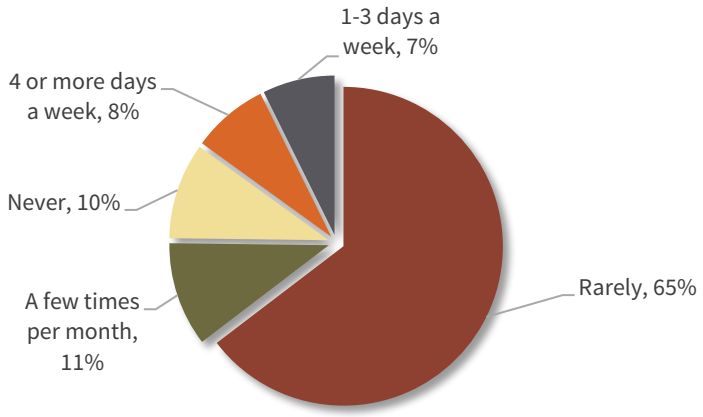


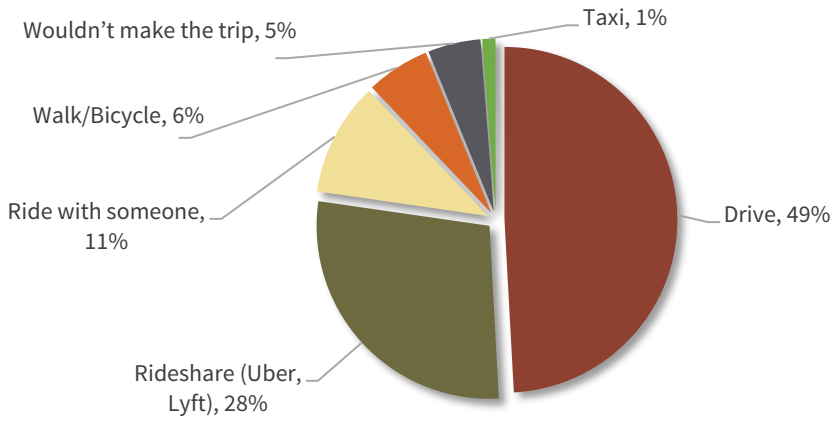
Figure 8-9 shows the frequency with which respondents used transit. Approximately 65 percent indicated that they rarely used transit services within the city, 11 percent said a few times per month, 10 percent said never, 8 percent indicated 4 or more days per week, and 7 percent responded 1–3 days per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

Figure 8-9: 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 8-10, 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 8-10: How would you make the trip if transit services were not available?

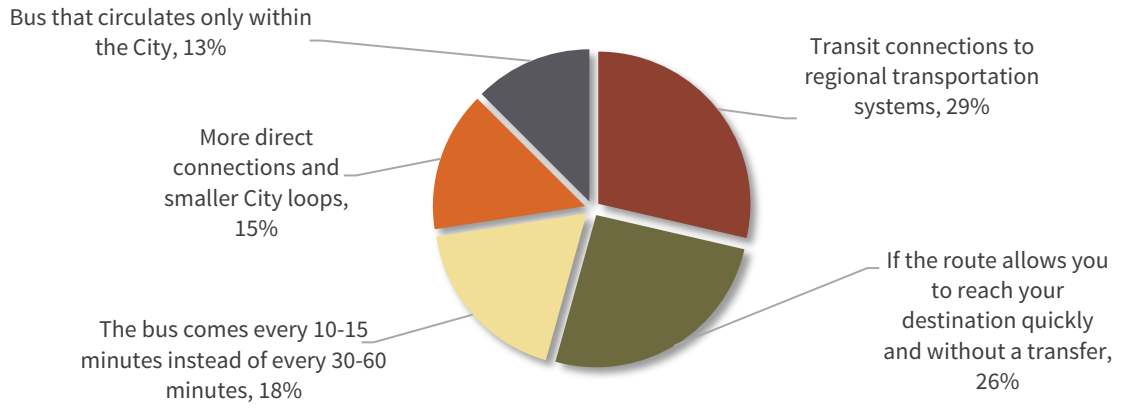


Although 61 percent responded that they did not use public transit in Smyrna or were not aware of the services, 75 percent agreed when asked if there was a need for additional/improved transit services in the city. As shown in Figure 8-11, the remaining respondents indicated they did not know (13%) and did not believe there was a need (12%).

Figure 8-11: Do you think there is a need for additional/improved transit services in Smyrna?

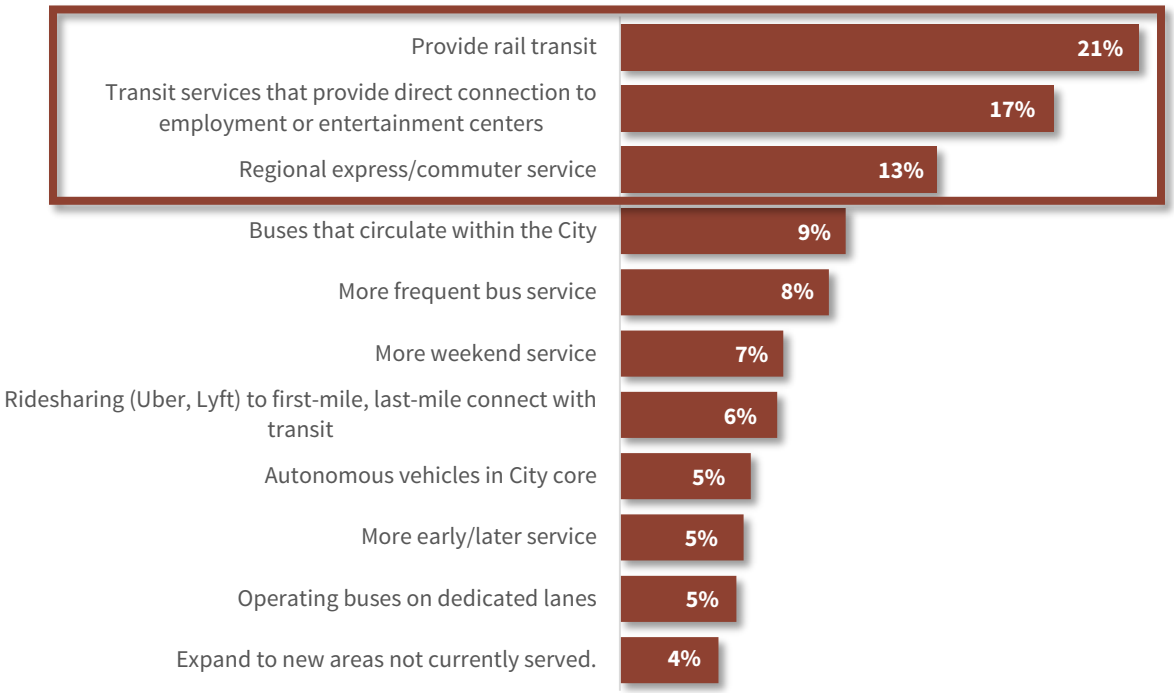
To help determine the transit needs in the area, participants were asked what would make transit more appealing to use or to use more often. As shown in Figure 8-12, top responses were transit connections to regional transportation systems (29%), routes allowing riders to reach their destinations quickly 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 8-12:What would make transit more appealing for you to use it or use it more?



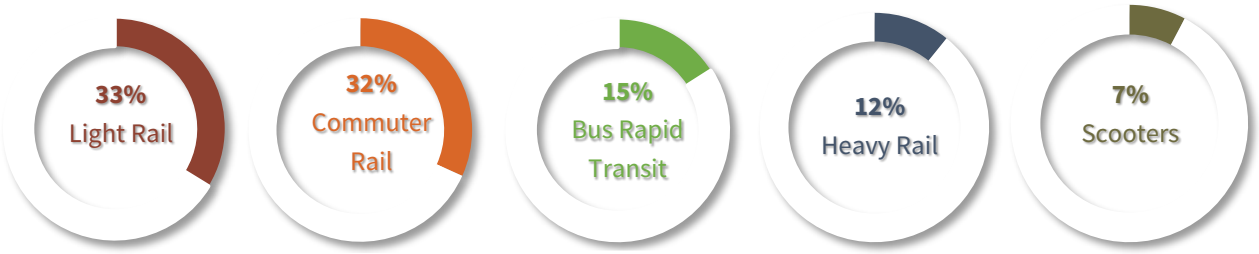
To rank the different transit service options available, participants were asked to select what the City should prioritize in the next 20 years. Responses were providing rail transit (21%), transit services that provide direct connections to entertainment centers and employment (17%), and regional express/commuter 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/later service (5%), operating buses on dedicated lanes (5%), and expanding to new areas not currently served (4%). These results are shown in Figure 8-13.

Figure 8-13: What should the City consider as public transit priorities over the next 20 years?



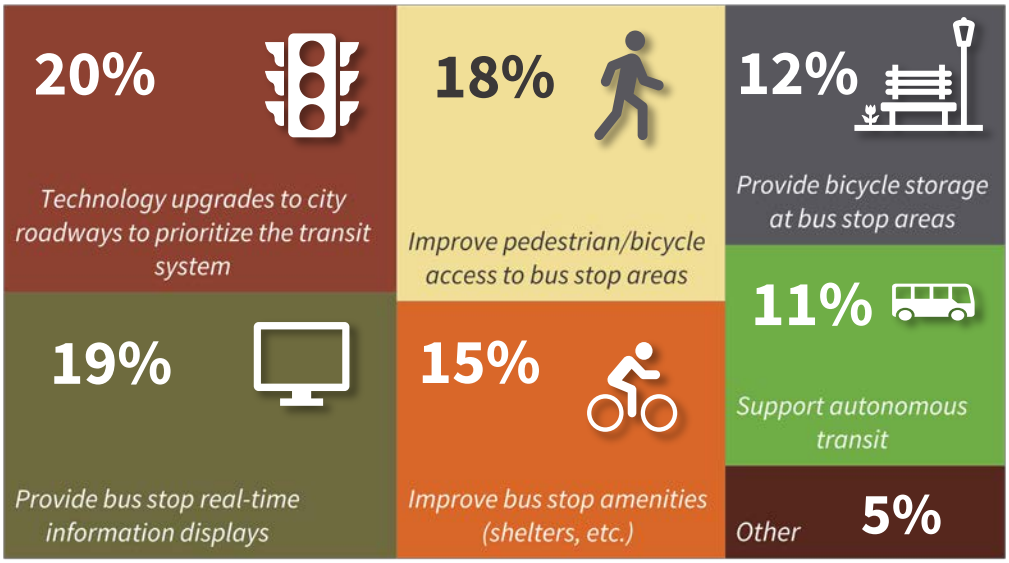
Participants were asked about other modes in addition to local and express buses the City should consider over the same time period. Light rail was the top choice (33%), followed by commuter rail (32%), BRT (15%), heavy rail (12%), and scooters (7%). These results are illustrated in Figure 8-14.

Figure 8-14: In addition to local/express bus, what other modes should the City consider over the next 20 years?



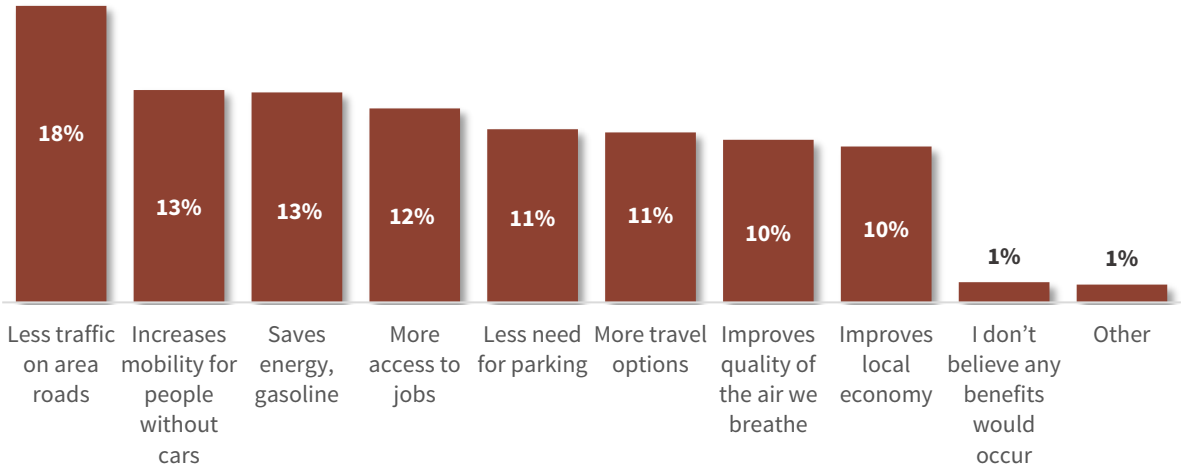
Exploring other improvements after inquiring about modes, participants were asked about the transit infrastructure and technology improvements they would like to see the City support in the next 20 years (Figure 8-15). The top response (20%) was technology upgrades to roadways to prioritize transit, 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 8-15: What transit infrastructure and technology improvements should the City consider supporting in the next 20 years?



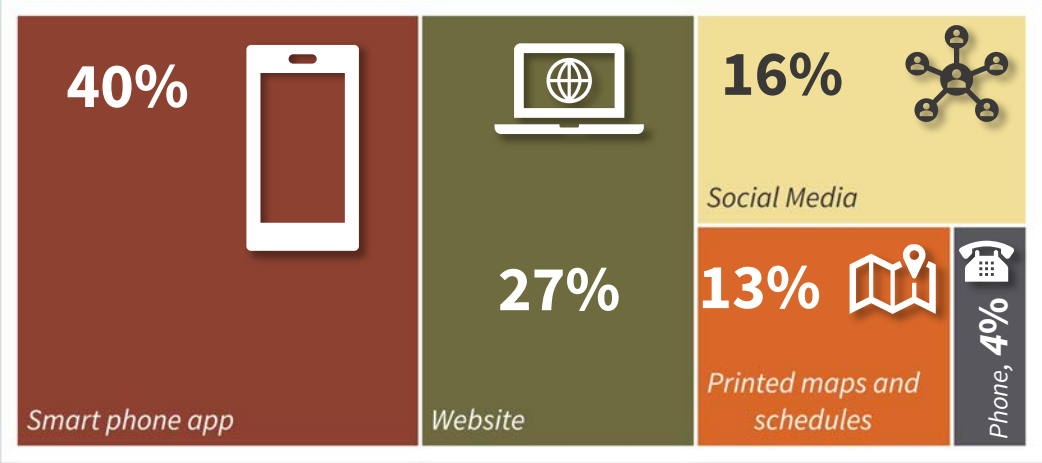
Participants were asked what benefits they believed could result from additional transit services in the City and adjacent areas. Less traffic on area roads (18%), increased mobility for people without cars (13%), and energy savings (13%) were noted as the top three, as shown in Figure 8-16.

Figure 8-16: 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 8-17).

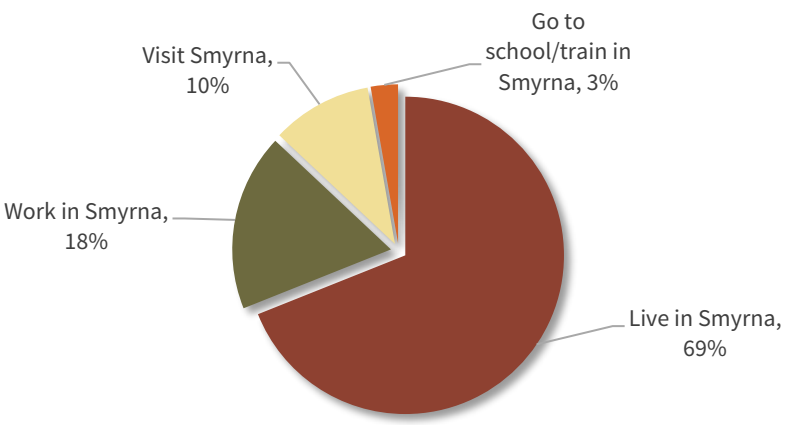
Figure 8-17: How would you like to have access to public transit information?



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.

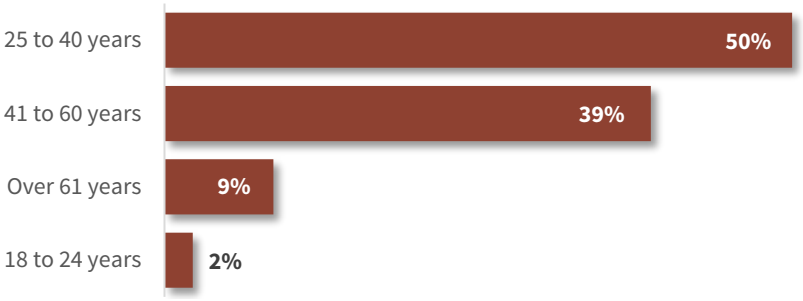
It was important to know if the respondents were from Smyrna or why they visited Smyrna. Of the total, 69 percent lived in Smyrna, 18 percent worked in Smyrna, 10 percent were visiting Smyrna, and 3 percent went to school and trained in Smyrna (Figure 8-18).

Figure 8-18: Respondent Relationship to Smyrna



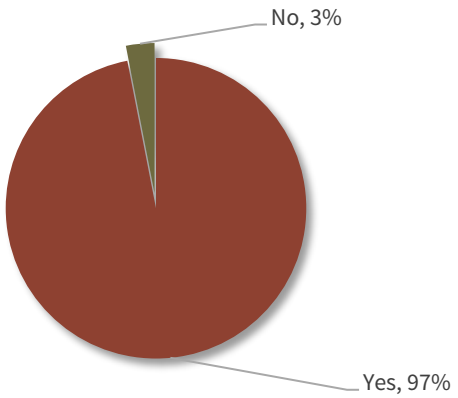
More than half of respondents indicated that they were age 25–40, 39 percent were 41–60, 9 percent were 61+, and 2 percent were 18–24 (Figure 8-19).

Figure 8-19: Respondent Age



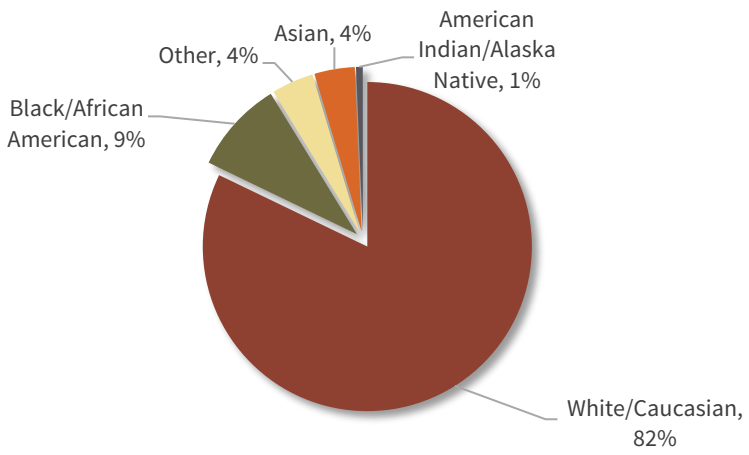
Analyzing access to a personal vehicle was also relevant, as those who do not have access to a personal vehicle are more likely to rely on public transit. When analyzed with other responses, this also can identify the attitudes on transit from respondents who own personal vehicles. The data show that approximately 97 percent of respondents indicated having access to a personal vehicle and 3 percent indicated that they did not (see Figure 8-20).

Figure 8-20: 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 8-21).

Figure 8-21: Respondent Race/Ethnicity



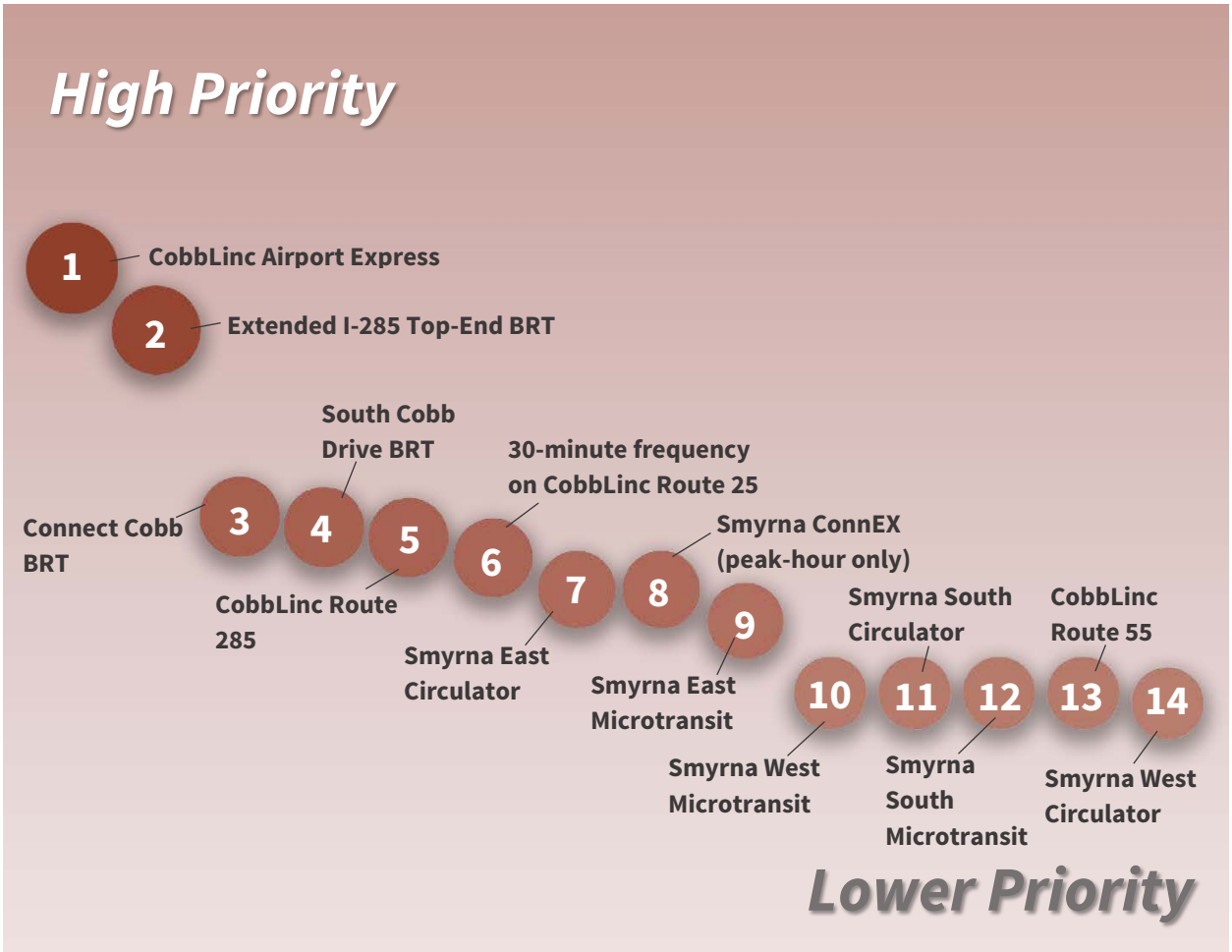
Transit Priorities Survey

Beginning in April 2020, a survey was available online to virtual workshop participants and the general public to provide their input on the recommended transit strategies and to identify any other areas of need. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the survey was promoted on all social media and virtual platforms. In total, 195 surveys were completed; a copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix C.

The top three most popular improvement strategies selected by the public were a new CobbLinc Airport Express, extending I-285 Top-End BRT to South Cobb Drive in Smyrna, and Connect BRT. Transit strategies that were regional connectors received the most support, as did premium transit

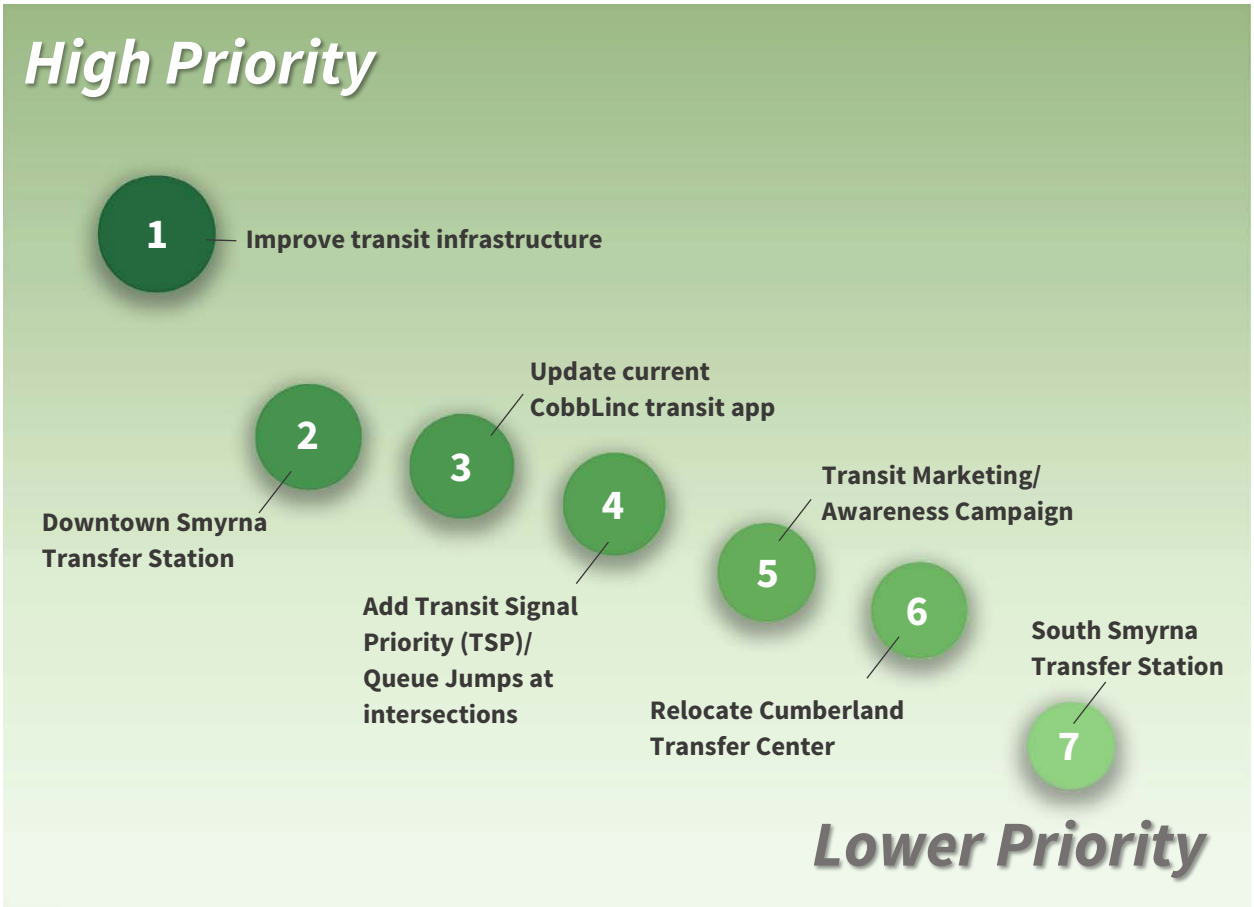
options such as BRT and express routes. As summarized in Figure 8-22, Other than the top two, all other strategies were ranked close to each other by the public.

Figure 8-22: Transit Priorities Survey-Service Improvements Results



When asked also to prioritize Capital, Technology, and Other improvements, improving transit infrastructure, adding a Downtown Smyrna Transfer Station, and updating the current CobbLinc transit app were the top three selections indicated. The other improvements, such as adding TSP/Queue Jumps at intersections, transit marketing/awareness campaign, relocating the Cumberland Transfer Center, and adding the South Smyrna Transfer Station were also received positively. Figure 8-23 shows the improvements ranked by favorability.

Figure 8-23: Transit Priorities Survey-Capital/Technology/Other Improvements Results



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.

Figure 8-24 shows the public outreach activities conducted and the strategies considered to be important for the next 20 years.

Figure 8-24: Smyrna Connects Outreach in Brief

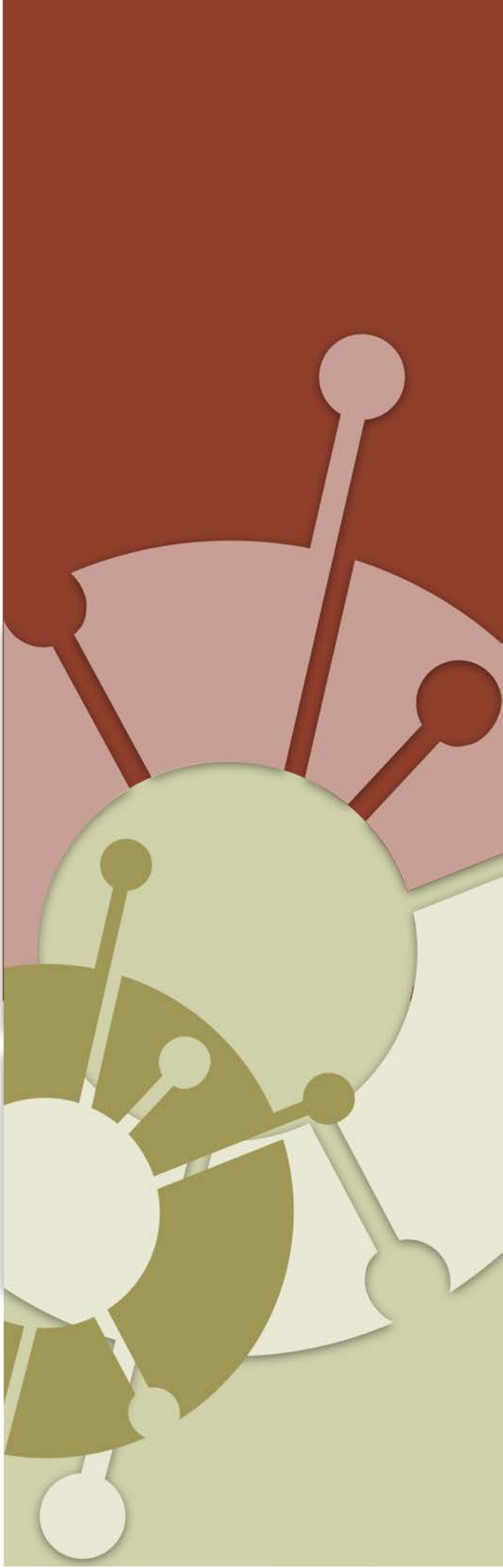
	Stakeholders	Surveys	Public Workshops	Discussion Groups	Advisory Committees	Media
Technique	41 stakeholders	2 public input surveys	2 in-person workshops, 1 virtual workshop	4 discussion groups	4 Technical Advisory Committee meetings	Website, social media, email
Outcome	26 interviewed	1,233 engaged	2,204 engaged	65 involved	18 involved	4,469+ reached
Transit Needs/Policy Direction	• 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	• 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) • CobbLinc Airport Express, Extended I-285 Top-End BRT, and Cobb Connect BRT selected as top priorities	• 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 • Downtown Transfer Center and higher frequency on Route 25 chosen as priorities	• 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	• Integrated transportation system that meets local and regional connectivity needs • Coordination between regional plans and entities	• Web-based resources for information: how to ride transit; real time updates; and trip planning

Section 9: Toolbox of Improvement Strategies

This section summarizes the transit improvement strategies to address the needs developed and presented previously in this report. These needs were developed based on findings from data analysis, input from the community and stakeholders, and policy direction from the City and the larger region. These needs, as noted below, provide the basis for developing a toolbox of improvement strategies for public transit in Smyrna for the next 20 years:

- **Develop a high-frequency commuter network** – These premium and regular transit routes should connect to a regional network of premium/express transit services and facilities on key corridors in the city with service every 15 minutes or less.
- **Establish rapid internal and adjacent hub connectivity** – Establish a branded shuttle/van service with fast connectivity for intra-city travel and to the adjacent Cumberland CID.
- **Improve transit infrastructure/capital facilities** – Add new transfer facilities and relocate the current Cumberland Transfer Center to provide an easy, convenient, and safe transfer experience.
- **Implement a transit marketing campaign** – Develop and implement a coordinated marketing strategy that includes participation of various stakeholders/agencies and use of local and regional resources.
- **Develop a transportation network company (TNC)-based after-hour rides program** – Develop a voucher program for using ride-hailing services from TNCs such as Uber and Lyft to get around when regular service is not available.

The improvement strategies for addressing these core needs are presented in the remainder of this section.



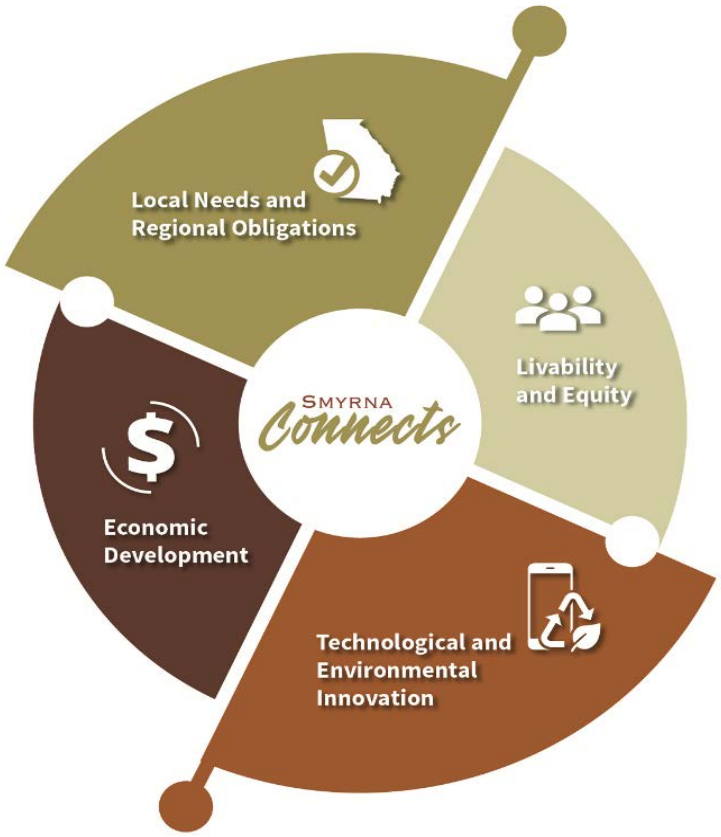
Factors Guiding Development of Strategies

In addition to guidance from project and City goals in general, Smyrna's geographic location, diverse population and needs, and proximity to the Cumberland CID warrant a toolbox of well-thought-out transit strategies for the next 20 years. The following factors were strongly considered in guiding and shaping these strategies.

Economic Development

With a revitalized Downtown District that continues to expand and an adjacent $4.4 billion commercial/residential hub with an additional $1.5 billion investment planned over the next decade, economic development has been a major focus of City leadership and staff. With many commercial and residential developments planned along city arterials and major roadway improvements scheduled, transit strategies that complement and elevate the City's economic development efforts are crucial.

Figure 9-1: Factors Guiding Development of Smyrna Connects Strategies



Livability and Equity

Smyrna continues to be an attractive place to live for a variety of people. Its Downtown District provides walkability and access to many amenities and civic centers. Connecting transit to the Downtown and its activities and amenities as well as the city's extensive trail network can support the livability goals. In addition, strategies that cater to the northern part of the city, with more baby boomers, and the southern part of the city, with younger populations, while also serving the city's low-income and other disadvantaged or underserved populations are also essential.

Local Needs and Regional Obligations

Ensuring that the desires and needs of the City are met while staying consistent with regional goals is also crucial. Locally, the strategies should address the community's needs to be connected quickly and internally in addition to connecting to activities and economic opportunities adjacent to the city. As Smyrna grows with the Atlanta region, regional connectivity will be critical to an economically and socially successful region.

Technological and Environmental Innovation

Smyrna has repeatedly been described as an innovative and desirable place to live, work, and visit. Technologically-advanced and innovative strategies may be needed to stay consistent with this identity, especially if the city wants to continue attracting younger populations. In addition, with 304 acres of green space and an eco-conscious population, the City's focus on the environment should also be reflected in its transit strategies.

Phasing of Transit Improvements

Phasing of improvement strategies is important for a practical and implementable plan that can carry out the vision for Smyrna's growth over time. It not only allows the City to further evaluate the strategies it selects, but it also can ensure that adequate funding is in place. Also, with meaningful phasing, Smyrna could be well-positioned to communicate the components of its transit vision to County and regional planning efforts. The strategies can be presented to Cobb County for consideration in its update to the overall countywide transportation plan, which includes a transit element. In addition, the strategies for Smyrna can be presented to the ATL for its consideration as it continues to update its transit plan for the region.

Also, GDOT is advancing a managed lane project on the top end of I-285, with lanes expected to open by 2032. A feasibility study is underway by surrounding cities for implementing BRT once the lanes are open. All these regional initiatives provide an opportunity for Smyrna to provide input and have influence with a phased implementation plan for transit. In addition, the phased strategies may feed into the projects Cobb County may be developing for the Transit Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST) referendum in the future.

The phases of *Smyrna Connects* improvement strategies to meet the transit needs and regional timelines are defined as follows:

- **Short-term (1–2-year) recommendations** are strategies that include enhancements to existing transit services provided by CobbLinc, new services, and any infrastructure and policy improvements that are higher priority, easier to implement, and/or lower-cost or cost-neutral in nature to facilitate implementation in the more immediate future **by the end of 2022**.
- **Mid-term (3–7-year) recommendations** either are not as immediate in terms of priority or the needs are sufficiently extensive and costly to require some level of additional planning and time to implement. These strategies may make sense over the next 2–8 years, **from 2023 through 2029**.

- **Long-term (8–20-year) recommendations** include mobility needs that may require greater financial commitments, changes in existing policies or operational philosophy over a greater period of time, or new premium services that may require longer implementation times, so phasing must occur in the latter half of a 20-year plan timeframe, **from 2030 to 2040**.

Toolbox of Strategies

The *Smyrna Connects* improvement strategies summarized below lay the foundation for making transit a viable travel option in Smyrna are presented below. Each of these "tools" is categorized in to the three phases described previously based on the type and extent of the improvement, necessary natural succession, and sound judgment. For each phase, service strategies are listed, followed by infrastructure, technology, and policy strategies to support implementation of these service strategies.

It is important to note that the draft strategies identified here are Smyrna's recommendations to CobbLinc and its other regional partners on how the City wants to improve travel options for its residents and visitors. As the City does not operate, manage, or fund regular transit services and may not intend to do so in the near future, it will need to coordinate with CobbLinc and other partners to assess the feasibility of incorporating the majority of these strategies into their individual transit plans.

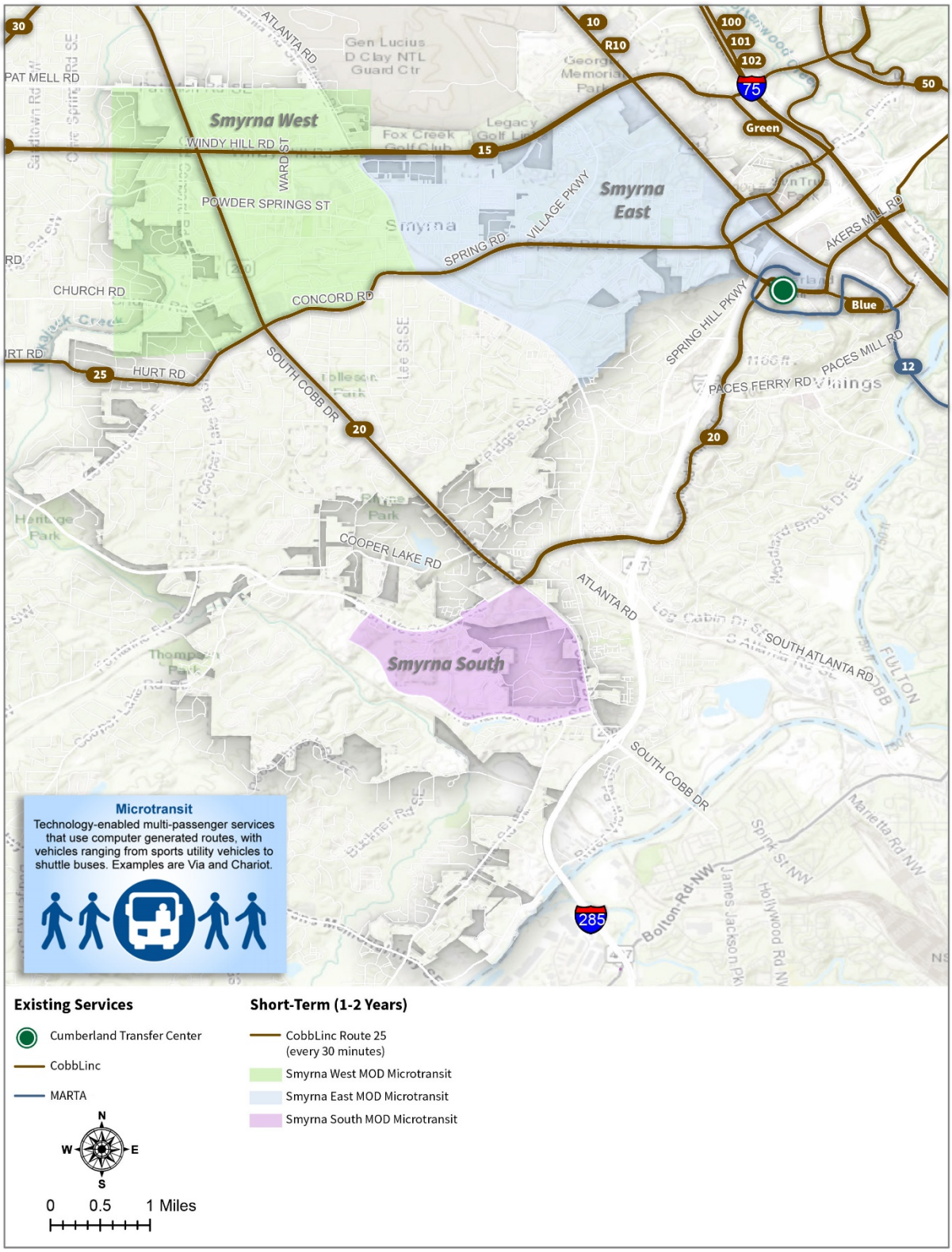
Short-term Strategies (1–2 Years)

Several strategies are identified to improve transit service in the short term and begin to lay the foundation for making transit a more viable travel option in Smyrna. Several service-related improvements are recommended for implementation within the next 1–2 years to start addressing the key needs identified previously. In addition, infrastructure, technology, and policy strategies are identified to support implementation of the service improvement strategies listed below. Map 9-1 shows the short-term service strategies for the *Smyrna Connects* 20-year plan.

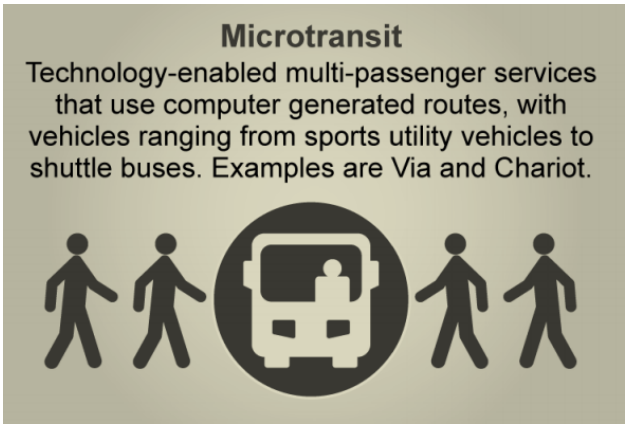
In the short term, the key focus will be to improve the frequency of current bus services on key arterials to every 30 minutes and add a new layer of mobility options to set the stage for the next phases. The following improvement strategies were identified:

- **Increase service frequency to 30 minutes on routes** – This would increase the service frequency on Concord/Spring Road to a bus every 30 minutes from the current frequency of every 60 minutes. Although improving CobbLinc Route 25 to 30-minute frequency is also identified as a need by CobbLinc as part of its recent service efficiency analysis, it was not implemented immediately but was included as a mid-range recommendation by CobbLinc with no set time frame. *The Smyrna Connects 20-year plan recommends that the City work with CobbLinc to establish 30-minute service on Route 25 within the next 1–2 years*.

Map 9-1: Short-Term Service Strategies



- **Implement Mobility on Demand (MOD) microtransit in three zones** – As a pilot to assess public interest in shared mobility services and establish a ridership base for potential circulator-type transit services in the future, three areas were identified for establishing microtransit services in the city. The service will be provided with non-bus-like vehicles/vans (during public outreach, using non-transit-looking vehicles was preferred over using typical transit buses in Smyrna), preferably electric, where riders can quickly book a ride using an app or call a number to request a ride.



Source: GAO Report 18-539

FTA defines microtransit as "IT-enabled private multi-passenger transportation services (such as Bridj, Chariot, Split, and Via) that serve passengers using dynamically-generated routes and may expect passengers to make their way to and from common pick-up or drop-off points. Vehicles can range from large SUVs to vans to shuttle buses. Because they provide transit-like service but on a smaller, more flexible scale, these new services have been referred to as microtransit."

Excluding the modified walk access area of current CobbLinc routes, all other area in the zones identified in Map 9-1 will be connected. (A transit walk access area was defined for *Smyrna Connects* as being 1/8-mile or a 2-minute walk from a bus route to make it a more comfortable walk than the ¼-mile threshold typically used in the industry).[2] The MOD zones described below were identified based on demand analyses and findings from *Smyrna Connects* public outreach:

  - *Smyrna East MOD Microtransit* – Encompasses the area between Atlanta and Windy Hill Roads and Cobb Parkway and areas on both sides of Spring Road. This app-based service would connect eligible riders in this high population/employment area to locations within the designated MOD zone.
  - *Smyrna West MOD Microtransit* – Includes areas west of Atlanta Road, north of Concord Road, and on both sides of Windy Hill Road and South Cobb Drive. The traditional transit market segments and residents/workers in this zone who are without easy access to current CobbLinc services will be connected to locations in the zone and to CobbLinc routes 15, 20, and 25.

[2] FTA defines a ¼ -mile buffer as a comfortable walking distance of access transit, commonly considered to be the transit walk access buffer. This plan assumes a 1/8-mile buffer to make using transit even more convenient and easy in Smyrna.

- *Smyrna South MOD Microtransit* – Includes the area between the East-West Connector, Highlands Ridge Road, and South Cobb Drive. The service would provide easy access to key points and transit stops from jobs and homes in this area.
- These services would also serve as first/last-mile service for the arterial route network currently provided by CobbLinc. For such riders, the service could be free, as they have already paid or will pay fare for regular bus service. The service will use geofencing to ensure that the population living/working close to the CobbLinc routes (defined as within 1/8-mile) are excluded. The *Smyrna Connects* plan recommends two possible options for establishing this service:
  - *CobbLinc Service* – Includes working with CobbLinc and using its current service provider, First Transit, to operate this service. With its presence in the area as the service provider for CobbLinc and having maintenance and other facilities, First Transit should be considered for providing this service if it fits the technological needs and financial framework. Technological needs include the ability to power an on-demand service, including a rider app, a driver app, administrative consoles/dashboards, etc. Another option may be to partner with a transportation technology company to provide the technology platform and CobbLinc/First Transit procuring the vehicles, recruiting drivers, and managing ongoing operations.
  - *Transportation Technology/Service Company* – In recent years, several TNC-type transit providers have entered the transit service industry by providing technology-based MOD services. Based on research conducted for this study, using a transportation technology company such as Via, TransLoc, or Freebee that has experience providing such services may be the best strategy in Smyrna, especially given the community's desire to have "non-transit-looking" transit. Options typically provided with Via and other similar providers include the following:
- *Technology-Only Option* – The company provides the technology to power an on-demand service, including providing technology platforms, a rider app, a driver app, an admin console, and access to data dashboards and reports. The company would train CobbLinc on how to use these tools and provide support and service optimization to help partners throughout the duration of the service. The City would need to partner with CobbLinc/First Transit for procuring vehicles, recruiting drivers, and managing ongoing operations.
- *Service and Technology Option* – The City or CobbLinc would directly hire the transportation technology company to provide the technology and support described above and also to fully operate the service. The company would procure vehicles and recruit drivers and would provide customer support, vehicle maintenance, etc. The City would operate as a strategic partner to ensure that the company is meeting the City's goals/expectations.

- **Launch a transit marketing campaign (Phase I)** – Although it is important to make transit more convenient to use and attractive to appeal to new ridership, it is equally important to

ensure that the community is aware of these services and how they work. Based on input from the general public and most project stakeholders, lack of awareness and education about currently-available services and facilities is a major hurdle to making transit a more viable option. Therefore, a carefully-coordinated and multi-year "all-hands-on-deck" marketing campaign strategy that involves local and regional agencies is recommended. The initial phase of the campaign to promote transit in Smyrna will use existing staff/resources and should include the following:

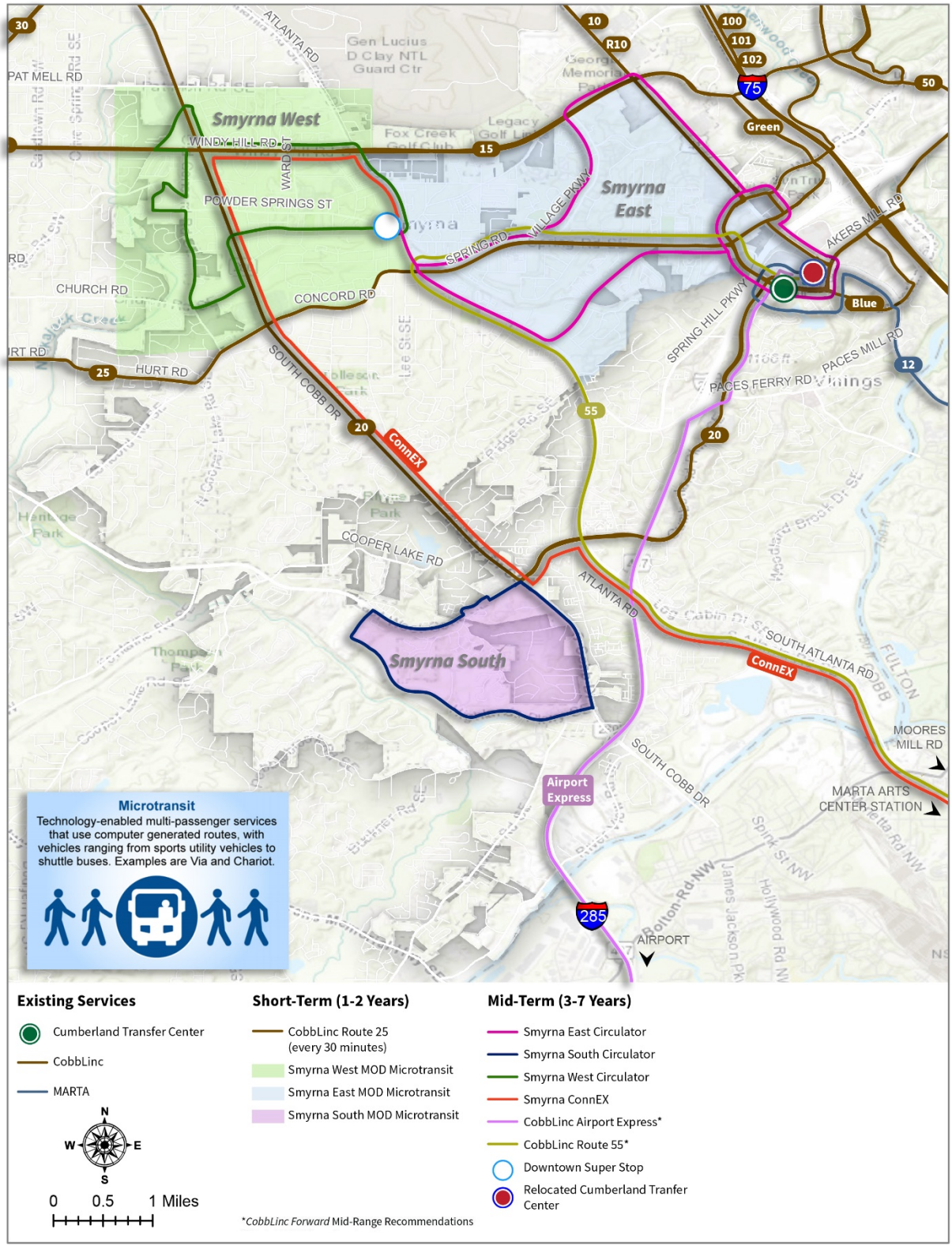
- *Establish a Transit Cheerleader/Ambassador Program* – Coordinate with transit support/advocacy groups such as the Smyrna-focused transit advocacy group recently formed to advocate for more transit in the city to identify and train volunteers to promote transit awareness and use in the city. This low- or no-cost program would help promote the value and benefits of using transit to travel in Smyrna and connect regionally.
- *Launch a social media-based transit awareness campaign* – Using social media has become a powerful tool to reach all demographics and age groups. Combined with a younger city population and a supportive community relations department, it could become an even more useful and effective avenue in awareness campaigns. The City's already-established social media platform can help change attitudes and interest at a lower cost than most other marketing efforts.
- *Coordinate with/use regional resources* – Ample resources, such as Georgia Commuter Options, ATL outreach programs, and other agency efforts, may be available to piggyback on other marketing efforts in the city. All parties in the region identified the need to work together to elevate the transit use message. In addition, the strategic location of Smyrna in the northwest Atlanta region makes efforts to promote transit an effort of regional importance.

- **Evaluate existing transit infrastructure in the city** – Improving levels of transit service is important, and supporting infrastructure is also a necessity for improving the overall quality of transit services. Although no new facilities will be necessary or are recommended immediately, assessing the inventory of current bus stops and other supporting infrastructure such as bus stop amenities and sidewalk access as proposed in the South Cobb Study is recommended. There are more than 75 bus stops currently in the city, and transit support/ advocacy groups may provide a starting point for coordinating with CobbLinc to assess the condition of the current facilities and additional needs.

Mid-term Strategies (3–7 Years)

The most important phase of making transit a more viable travel option in Smyrna will begin with the strategies in this phase, which will set the foundation for a high-frequency commuter network on Smyrna's key arterials and a supportive feeder network and necessary facilities. The mid-term strategies are shown in Map 9-2.

Map 9-2: Mid-Term Service Strategies



The mid-term network includes the following service, infrastructure, technology, and policy strategies:

- **Implement three city circulators** – To meet the need for a local network that quickly connects internally and with the adjacent Cumberland CID, three circulators are recommended that will build on the ridership and heightened interest in transit potentially gained from microtransit services implemented in the short term. The services will be provided every 30 minutes with branded, small, non-transit-like vehicles, preferably electric, that can be tracked in real time with an app.
    - *Smyrna East Circulator* – Serving the same general area as Smyrna East Microtransit, this circulator would connect riders east of Atlanta Road to the Cumberland area and Downtown Smyrna. The service will begin at Downtown Smyrna, operate mainly along Atlanta Road to Spring Road and Village Parkway, and connect to Cumberland Mall and the Cumberland Transfer Center, serving the Braves Stadium/Battery area. The circulator would also provide opportunities to transfer to the two CobbLinc circulators currently operating (and potentially operated by autonomous vehicles in the future) in the Cumberland CID.
    - *Smyrna West Circulator* – Similarly, the microtransit service potentially implemented in the short term would be converted into a circulator route in the MOD zone to the west of Atlanta Road. This service would operate from Downtown Smyrna/ Village Green on Atlanta Road and Windy Hill Road before serving the areas west of South Cobb Drive. It would provide a quick and convenient link for the population and businesses on the west side of Atlanta Road to connect to Smyrna Downtown and the east side of the city from there, reducing the need to rely on existing CobbLinc routes. To provide a "one-seat trip" from the west side of the city to the Cumberland area, this route may interline with the East Circulator once it reaches Downtown Smyrna.
    - *Smyrna South Circulator* – Although not a high priority, as the need for transit in this zone may be relatively less than in the east and west circulator service areas, a circulator could still function as a feeder to any current or future routes on South Cobb Drive. This would also connect workers and residents in this area to retail, work, recreation, and other services on that corridor.

  As previously noted, microtransit services in the short term are expected to function as forerunners of the circulators proposed for implementation in the mid-term. The MOD zones provide an opportunity to gauge if there is a demand for regularly scheduled transit and, if the demand is there, to identify hot spots of demand so the circulators can be aligned/routed to maximize the ridership productivity.

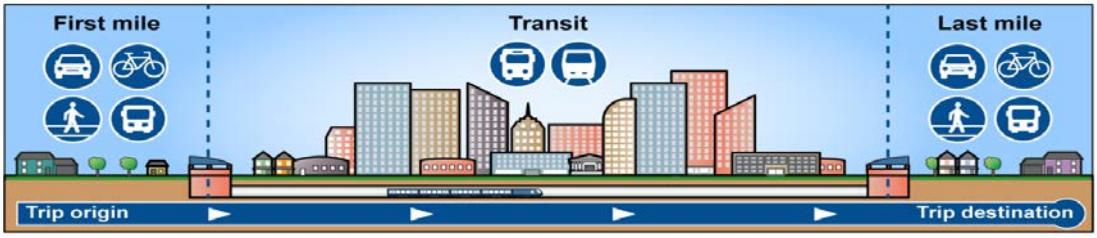
- **Implement Downtown Smyrna–Atlanta Express (Smyrna ConnEx)** – This route would provide another commuter alternative to connect Smyrna to Atlanta, providing a one-seat express route from Downtown Smyrna to MARTA's Bankhead station in Atlanta. In part, this also is proposed as a precursor to potential premium transit such as bus rapid transit (BRT) on

South Cobb Drive in the future. This route would operate every 30 minutes and stop at all key locations along the route within the city, then become closed-door express service until it terminates at the MARTA Arts Center station. Coordinated with existing CobbLinc services on Windy Hill Drive and South Cobb Drive, this service also would improve effective transit frequency to 15 minutes on most roadway segments on which it operates.

- **Implement CobbLinc Route 55** – This local route is already proposed in the CobbLinc Forward mid-term implementation plan and would connect the Cumberland Transfer Center to Moores Mill in Atlanta, operating on Spring Road and Atlanta Road. MARTA routes 1, 14, 37, and 60 currently serve Moores Mill, extending Route 55 reach to Midtown Atlanta, Downtown Atlanta, and the HE Holmes MARTA station. Route 55 would connect high-density residential areas along Atlanta Road to the employment and entertainment options in Cumberland and to MARTA. It would operate every 30 minutes, increasing the effective transit frequency to 15 minutes on Spring Road from Cumberland Transfer Center to Atlanta Road. CobbLinc may also partner with MARTA to interline this route with a MARTA route in Moores Mill to provide a direct, one-seat ride to the HE Holmes station or Midtown/Downtown.

- **Implement CobbLinc Airport Express (Route AX)** – A direct connection to Hartsfield Airport from Smyrna was mentioned as a need by *Smyrna Connects* stakeholders and the public. Regional travel flows also show travel demand between Cobb County and the airport. CobbLinc has already included an airport connection in its *CobbLinc Forward* mid-term recommendations; however, discussion with CobbLinc indicated that no timeline is set for implementing this service at this time. To provide an alternative mode for this travel demand for commuters and a direct connection to visitors during peak hours from the airport to the Cumberland area/Smyrna for economic development purposes, the City should work with CobbLinc to implement this non-stop airport express service in the next 3–7 years.

- **Reduce microtransit services to first/last-mile service** – With the implementation of three circulators in the mid-term, previously-discussed Smyrna Microtransit services would be scaled down to bring only eligible riders to and from bus stops, essentially reducing its service footprint and becoming only first/last-mile service for transit. Anyone in the designated zones who cannot access the transit routes with a maximum 2-minute walk (live/work more than 1/8-mile from a route) would still be eligible for this service. Using app-based geofencing technology or address information, those within 2 minutes of a bus route or outside the designated MOD zone would be excluded and expected to rely on city circulators and CobbLinc routes.



Source: GAO Report 18-539

- **Deploy Transit Signal Priority (TSP)/Queue Jumps at selected intersections** – Increased congestion directly impacts the travel time of current and any new transit services, making them unattractive and unreliable, especially during peak travel times at intersections. Bus preferential treatments such as TSP and/or queue jumps have proven to expedite the movement of transit vehicles at busy intersections that are regularly backed up or get backed up at peak travel times. In Smyrna, TSP/queue jumps have been recommended for key intersections in City studies and proposed transportation plans for Cobb County, and ATL already included a plan to deploy TSP in Cobb County. In the mid-term, TSP/queue jumps are recommended at selected city intersections that are most optimal for supporting premium transit. This should help buses adhere to their schedules and improve their appeal over driving an automobile on the same corridor.
- **Update CobbLinc transit app** –Transit apps have gained popularity, as they can reduce wait times as people can use an app to time their walk or biking to a bus stop. It has also reduced travel time as people can adjust their trip choices in real time. Long and uncertain wait times and travel times are key reasons for people not choosing transit, and an easy to use transit app may also help attract new ridership. The City should coordinate with CobbLinc to update the CobbLinc's transit app with any new transit services added in the city. In addition, the City should also coordinate with the microtransit provider to either link the microtransit app with CobbLinc app or use one single app for all transit services operating in the city.
- **Improve the transit infrastructure** – Implementation of all the above transit services should be supported by necessary capital infrastructure improvements to ensure a more holistic approach of making transit work in the city. Based on bus stop amenities, infrastructure, and access reviews conducted and needs/gaps identified in the short-term, the City should work with CobbLinc and Cobb County on options to address those needs and gaps. In addition, the following major capital/infrastructure improvements are also recommended:
    - *Establish a Downtown transfer station* - Establishing a transfer station to support the new transit services is proposed for Downtown Smyrna (Figure 9-2). For *Smyrna Connects*, a transfer station is an enhanced bus stop or "mini-hub" with more advanced amenities, primarily including an information kiosk, real-time bus arrival information display, lighting, covered seating, and bike storage. This would reduce the need for significant land space in Downtown Smyrna while also reducing dislikes/concerns associated with large sprawling transfer facilities. In addition to helping bring more visitors and workers to Downtown Smyrna and improving its livability and walkability initiatives, a transfer station would provide a convenient transfer point in Downtown Smyrna, which is currently not served by transit. Input from the community and project stakeholders also showed support for connecting transit to the downtown area and improving walkability/access to its services. Establishing transit connectivity and a hub within Downtown Smyrna also supports the objectives of the ongoing *Smyrna B.O.L.D. —Building on the Legacy of Downtown* master plan to create a healthier, more walkable downtown that offers improved

services. Expanded public transit connectivity to Downtown Smyrna can also become useful during community events such as the Jonquil Festival, allowing residents and visitors to access these events conveniently and solving some event parking issues.

Figure 9-2: Downtown Smyrna

- *Relocate Cumberland Transfer Center to Akers Mill Road* – Located outside the City boundary on the southside of Cumberland Mall, the Cumberland Transfer Center is the only major transfer center for the city's use at this time and is served by multiple CobbLinc routes and MARTA Route 12. The current location and configuration have created safety issues and routing difficulties for westbound routes, adding significant time delays for riders. Relocating the transfer station to the Cumberland Mall site adjacent to Akers Mills Road has been included in ATL plans (Figure 9-3). The proposed facility would create a potential transit-oriented development that would include additional bus bays that are accessible to all routes, park-and-ride facilities, a mixed-use development, bicycle parking, a drop-off and pick-up area, and other bus rider amenities. The proposed new transfer center would also increase access to I-75 and the future I-285 Express Lanes and help facilitate more convenient and accessible transfers.

Figure 9-3: Potential Site of Cumberland Transfer Center on Akers Mill Road

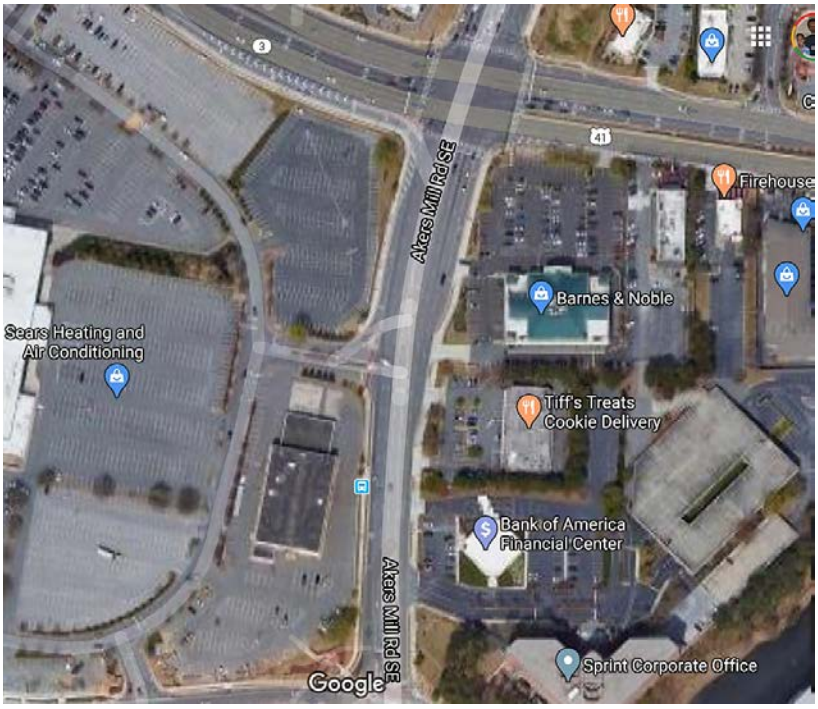
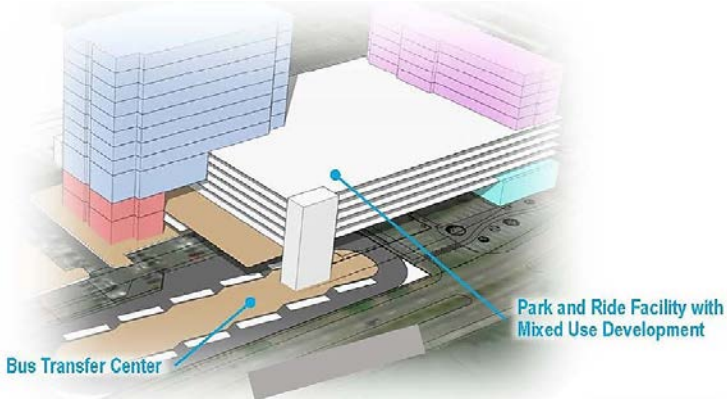


Figure 9-4: Proposed Cumberland Transfer Center on Akers Mill Road



Source: ATL Regional Transit Plan

- **Designate a City Transit Coordinator** – Identify existing staff or establish a new position within the City's Community Development Department or Administrative department to organize transportation services throughout the city and coordinate with regional stakeholders to improve mobility for both traditional and choice transit riders. The coordinator would be tasked with educating/training people on the enhanced transportation options in the community and would serve as the single point of contact on transit and

related matters. In addition, this position would encourage or ensure "a seat at the table" for growth and land use discussions related to transit in the city. The position would help integrate transit into economic development in the city while increasing transit awareness and ridership, ultimately leading to a more independent lifestyle for residents and visitors who wish to use an alternative to automobile.

- **Launch Phase II of the transit marketing campaign** – Using a transit cheerleader/ ambassador program, social media campaigns, and other available local and regional resources and working with CobbLinc closely, the City should launch a city-wide marketing/awareness drive prior to implementing the mid-term improvements. This may be necessary to ensure that the community is aware of the new improvements and the benefits and freedoms they would provide to both the traditional and choice transit riders.

Long-term Strategies (8–20 Years)

With the opening of the I-285 managed lanes and implementation of many regionally-significant transit projects, this phase brings many opportunities to advance the movement of people with transit within the region. Challenges would also grow with the need for better and quicker travel options and growth in traffic flows due to population, driverless cars, and delivery vehicles. Therefore, strategies that are efficient and that use technological and operational advancements in transit are essential.

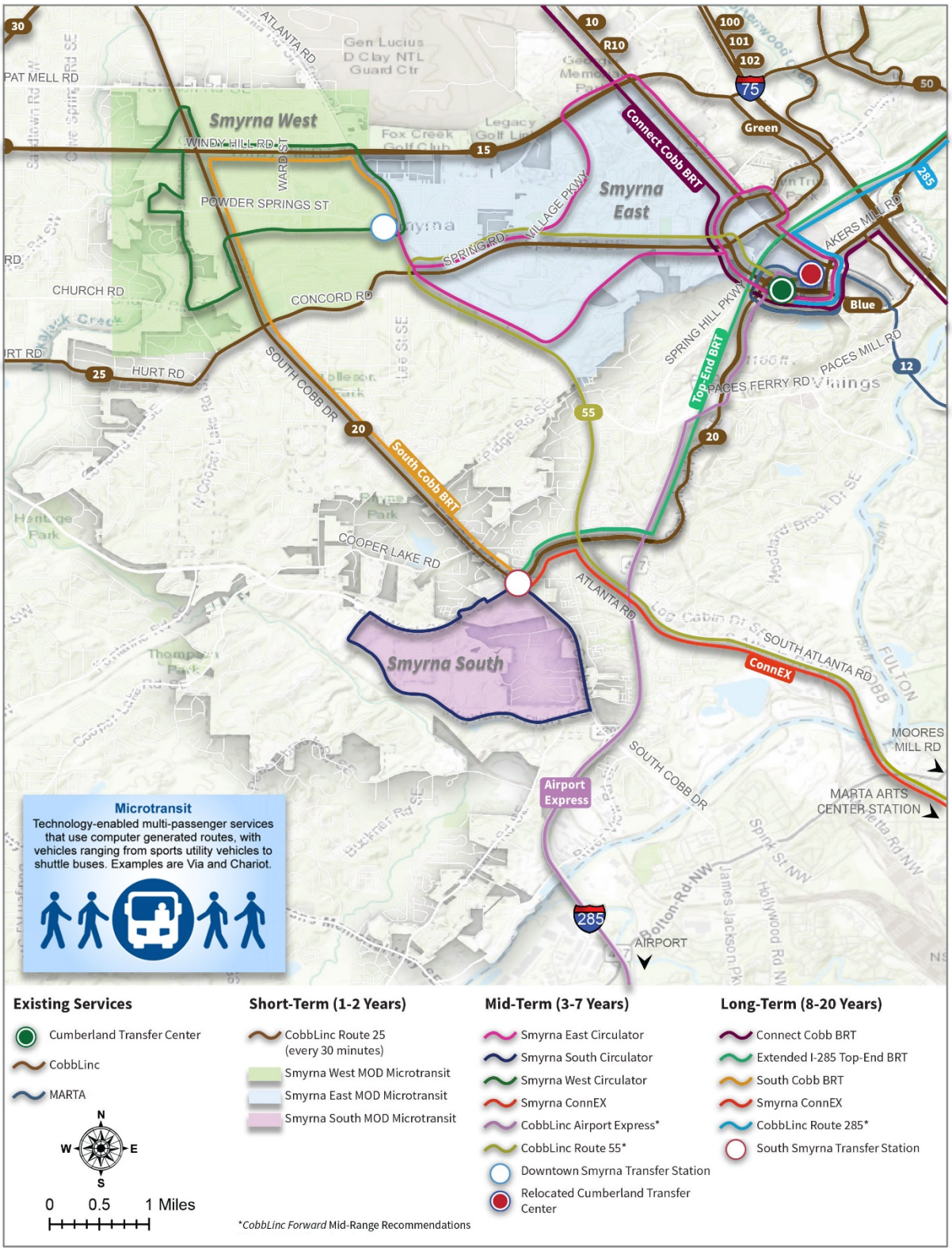
To address these needs, strategies in this phase would build on or enhance some improvements included in the first two phases. Most important, they would add advanced technologies and premium transit concepts in Smyrna, elevating transit on some corridors to provide rail-like services in a rail-desired community. Map 9-3 shows the long-term strategies for *Smyrna Connects*.

The following strategies are recommended.

- **Implement South Cobb Drive BRT** – This improvement would provide a high-frequency premium transit connection from Downtown Smyrna to a new transfer station on South Cobb Drive at the East-West Connector. The service would originate at the proposed new transfer station in Downtown Smyrna and travel north on Atlanta Road and west on Windy Hill Road until turning to South Cobb Drive to head south. The South Cobb Drive BRT would provide premium transit service with branded rubber-tired bus vehicles along the 6-mile route, providing 15-minute service frequencies. The BRT service would be designed with exclusive lanes along South Cobb Drive and operate in mixed traffic (sometimes called "BRT Lite") along Windy Hill Road and Atlanta Road.

  Key features of the service would include bus preferential treatments such as TSP/queue jumps at needed/applicable intersections, off-board fare collection, branded stations with enhanced amenities (covered/ sheltered bus stops with real-time passenger information, WiFi, information kiosks, etc.), and branded low-floor BRT vehicles. The South Cobb Drive portion of the BRT would provide a rail-like feel and look with its own running way and branded stations.

Map 9-3: Long-Term Service Strategies



Overall, the service would offer fast service (with travel time saving from running on exclusive lanes and TSP at intersections) and frequent service to help promote transit use and attract riders.

Example of a BRT vehicle that operates in a curbside running way stopped at a station featuring level boarding, a shelter, and bicycle parking.

A total of 12 locations have been identified for potentially exploring to establish BRT stations. These would be spaced at every half a mile, on average (typical for BRT, as industry research has shown that people are willing to walk more to access primum transit). These locations were selected based on the following high-level planning criteria:

- Minimum distance of ¼–½ mile between stations
- Safe pedestrian access to BRT station (sidewalk access and pedestrian crossings nearby)
- Concentrations of residential, employment, commercial, recreational destinations or activity centers
- Connectivity to the existing and proposed transit networks

Further evaluations would need to be conducted to determine the practicality and suitability of these locations and identify possible sites for stations. Potential BRT stations/locations are shown in Table 9-1.

Local transit service is currently provided along South Cobb Drive via CobbLinc Route 20 and connecting routes 25 (Concord Road) and 15 (Windy Hill Road). As the proposed BRT service will not stop as frequently as regular bus service, CobbLinc routes 20 (South Cobb Drive) and 15 (Windy Hill Road) should continue to provide underlying local bus service every 30 minutes to increase transit access to the South Cobb Drive BRT system. There may be a need to revise and consolidate the bus stops to provide for improved accessibility, mobility, and performance of all routes on these corridors.

Table 9-1: Proposed BRT Stations and Network Connectivity

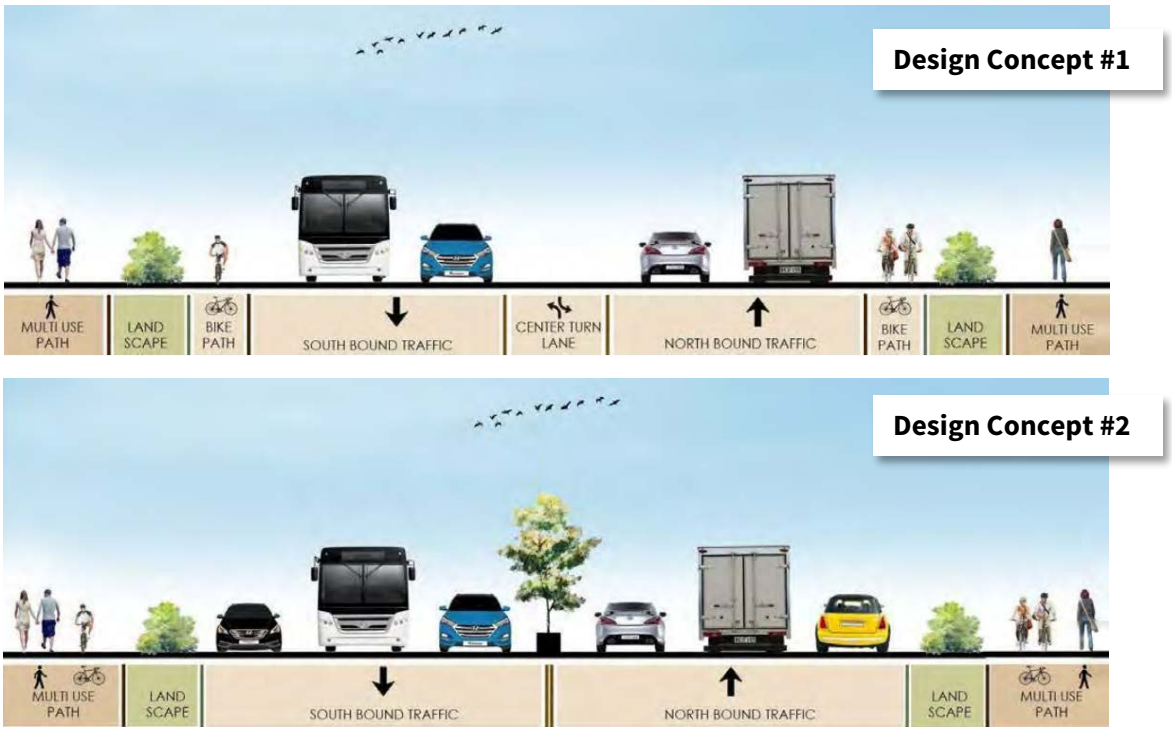
Proposed BRT Station	Transit Network Connectivity
Atlanta Road	
Downtown Smyrna Transfer Station	Smyrna East Circulator, Smyrna West Circulator
Belmont Boulevard	Smyrna West Circulator
Windy Hill Road	
Atlanta Road	CobbLinc Route 15, Smyrna West Circulator
SE Ward Street	CobbLinc Route 15, Smyrna West Circulator
South Cobb Drive	
Windy Hill Road	CobbLinc Route 15, Route 20, Smyrna West Circulator
Powder Springs Street	CobbLinc Route 20
Church Street	CobbLinc Route 20, Smyrna West Circulator
Concord Road	CobbLinc Route 20, Route 25
Wisteria Lane/ McCauley Drive	CobbLinc Route 20
King Springs Road	CobbLinc Route 20
Ridge Road	CobbLinc Route 20
Cooper Lake Road	CobbLinc Route 20
South Smyrna Transfer Station (East-West Connector)	CobbLinc Route 20, Smyrna South Circulator, Smyrna ConnEx, I-285 Top-End BRT

The South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study recently completed by the City also has identified a need to enhance transit service and improve ridership along the South Cobb Drive Corridor. The study also has proposed bus queue jumping lanes at the intersection of Windy Hill Road and South Cobb Drive and installing bus bays along the corridor. The study also identified that this corridor has sufficient right-of-way (approximately 200 ft) available for enhancements without the need for additional property acquisition.

Typical roadway cross sections representing the preferred alternatives from the South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study are shown in Figure 9-5. Although both preferred alternatives incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as queue-jump lanes at key intersections to support transit operations, neither currently accommodates plans to include exclusive lanes for transit vehicles.

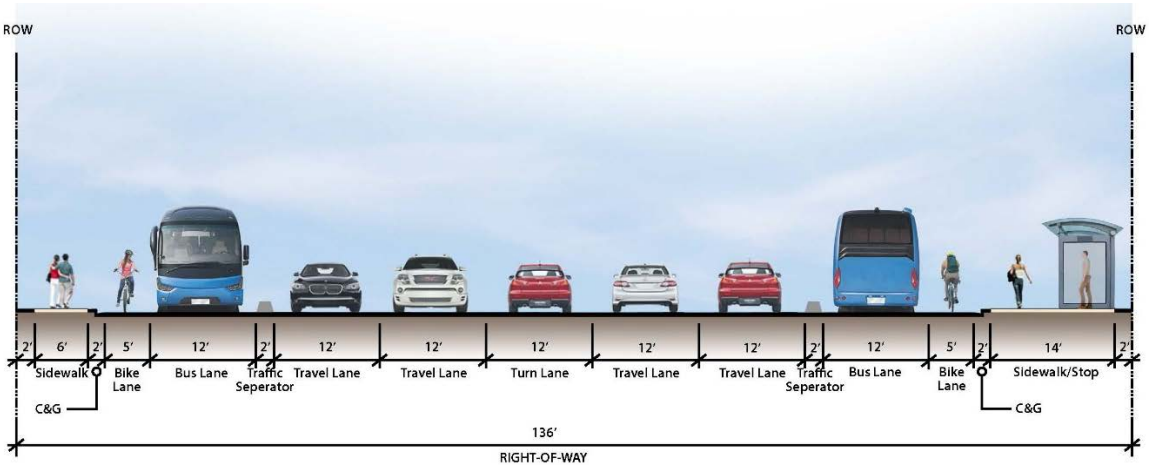
As preferred cross section alternatives from the South Cobb Drive Corridor Study do not accommodate an exclusive lane for transit vehicles, further studies may be necessary to develop corridor alternatives that includes such provisions. Figure 9-6 shows an example cross section of a configuration that accommodates two travel lanes in each direction and a center turn lane, exclusive bus lanes in each direction, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Figure 9-5: Currently Recommended Roadway Cross-Sections for South Cobb Drive



Source: South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study, City of Smyrna

Figure 9-6: Example Roadway Cross-Section with Curbside BRT Running Way



Source: VHB

With a growing need to serve both traditional and choice rider markets, its future economic development and growth potential as a major north-south connection in the city and Cobb County, the South Cobb Drive corridor provides an opportunity to implement premium transit in the city. BRT along the South Cobb Corridor should be designed to achieve the following:

- Provide fast and frequent premium service to major residential and employment areas in Smyrna.
- Promote local and regional connectivity between existing and future transit services and infrastructure.
- Use already-available right-of-way along the corridor without removing any travel lanes.
- Generate transit oriented/station area developments and become an economic/ growth corridor for the city. Research on the real-estate and economic development impacts of existing transit systems in the US have found that areas within ½ mile of BRT increased their share of office space and multi-family residential development and achieved a slight premium for office rents.
- Improve the economic resilience of the city. Research also shows that, in addition to reducing travel costs for residents, areas along BRT corridors experienced large positive shifts in higher-wage jobs as well as an increase in manufacturing employment during the expansion after the 2008 recession.

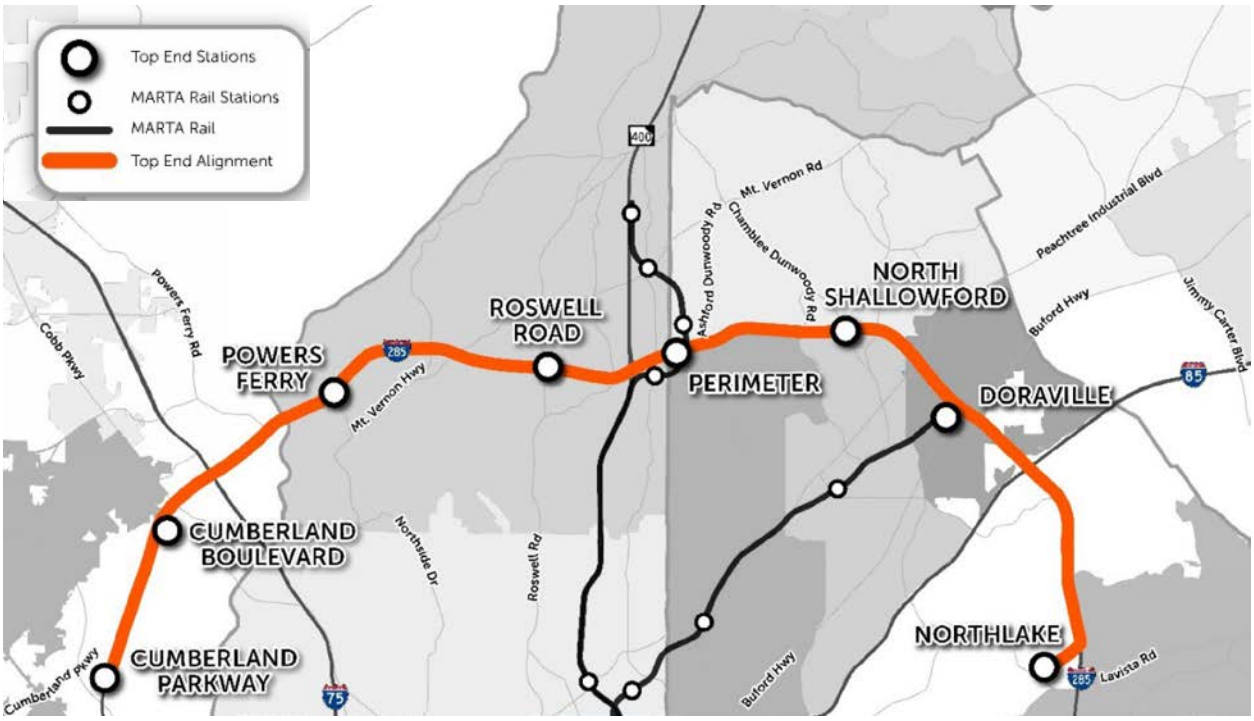
However, although the City, CobbLinc and their regional partners can come together to provide attractive transit options with premium transit, transit-supportive local land-use policies and development incentives may be necessary for the BRT to reach its full potential for spurring economic development.

With the advancement of technologies in the transportation industry, there may be a future opportunity to enhance and convert the BRT service to an autonomous bus system. As the cost of a bus operator is typically the largest percentage of bus operating cost, driverless vehicles show promise for future transit, specifically for exclusive-lane BRT. The South Cobb BRT designed with exclusive lanes and TSP would provide a controlled separation of operations from mixed traffic.

- **Extend I-285 top-end BRT to South Cobb Drive** –The feasibility of providing BRT service on the top-end portion of proposed I-285 managed lanes is being studied by the City of Smyrna and six other top-end cities as well as the Cumberland and Perimeter CIDs. If this service is implemented once the managed lanes open to general traffic in 2032, *Smyrna Connects* assumes that the I-285 top-end BRT service would be extended to South Cobb Drive from its currently planned west-side terminus at Cumberland Parkway. Figure 9-7 shows the BRT route alignment currently planned and station/access points for this east-west service. This route alignment would extend approximately 1 mile from the proposed interchange at I-285 and Cumberland Parkway along Cumberland Parkway to connect to the potential new South

Smyrna Transfer Station at South Cobb Drive. Connecting with other services at this location, this extended I-285 BRT service would provide commuters from Smyrna with convenient and faster access to the Perimeter Center area and beyond. However, early regional coordination may be necessary to ensure that this extension is added to the alignment currently considered for potential premium transit services on the new express lanes.

Figure 9-7: I-285 Top-End BRT Feasibility Study Area



- **Implement Connect Cobb BRT** – This proposes the addition of BRT along Cobb Parkway. A plan previously studied by the County recommends that the majority of the BRT system operate on dedicated lanes from the Kennesaw to the Cumberland areas. From the Cumberland area, service would continue to the MARTA Arts Center station via I-75 on existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and major roads in Atlanta. The Connect Cobb BRT has also been included in both Cobb County and ATL plans as a transit solution to serve the northwest corridor. When implemented, Connect Cobb will link Kennesaw and the Town Center area through Marietta, the Cumberland area, and Atlanta, providing much-needed travel options for thousands of daily riders.
- **Implement Smyrna-Atlanta Express (Smyrna ConnEx)** – BRT potentially could operate from Downtown Smyrna to south Smyrna; this modified Smyrna ConnEx route would begin at the intersection of the East-West Connector and South Cobb Drive instead of Downtown Smyrna. With the possibility of interlinking with South Cobb BRT to provide a one-seat ride to commuters, at least during peak hours, this route would connect with South Cobb Drive BRT to continue to provide a commuter connection to the MARTA Arts Center station.

- **Increase frequency to 15 minutes on selected Smyrna circulators** – To establish rapid connectivity within the city and provide easy, quick, and convenient access to Downtown Smyrna and the Cumberland CID, both east and west circulators would run every 15 minutes.
- **Implement CobbLinc Express Route 285** – As a mid-range recommendation under the CobbLinc Forward plan, this route would connect the Cumberland CID and Perimeter areas with express bus service on I-285. Route 285 would use the completed I-285 managed lanes to connect the Cumberland Transfer Center to the Dunwoody MARTA station. With top-end BRT also operating on I-285 on weekdays, this route would operate every 60 minutes during weekdays and every half hour on weekends.
- **South Smyrna Transfer Station** – Establishing a transfer station on South Cobb Drive at the East-West Connector is essential to conveniently connect Smyrna ConnEx, South Cobb BRT, the extended I-285 top-end BRT, and the Smyrna South Circulator routes. This station would follow the same concept as the Downtown Smyrna station, providing a transit mini hub with a footprint smaller than a full-scale transfer station such as the current Cumberland Transfer Center. This station would become a regionally-significant transit hub due to its transit connections to Smyrna and Marietta to the north, top-end BRT to the east, and Smyrna ConnEx commuter service to the south. As a terminus of both South Cobb BRT and I-285 top-end BRT, this station will feature enhanced amenities and branding.
- **TNC-Based After-Hour Rides Program** – A recent study conducted for the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS) has indicated that peak use of TNCs such as Uber and Lyft is on weekends and evenings. Input from *Smyrna Connects* outreach also has indicated that there needs to be some form of travel option for transit users after regular bus service hours in the evenings, especially on weekends. This improvement would establish a voucher-based subsidized ride program for travel after regular bus services end, making and expanding the availability of 24/7 transit options in the city.

Meeting the Needs

It is important to determine if the improvement strategies developed and presented will help Smyrna meet its transit needs identified for the next 20-years. Table 9-2 examines each of these service, technology, capital/infrastructure, and policy related strategies and how each of them address the transit needs.

Table 9-2: Smyrna Connects Needs and Strategies

Smyrna Connects Strategies	High-Frequency Commuter Network	Rapid Internal/ Adjacent Hub Connectivity	Transit Infrastructure/ Facilities	Transit Mktg/ Awareness	After-Hours Connectivity
Increase frequency to 30 min on Route 25	•	•			
Implement MOD microtransit in 3 zones		•			
Launch transit marketing campaign (Phase I)				•	
Evaluate existing transit infrastructure			•		
Implement 3 city circulators		•			
Implement Downtown Smyrna–Atlanta Express	•	•			
Implement CobbLinc Route 55	•	•			
Implement CobbLinc Airport Express (Route AX)	•				
Reduce microtransit services to FM/LM service		•			
Deploy TSP/queue jumps at selected intersections	•		•		
Update current transit app		•		•	
Improve transit infrastructure network in city			•		
Establish Downtown transfer station			•		
Relocate Cumberland Transfer Center to Akers Mill Rd			•		
Designate City Transit Coordinator				•	
Launch Phase II of transit marketing campaign				•	
Implement South Cobb Dr BRT	•	•			
Extend I-285 top-end BRT to S Cobb Dr	•				
Implement Connect Cobb BRT	•				
Implement Smyrna–Atlanta Express	•				
15-min frequency on selected Smyrna circulators		•			
Implement CobbLinc Express Route 285	•				
Establish South Smyrna Transfer Station			•		
TNC-based after-hour rides program					•

Section 10: Evaluation of Improvement Strategies

The strategy development and evaluation process were structured to encourage consideration of a full range of improvement options for Smyrna. After the alternative strategies were developed, an evaluation framework was developed to assess the strategies for practical applicability. The process identifies criteria to help ensure that the transit improvement alternatives are feasible and implementable.

Evaluation Process

A hybrid qualitative/quantitative methodology was developed to evaluate and prioritize the transit improvement strategies presented in Section 9. To prioritize and program these improvements for potential implementation, it is important to weigh the relative benefits. The evaluation methodology is summarized in this section.

Figure 10-1 identifies and describes the four strategy evaluation criteria used in the methodological process to rank the improvement strategies. Table 10-1 provides the evaluation criteria, measures, descriptions, and weights used in this evaluation process. A description of each of these criteria and measures is provided below.

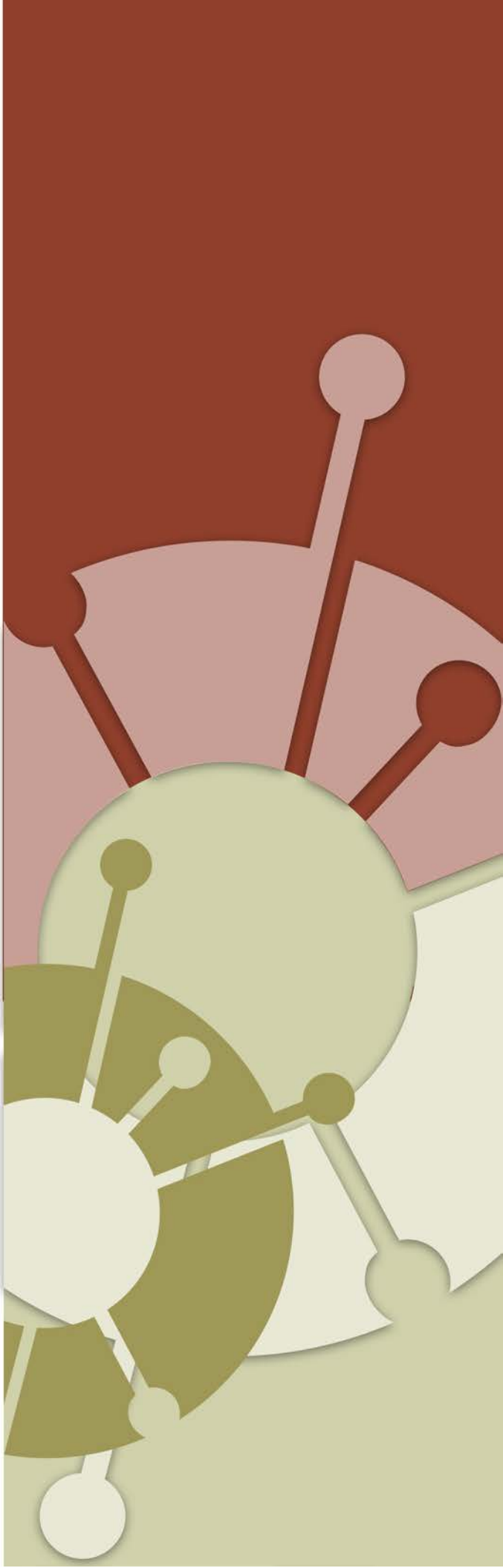


Figure 10-1: Strategy Evaluation Criteria

Table 10-1: Evaluation Measures and Weights

Criteria	Measure	Measure Description	Measure Weight	Criteria Weight
Public Support	Public Input	Priority rankings/outreach data on specific strategies	15%	30%
	Stakeholder Vision/Direction	Input/level of interest in specific strategies and general direction/vision on transit	15%	
Ridership Potential	Traditional Market Coverage	General overlap with traditional market gaps (areas with "High" or "Very High" rating from Transit Orientation Index)	10%	30%
	Choice Market Coverage	General overlap with choice market gaps (Density Threshold Assessment areas with 6 or more jobs or dwelling units per acre)	10%	
	Ridership Productivity	TBEST model simulated 2040 normalized ridership	10%	
Regional Connectivity	Connections to Adjacent/Regional Hubs	Seamless connections to adjacent and regional hubs	15%	15%
Financial Feasibility	Cost Efficiency	Normalized operating cost by strategy	10%	25%
	Political & Funding Support	Likelihood of securing stable operational funding	15%	

Evaluation Criteria & Methodology

Public Support

Public support is gauged using two measures to capture input from the general public and from the broad multi-agency stakeholder engagement conducted for *Smyrna Connects*:

- **Stakeholder Vision/Direction** – In the first phase of public outreach, stakeholders were interviewed and asked what their overall vision of and direction for transit for Smyrna would be in the next 20 years. Discussions on the state of current conditions related to transit and specific changes, modes, technologies, and innovations they envision to achieve a more interconnected city and region were held with nearly three dozen city, county, and regional stakeholders. These qualitative data, combined with the direction/guidance from the *Smyrna Connects* Technical Advisory Committee, were used to gauge the level of importance of the improvement strategies.
- **Public Input** – The second phase of outreach, including public workshops and an on-line survey, was conducted for *Smyrna Connects* to gauge the community's preferences on the strategies presented previously. Participants during this phase were asked how they would prioritize transit improvements identified for the *Smyrna Connects* 20-year plan.

Ridership Potential

Improvement strategies were evaluated for ridership potential using three methods:

- **Choice Market Coverage** – The assessment of the choice transit user market (e.g., people who have access to an automobile but may decide to use transit instead) was reviewed based on results from the choice market gap analysis. The service area of the *Smyrna Connects* network identified for the next 20 years was analyzed together with the results of the choice market gap analysis. A ¼-mile service area buffer (typical transit walk access buffer) was used to assess how well the service improvements align with choice transit market gaps in the study area. For each service strategy, the extent of coverage of gaps in choice markets (areas with six or more jobs or dwelling units per acre) was analyzed.
- **Traditional Market Coverage** – The assessment of transit demand in the traditional transit user market (transit-dependent riders such as low-income and zero-vehicle households, older adults, and youths) was reviewed based on the results from the traditional market gap analysis. A similar process of overlaying the *Smyrna Connects* transit network service area with the results of the traditional market gaps was conducted. For each service strategy, the general overlap with traditional market gaps (areas with "High" or "Very High" Transit Orientation Index) was analyzed.
- **Ridership Productivity** – Ridership productivity was measured in terms of the projected annual passenger trips per revenue hour of service for each strategy. TBEST (Transit

Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool), a stop-based ridership estimation model, was used to develop ridership projections and ridership productivity. TBEST is particularly useful for assessing relative ridership projections for improvement strategies.

Regional Connectivity

Regional connectivity was given priority in the evaluation process. Improvement strategies were considered regional if they are either improvements to existing services or entirely new services that extend beyond the City limits. Convenient, fast, and effective connections to adjacent commercial or residential hubs such as the Cumberland CID or to the greater Atlanta region are critical to making transit a more viable choice. Strategies facilitating regional mobility also link commuters from Smyrna to other transit systems. Overall, a strategy that facilitates regional connectivity improves economic development within the city and beyond by helping to build a more interconnected region.

Financial Feasibility

This criterion was used to determine the financial feasibility of implementing a transit alternative. Cost estimates, policy support, and funding potential were examined together to determine the financial feasibility of an improvement strategy. Two measures were used evaluate the strategies:

- **Cost Efficiency** – This measure was used to gauge how well the strategies will use the available financial resources. This was evaluated for each service improvement strategy using a standard transit industry efficiency measure, operating cost per passenger trip. To calculate this efficiency measure, projected operating costs and ridership were developed for each of the *Smyrna Connects* strategies.
- **Policy & Funding Support** –This measure reviewed the likelihood of securing stable operational funding for the recommended strategies. The funding potential for each service strategy was evaluated based on the possibility of securing eligible sources at Federal, State, regional (including Cobb County), and/or City/local levels. For example, the likelihood of securing local funding may be higher if a transit investment would serve as a catalyst for development/redevelopment, whereas a regional connection may enhance the likelihood of securing funding from regional or Federal sources. Qualitative information on perceived policy support was derived from discussions with project stakeholders and input from the TAC and City of Smyrna staff.

Consistency with ATL Project Evaluation Criteria

Although it is important to use criteria that emphasize projects for a community-driven plan that supports the City's broader objectives, it is also important that the criteria are as consistent as possible with criteria used by the ATL to prioritize transit projects throughout the region.

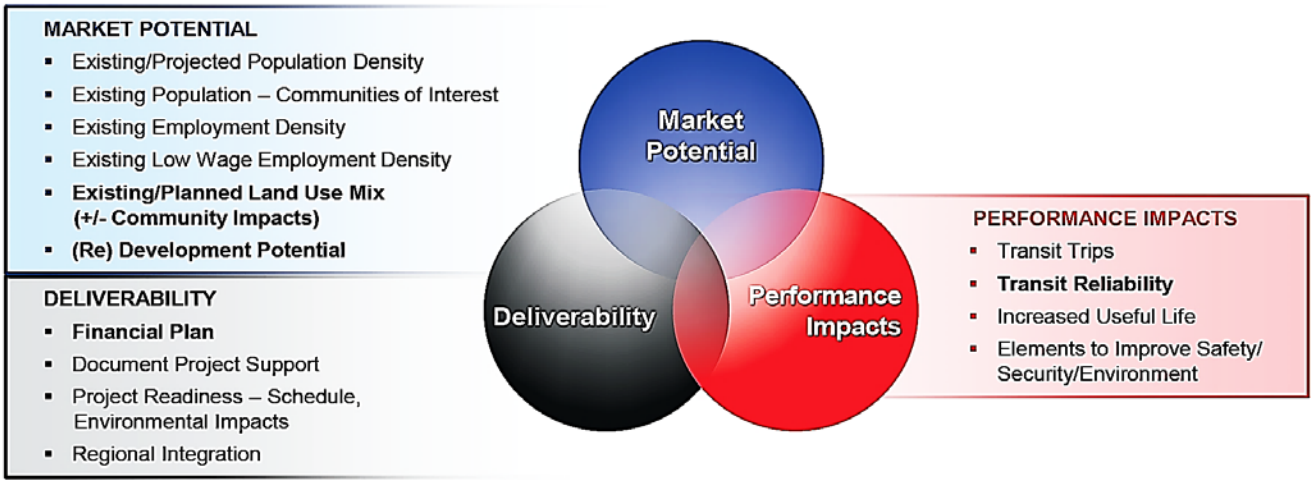
ATL Project Evaluation Criteria

ATL currently uses a process to evaluate individual transit investments based on three measures:

- **Market potential** is an assessment of underlying market conditions to identify areas with the greatest potential to support proposed transit service, including population and employment densities, socio-demographic attributes, land use, housing, parking, or other policy features that will support a strong return on transit investment.
- **Performance impacts** is a technical assessment of a proposed investment's impact on congestion, safety, and other quality-of-life considerations.
- **Deliverability** is an assessment of a proposed investment's feasibility and readiness for implementation through review of its financial plan, political and community support, and other physical, technology, or other operational constraints.

A targeted set of 14 criteria was used by the ATL to assess the above three measures, as shown in Figure 10-2.

Figure 10-2: ATL Project Evaluation Measures/Criteria



Criteria in bold reflect those that were weighted the highest, per feedback from technical workshop attendees.

Source: ATL 2019 Regional Transit Plan

The ATL project evaluation process also uses project-level cost-effectiveness, which is capital cost plus 20-year operations and maintenance divided by the total project score from the above criteria. This key step is used by ATL to categorize projects based on project score and cost-effectiveness into a two-by-two scatterplot matrix with four quadrants to identify high/low impact and high/low relative cost projects for implementation.

Consistency with ATL Project Evaluation Criteria

The criteria used for evaluating projects for the *Smyrna Connects* study were compared with the criteria currently used by the ATL to examine how consistent they are with each other. In total, 11 of the 15 criteria used by the ATL are similar, in varying degrees, to the criteria used with *Smyrna Connects*:

- Existing/Projected Population Density
- Existing Population (Communities of Interest)
- Existing Employment Density
- Existing/Planned Land Use Mix
- Development/Redevelopment Potential
- Potential Transit Ridership
- Transit Reliability
- Financial Plan
- Project Support
- Regional Integration/Connectivity
- Project-level Cost-Effectiveness

The following four ATL criteria are not covered at any level in *Smyrna Connects* project evaluation criteria:

- Existing Low Wage Employment Density
- Increased Useful Life
- Elements to Improve Safety/Security/Environment
- Project Readiness

Table 10-2 provides a comparison of the ATL and *Smyrna Connects* evaluation criteria. It is important to note that the level of project evaluation in the *Smyrna Connects* study does not reach the level required by the ATL project evaluation process. As a result, any project from *Smyrna Connects* that is desired to move forward into the regional process will require a more detailed feasibility study to meet the more extensive project evaluation requirements of the ATL.

Table 10-2: ATL Project Evaluation Criteria and Consistency with Smyrna Connects

Measure	ATL Project Evaluation Criteria	*Smyrna Connects* Project Evaluation Criteria							
		Public Support			*Ridership Potential*		*Regional Connectivity*	*Financial Feasibility*	
		Public Input	Stakeholder Vision/Direction	Traditional Market Coverage	Choice Market Coverage	Ridership Productivity	Connections to Adjacent/ Regional Hubs	Cost Efficiency	Political & Funding Support
Market Potential	**Existing/Projected Population Density –** Population as a catalyst (trip generator) for transit service.				✓				
	Existing Population – Communities of Interest – Concentration of low-income, racial and ethnic minorities, and/or zero-car households within proposed transit investment area.			✓					
	Existing Employment Density – Employment density as catalyst (trip attractor) for transit service.				✓				
	Existing/Planned Land Use Mix (+/- Community Impacts) – Transit rider's ability to meet daily needs without using a car given underlying land use patterns and adopted policies that support positive community impacts within investment area.		✓						
	Development/Redevelopment Potential – Potential for transit to serve as catalyst for (re)development and investment within proposed service area.								✓
Performance Impacts	**Potential Transit Ridership –**Potential to shift trips from automobile to transit given underlying travel demand and transit type proposed.					✓			
	Transit Reliability – Project-specific attributes that improve or enhance transit travel time or reliability of transit service for proposed investment.		✓						
Deliverability	**Financial Plan –** Demonstrated plan to support project implementation and ongoing operations and maintenance of proposed transit investment.								✓
	Project Support – Demonstrated public/community support, support from business community, support from relevant ATL District, and/or support of regional and/or state partners.	✓							
	Regional Integration/Connectivity – Demonstrated ability to leverage existing regional infrastructure to enhance regional transit service or lower overall transit system costs for either transit rider or transit operators.						✓		
Cost	**Project-level Cost-Effectiveness –** Project capital cost plus 20-years operations and maintenance divided by the total project score from above criteria.							✓	

Project Scoring Thresholds

As shown in Table 10-1, each project evaluation criterion was assigned a weight, which affords the opportunity to measure the relative importance of each criterion. For each applicable service strategy, a score was determined either through the computation of the selected measure or the judgment of the project team. Scores for the qualitative criteria (i.e., policy and funding support) were assigned based on a relative comparison of each transit alternative with other transit alternatives. A higher score is consistent with a higher ranking for a given alternative for the criterion being evaluated. The thresholds for computation-based criteria (survey results, traditional market coverage, choice market coverage, ridership productivity, and cost efficiency) were determined using the average of the entire data set and one standard deviation above or below the average. Table 10-3 shows the thresholds and scoring for each criterion used in the alternatives evaluation. The results of the alternatives evaluation are shown in Figure 10-3.

Table 10-3: Alternatives Evaluation- Scoring Thresholds

Criteria	Range	Score
Survey Results – Transit Priorities Survey	Less than (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Between (Average – 1 SD) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 SD)	5
	More than (Average + 1 SD)	7
Stakeholder Vision/Direction – General Agreeance	Low	1
	Moderate	3
	High	5
	Very High	7
Traditional Market Coverage (% Serving Traditional Market)	Less than (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Between (Average – 1 SD) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 SD)	5
	More than (Average + 1 SD)	7
Choice Market Coverage (% Serving Choice Market)	Less than (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Between (Average – 1 SD) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 SD)	5
	More than (Average + 1 SD)	7
Connections to Adjacent/ Regional Hubs	None	1
	Moderate	3
	High	5
	Very High	7
Ridership Productivity (Trips per Revenue Hour)	Less than (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Between (Average – 1 SD) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 SD)	5
	More than (Average + 1 SD)	7
Cost Efficiency (Operating Cost per Trip)	More than (Average + 1 SD)	1
	More than Average to (Average + 1 SD)	3
	Between (Average – 1 SD) to Average	5
	Less than (Average – 1 SD)	7
Political & Funding Support	Low	1
	Moderate	3
	High	5
	Very High	7

SD = statistical Standard Deviation

Figure 10-3: Summary Results of Alternatives Evaluation

Strategy	Public Input	Stakeholder Vision/ Direction	Traditional Market Coverage	Choice Market Coverage	Ridership Productivity	Connections to Adjacent/ Regional Hubs	Cost Efficiency	Political & Funding Support	Evaluation Score
Smyrna ConnEx (peak-hour)									5.9
South Cobb Drive BRT									5.6
Extended I-285 Top End BRT									5.4
Smyrna East Circulator									5.2
ConnectCobb BRT									4.6
CobbLinc Airport Express									4.3
Smyrna East MOD									4.3
CobbLinc Route 285									4.1
Smyrna West Circulator									3.7
Smyrna West MOD									3.6
30 min freq. CobbLinc Route 25									3.5
CobbLinc Route 55									3.4
Smyrna South MOD									2.4
Smyrna South Circulator									2.4

Legend: =1 =3 =5 =7

Section 11: 20-Year Plan

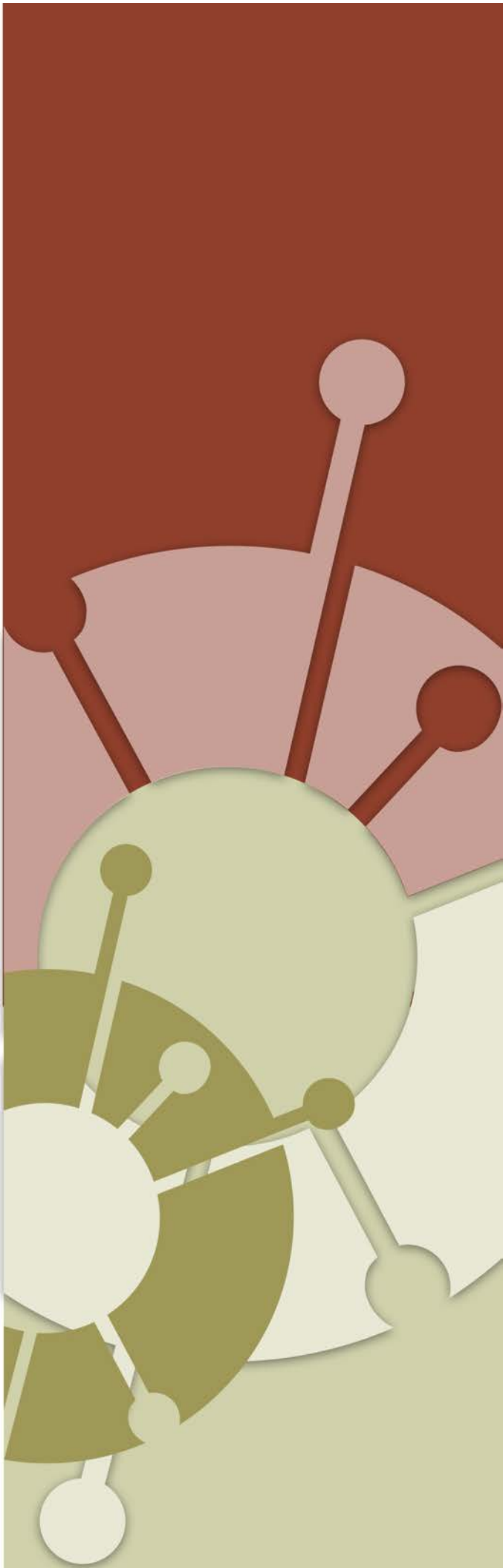
This section summarizes the recommended 20-year transit plan for *Smyrna Connects*, a transit vision crafted and prioritized based on findings from data analysis, support from the community, collaboration with the TAC, and direction from stakeholders to meet the transit needs of the City of Smyrna and reinforce the City's broader objectives:

- Livable communities and corridors
- Economic development
- Growth management
- Environmental stewardship
- Traffic mitigation
- Connected and walkable communities

Plan Development

Development of the 20-year *Smyrna Connects* plan with an "overarching, consensus-driven transit vision" for the city included cost estimates for the strategies identified and prioritized previously. This provides an understanding of the magnitude of operating, capital/infrastructure/ technology, and other costs associated with each strategy and their financial implications to the city and the region. A set of financial investment scenarios was defined to provide the City with options to chart a path forward to work with its regional partners to pursue funding and implementation of the recommended strategies. These scenarios provide the City of Smyrna with a framework of potential transit improvements to support discussion with CobbLinc, the ATL, and other partners throughout the region.

This plan also considers the impacts of the currently unfolding public health crisis due to COVID-19. Although the City and region may slowly return to some form of normalcy, the impact on transit ridership industry-wide is expected to be enormous and assumed to last much longer, as transit inherently does not accommodate social distancing. Therefore, any immediate undertakings—service, financial, or otherwise—are not included for consideration in this plan.



Development of Costs

A summary of the assumptions for developing operating, capital, and other costs of the recommended strategies included in the 20-year transit plan is presented below. These cost assumptions were developed based on information available from various sources identified with each assumption to analyze and forecast costs from 2021–2040.

Operating Cost Assumptions

- Operating cost inflation was based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for the last 10 years (2009–2019). An average annual inflation rate of 1.56 percent was used for all operating cost projections.
- The cost for providing one hour of local or express fixed-route bus in revenue service was assumed at $100 and used to project annual operating costs for proposed fixed-route bus service. This was determined based on 2019 CobbLinc operating expense per revenue hour data and CPI-based inflation. The annual operating costs were developed using the total revenue service hours calculated for each route multiplied by the cost per revenue hour.
- Cost per revenue hour of service for providing microtransit was assumed at $50, based on industry data for providing these types of services. (The current cost for providing microtransit services from a TNC such as Via is $40–$60 per service hour, $50 on average.) This service is assumed to be fully-operated by a TNC or other microtransit service provider that would procure vehicles, recruit drivers, and provide customer support and vehicle maintenance.
- The cost of providing a TNC-based after-hour rides program is assumed at $75,000 annually. This includes a total of 12,500 annual trips with a trip subsidy of up to $6.00 per trip. For example, an after-hours rider taking a $8.00 Uber ride would be charged only $2.00 under this program, and the program would cover the remainder of the cost up to $6.00. This cost per trip would still be less expensive than providing a fixed-route bus trip, which currently costs an average of $8.00 per trip, based on 2018 CobbLinc data.
- The cost per revenue hour for BRT operating costs was assumed at $107. This is based on recent operating cost data from MARTA and data on BRT operating costs from other areas. The annual operating costs for the South Cobb Drive BRT, extended I-285 Top-End BRT, and Connect Cobb BRT were calculated based on the total revenue hours multiplied by this BRT cost per revenue hour.
- A farebox recovery ratio (how much of a route's operating cost is covered by its fare revenues) of 22 percent (based on FY 2018 CobbLinc data) was assumed to determine fare revenues to be deducted to reflect net operating costs for the proposed service strategies.

Capital/Infrastructure/Technology Costs

- The inflation rate for projecting capital/infrastructure and technology related was assumed at 3 percent. This is consistent with the rate currently used in transportation projects in the Atlanta region. Vehicle costs also were assumed to be part of capital costs.

- The cost of a 40-foot CNG bus for local and express fixed-route service was assumed to be $650,000, and the cost of a medium duty/cutaway was assumed to be $200,000, based on recent bus purchase data from CobbLinc.
- Vehicle replacement schedules, where applicable, were based on FTA's Useful Life Benchmark data (https://www.transit.dot.gov/TAM/ULBcheatsheet). Based on these data, large bus vehicles were assumed to be replaced every 14 years and smaller buses (cutaway/mini) every 10 years. The industry-standard 20 percent spare ratio was used to calculate spare vehicle needs.
- The one-time set-up fee to purchase technology to power an on-demand microtransit service was assumed at $25,000. (Per Via, this cost is $10,000–$50,000; an average of this range was assumed). This includes a rider app, a driver app, an administrative console, and access to data dashboards and reports. In addition, a monthly fee for ongoing use of the technology was assumed at $500 per vehicle per month.
- South Cobb Drive BRT:
    - Table 11-1 shows the cost assumptions used for developing conceptual capital costs for the South Cobb BRT alignment. The running way cost was determined by averaging typical running way costs of both median and curb-running dedicated running ways from similar BRT systems in the US. The running way cost assumes implementation of new roadway pavement, striping, and intersection treatments. The running way lanes costs were assumed at $766,667 per mile.
    - A station cost was also estimated by averaging the typical cost of all industry-standard BRT station elements, including station foundation (concrete pad), station shelter (ranging from off-the-shelf to fully customizable), station access, station amenities such as ticket vending, real-time information screens, trash/recycling bins, seating, etc. The cost of a South Cobb Drive BRT station was assumed at $775,000 each.
    - It was assumed that this service would operate 40-ft stylized BRT vehicles with CNG propulsion. According to operational needs, four vehicles would be needed for this route as well as an industry-standard 20 percent vehicle spare. In total, five 40-ft vehicles are needed to operate this BRT service and are recommended to be branded to define and market the premium service. The cost of each bus was assumed at $750,000, based on data from recent BRT vehicle costs in other areas.
    - Right-of-way cost estimates were not developed or included in these cost projections. However, it is assumed that right-of-way costs will be minimal. A BRT feasibility study would need to be conducted prior to any planning and design stages to further investigate right-of-way needs/costs for this project.

Table 11-1: South Cobb Drive BRT Capital Costs

Element	Unit	Total Cost	Description/Assumptions
Median/Curb-Running way, Dedicated	6 centerline miles	$4,600,000	Assumed 6 miles of average cost of median/curb-running dedicated running ways
Transit Signal Priority	7 intersections	$154,000[1]	Assumed TSP at all major intersections along corridor
Queue Jump Lanes	2 lanes (1 Intersection)	$136,000[2]	Assumed one queue jump lane on portion of corridor running in mixed traffic along Windy Hill Road
Stations	12	$9,300,000	Assumed defined stations with concrete pad, access sidewalks, standard passenger amenities, utility/electric connections, etc. (multiple peer agency sources); assumed average cost of range of off-the-shelf to fully-customized station shelters
BRT Vehicle	5	$3,750,000	Five 40-ft stylized BRT vehicles (including 20% spare); assumed CNG propulsion; cost for each $750,000 per recent BRT studies in other areas; initial purchase only
Professional Services Fee	–	$4,400,000	Assumed 35% of total costs to include costs associated with preliminary engineering, final design, project management, construction management, legal, permits, insurance, surveys, testing, and start-up (not including vehicles, right-of-way costs)
Contingency	–	$2,200,000	Assumed 10% contingency
Total Capital Cost	–	**$24,540,000**	–

[1] *Metro Transit, "West Broadway Transit Study: Capital Cost Estimation Methodology," 2015.*
[2] *San Mateo County Transit District, "El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit Phasing Study," 2014.*

- Based on the recent I-285 Top-End BRT Feasibility Study, a conceptual capital cost of approximately $335 to $360 million was estimated to establish BRT service along I-285 between Northlake/Lavista and Cumberland Parkway. Estimated capital costs for the one-mile extension of the Top End BRT route from a new interchange at I-285 and Cumberland Parkway to South Cobb Drive are shown in Table 11-2.
- Capital cost of the Connect Cobb BRT project was estimated at $553.4 million, excluding vehicle costs. This is based on the $491 million cost identified in the 2015 Connect Cobb Corridor Environmental Assessment Study and using 3 percent capital cost inflation. This includes BRT running way costs for more than half of the route length and the cost of 13 BRT stations.
- The cost of TSP/queue jumps is assumed at up to six intersections to support the Smyrna ConnEx service, at $32,500 each. This cost was based on data from Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) *Synthesis 83: Bus and Rail Transit Preferential Treatments in Mixed Traffic (*FTA 2010), the 2019 ATL Regional Transit Plan, and three percent capital inflation.

- The cost for updating CobbLinc's transit app was assumed at $30,000 based on industry data, which includes adding *Smyrna Connects* routes. This may also include the City coordinating with the microtransit service provider to either link the microtransit rider app with the CobbLinc rider app or use a single app for all transit services operating in the city.
- The Downtown Smyrna Transfer Station was assumed to cost up to $7.5 million, and the new South Smyrna Transfer Station was assumed to cost up to $5 million. These preliminary costs do not include any land acquisition expenses and are subject to change based on findings from the facility feasibility studies that will be necessary prior to these projects moving forward.
- Based on information from the ATL Regional Transit Plan, the cost for relocation of the Cumberland Transfer Center to Akers Mills Road (within the Cumberland Mall site) was assumed at $51 million.
- Based on industry data on basic bus stop infrastructure and maintenance costs, the cost to evaluate/improve existing bus stop infrastructure in the city and add new facilities was assumed at $25,000 annually for the first two years, increasing to $75,000 annually thereafter.

Table 11-2: I-285 Top-End BRT Extension – Capital Costs*

Element	Unit	Total Cost	Description/Assumptions
Running Way - Mixed Traffic	1 mile	$0	Assumes vehicle would run in mixed traffic along Cumberland Pkwy from I-285 to South Cobb Dr
Transit Signal Priority	2 intersections	$44,000	Assumes TSP at one major intersection along extension
Queue Jump Lanes	2 lanes (1 intersection)	$136,000	Assumes one queue jump lane along extension
Stations	1	$775,000	Assumes addition of one station at Atlanta Road at middle of extended portion of alignment
BRT Vehicle	2	$1,500,000	Up to two CNG 40-ft stylized BRT vehicles (including 20% spare) assumed to support extending currently proposed service to South Cobb Dr. Cost for each bus is $750,000; initial purchase only.
Professional Services Fee	–	$100,000	Assumes 35% of total costs to include costs associated with preliminary engineering, final design, project management, construction management, legal, permits, insurance, surveys, testing, and start-up (not including vehicles and right-of-way costs)**
Contingency	–	$200,000	Assumes 10% contingency
Total Cost	**–**	**$2,755,000**	

[1] *Metro Transit, "West Broadway Transit Study: Capital Cost Estimation Methodology," 2015.*
[2] *San Mateo County Transit District, "El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit Phasing Study," 2014.*
**Includes only costs to extend currently proposed I-285 Top End BRT to South Cobb Drive.*
***Professional services for I-285 Top End extension could potentially be included in professional services fee of total I-285 Top End alignment project budget if extension added to overall project limits.*

Policy and Planning-Related Costs

- The cost of the first phase of the transit marketing campaign was assumed at $50,000; the second phase was assumed at $100,000.
- Designating a City Transit Coordinator was assumed to not incur an additional cost, as the role would be assigned to an existing City employee.
- Feasibility studies are an important step prior to making any major transit investment. Several feasibility studies are proposed, as summarized in Table 11-3.

Table 11-3: Estimated Feasibility Study Costs

Proposed Feasibility Study	Cost
Smyrna East/West/South Microtransit	$60,000
Smyrna East/West/South Circulator	$125,000
South Smyrna Transfer Station	$125,000
Downtown Transfer Station	$200,000
I-285 Top End BRT Extension	$250,000
South Cobb Dr BRT	$500,000
Smyrna-Atlanta Rail Connection	$500,000

- Prior to improving the City's bus stops, coordination with CobbLinc would be needed to conduct a bus stop assessment/evaluation, potentially as part of CobbLinc's bus stop infrastructure program. The $50,000 previously assumed in the first two years of this plan for evaluating/improving existing bus stops in the city may be used for this assessment if necessary.

Using these assumptions, costs were projected for the service improvement strategies identified for the *Smyrna Connects* 20-year transit plan, as shown in Table 11-4.

Table 11-4: Smyrna Connects 20-Year Service Strategies – Operating Characteristics and Costs

Service Improvement	Operating Characteristics					Annual Operating Costs* (2020$)	Capital Costs (2020$)
	Frequency (min)	*Service Span (hrs)*			Day of Service		
		Weekday	Saturday	Sunday			
Fixed- Route							
30-min frequency on Route 25	30	19.5	19.5	13.5	Every day	$1,578,774	$3,900,000
Add three city circulators	30	16	14	10	Every day	$1,677,287	$1,600,000
Add 15-min frequency on two circulators	15	16	14	10	Every day	$1,257,965	$1,200,000
CobbLinc Route 55	30	16	16	10	Every day	$1,282,301	$1,950,000
Downtown Smyrna–Atlanta Express	30	8 (AM/PM peak)	No service	No service	Weekday	$482,969	$4,095,000
Smyrna–Atlanta Express	30	8 (AM/PM peak)	No service	No service	Weekday	$321,979	None
CobbLinc Route 285	60	16	14	10	Every day	$516,664	$650,000
CobbLinc Airport Express (AX)	30	24	24	24	Every day	$2,710,616	$5,200,000
Mobility-On-Demand							
Implement Microtransit in 3 zones	On-demand	16	14	10	Every day	$1,048,320	$373,000
Reduce Microtransit to FM/LM	On-demand	16	14	10	Every day	$628,992	None
TNC-based after-hour rides	On-demand	After hrs	After hrs	After hrs	Every day	$75,000	None
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)							
South Cobb Dr BRT	10, 15 @ off-peak	18	16	14	Every day	$1,725,619	$25,040,000
Extended I-285 Top-End BRT	10, 15 @ off-peak	18	17	17	Every day	$5,659,550	$358,505,000
Connect Cobb BRT	8, 15 @ off-peak	18	16	14	Every day	$5,348,117	$566,900,000

**Net operating cost after subtracting farebox revenues.*
Capital costs include vehicle replacement costs in addition to costs of initial vehicle needs.
Consistent with data from I-285 Top-End BRT Feasibility Study, operating cost for Extended I-285 Top-End BRT reflects bus and station operating costs.
Mobility on Demand (MOD) services provided by TNCs, which provide vehicles. However, capital costs incur due software purchase/ maintenance needs.
Farebox recovery ratio of 22% (based on CobbLinc data) assumed to determine fare revenues.

Investment Scenarios

As a municipality within Cobb County, Smyrna is in a unique position of desiring to influence future transit service in the community without having responsibility for funding and operating the services. With this in mind, three investment scenarios were developed that represent different levels of progress in the implementation of the 2040 transit vision for Smyrna:

- **Small-Impact Scenario** – assumes smaller transit investments with an emphasis on improvements to existing services and implementation of new services focused largely on population segments with the greatest transportation needs.
- **Moderate-Impact Scenario** – assumes a more moderate level of transit investment, including implementation of transit improvements included in the short- and mid-term recommendations of the *Smyrna Connects* vision.
- **High-Impact Scenario** – assumes the most significant transit investments and builds upon the Moderate-Impact Scenario by including implementation of transit improvements included in the long-term recommendation of the *Smyrna Connects* vision.

Table 11-5 summarizes the assumed transit investments for each of these scenarios, including the short-, mid-, and long-term strategies that would be implemented in each. For each scenario, additional planning requirements that may be necessary to implement the improvements also are identified:

- **City of Smyrna Decision** – City budgeting decision may be needed to fund the strategy.
- **Cobb County/CobbLinc** – Cobb County has led previous efforts related to this strategy.
- **Marketing campaign** – Collaboration with CobbLinc and other transit partners may be necessary for implementing this strategy.
- **Service planning** – Operational planning by CobbLinc and/or other service providers may be necessary to guide the implementation of the strategy.
- **Planning study** – Smaller planning study may be necessary to guide strategy implementation.
- **Feasibility study** – Major feasibility study may be necessary prior to the planning and preliminary design stage to move this project forward.

The summary also shows the projected cost or the financial investment necessary to implement each of these scenarios, including all capital and operating costs and costs of any additional planning such as feasibility studies required.

Table 11-5: Summary of Investment Scenarios, Smyrna Connects Transit Plan

Smyrna Connects Strategies	Additional Planning Required*	Small-Impact Scenario	Moderate-Impact Scenario	High-Impact Scenario
Increase service frequency to 30 min on Route 25	Service planning	•	•	•
Implement microtransit in 3 zones (MOD)	Feasibility study**	•	•	•
Launch transit marketing campaign (Phase I)	Marketing campaign	•	•	•
Evaluate/improve existing bus stop infrastructure in city	Bus stop assessment	•	•	•
Implement 3 city circulators	Feasibility study**		•	•
Implement Downtown Smyrna–Atlanta Express	Service planning		•	•
Implement CobbLinc Route 55	Service planning		•	•
Implement CobbLinc Airport Express (Route AX)	Service planning		•	•
Reduce microtransit services to FM/LM service	Service planning		•	•
Deploy TSP/queue jumps at selected intersections	Cobb County/ CobbLinc		•	•
Update current transit app	Cobb County/ CobbLinc		•	•
Improve bus stop infrastructure in city	Bus stop assessment		•	•
Establish Downtown Transfer Station	Feasibility study**		•	•
Relocate Cumberland Transfer Center to Akers Mill Rd	Cobb County/ CobbLinc		•	•
Designate City Transit Coordinator	City decision		•	•
Launch Phase II of transit marketing campaign	Marketing campaign		•	•
Implement South Cobb Dr BRT	Feasibility study**			•
Extend I-285 top-end BRT to S Cobb Dr	Feasibility study**			•
Connect Cobb BRT	Cobb County/ CobbLinc			•
Implement Smyrna–Atlanta Express	Service planning			•
15-min frequency on selected Smyrna circulators	Service planning			•
Implement CobbLinc Express Route 285	Service planning			•
Establish South Smyrna Transfer Station	Feasibility study**			•
TNC-based after-hour rides program	City decision			•
Estimated 20-yr Investment Cost		$66 M	$269 M	$1,717 M

**Additional planning requirements that may be necessary to implement the improvements.*

***Feasibility study – Depending on scale of investment and requirements from potential funding partners, feasibility studies should be conducted at least 6 months to 2 years prior to planning and preliminary design stage of project.*

20-Year Investment Scenario Summary

The total 20-year operating and capital/other costs for the strategies developed and included in each of the three investment scenarios identified for the *Smyrna Connects* Transit Analysis and Feasibility Study are summarized below. Figures 11-1, 11-2, and 11-3 illustrate the annual operating and capital costs for the Small-, Moderate-, and High-Impact scenarios, respectively.

Figure 11-1: Annual Operating and Capital Costs – Small-Impact Scenario (2021-40)

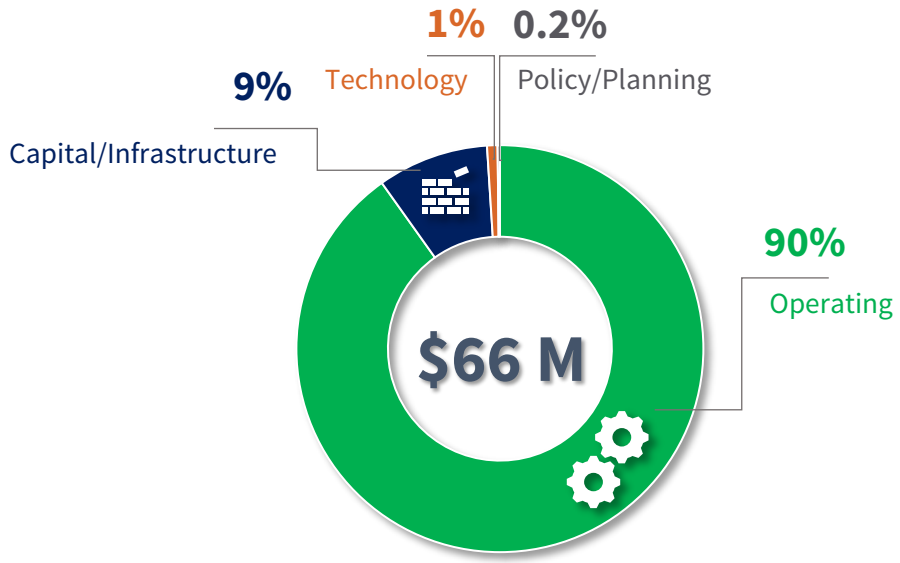


Figure 11-2: Annual Operating and Capital Costs – Moderate-Impact Scenario (2021-40)

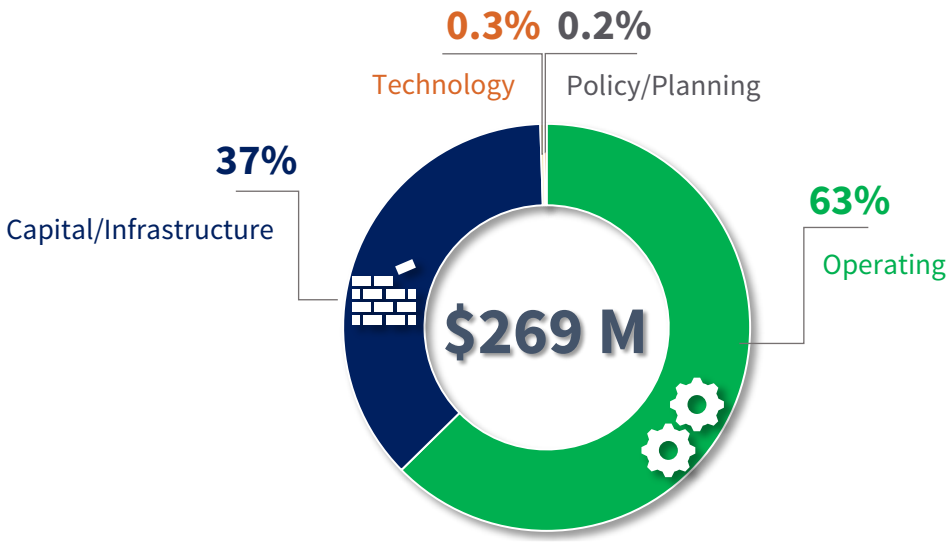
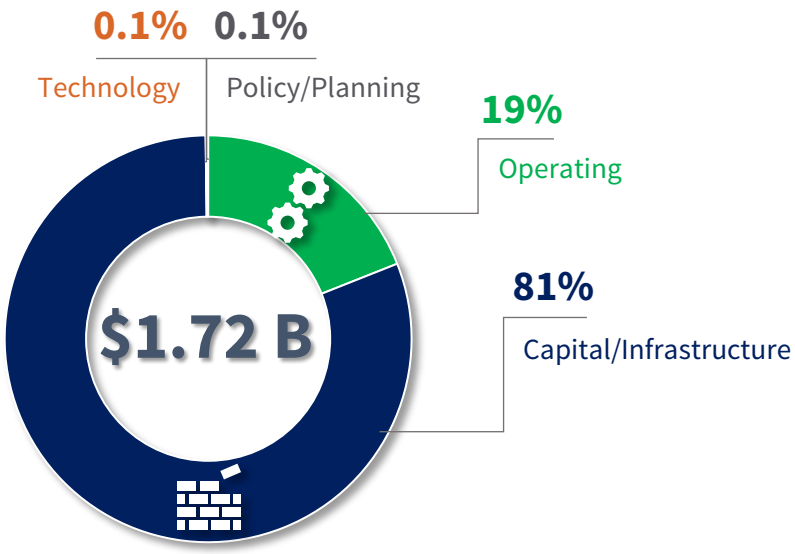


Figure 11-3: Annual Operating and Capital Cost – High -Impact Scenario (2021-40)



Potential Funding Options

Once costs are estimated, it is important to identify potential funding providers and sources that may be used to implement this plan, including local, State, or Federal. Even if the City does not fund transit at this time, and may not do so in the immediate future, a funding review provides necessary insights for the City of the scale and range of options available to fund its needs.

Existing Revenues in Smyrna

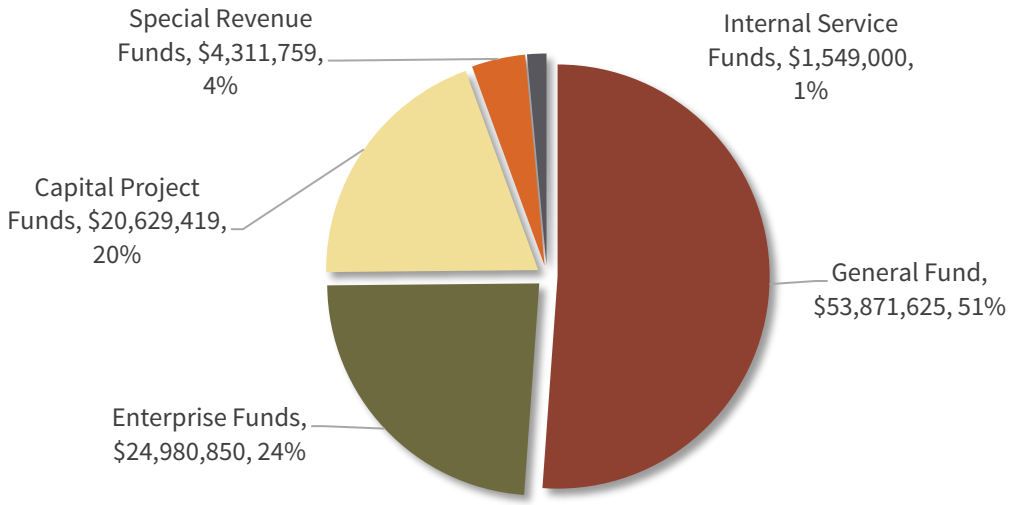
The first step in this task was understanding the City's fiscal capacity by objectively documenting existing local revenue streams. Figure 11-4 presents the distributions of revenue currently used by the City.

As with any City or County, general funds in Smyrna support many City services. Property taxes are the General Fund's largest source of revenue. The 2021 budget anticipates the millage rate to remain unchanged at 8.99 mills for the 14th consecutive year. The budget also projects property taxes to increase by 7 percent in 2021, but a lower collection rate is expected due to economic hardships resulting from the COVID-19 health crisis.

The Special Revenue Fund is a collection of funds and includes Auto Rental Tax, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Confiscated Assets, Donations & Special Fees, and E-911 funds (revenues generated from State-mandated E-911 fees that landline and mobile phone providers collect from their customers and pass on to the City.) The Hotel/Motel fund (tax imposed on each room night occupied in Smyrna hotels and motels) also is part of this fund, but recreational and

business travel is expected to be down in FY 2021 due to the COVID-19 health crisis. This fund also includes several miscellaneous public safety grants awarded to the City.

Figure 11-4: City of Smyrna Projected Revenues, FY 2021



As shown, a large portion of City revenues comes from the Capital Project funds. Nearly 94 percent of this fund includes revenues from the 2016 SPLOST Fund, which holds the City's portion of the tax received from the 1 percent SPLOST approved in 2014 and began collection in 2016. At that time, Cobb County voters approved this tax to be collected through 2021, which needs to be approved again by Cobb County voters in November 2020 to be available beyond 2021.

Need for Funding Partners

The City's proposed FY 2021 budget, which consists of key sources and other revenues, is balanced, as the State of Georgia requires every local government to adopt a balanced operating budget. However, the proposed budget does not provide much flexibility to make any significant transit investment. Especially with the impacts of the COVID-19 public health crisis, the City has taken, and will continue to take, a cautious approach to spending given the anticipated reduction in revenues. This translates to limiting commitments to any new programs or new positions with long-lasting cost implications, including transit.

With the development of the *Smyrna Connects* plan, the City of Smyrna is in a much stronger position to discuss and potentially influence transit investment priorities with its transit partners throughout the region, including FTA, Cobb County/CobbLinc, ATL, MARTA, GDOT, ARC, Cumberland CID, and others throughout the greater Atlanta region.

An understanding of funding sources that may be available from some of these federal and regional entities can provide the background needed to discuss and potentially influence transit investment priorities of Cobb County/CobbLinc and the ATL.

FTA

Capital Investment Grants Program

The FTA Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program is a competitive grant program that awards more than $2 billion each year toward public transit capital projects, including light rail, heavy rail, commuter rail, streetcar, and bus rapid transit. Under the CIG, there are two categories for BRT projects:

- **New Starts** are projects with a total cost of at least $300 million or that are seeking over $100 million in funding. These projects include new fixed guideway systems (BRT, LRT, commuter rail, etc.), or extension of an existing fixed guideway system. Fixed guideway requires that the majority of the project operates in a separated right-of-way dedicated for public transportation use.
- **Small Starts** are projects with a total cost less than $300 million or that are seeking under $100 million. Projects that qualify for this program are new fixed guideway systems (BRT, LRT, commuter rail, etc.) or corridor-based BRT system or extension to an existing system. Corridor-based systems require a separated right-of-way but not for the entirety of the corridor.

Based on the initial cost analysis and estimates for the South Cobb Drive BRT and extension to I-285 Top End, both projects could qualify for the New Starts or Small Starts category. Small Starts is the preferred category for a BRT project that qualifies. More detailed planning, engineering, and design are needed to confirm project eligibility.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

In April 2020, more than $500 million was made available to the State of Georgia by FTA through the CARES Act. Of this total, CobbLinc will receive just over $18 million in additional operating funds during the pandemic. The purpose of these funds is to provide Federal assistance for continuation of operations and revenue during the pandemic. The funds do not require a local match and are meant for operational expenses rather than capital expenses. It should also be noted that due to the pandemic, future operating fund levels may be negatively impacted.

Urbanized Area Formula Funding Program (5307)

FTA's 5307 program (grants) provides Federal resources to urbanized areas and governors for transit capital and operating assistance and for transportation-related planning. Cobb County qualifies for this as a designated urbanized area. Eligible activities for this funding include but are not limited to

planning, engineering, design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies, capital transit infrastructure, vehicle, and facility investments, and more. For urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000, the funds may be used in operating assistance.

Funding through this program is available the year appropriated plus five years and is allocated based on specific formulas for urbanized areas of 50,000–200,000 people and for urbanized areas of over 200,000 people. The formulas for this grant are communicated each year on the FTA website. The Federal funds from this program should not exceed 80 percent of the project cost for capital expenditures, 90 percent of the cost for vehicle-related costs, and 50 percent for operating costs.

State of Good Repair (SGR) Grants Program (5337)

FTA's 5337 program provides capital assistance for maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation projects of high-intensity fixed guideway and bus systems to help transit agencies maintain assets in a state of good repair. Additionally, these grants are eligible for developing and implementing Transit Asset Management (TAM) plans. Eligible recipients are state and local government authorities in urbanized areas with fixed guideway and high-intensity motorbus systems in revenue service for at least seven years. Program funds are available for capital projects that maintain a fixed guideway or a high-intensity motorbus system in a state of good repair, including projects to replace and rehabilitate:

- Rolling stock
- Track
- Line equipment and structures
- Signals and communications
- Power equipment and substations
- Passenger stations and terminals
- Security equipment and systems
- Maintenance facilities/equipment
- Operational support equipment, including computer hardware and software.

Funds are available for obligation for four fiscal years and allocated based on revenue miles and route miles reported to the NTD. Similar to most FTA funds, the Federal share of eligible capital costs is 80 percent of the net capital project cost.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program

As part of FTA's Flexible Funding Program, CMAQ provides funding to areas in nonattainment or maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide, and/or particulate matter. States that have no nonattainment or maintenance areas still receive a minimum apportionment of CMAQ funding for either air quality projects or other elements of flexible spending. Funds may be used for any transit capital expenditures otherwise eligible for FTA funding as long as they have an air quality benefit.

Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program (Section 5339)

Another federal, formula-based grant, the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities program provides federal resources to States and designated recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment. These funds may also be used in construction of bus-related facilities including facility upgrades for technological changes or new maintenance facilities.

Eligible recipients for this grant program are jurisdictions that operate fixed-route bus service and are already eligible to receive direct grants under the 5307 program. Eligible activities for this funding include but are not limited to capital projects to replace, rehabilitate and purchase vehicles (buses, vans, and related equipment) and facilities (new or updated). A sub-program of this grant provides competitive grants for bus and bus facility projects that specifically support low and zero-emission vehicles.

As with the 5307 program, the Federal share of the 5339 program Federal share is not to exceed 80 percent of the net project cost. Funds through this program are available for three years after the fiscal year in which the amount was appropriated.

Cobb County and ATL

Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)

Since 1985, local transportation capital improvement funds in Cobb County are generated through the SPLOST. The County's sales tax, currently 6 percent, contributes 4 cents to the State, one cent to the school district SPLOST, and one to the SPLOST, which goes directly to the County and jurisdictions within the county. Voted on in 2014 and with funds generated since 2016, the 2016 SPLOST will expire in 2021; Cobb County voters will vote on renewal of the SPLOST in November 2020.

Cobb County General Fund

Transit and transportation operations and infrastructure investments typically are funded through allocations from Cobb County's General Fund, the primary operating fund of the County. The FY 2020 proposed budget shows a 4.73 percent increase in this budget to nearly $476 million compared to the FY 2019 adopted budget. Of this operating budget, about $25 million is proposed for the transit operating budget, an increase of 12.58 percent from FY 2019. The transit budget line item is the Cobb County portion allocated to the CobbLinc operating fund. Apart from its contribution to CobbLinc through the Cobb County budget, the City of Smyrna does not currently dedicate any funding directly to transit.

T-SPLOST

In 2019, the Georgia General Assembly passed House Bill 930, which created the ATL, a 13-county district. This law gives Cobb County, as one of the 13 counties, the ability to establish a dedicated sales tax either countywide or for a selected area of Cobb County to help fund transit expansions. Thus, Cobb County has a future opportunity to consider enacting this tax at a special district level with more transit-supportive areas such as Smyrna to create an additional source of funding for public transit in Cobb County. As noted in relation to HB 930, Cobb County has the authority and

option to work with the ATL to raise a dedicated sales tax specifically for transit improvements and expansion through a T-SPLOST, separate from the general SPLOST. The County is in a unique position to consider enacting this tax in the coming months to create an additional source of funding for transit in Cobb County at a special district level.

Cumberland CID

Formed in 1988, the Cumberland CID was founded based on Article 9, Section VII of the Georgia State Constitution. It is made up of 190+ commercial investors/owners who pay an additional millage on property taxes and is collected by Cobb County and distributed to the CID, which commits those funds to several local area improvement projects, including transportation/infrastructure. The Cumberland CID historically has been a funding partner in major transportation projects within the District, including the Northwest Corridor Express Lanes, and is a supportive partner in the ongoing I-285 Top End BRT project. Portions of both the South Cobb Drive BRT alignment and the extension to the I-285 Top End BRT project fall within the Cumberland CID geographic boundary, meaning that the Cumberland CID is a potential funding partner for these projects.

Public-Private Partnerships

Cobb County has a history of successful public-private partnerships to generate revenue and create amenities and spaces for private development and public use. Most notably, the County entered into a public-private partnership with the Atlanta Braves for development of The Battery complex. The Cobb County 2019 Annual Report states that The Battery development will generate the necessary taxes to pay for the County's portion of the partnership sooner than originally anticipated. With successful developments such as this in the area, the County is in a unique position to leverage private funds for public services, such as new premium BRT service, which would increase access to numerous private developments throughout the county.

Section 12: Coordination and Plan of Action

The goal of this collaborative planning effort is to develop an implementable 20-year transit vision for the City of Smyrna that is tailored primarily to the needs of the city and its immediate region and communicate that transit vision to Cobb County and the ATL for consideration in future transit investment priorities. Three investment scenarios were identified and evaluated that represent different levels of progress in the implementation of the 20-year transit vision for Smyrna.

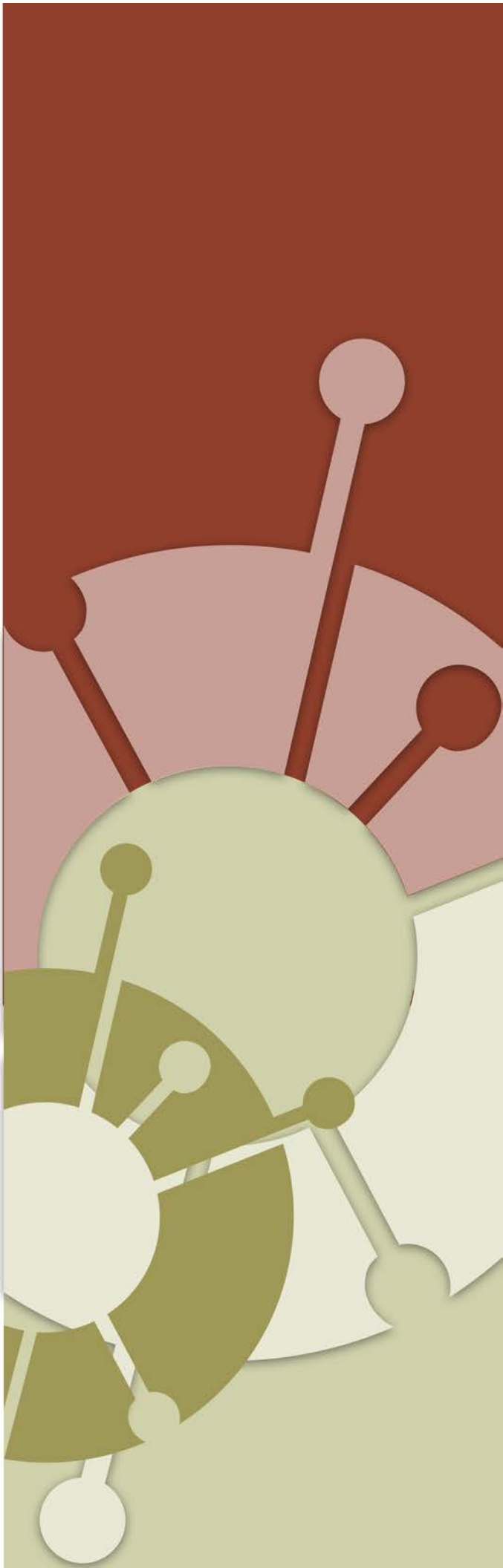
The next step is identifying the need for coordination and where and when that coordination should occur so the vision can be communicated as appropriate.

This section presents a set of actions for the City to ensure coordination and communication in the coming months and years. These actions provide the City with a starting point in its efforts to pursue funding and implementation of the *Smyrna Connects* transit vision for the next 20 years.

Coordination with Key Partners and Plans

Effective coordination with the ATL is a critical part of the City's efforts to implement *Smyrna Connects*. As part of the ATL's current process, local entities, project sponsors such as county and city governments, and transit operators identify their projects to the ATL, which reviews them, considers them for strategic investment by the State, and helps promote them for Federal funding.

The ATL's Atlanta Regional Transit Plan (ARTP) feeds local referendum lists and serves as the primary source of transit projects for the region's short- and long-range transportation plans.



The ATL project submittal process for the ARTP began with a call for projects in July 2019 to evaluate projects based on cost-effectiveness measures. The final 2019 ARTP was adopted in December 2019 by the ATL Board; the timeline for the 2020 ARTP has not been made public yet. With the ATL Board adopting an amendment to the 2019 ARTP on May 27, 2020, as proposed by Gwinnett County, the timeline for 2020 ATL project submittal may shift to later this year. However, as shown in Figure 12-1, the City of Smyrna should be prepared to communicate its priorities to the ATL as soon as they are approved by the City, which is currently planned for in July/August 2020.

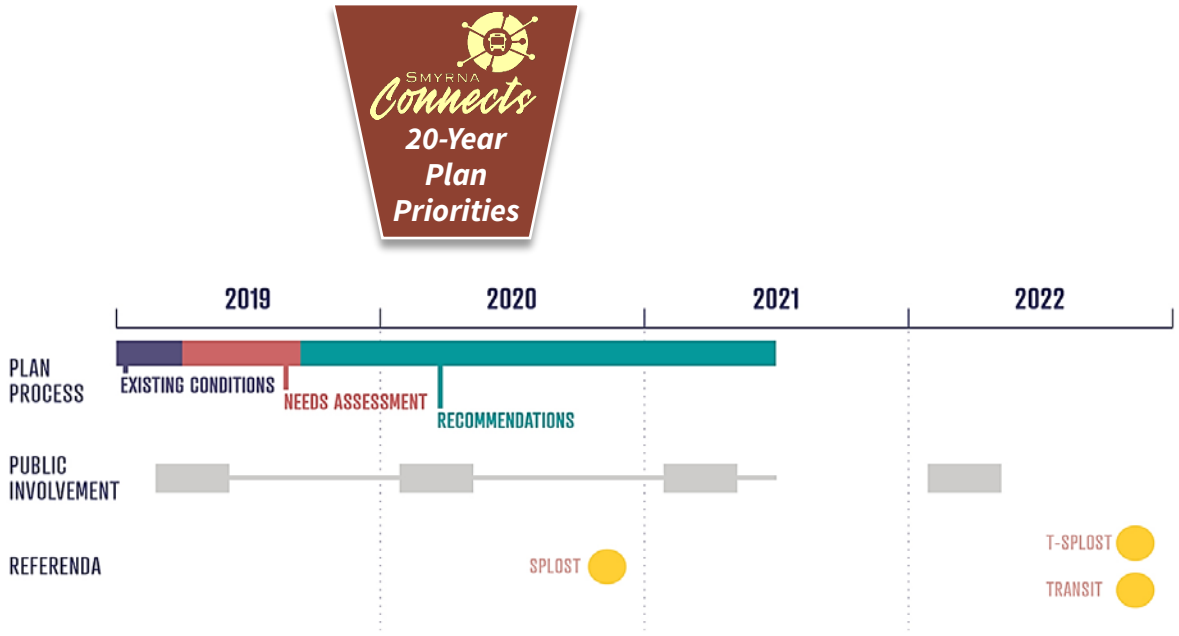
Figure 12-1: ATL Planning Timeline and Communicating Smyrna Connects Priorities

Source: 2019 ARTP

In addition, the Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), branded as *CobbForward,* is currently being updated to assess the county's existing and future transportation needs, including roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit services, and freight considerations. The goals of the CTP are to assist with identifying short- and long-term transportation priorities, establish a relationship between local (including the City of Smyrna) and regional expectations, and reinforce and support other local and regional planning and funding initiatives, such as *Smyrna Connects*.

The CTP is anticipated to be completed and adopted by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners in 2021. Figure 12-2 shows the CTP timeline and when *Smyrna Connects* priorities may be communicated to the CTP.

Figure 12-2: *CobbForward* Timeline and Communicating *Smyrna Connects* Priorities



Source: Cobb County

Role of *Smyrna Connects* Executive Summary

While coordination with the City's regional partners takes place, promotion of the *Smyrna Connects* 20-year vision should continue. It is anticipated that the *Smyrna Connects* Executive Summary, which will be completed as part of this effort to provide a concise overview of the plan, will be used as promotional tool to communicate the transit vision and generate support for transit projects to advance into more-detailed feasibility assessment and ultimately be funded and implemented.

Building on Efforts/Relationships

The City of Smyrna identified advocates while reaching out to the public for input and guidance on developing the future strategies. The City should leverage these relationships and offers for assistance to continue building support for the implementation plans and improvement strategies, especially on those that may require strong support and buy-in from the community. These individuals may serve as facilitators for a grassroots outreach program or could become transit ambassadors who can provide a foundation/support network for future outreach.

Plan of Action

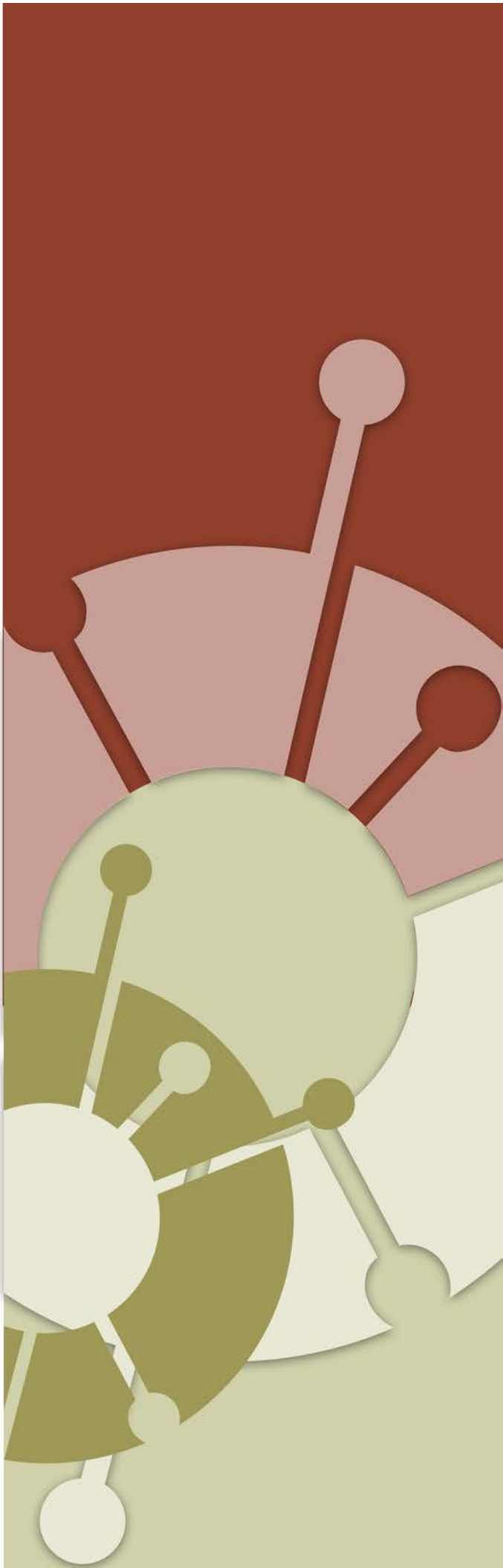
Implementing *Smyrna Connects* will require the actions generally outlined above. However, the following are specific key items to successfully put plan communication and implementation in motion:

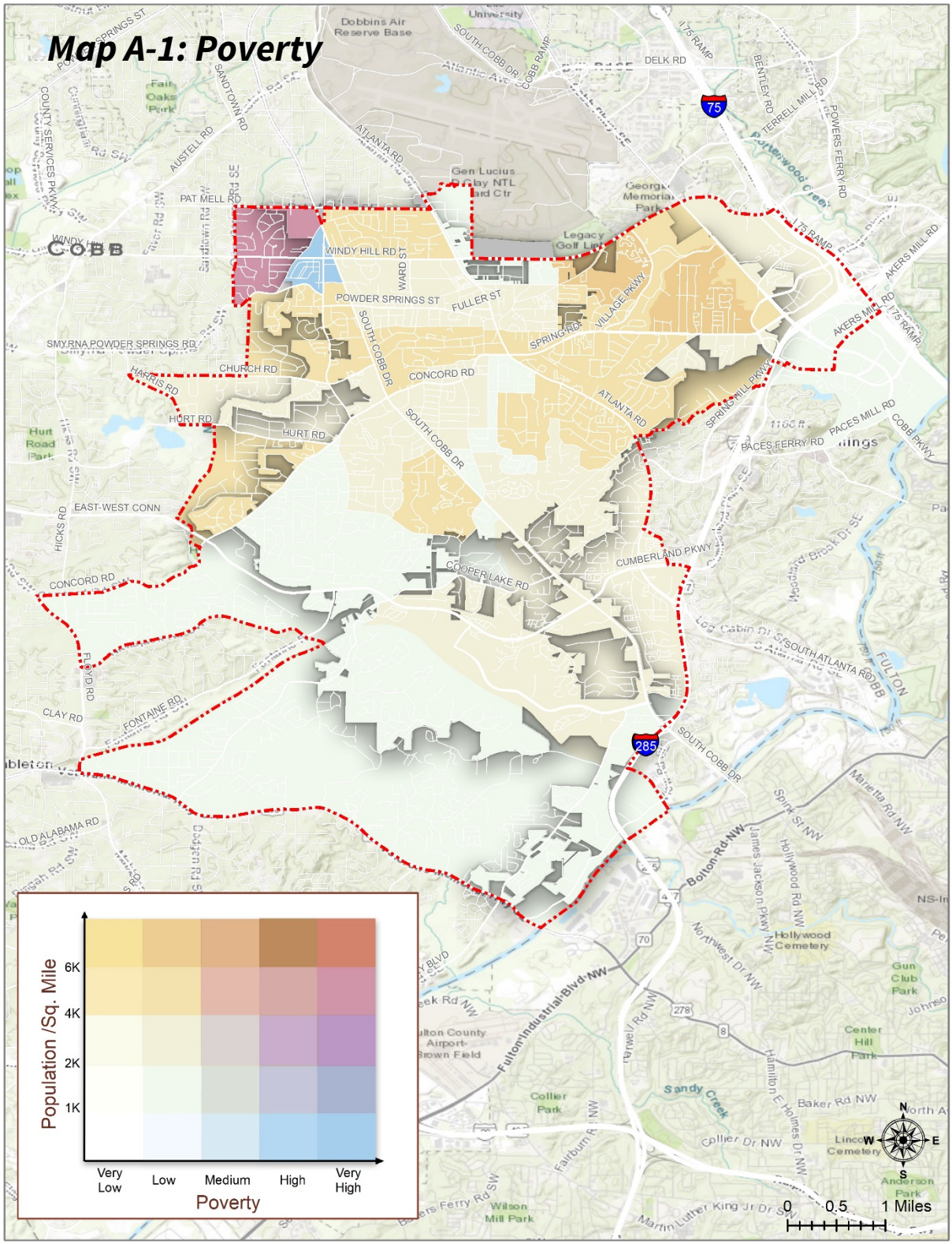
- ***Coordinate with the ATL and Cobb County on project priorities*** to ensure that *Smyrna Connects* feasibility studies and projects are communicated and considered by ARTP and *CobbForward* plans in a timely manner.
- ***Designate a City Transit Coordinator*** to advocate for transit services within the city and regionally. This role can be assigned to an existing City staff person and is crucial for ensuring timely and effective coordination and communication among the City's plan and other regional planning efforts, especially from Cobb County and the ATL.
- ***Establish a Smyrna Transit Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)*** comprising transit advocates and stakeholders to advocate for establishing a better transit network for the city and its immediate region and also to help effectively communicate the City's priorities into regional plans. The Transit CAC would be appointed by the City Council and would be responsible for evaluating and advising the Mayor and the Council on transit and other mobility strategies and policies.
- ***Coordinate with CobbLinc.*** Some improvement strategies in *Smyrna Connects* are consistent with CobbLinc's mid-range service recommendations, but it will be important to coordinate with CobbLinc to discuss opportunities for advancing the feasibility studies and recommendation of *Smyrna Connects*. In particular, an immediate opportunity exists to discuss the proposed frequency increase to 30 minutes on Route 25, which was identified as a near-term need in *Smyrna Connects* and is also a priority improvement for CobbLinc. In addition, coordination is paramount for evaluating and improving the bus stop infrastructure and amenities in Smyrna.
- ***Identify potential funding opportunities/grants and apply for funding.*** An initial task for the City Transit Coordinator will be to explore private and public funding opportunities so city-specific strategies such as microtransit or the after-hours ride program can be implemented. The Transit Coordinator could pursue partnerships to explore the study, funding, and implementation of projects in the *Smyrna Connects* plan.
- ***Secure funding for feasibility studies.*** *Smyrna Connects* identifies the need for numerous feasibility studies prior to any project advancing to final planning, design, and implementation. Opportunities to fund these studies will need to be explored with Cobb County, the ATL, and other partners throughout the region.
- ***Implement* Smyrna Connects.** The strategic location of Smyrna in the northwest Atlanta region makes implementing *Smyrna Connects* a key element of the regional transit network. Based on regional collaboration and unique regional demographics and socioeconomic diversity, implementation of *Smyrna Connects* can promote transit as a truly viable option locally and in the region. With its location, diversity, and strong community support for transit, Smyrna is well-positioned to collaborate with Cobb County, the ATL, and partners throughout the region and pursue the incremental implementation of the *Smyrna Connects* transit vision.

Appendix A: Transit Orientation by Demographic Variable

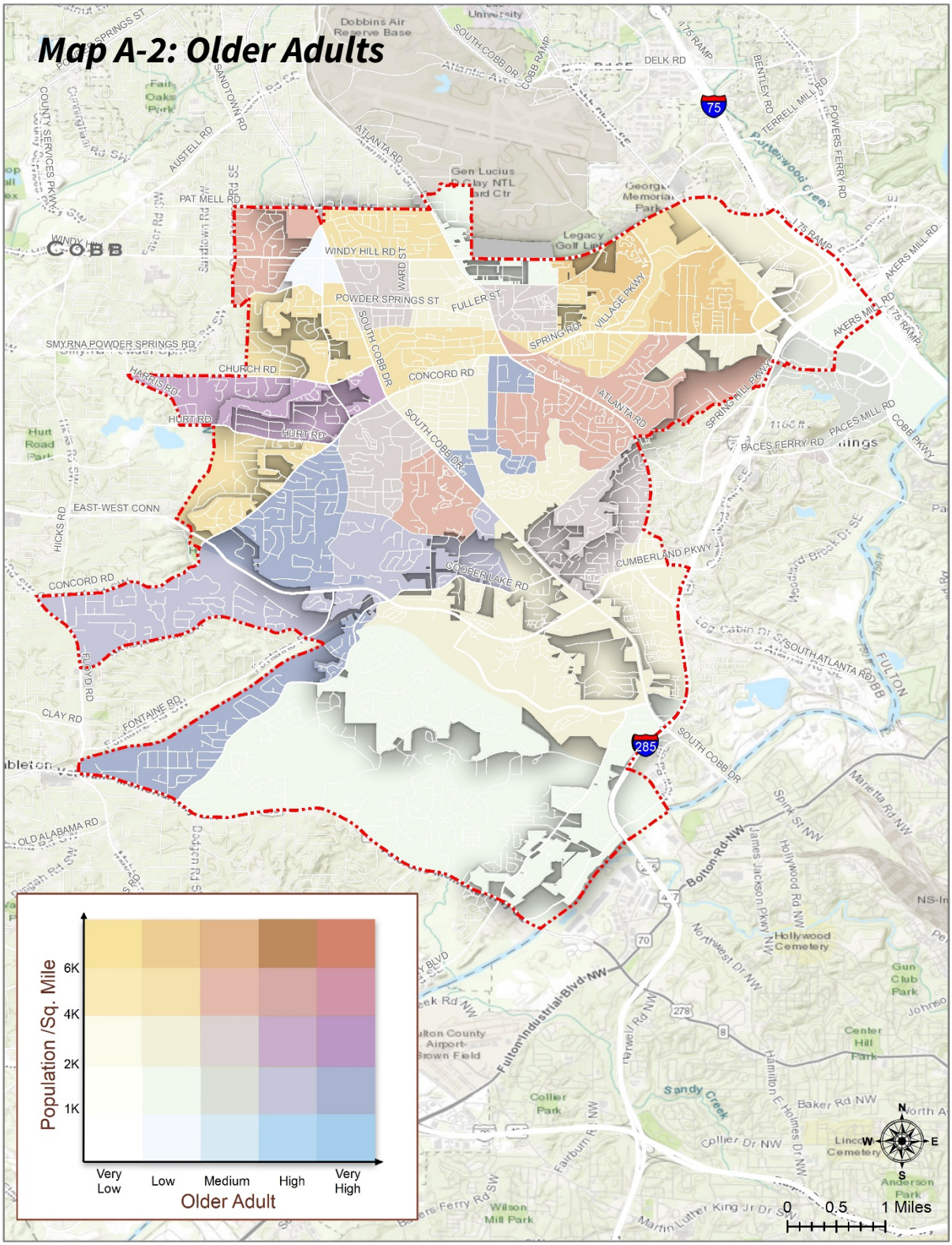
Maps in this appendix show the demographic data analysis to develop a Transit Orientation Index for the study area:

List of Maps

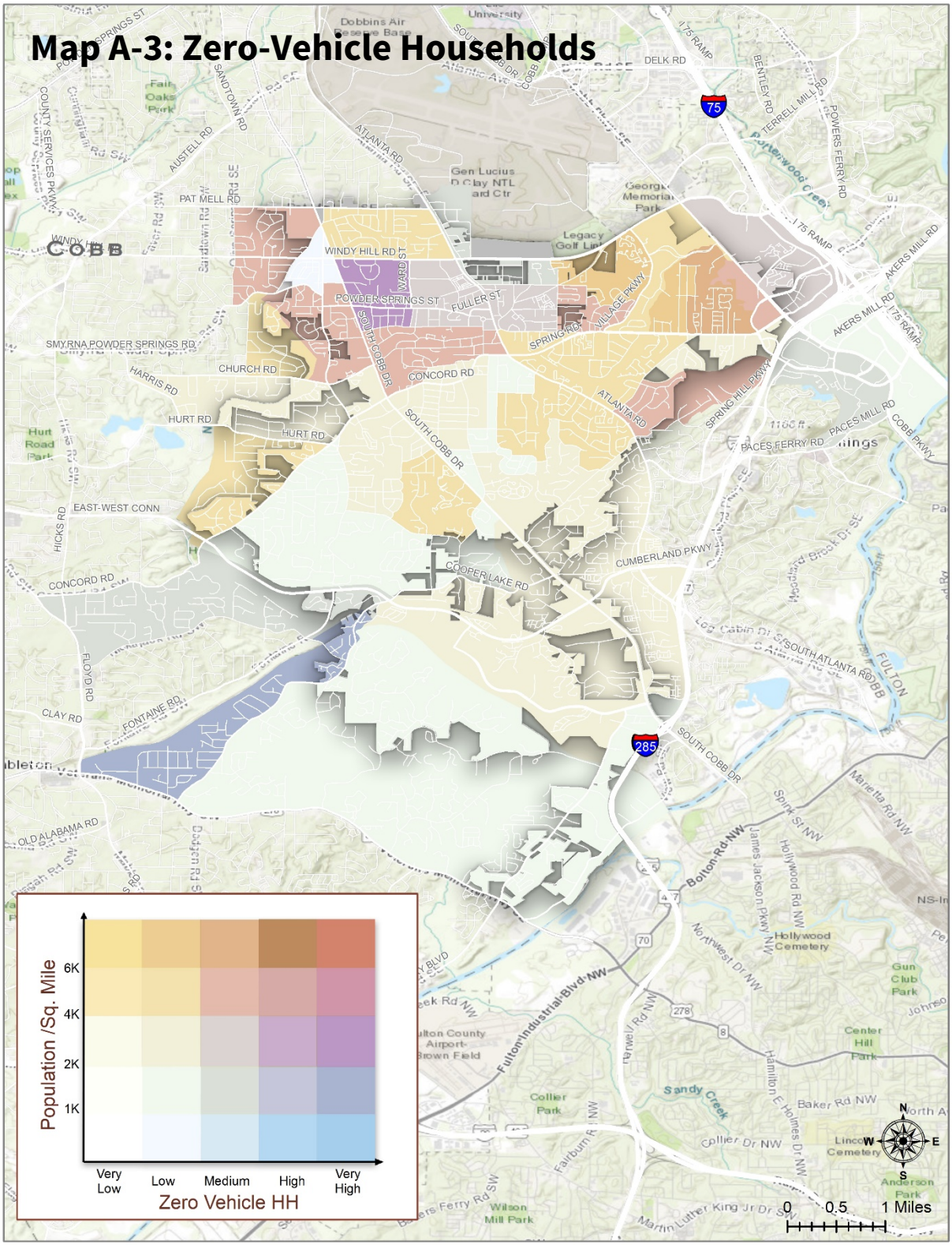


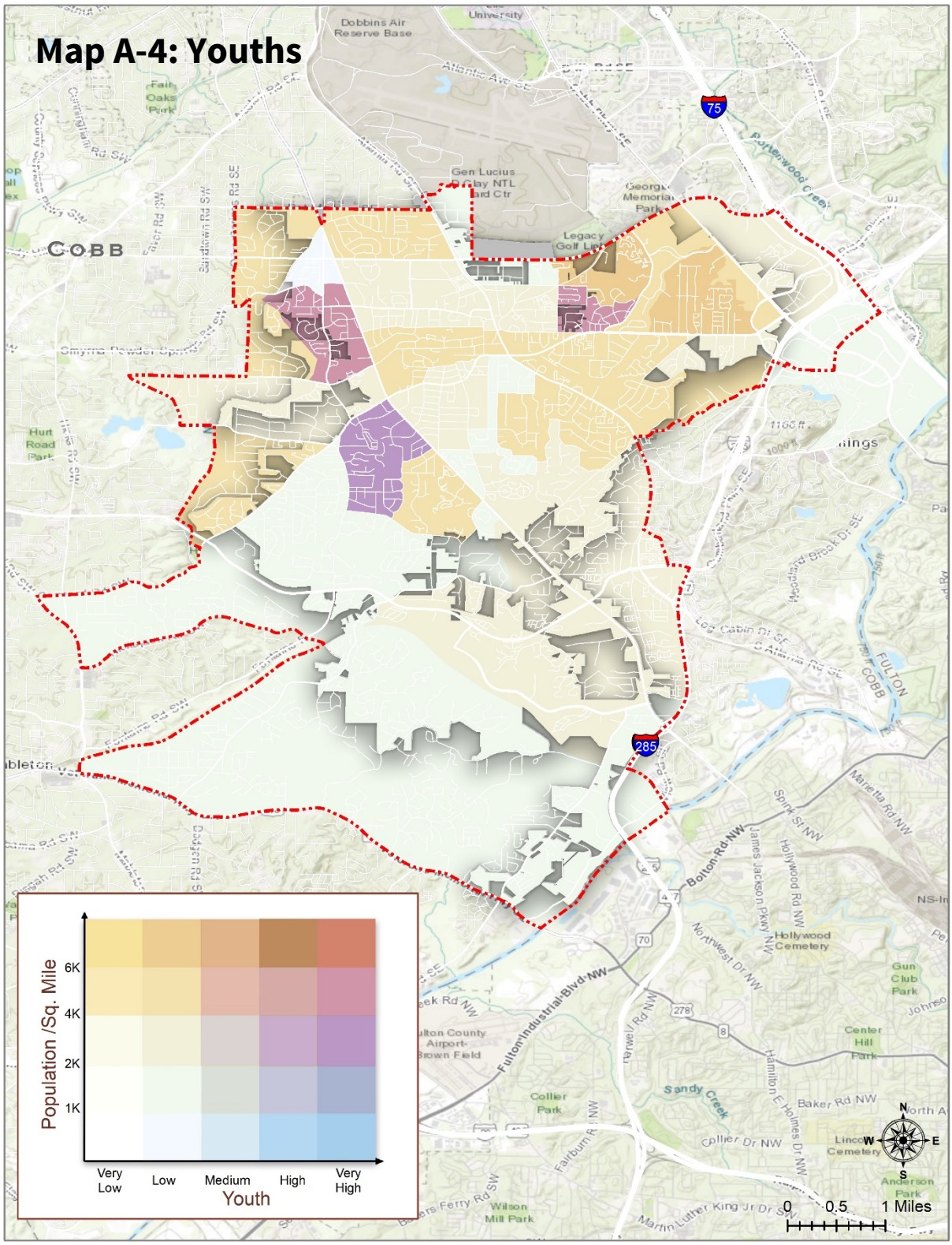

Map A-1: Poverty
Population /Sq. Mile
6K
4K
2K
1K
Very Low
Low
Medium
High
Very High
Poverty
0
0.5
1 Miles
N
S
E
W

Map A-2: Older Adults



Map A-3: Zero-Vehicle Households

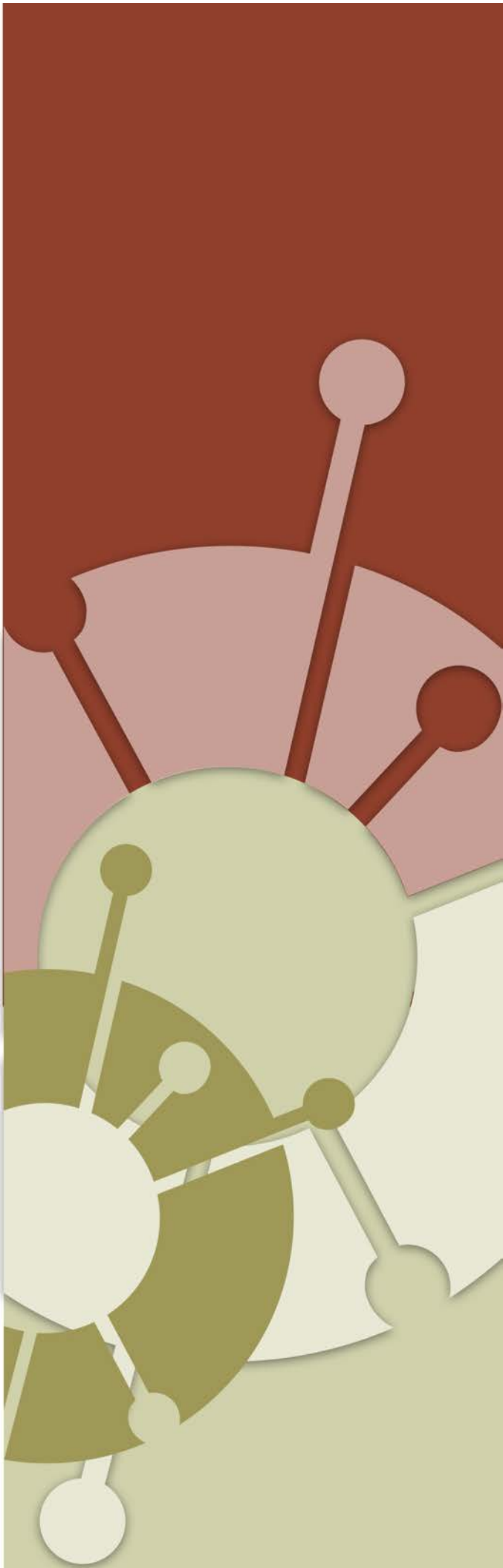



Map A-4: Youths
Dobbins Air Reserve Base
Fair Oaks Park
Gen Lucius D Clay NTL Guard Ctr
Georgia Memorial Park
Legacy Golf Links
COBB
Hurt Road Park
Bolton Rd NW
Fulton Industrial Blvd NW
Hollywood Cemetery
Gun Club Park
Center Hill Park
Collier Park
Sandy Creek
Baker Rd NW
Collier Dr NW
Anderson Park
Wilson Mill Park
Martin Luther King Jr Dr SW
Population /Sq. Mile
6K
4K
2K
1K
Very Low
Low
Medium
High
Very High
Youth
N
W
E
S
0
0.5
1 Miles

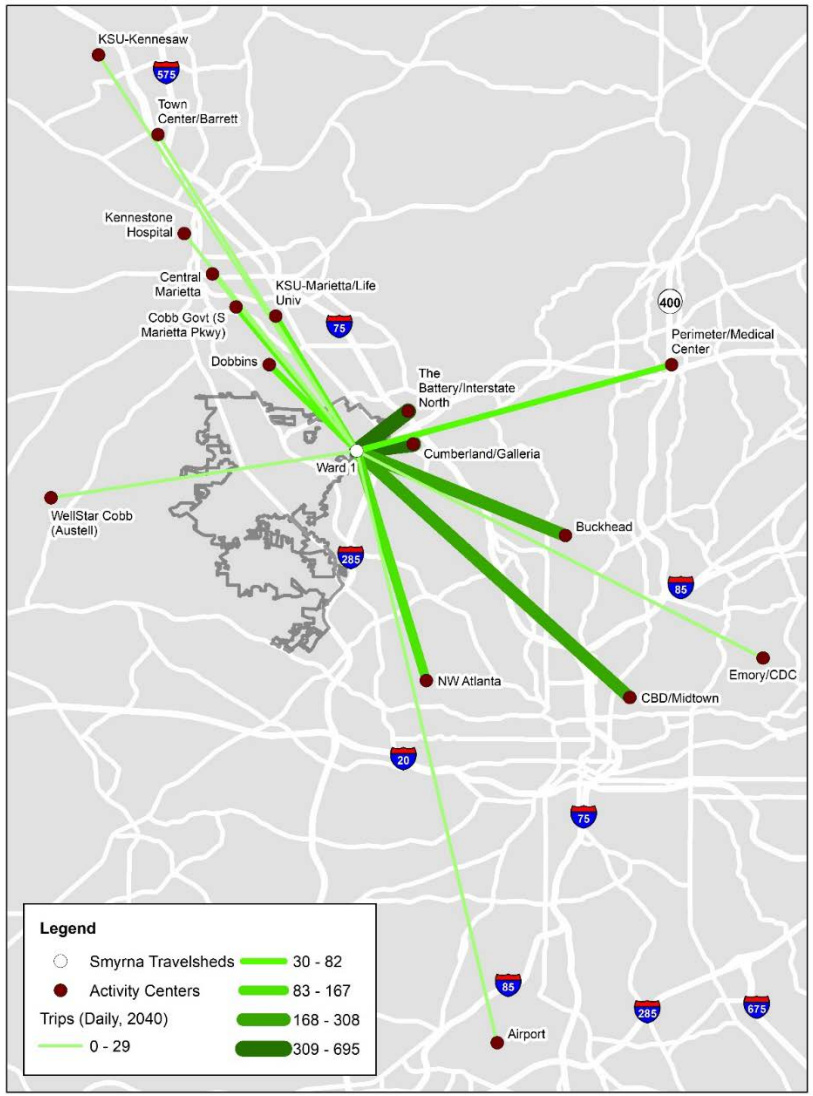
Appendix B: Travelshed Maps

Maps in this appendix show travel flows by ward for each internal travel market analyzed for this study:

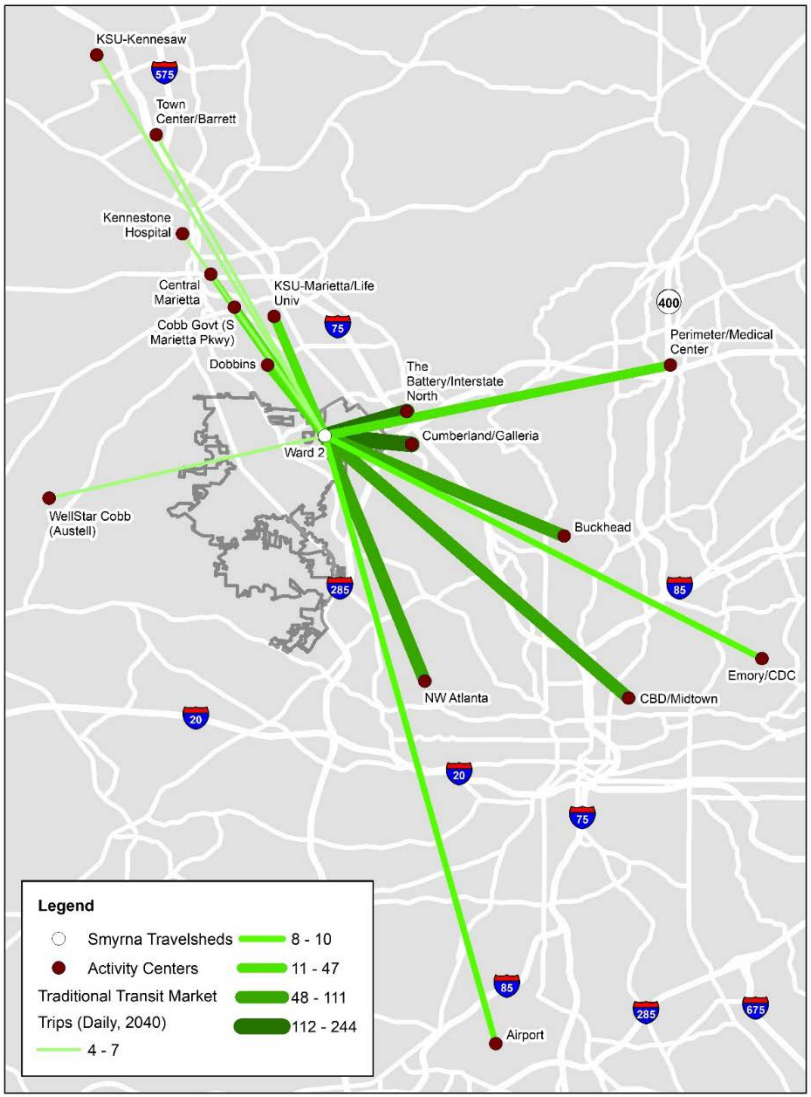
List of Maps



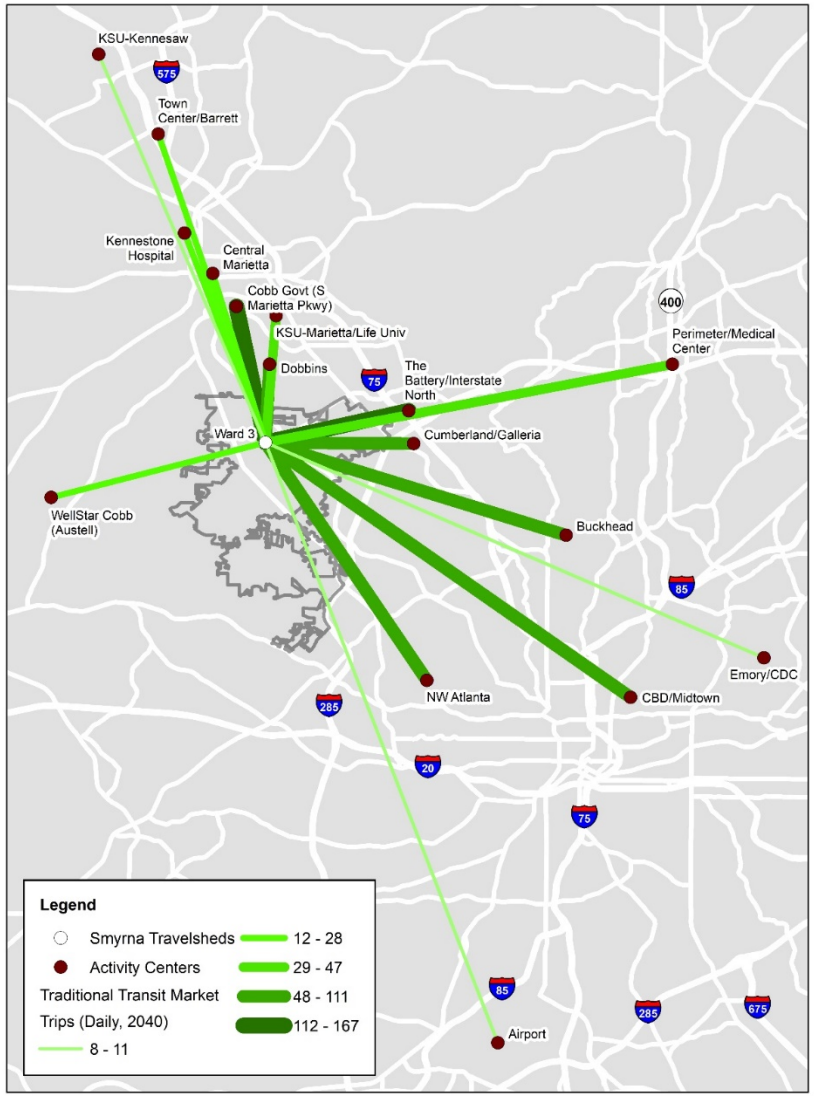
Map B-1: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 1



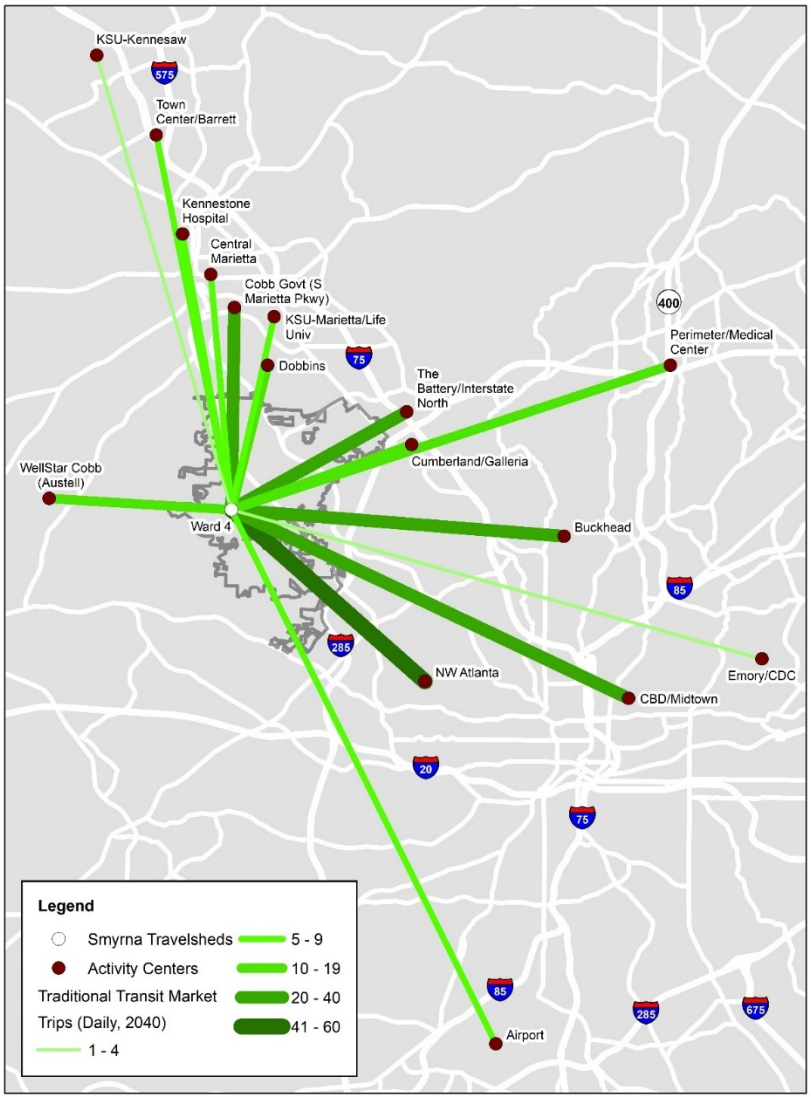
Map B-2: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 2



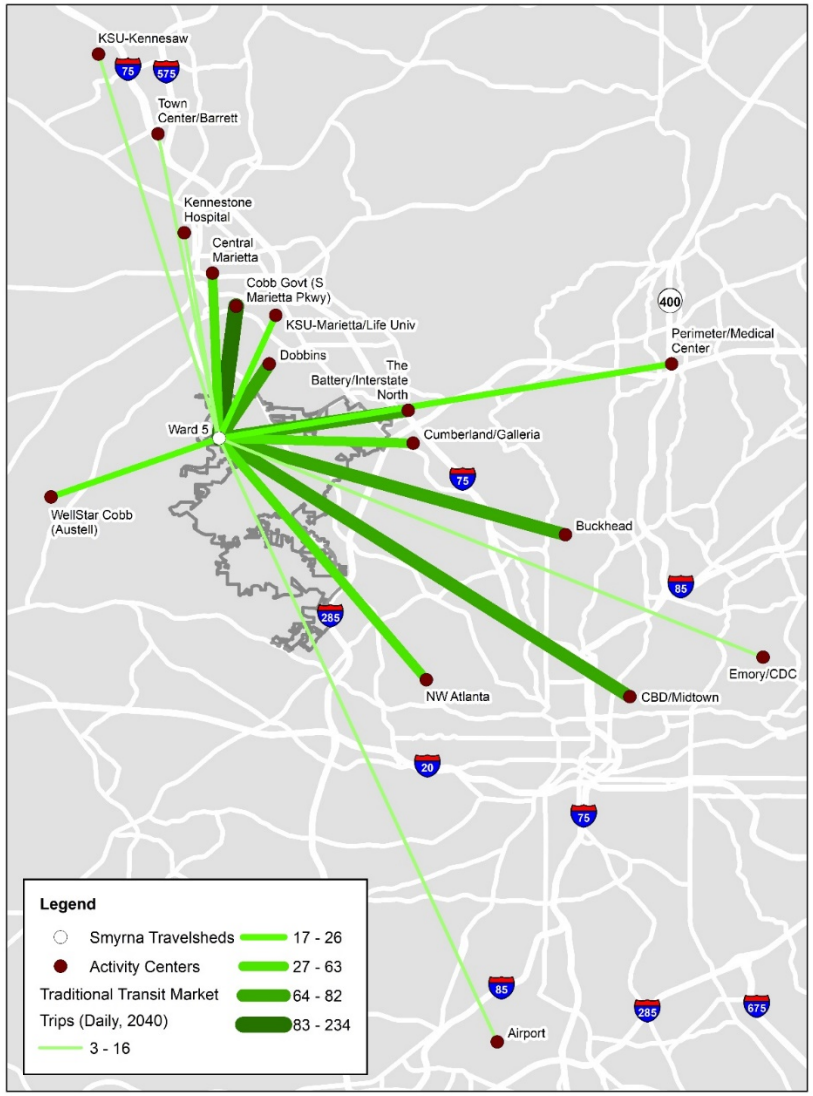
Map B-3: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 3



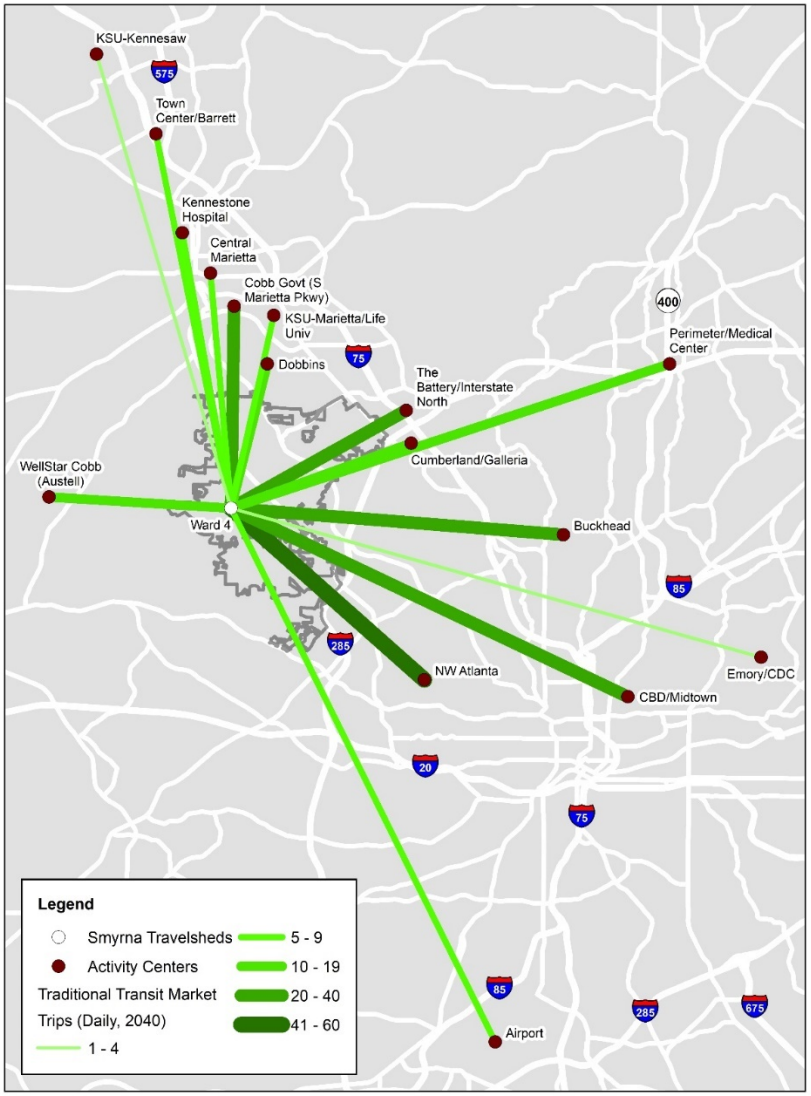
Map B-4: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 4



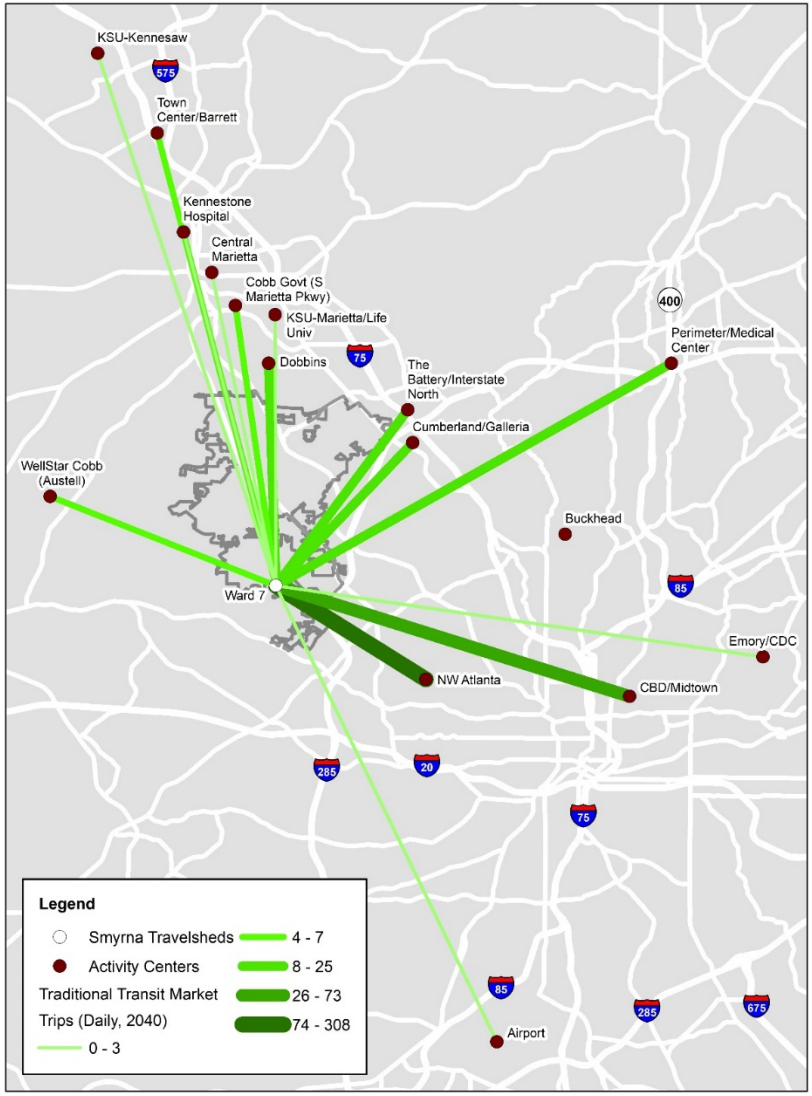
Map B-5: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 5



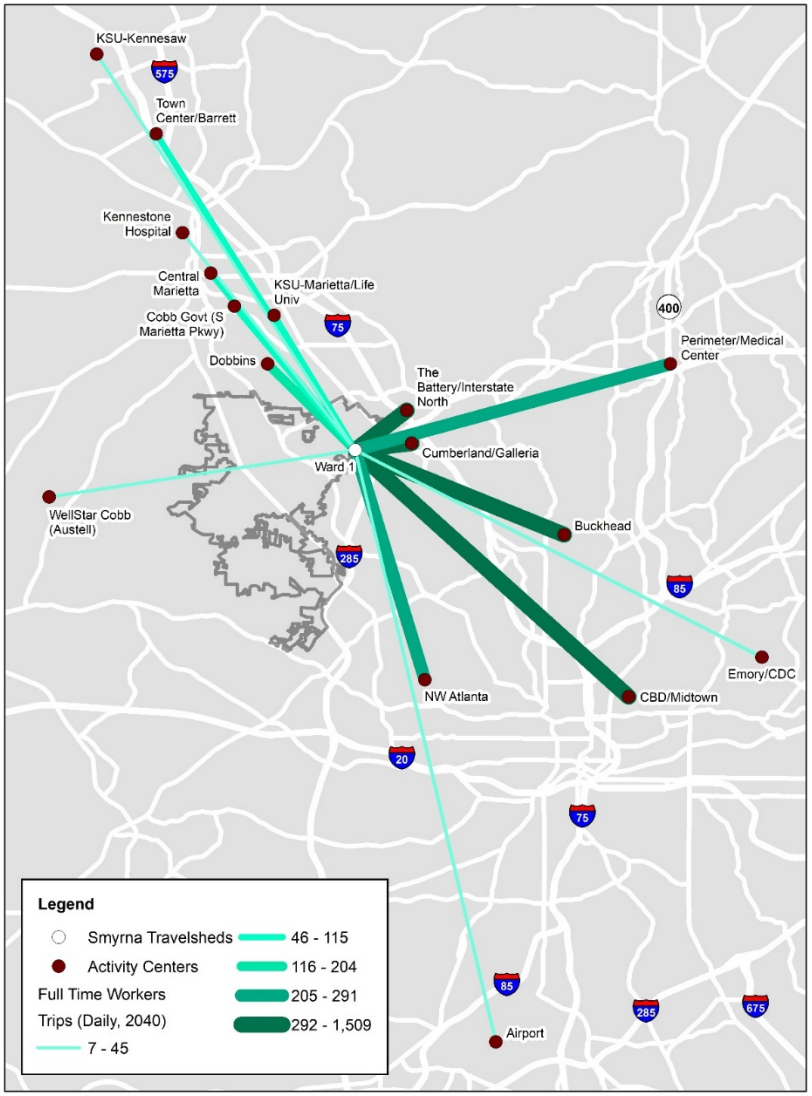
Map B-6: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 6



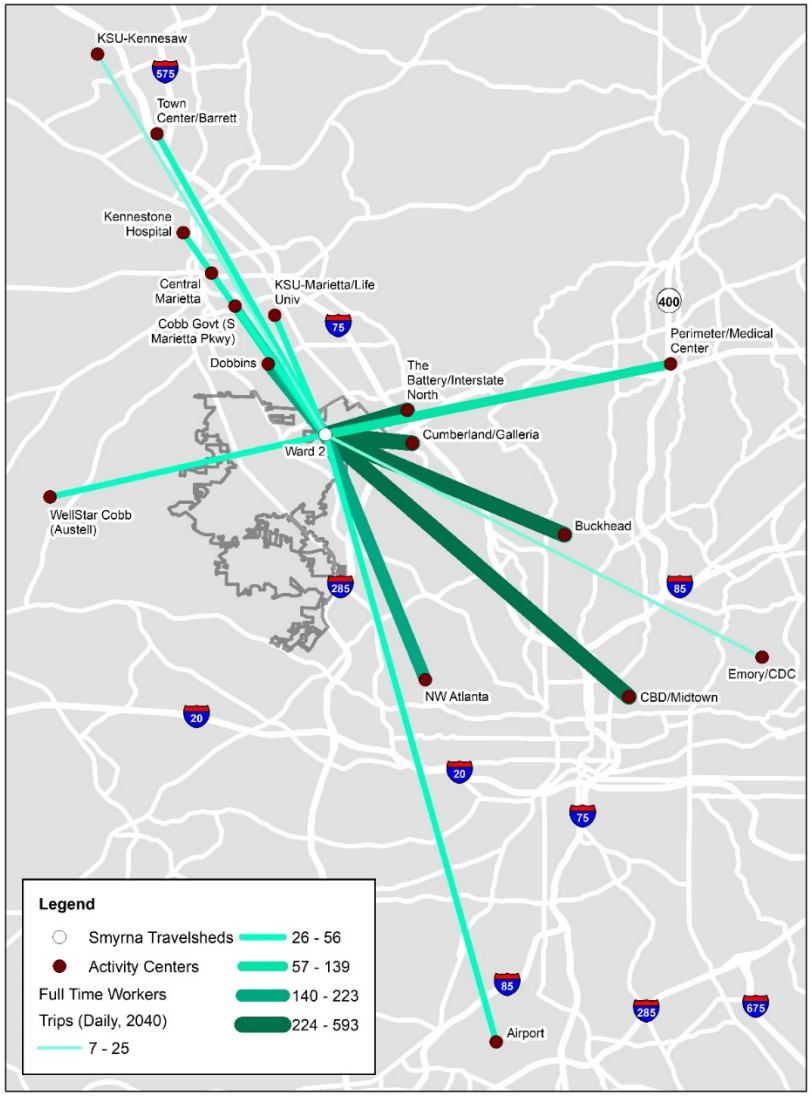
Map B-7: Low-Income Transit Markets–Ward 7



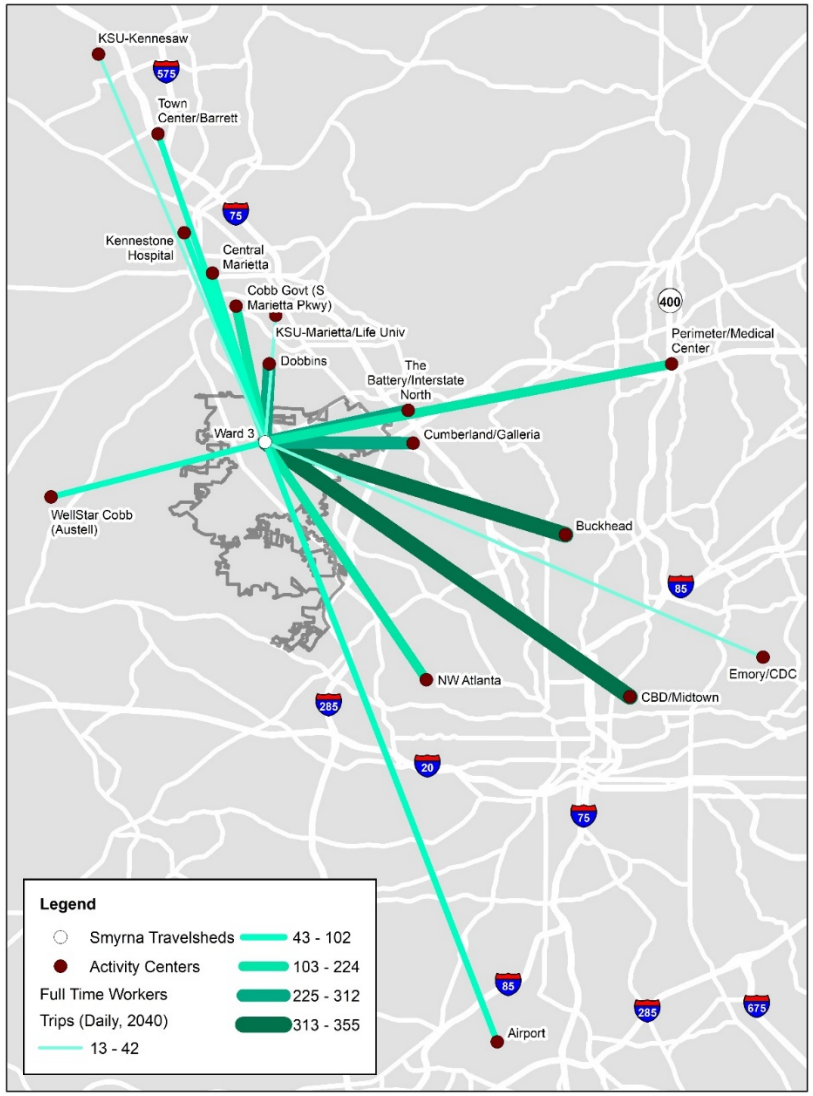
Map B-8: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 1



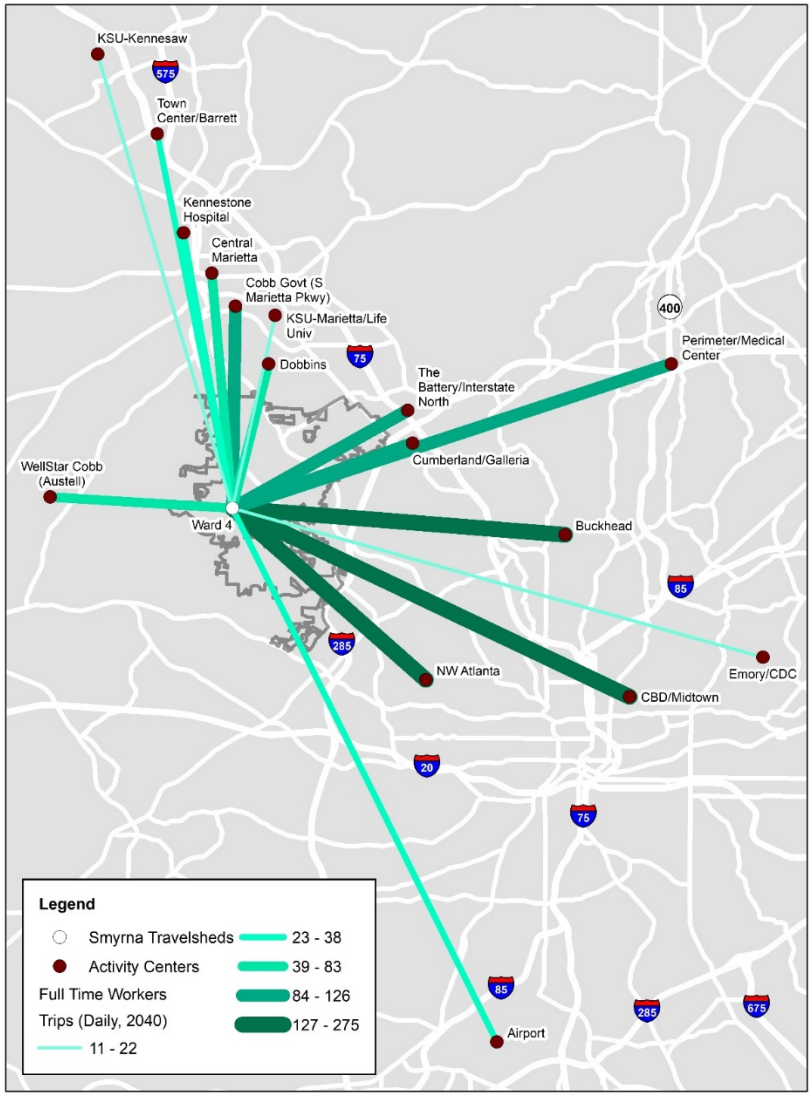
Map B-9: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 2



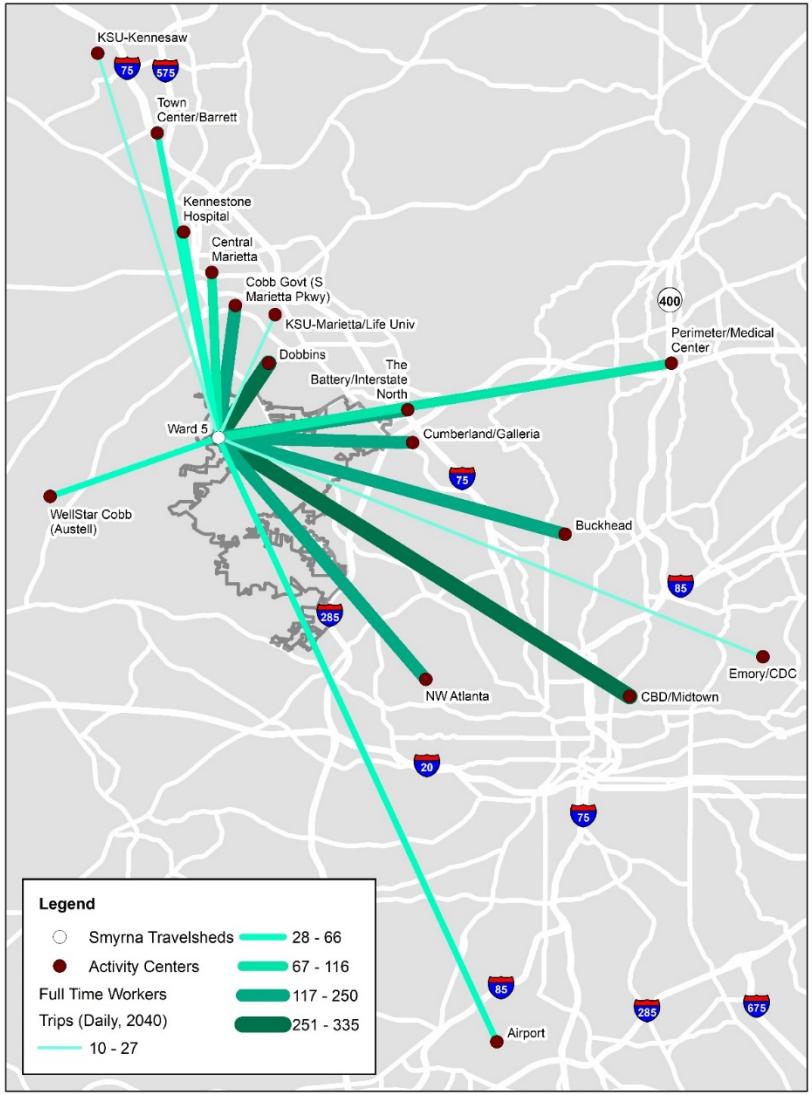
Map B-10: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 3



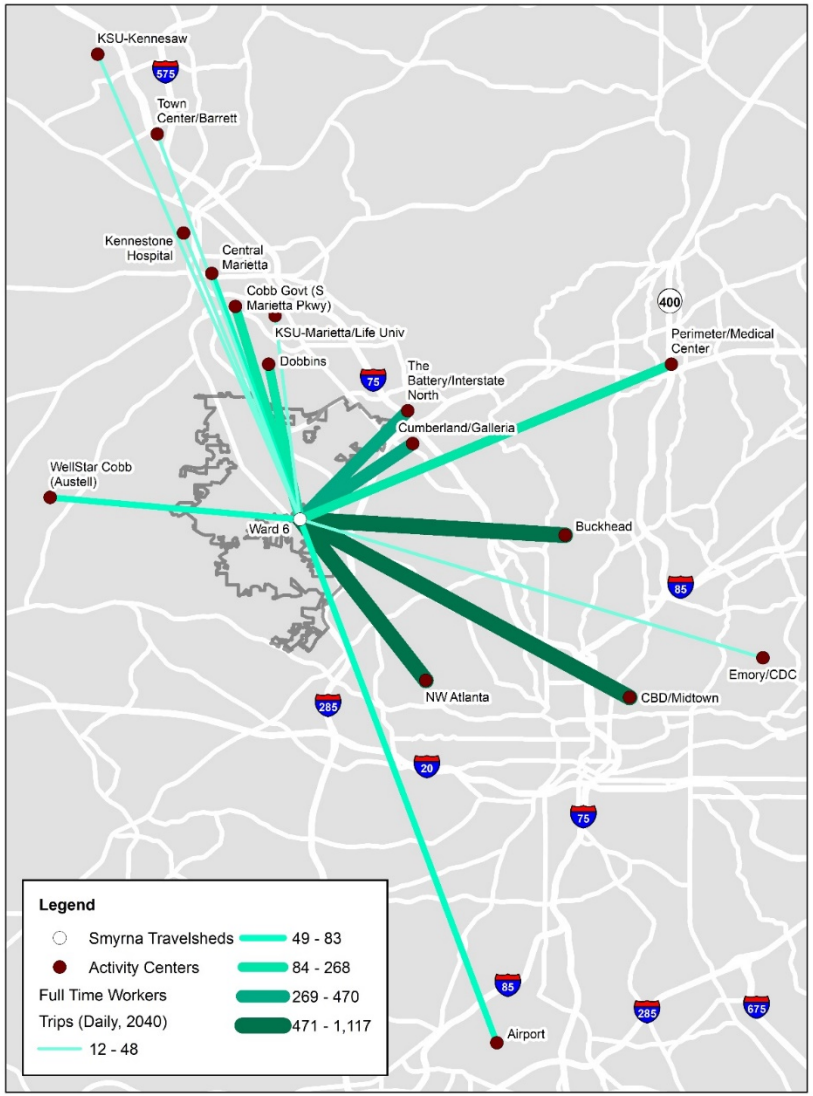
Map B-11: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 4



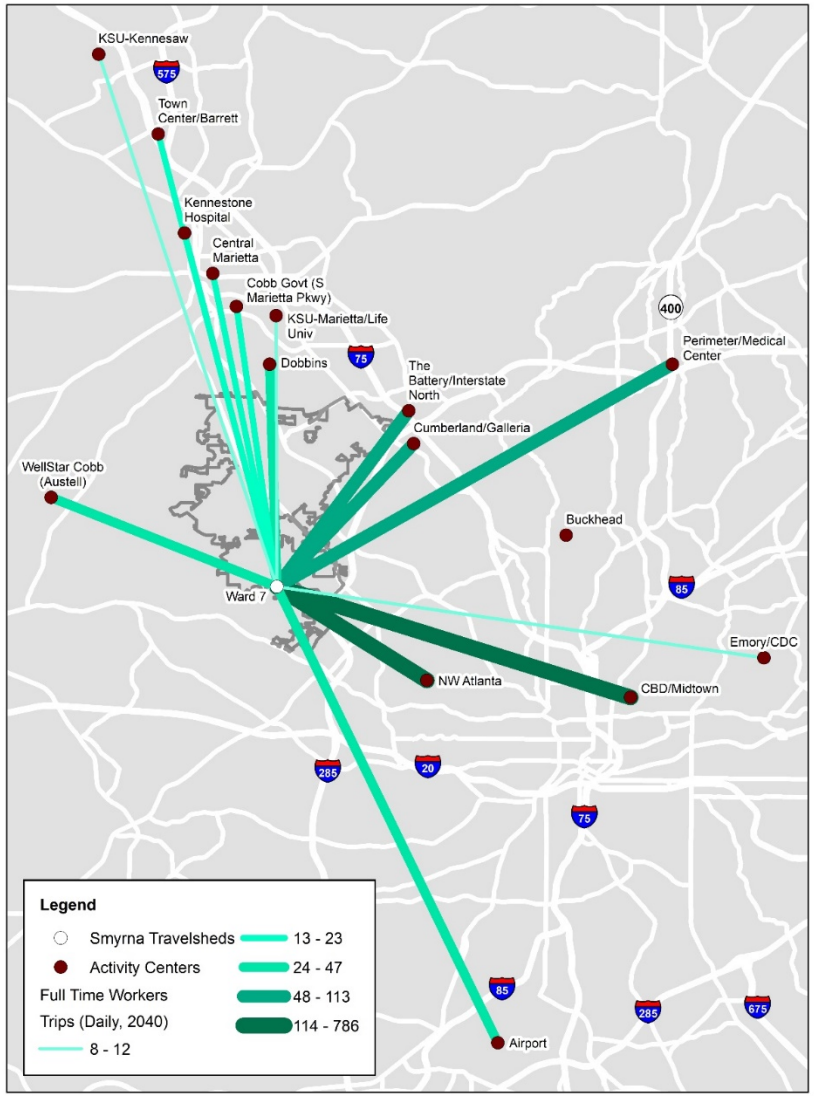
Map B-12: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 5



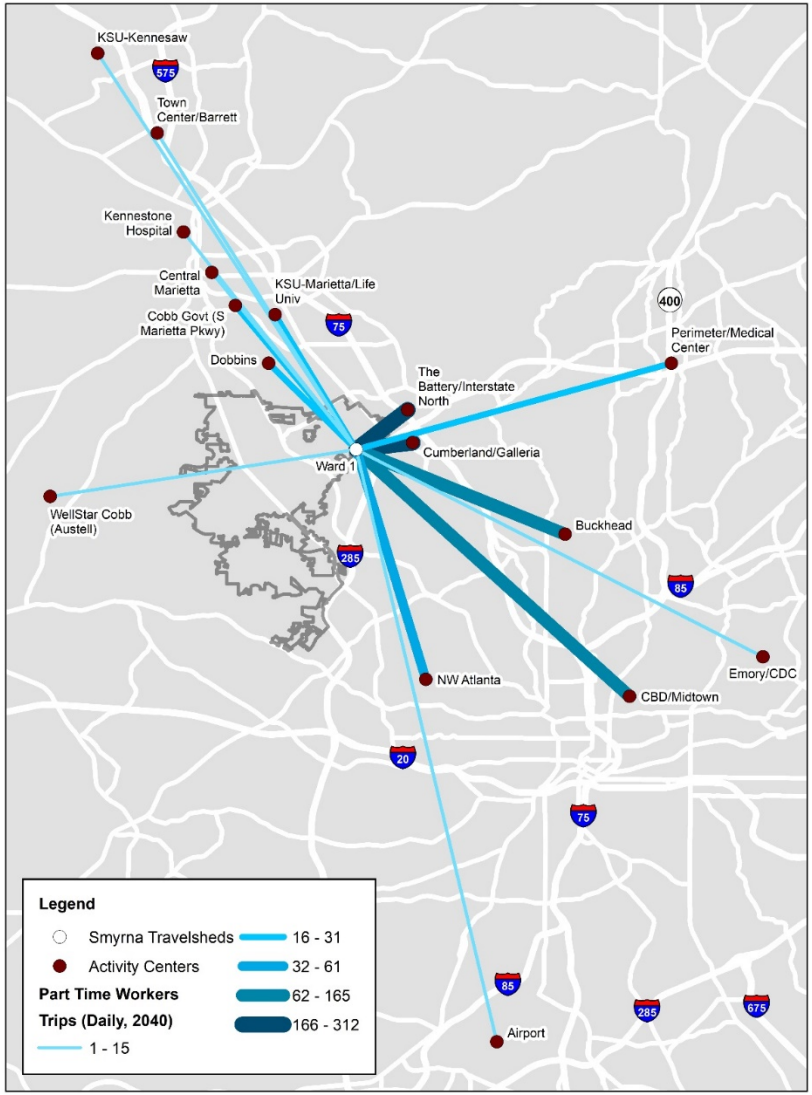
Map B-13: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 6



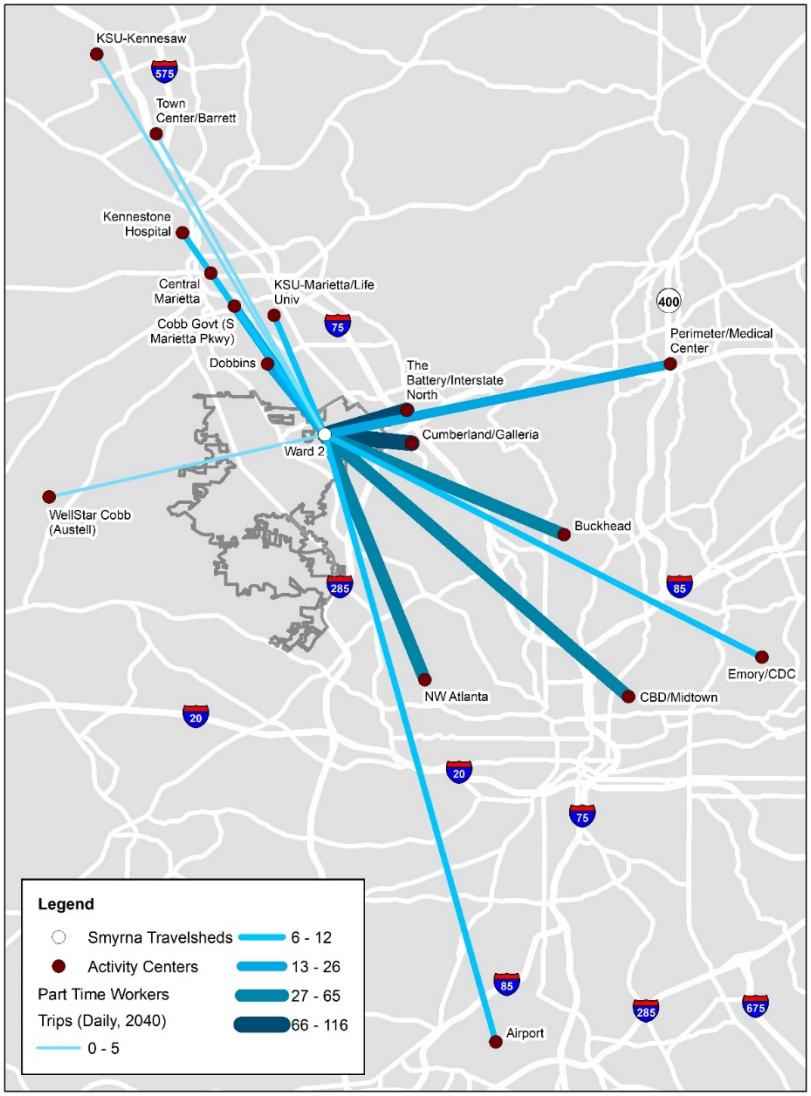
Map B-14: Full-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 7



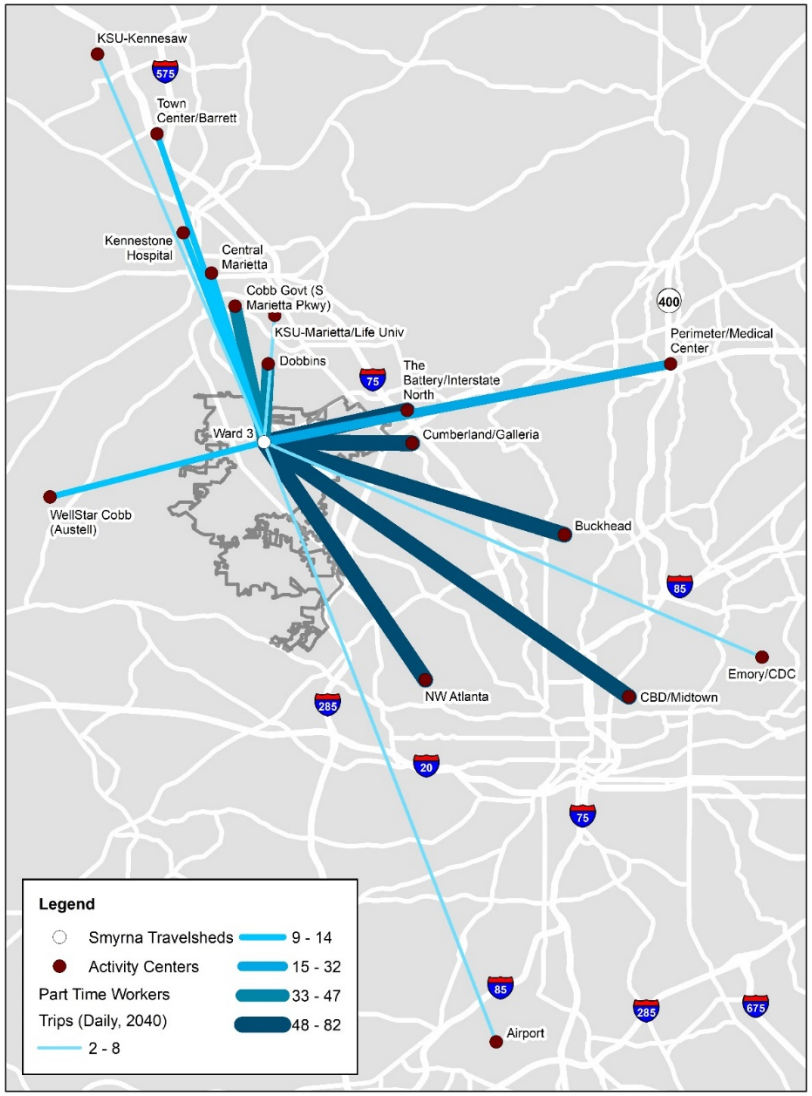
Map B-15: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 1



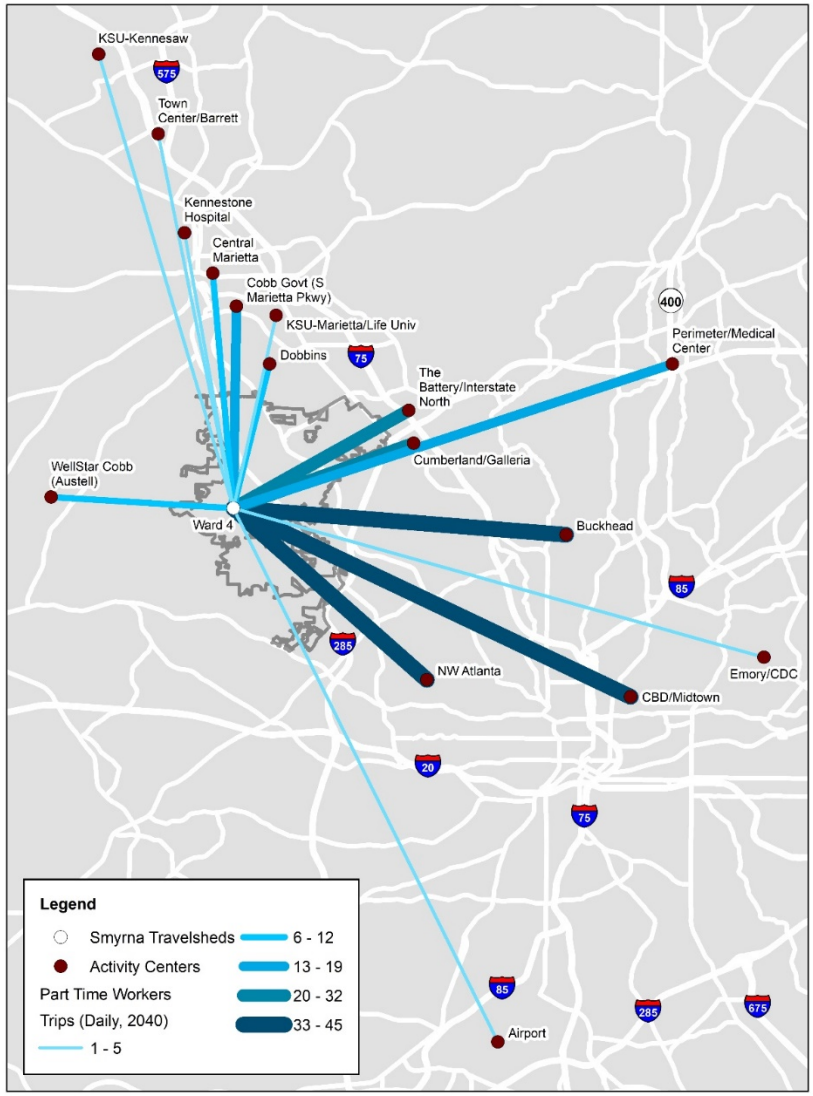
Map B-16: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 2



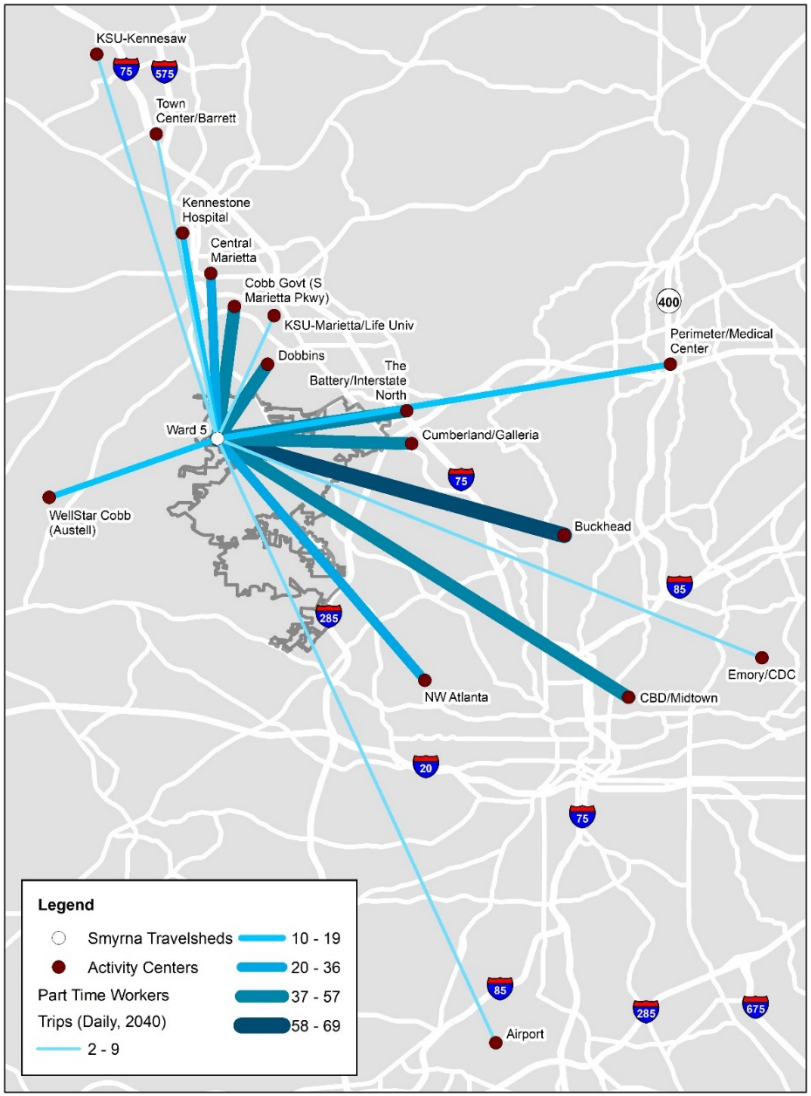
Map B-17: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 3



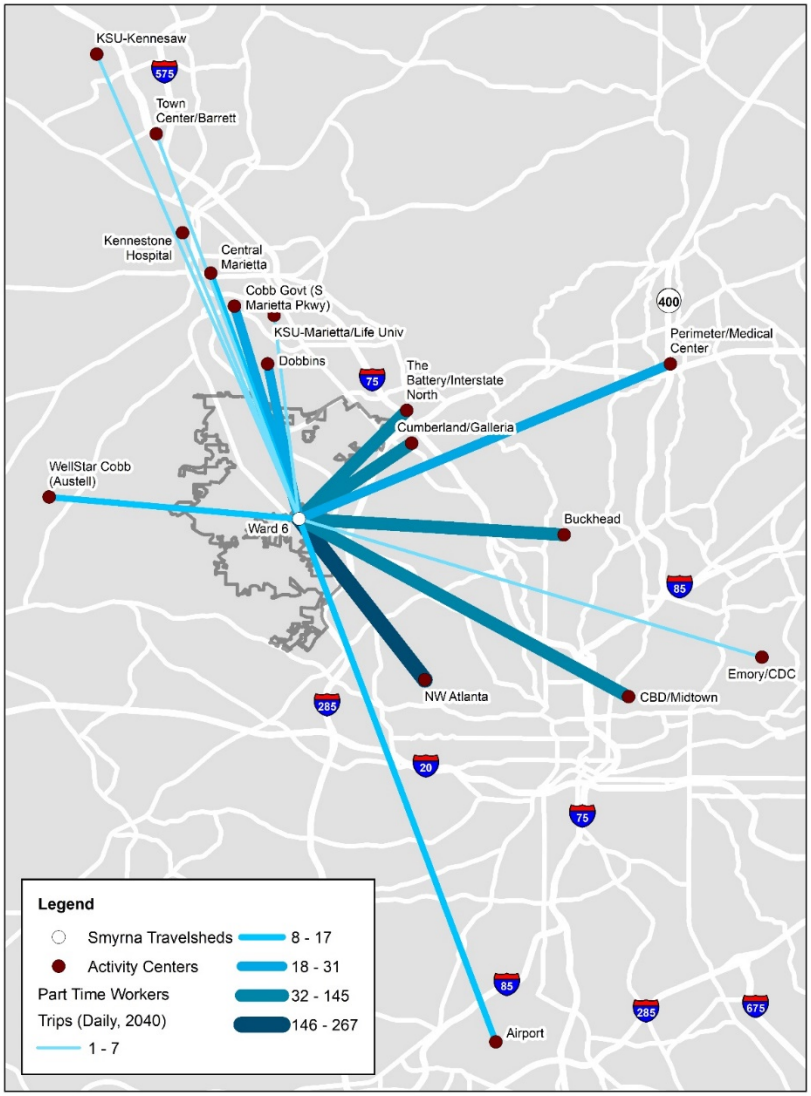
Map B-18: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 4



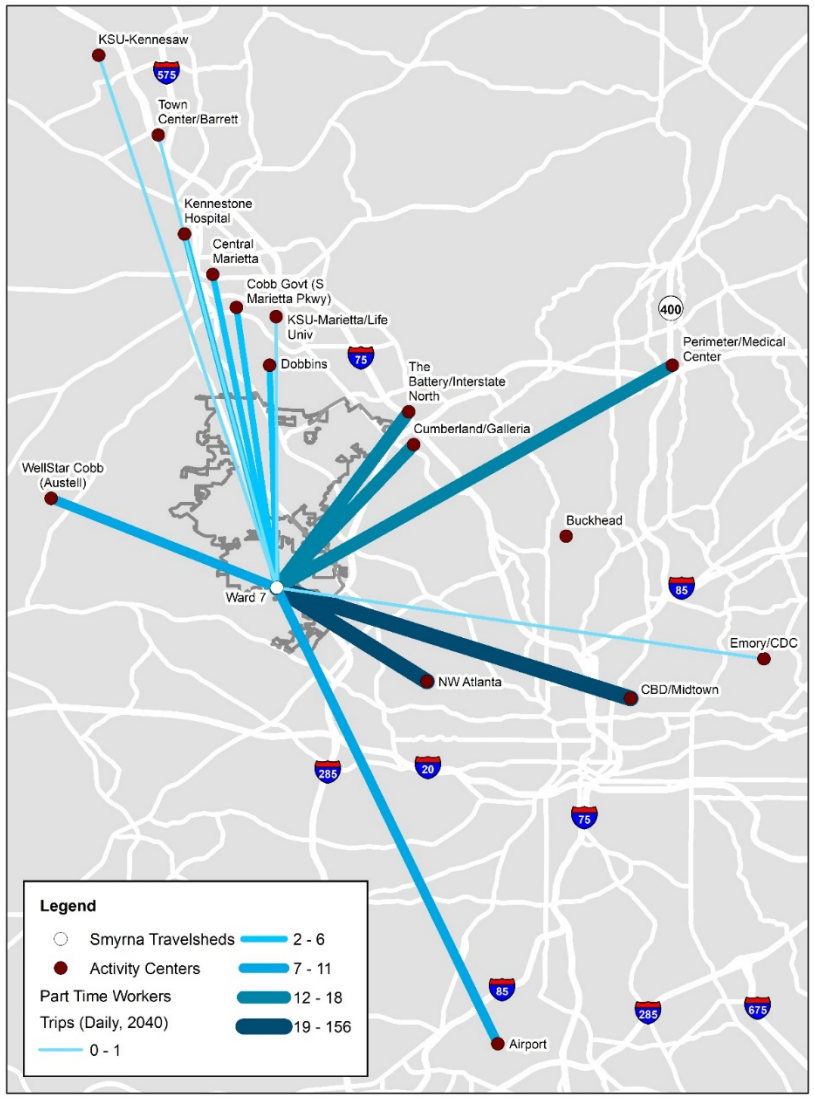
Map B-19: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 5



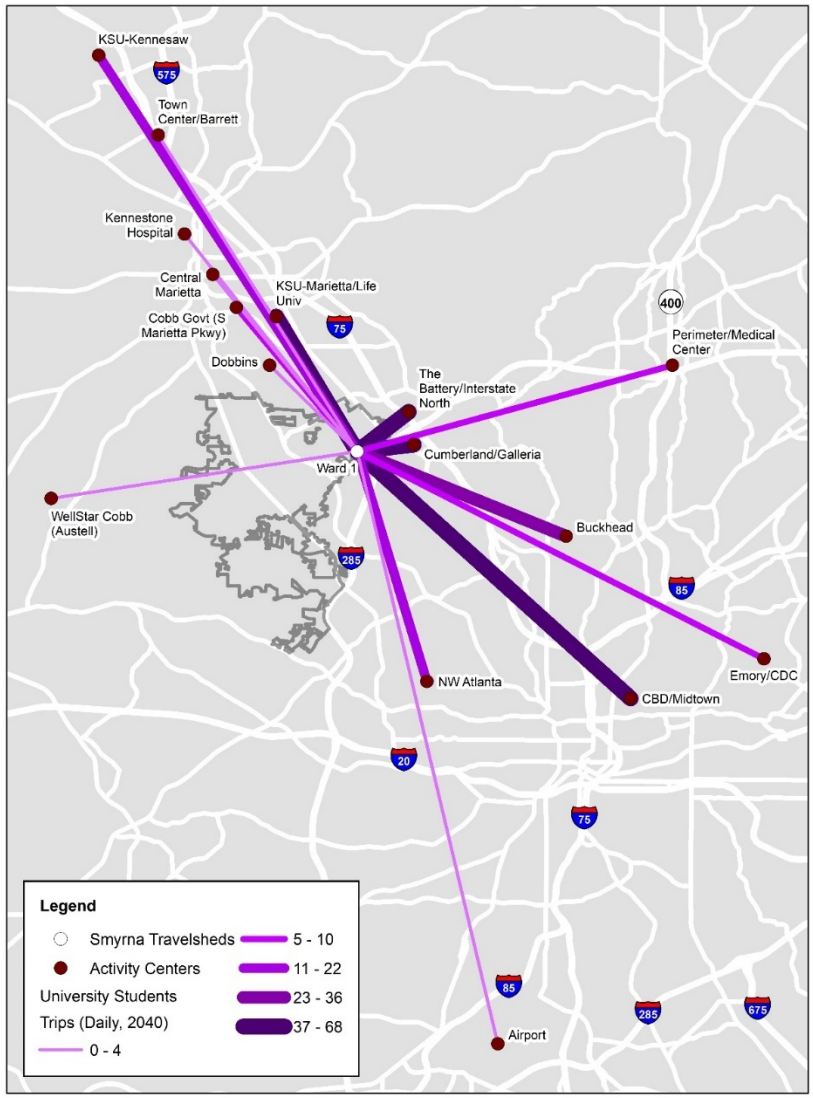
Map B-20: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 6



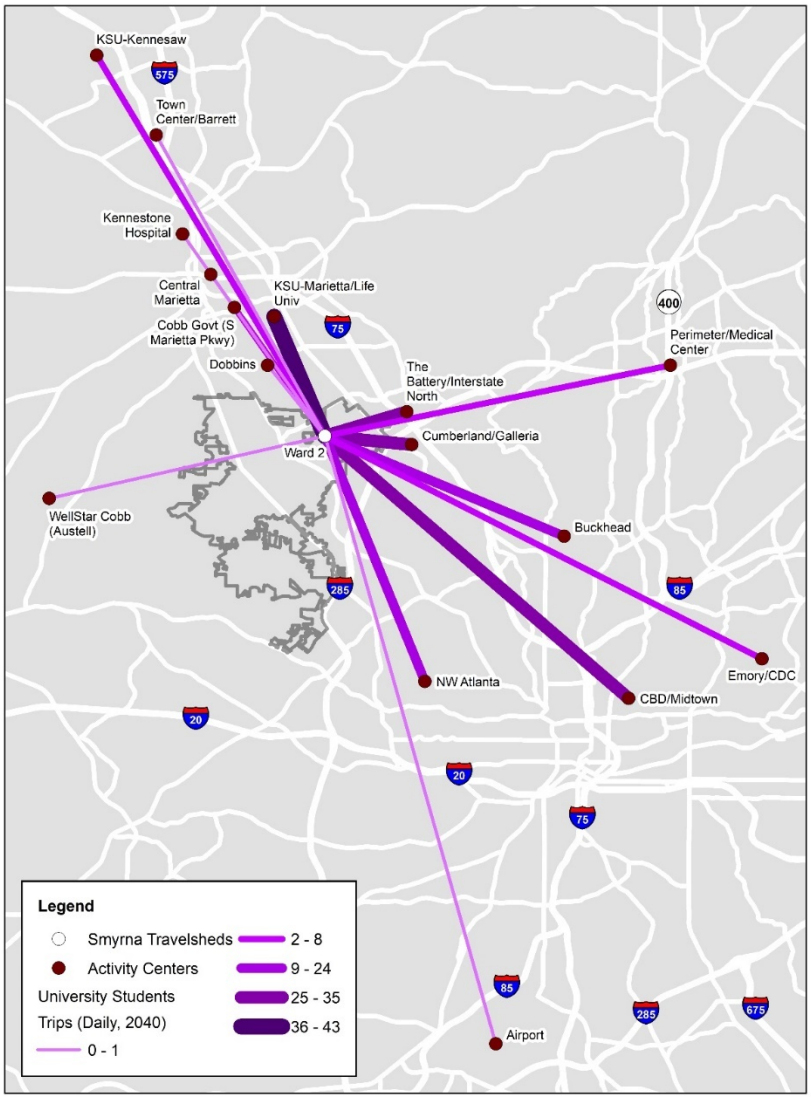
Map B-21: Part-Time Workers Transit Markets–Ward 7



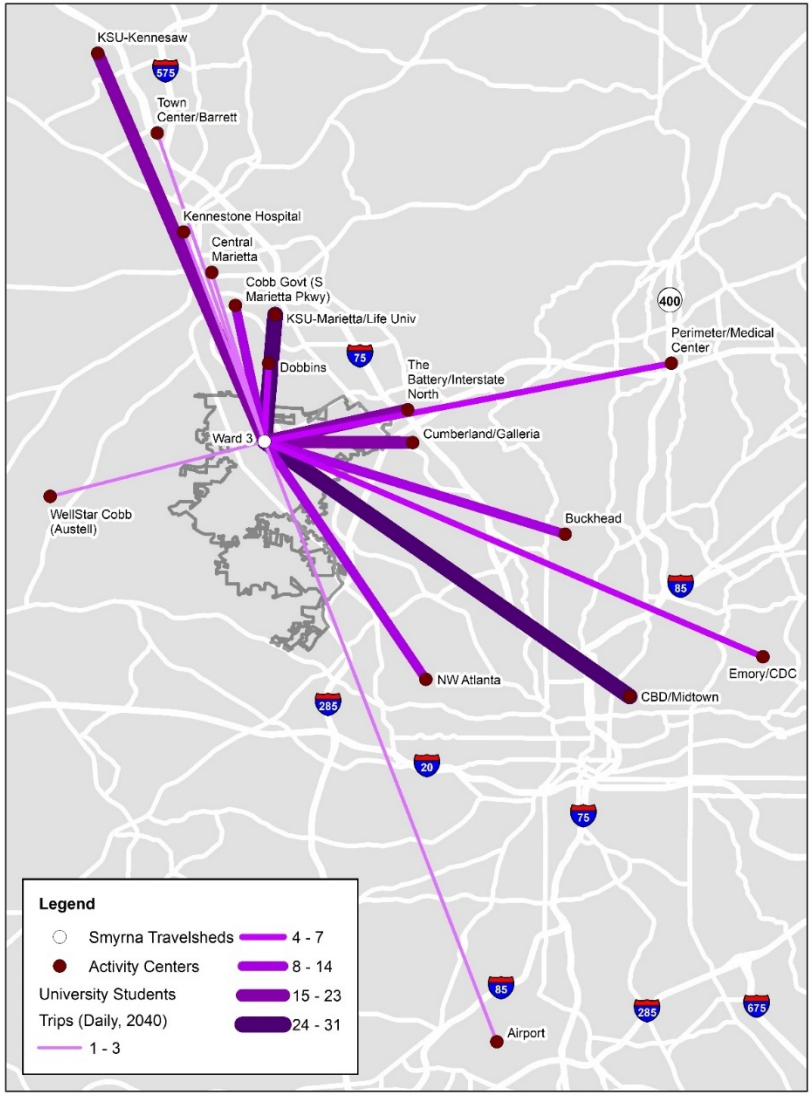
Map B-22: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 1



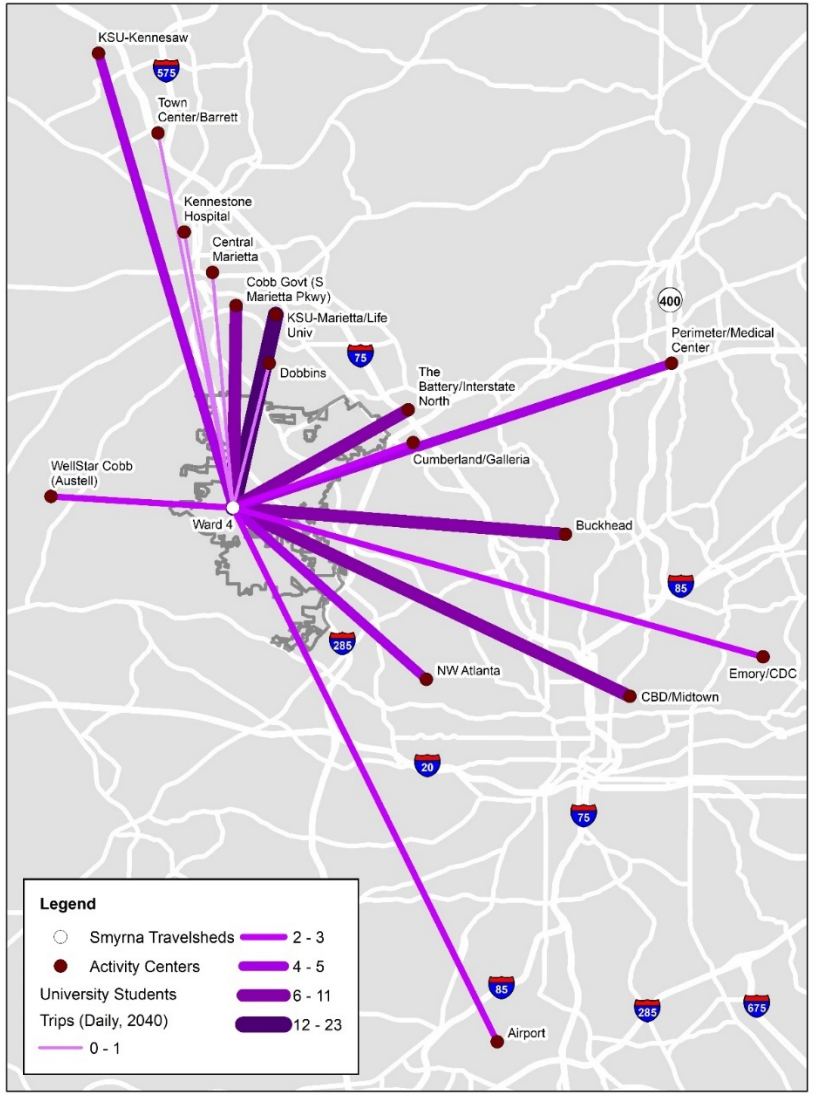
Map B-23: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 2



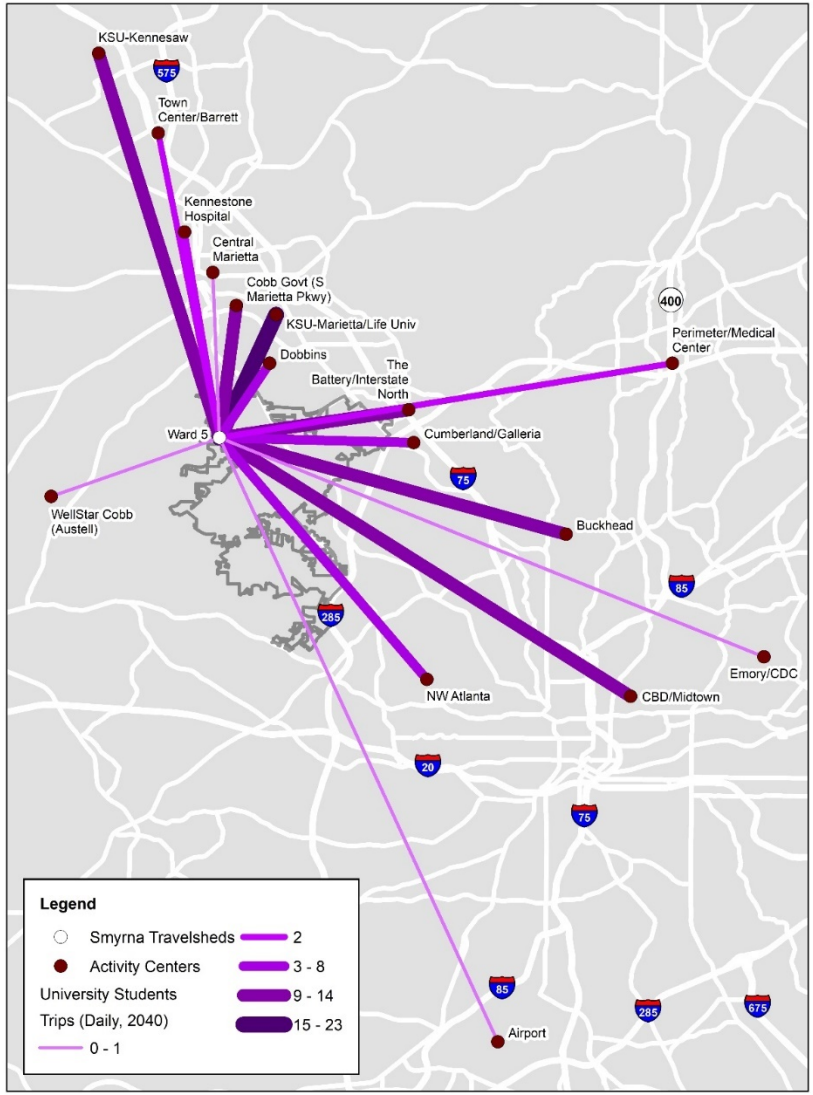
Map B-24: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 3



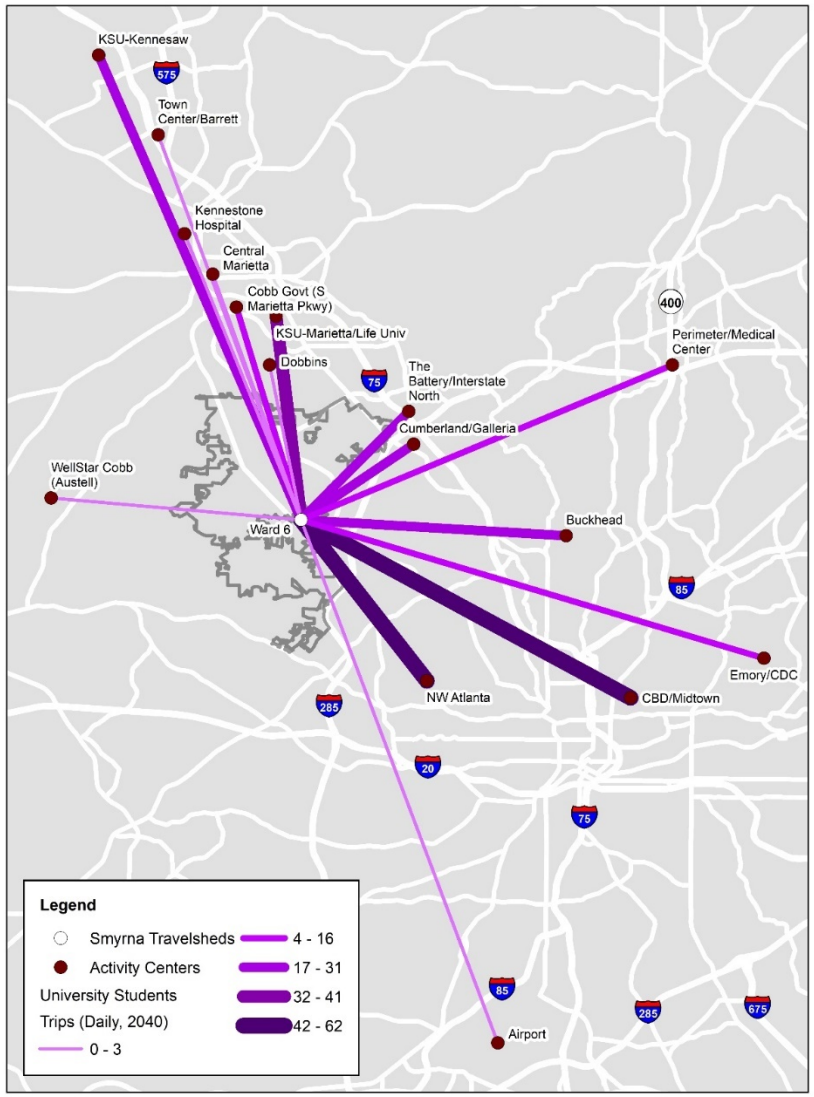
Map B-25: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 4



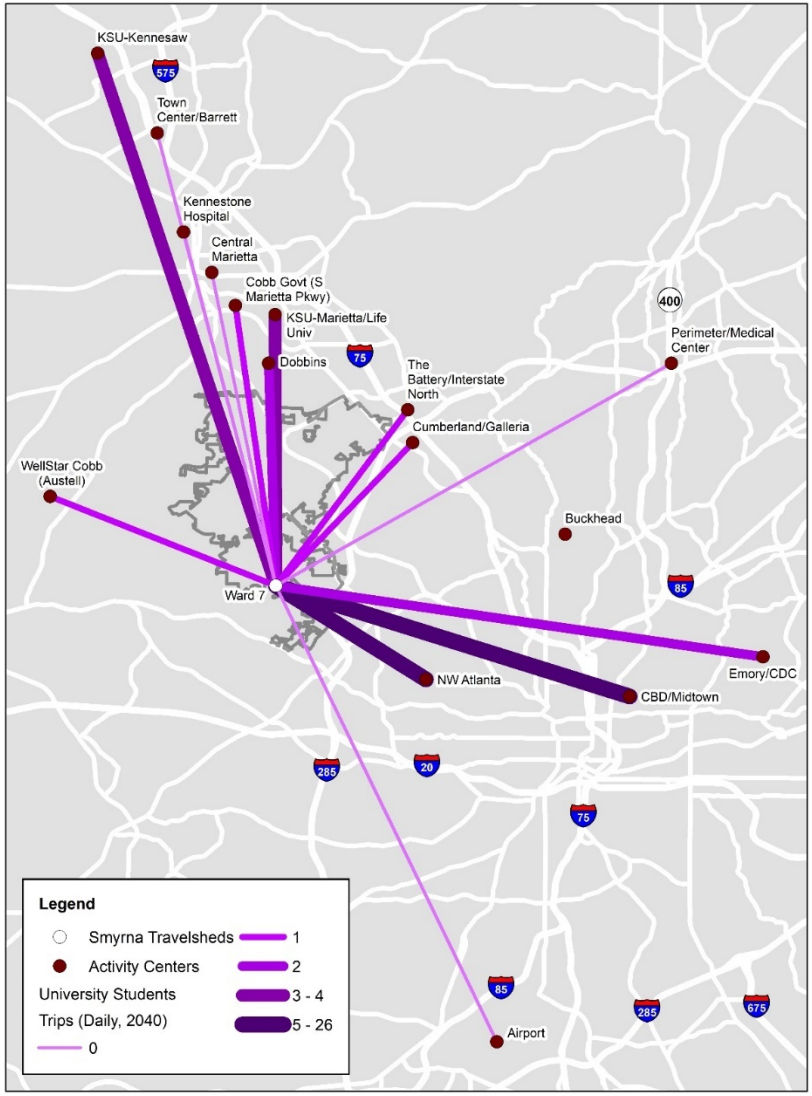
Map B-26: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 5



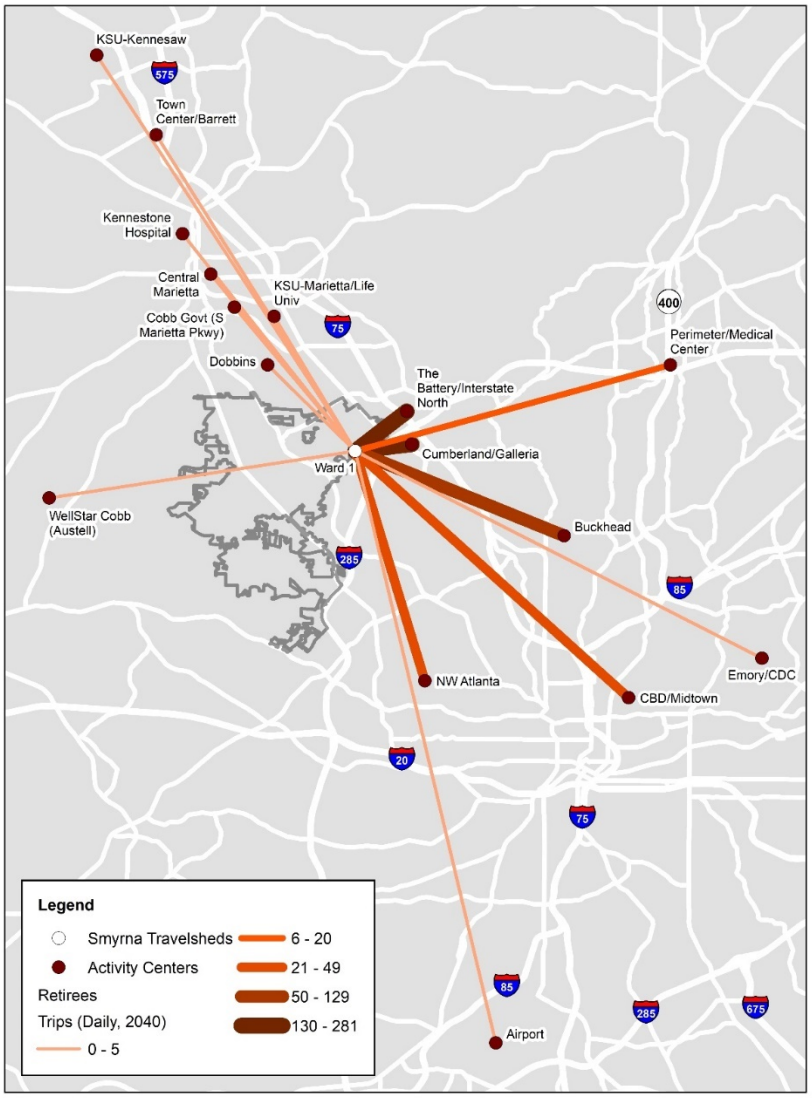
Map B-27: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 6



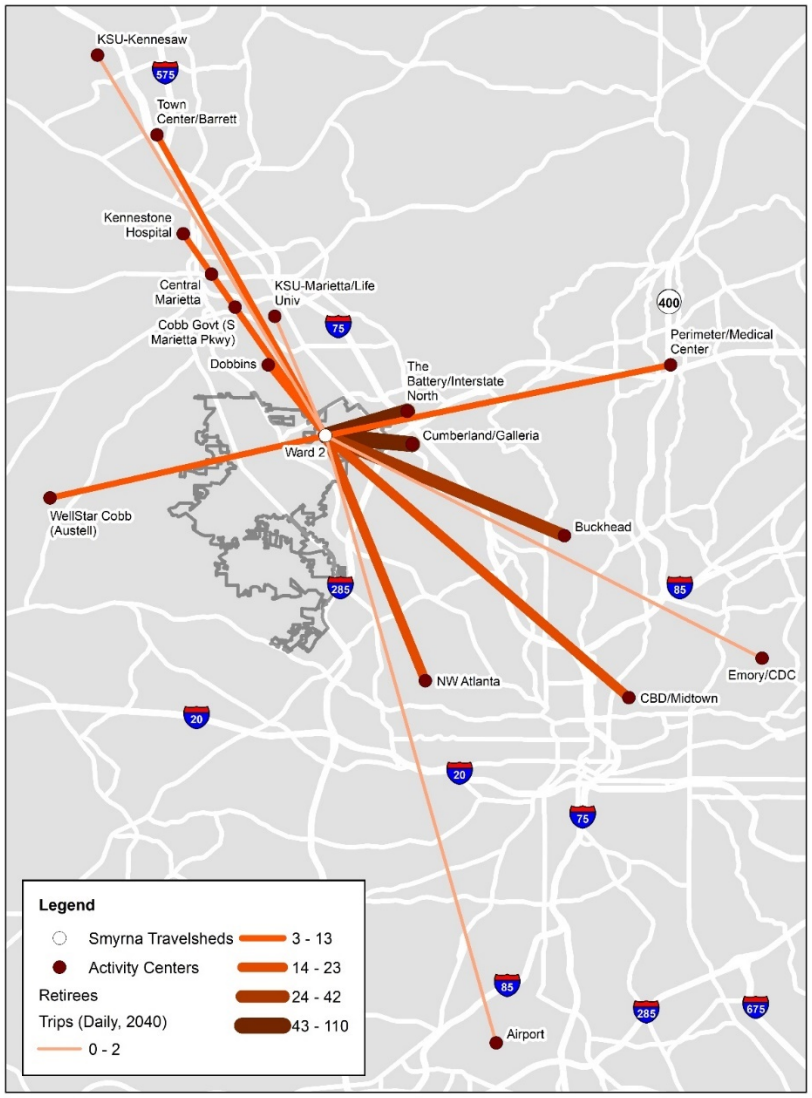
Map B-28: University Students Transit Markets–Ward 7



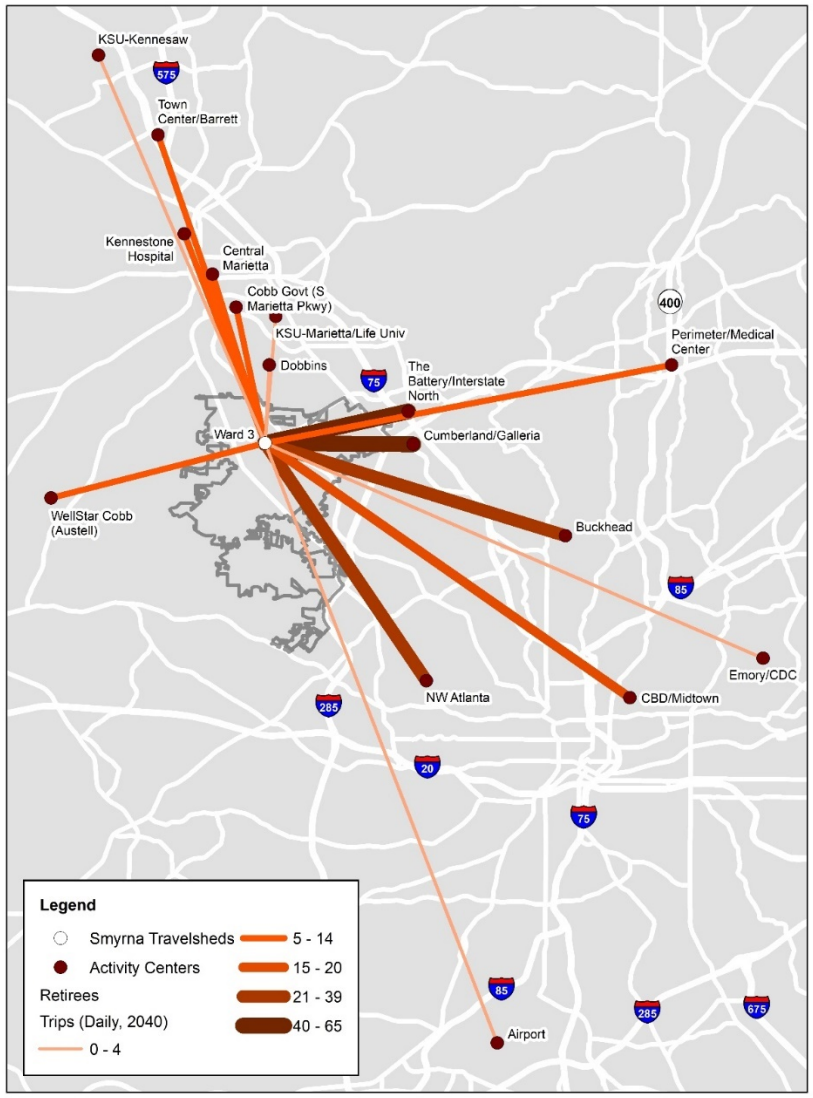
Map B-29: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 1



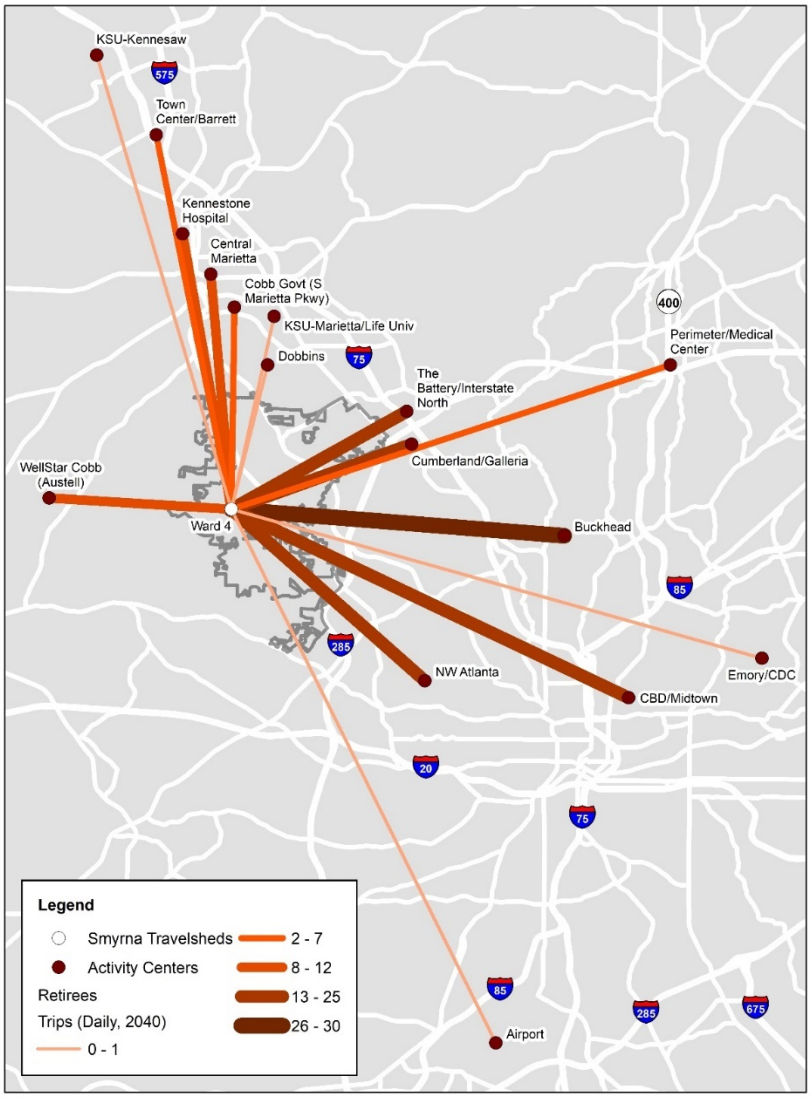
Map B-30: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 2



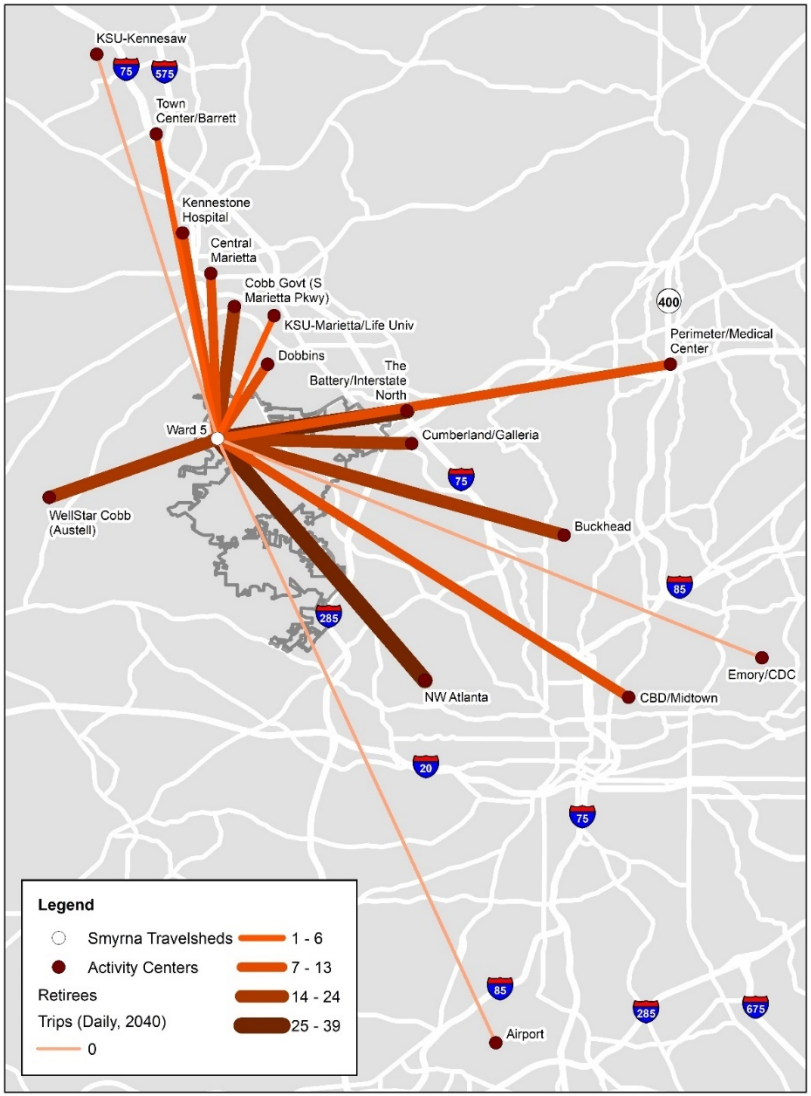
Map B-31: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 3



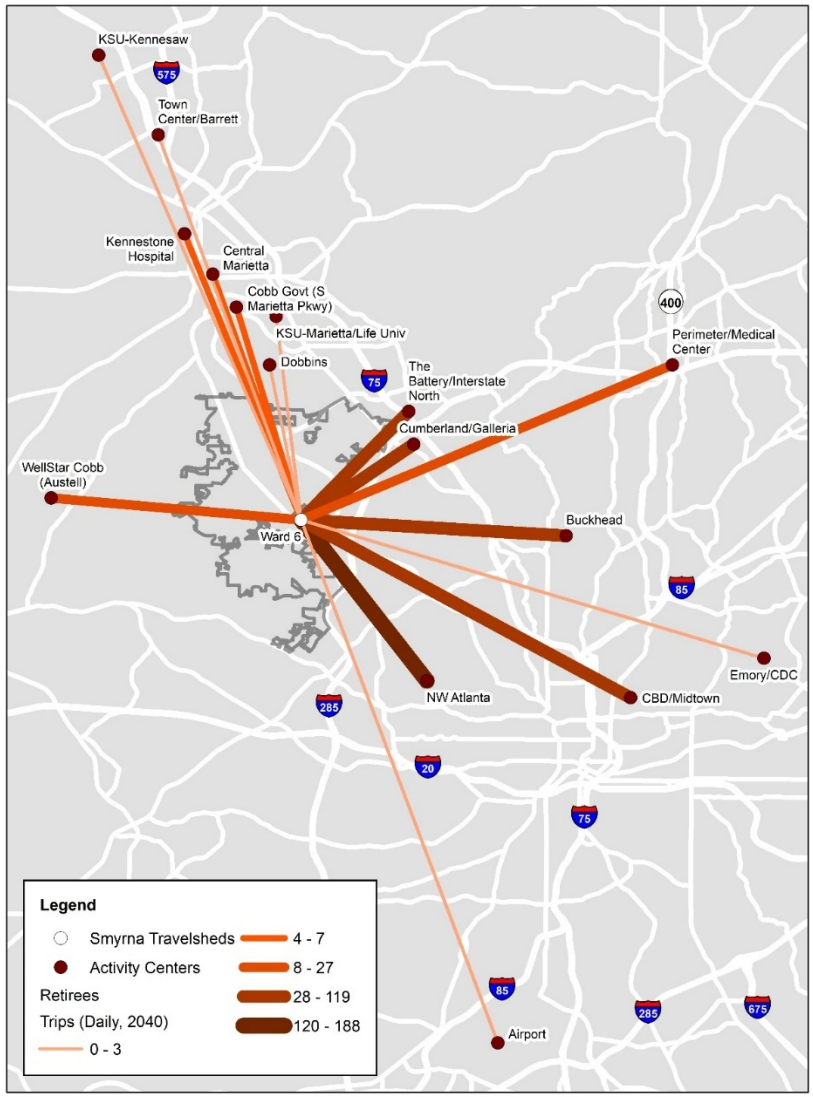
Map B-32: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 4



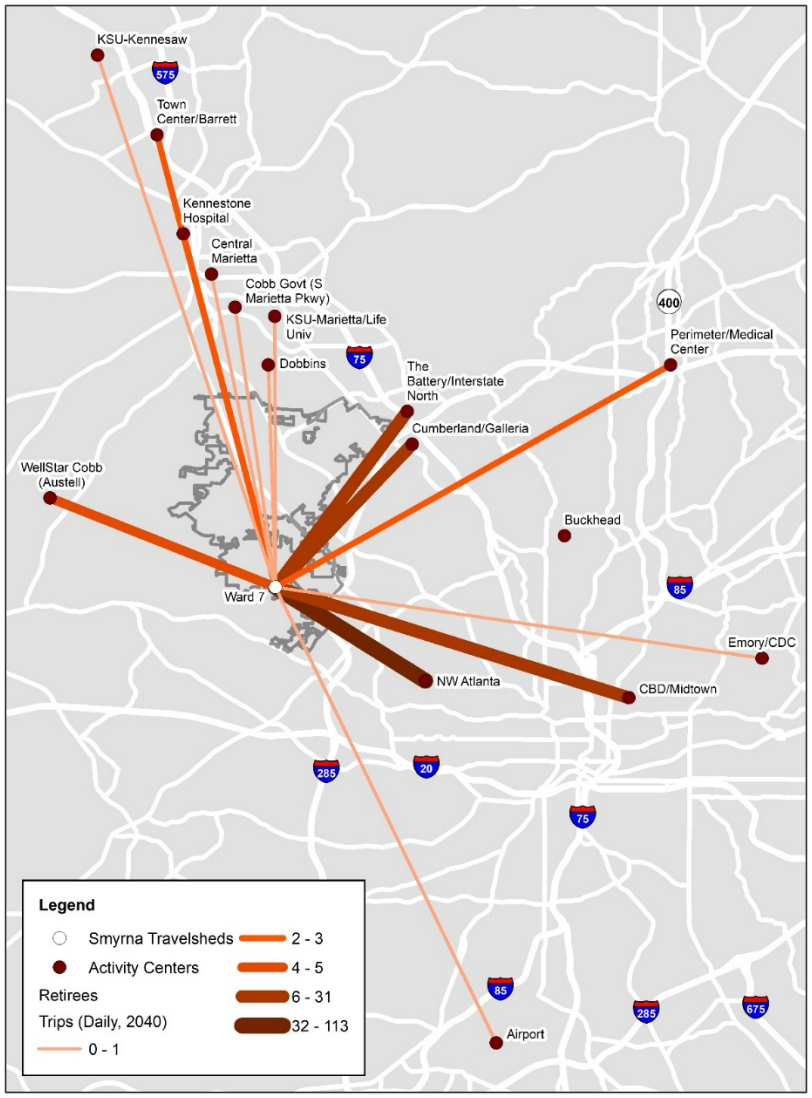
Map B-33: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 5



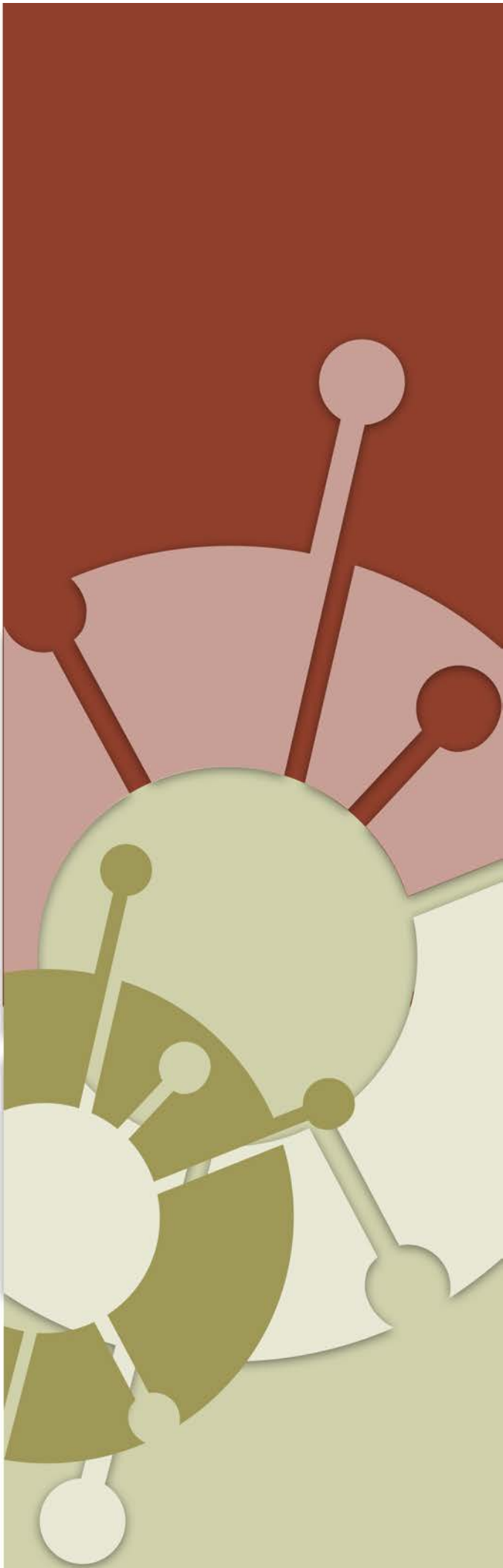
Map B-34: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 6



Map B-35: Retiree Transit Markets–Ward 7



Appendix C:
Public Involvement Materials



Smyrna Transit Analysis & Feasibility Study

Public Outreach Plan

Final

September 2019

Prepared for

Prepared by

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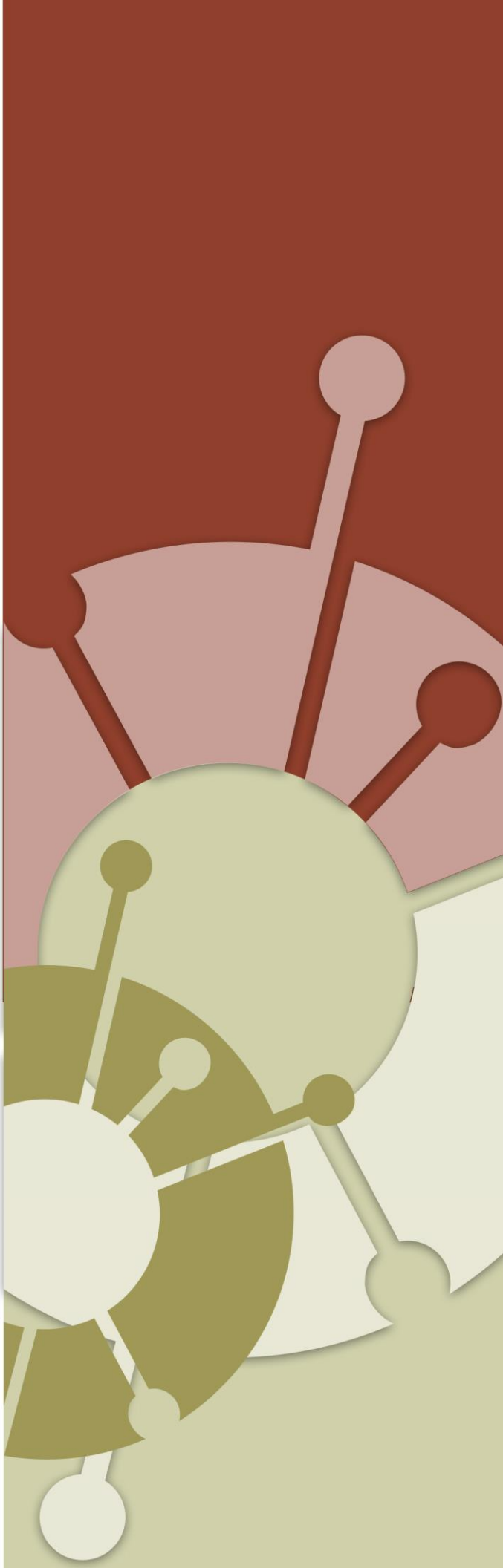
Section 1: Introduction

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.

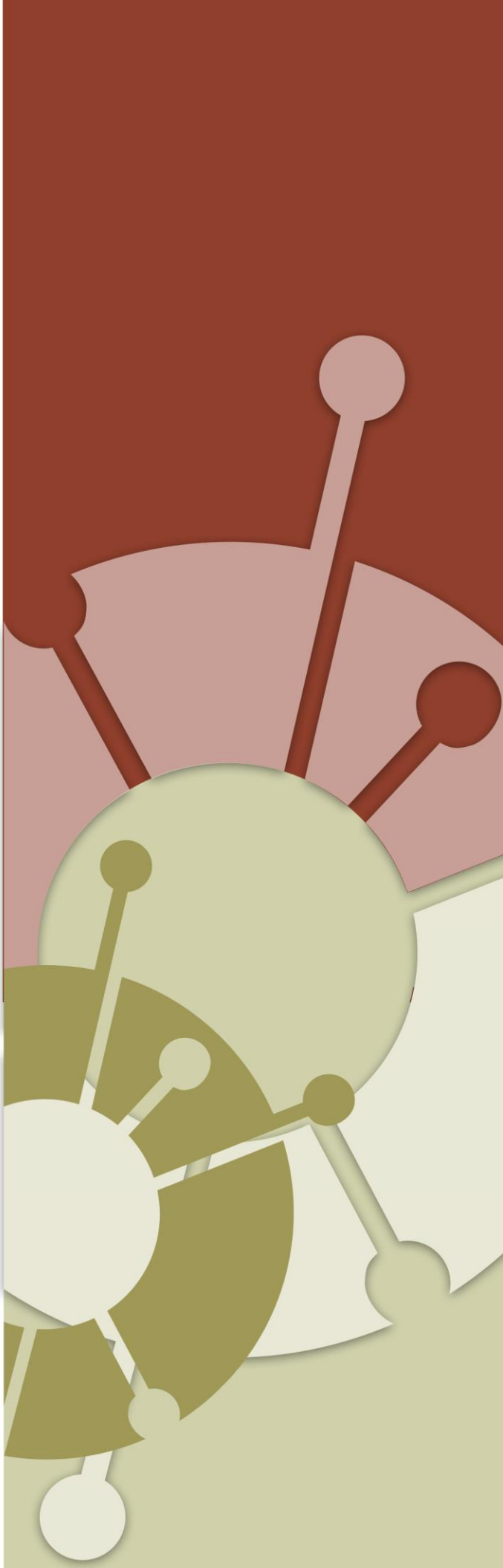


Section 2:
Public Outreach Process

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

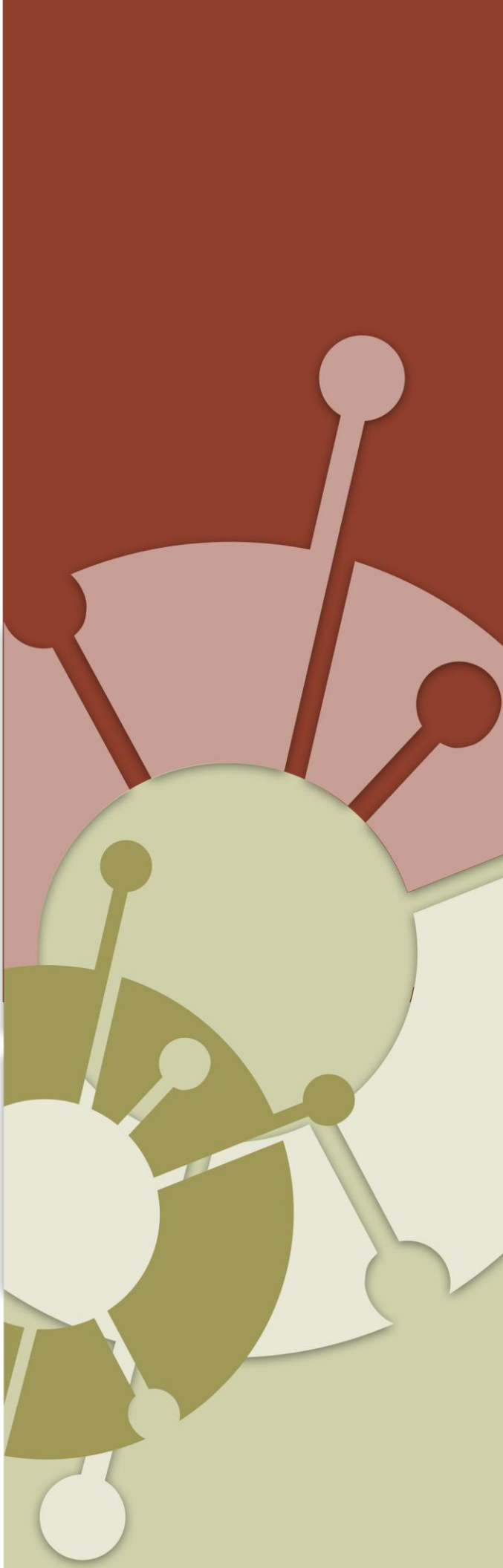
Table 3-1 provides a list of planned outreach activities. Each activity is described in detail below.

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 at 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.

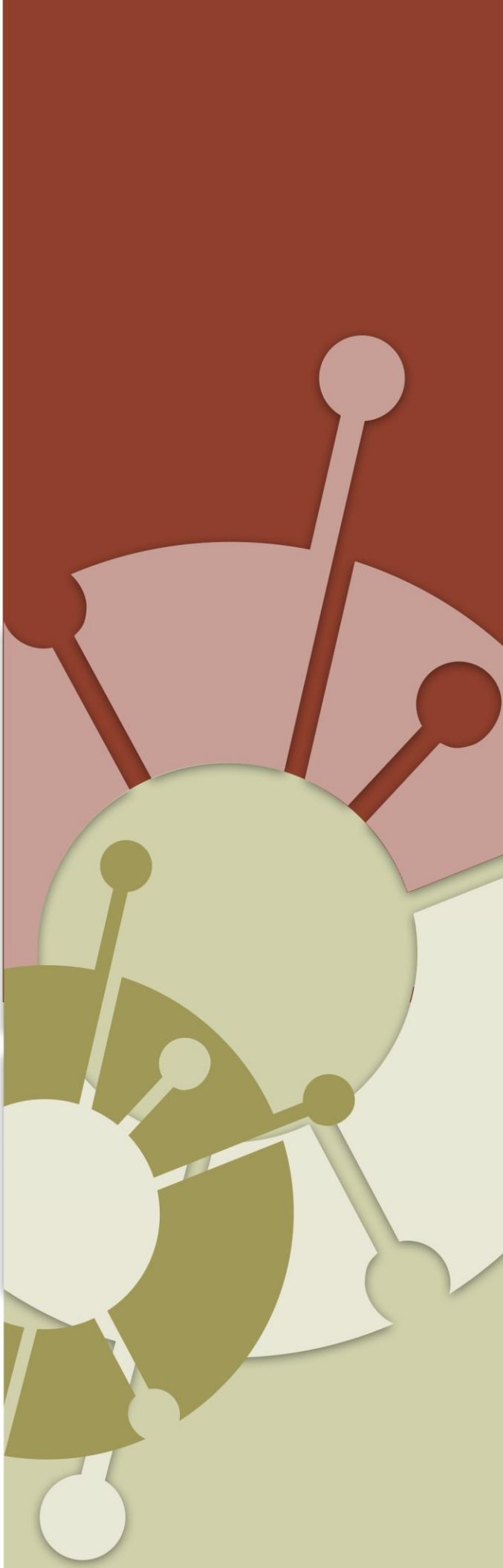
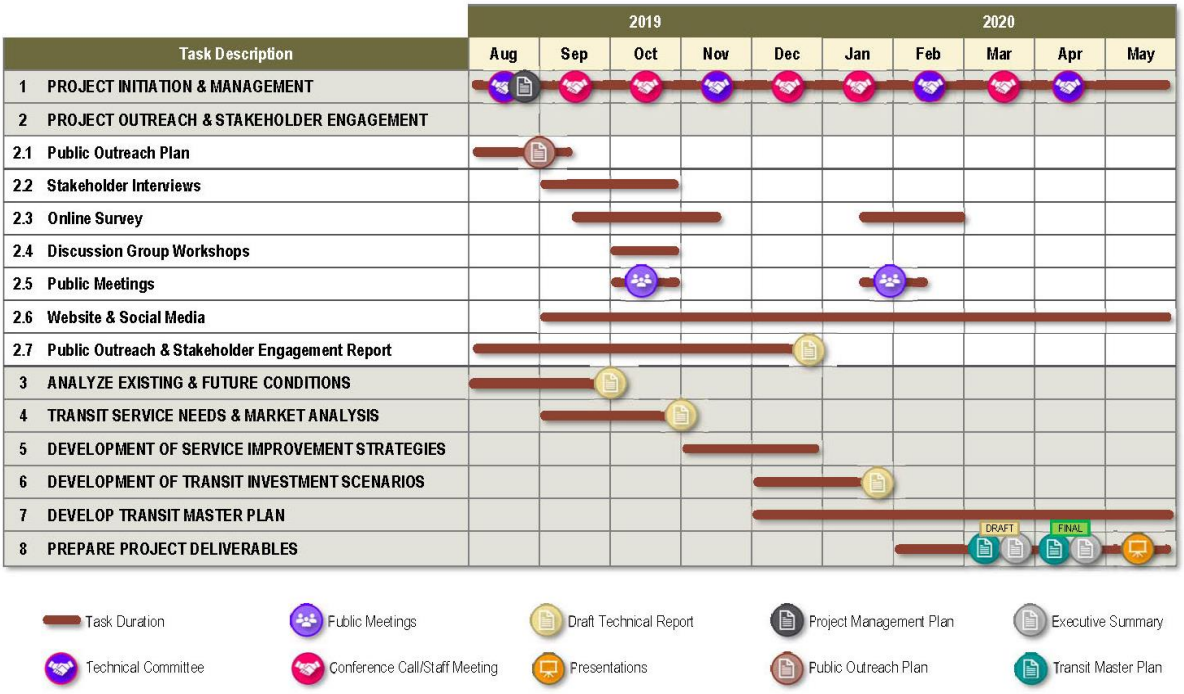


Figure 4-1: Schedule of Public Outreach Activities

	2019					2020				
Task Description	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**
Project Management Team	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	
Technical Committee	✱			✱		✱		✱		
Public Outreach Plan		◆								
Project Branding		◆								
Stakeholder Interviews		▬	▬							
Online Surveys		▬	▬	▬		▬	▬			
Discussion Group Workshops			▬							
Public Meetings			✱				✱			
Website and Social Media		▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
Documentation & Final Report	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	◆		
Presentations										▬

◆ Deliverable ✱ Meeting(s) ▬ Task Duration

Figure 4-2: Overall Project Schedule:



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?

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.**

❑ Yes, I have used CobbLinc
❑ Yes, I have used MARTA
❑ No, I have never used public transit in the City
❑ 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)

❑ Work ❑ Education / School ❑ Medical ❑ Recreational
❑ Shopping ❑ Social / Religious ❑ Other (Please specify) _____

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

❑ 1-3 days a week ❑ 4 or more days a week ❑ A few times per month
❑ Rarely ❑ Never

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

❑ Drive ❑ Walk / Bicycle ❑ Ride with someone
❑ Taxi ❑ Rideshare (Uber, Lyft) ❑ 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?**

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ 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
- ❑ Regional express / commuter service
- ❑ More early / later service
- ❑ Provide rail transit
- ❑ Buses that circulate within the City
- ❑ More weekend service
- ❑ Operating buses on dedicated lanes
- ❑ 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)

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

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

- ❑ Smart phone app
- ❑ Website
- ❑ Printed maps and schedules
- ❑ Telephone
- ❑ 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)

- ❑ Live in Smyrna
- ❑ Work in Smyrna
- ❑ Visit Smyrna
- ❑ Go to school / train in Smyrna

16. **My age is…**

- ❑ 17 years or younger
- ❑ 18 to 24 years
- ❑ 25 to 40 years
- ❑ 41 to 60 years
- ❑ Over 61 years

17. **Zip code of my…**

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

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

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

19. **My race / ethnic group is…**

- ❑ American Indian / Alaska Native
- ❑ Asian
- ❑ Black / African American
- ❑ White / Caucasian
- ❑ Other (Please specify) _____

20. **I am…**

- ❑ Not Hispanic / Latino
- ❑ Hispanic / Latino

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

- ❑ Less than $25,000
- ❑ Between $25,000 - $44,999
- ❑ Between $45,000 - $74,999
- ❑ $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.**

❑ Sí, he usado CobbLinc
❑ Sí, he usado MARTA
❑ No, nunca he usado el transporte público en la ciudad
❑ 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)

❑ Trabajo ❑ Educación / Escuela ❑ Visitas Medicas ❑ Recreacional
❑ Compras ❑ Social / Religioso ❑ Otro (Especifique) _____

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

❑ 1-3 días a la semana ❑ 4 o más días a la semana ❑ Algunas veces al mes
❑ Raramente ❑ Nunca

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

❑ Manejar ❑ Caminar / Bicicleta ❑ Viajar con alguien
❑ Taxi ❑ Servicios cooperativos (Uber, Lyft) ❑ No haría el viaje

Tu Tránsito Mañana

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

❑ Si ❑ No ❑ No lo se

7. **¿Qué haría que el transito 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 transito ferroviario
- ❑ Mas servicio temprano / y en la tarde
- ❑ 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
- ❑ Servicios cooperativos (Uber, Lyft) a la primera milla, a la última milla que se conecte con el transito
- ❑ 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? _____

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 transito 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)

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

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

- ❑ Sitio web
- ❑ Teléfono
- ❑ Aplicación de teléfono inteligente
- ❑ Mapas y horarios impresos
- ❑ 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)

- ❑ Vivo en Smyrna
- ❑ Trabajo en Smyrna
- ❑ Visito Smyrna
- ❑ Voy a la escuela / Entreno en Smyrna

16. **Mi edad es…**

- ❑ 17 años o menor
- ❑ 18 a 24 años
- ❑ 25 a 40 años
- ❑ 41 a 60 años
- ❑ Mayor de 61 años

17. **Código postal de mi…**

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

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

- ❑ Si
- ❑ No

19. **Mi raza/grupo étnico es…**

- ❑ Nativo Americano / Nativo de Alaska
- ❑ Asiático
- ❑ Afroamericano
- ❑ Blanco / Caucásico
- ❑ Otro _____

20. **Yo soy…**

- ❑ Hispano / Latino
- ❑ No Hispano / Latino

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

- ❑ Menos de $25,000
- ❑ Entre $25,000 - $44,999
- ❑ Entre $45,000 - $74,999
- ❑ $75,000 o mas

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

Nombre _____

Correo Electrónico _____

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?

SMYRNA Connects

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***

SMYRNA *Connects*

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.**

The City of Smyrna is conducting a priorities survey for Smyrna Connects. Please review the 20-Year Strategies map provided and answer the following questions to help us understand how we can better meet Smyrna's transit needs in the next 20 years!

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following potential improvements.

Service Strategies	Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree
30-minute frequency on Cobblinc Route 25	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna West Microtransit	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna East Microtransit	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna South Microtransit	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna West Circulator	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna East Circulator	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna South Circulator	5	4	3	2	1
South Cobb Drive BRT	5	4	3	2	1
Smyrna ConnEX (peak-hour only)	5	4	3	2	1
CobbLinc Airport Express	5	4	3	2	1
CobbLinc Route 55	5	4	3	2	1
Connect Cobb BRT	5	4	3	2	1
Extended I-285 Top-End BRT	5	4	3	2	1
CobbLinc Route 285	5	4	3	2	1
Capital/Technology/Other					
Downtown Smyrna Transfer Station	5	4	3	2	1
South Smyrna Transfer Station	5	4	3	2	1
Relocate Cumberland Transfer Center	5	4	3	2	1
Update current CobbLinc transit app	5	4	3	2	1
Improve transit infrastructure	5	4	3	2	1
Add Transit Signal Priority (TSP)/Queue Jumps at intersections	5	4	3	2	1
Transit Marketing/Awareness Campaign	5	4	3	2	1

If you have any comments, please use the space below.

Transit Feasibility Study

Virtual Public Workshop

April 2020

SMYRNA just right GEORGIA

Tindale Oliver

1

Executive Order - 2
COVID-19 Response
Posted Date: March 24, 2020

The City of Smyrna urges all citizens to remain at home as much as possible, and if you must leave your home be vigilant in your interactions with others. Please adhere to CDC and Health Department guidelines and maintain at least six feet of separation with others when you are at the grocery store, pharmacy, city parks or other office or establishment. Wash your hands often and utilize hand sanitizer and disinfecting agents. **Staying at home in this urgent moment is our best defense to turn the tide against COVID-19.**

Smyrna is a strong community and we will all get through this together. Stay safe.

Derek Norton, Mayor

- Go to https://www.smyrnaga.gov for the full message and information on your City's efforts to safeguard your health and wellbeing.

Tindale Oliver

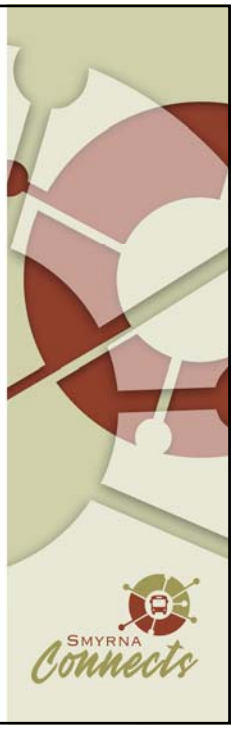
2

SMYRNA Connects

2

Study Objectives

- Develop consensus-driven transit vision
- Reinforce City's broader objectives:
  - Livable communities & corridors
  - Economic development
  - Growth management
  - Environmental stewardship
  - Traffic mitigation
  - Connected & walkable communities
- Communicate City's transit vision to Cobb County, the ATL, and City's other transit partners



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Public Involvement - Phase I

	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	• 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	• 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)	• 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	• 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	• Integrated transportation system that meets local and regional connectivity needs • Coordination between regional plans and entities	• Web-based resources for information: how to ride transit; real time updates; and trip planning

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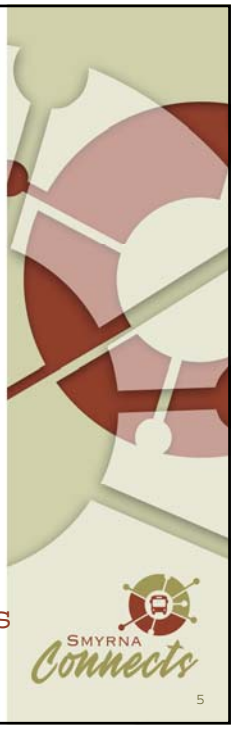
Developing Transit Needs

Community Needs & Vision

City, County, and Regional Policy Direction

Guiding Committee Feedback

Transit Gaps/Opportunities Assessment



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20-Year Needs

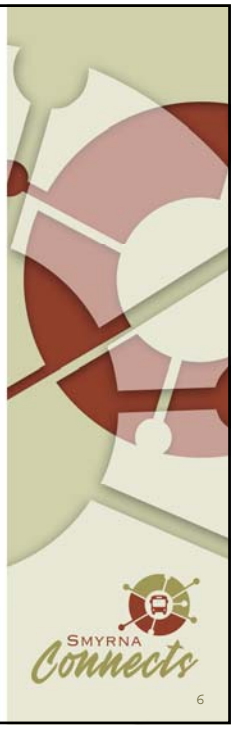
01 Frequent Commuter Bus in City/Region

Premium and regular transit routes on key corridors in the city with service every 15 minutes or less. Connects to the regional network of premium/express transit services and facilities.

02 Convenient Bus Connections in City

Branded shuttle/van service with fast connectivity within the City of Smyrna and to adjacent Cumberland area.

Tindale Oliver



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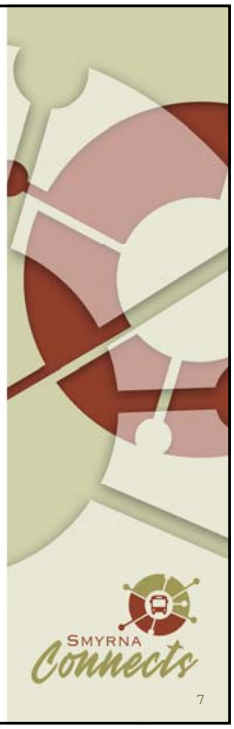
20-Year Needs

03 More/Enhanced Transit Facilities
Relocate current Cumberland Transfer Center to provide an easy, convenient, and safe transfer experience; add new transfer facilities.

04 Enhanced Transit Marketing/Education
Coordinate with various stakeholders/agencies and leverage available local and regional resources.

05 New After-Hour Rides Program
Voucher program for using Uber, Lyft, and services to get around when regular service is not available



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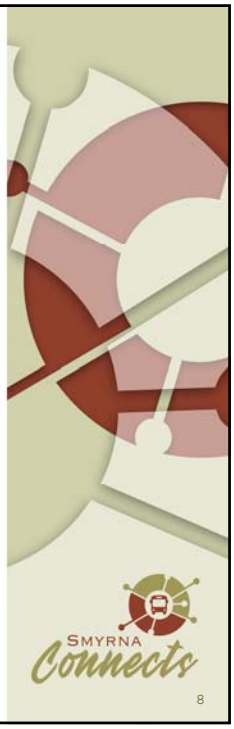
Potential Phasing of Transit Improvements

Short-Term
2021-22

Mid-Term
2023-29

Long-Term
2030-40

Tindale Oliver



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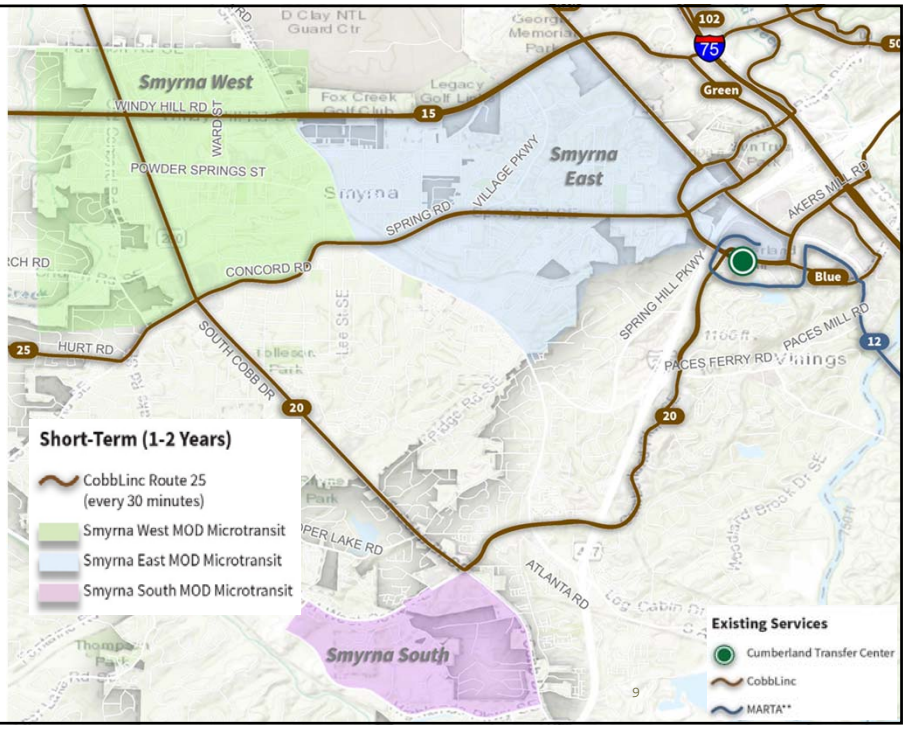
Short-Term Strategies (2021-22)

- Increase Route 25 frequency to 30 minutes
- Launch transit marketing campaign
- Assess/improve bus stops in city
- Implement Microtransit



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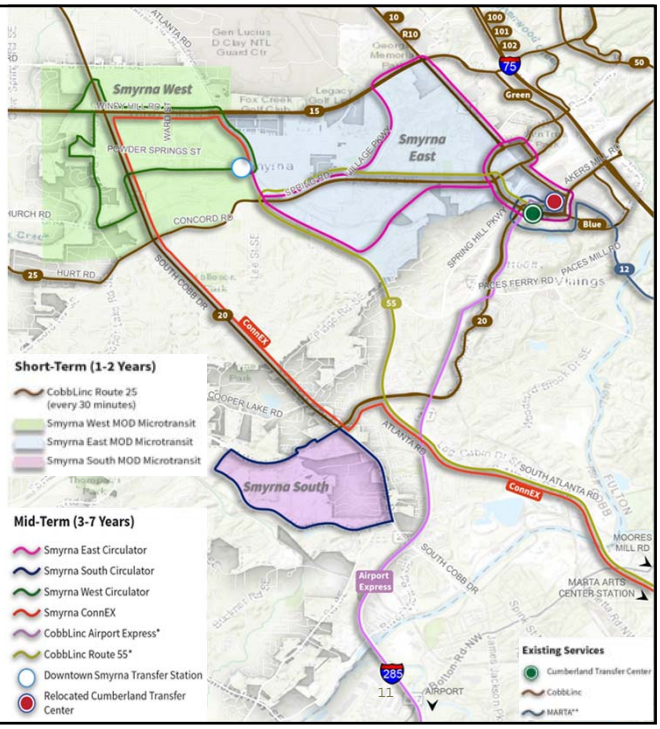
Short-Term Strategies

- Implement Three Microtransit Zones
  - App-based on-demand service
  - Curbside pickup/drop off
  - People within 2-min. walk to current routes excluded

10

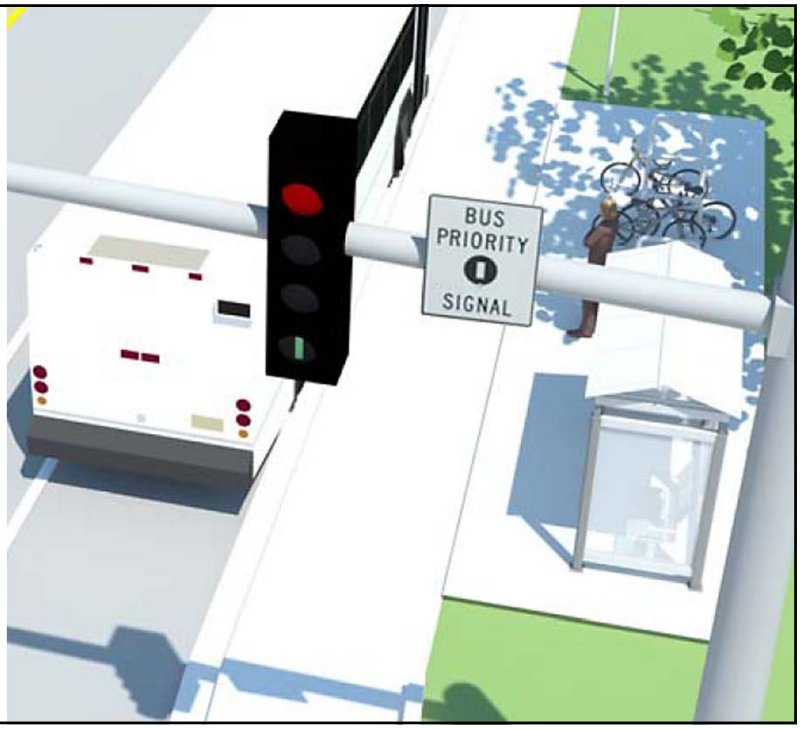
Mid-Term Strategies (2023-29)

- Three city circulators
- Reduce microtransit services to first/last-mile service
- Smyrna ConnEx: Downtown Smyrna–Atlanta Express
- CobbLinc Route 55
- CobbLinc Airport Express (Route AX)



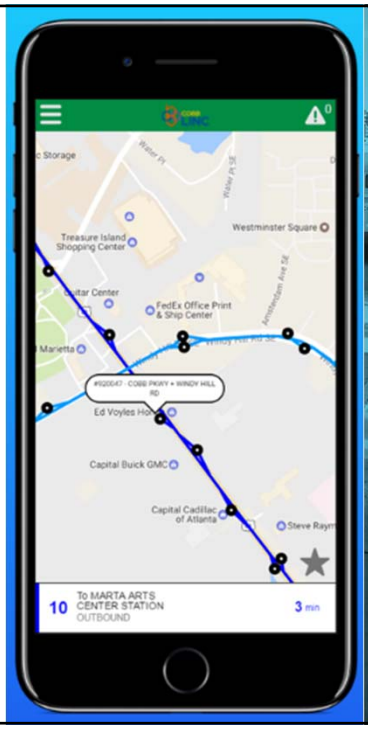
Mid-Term Strategies

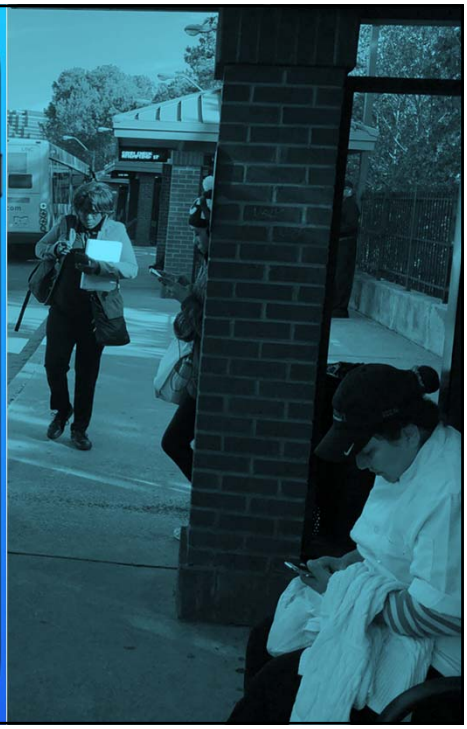
- Deploy Transit Signal Priority/Queue Jumps at selected intersections
  - TSP already in County/ATL plans for Cobb
  - At intersections that are most optimal for supporting premium transit



Mid-Term Strategies

- Update CobbLinc transit app
  - Coordinate with CobbLinc to update current app with new transit services added in the city
  - Link with microtransit app or use one single app for all transit in city





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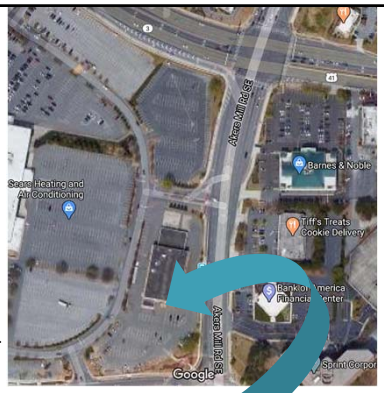
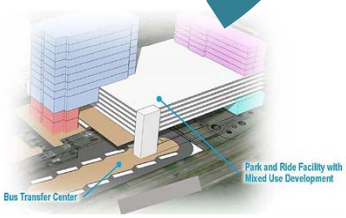
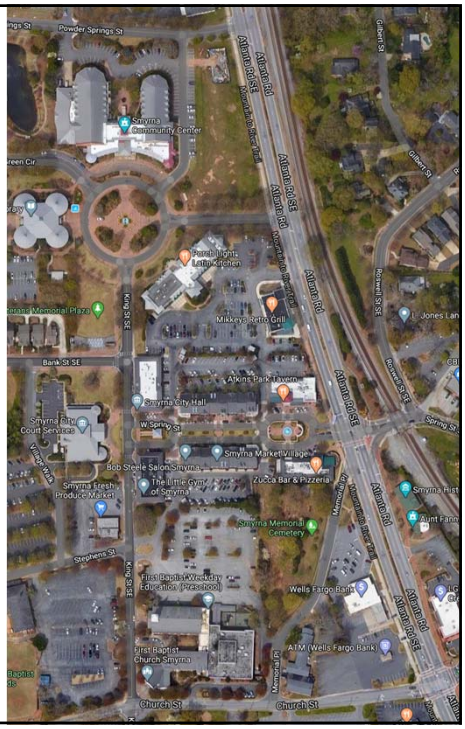
Mid-Term Strategies

- Improve transit infrastructure
  - Establish a downtown transfer station
  - Relocate Cumberland Transfer Center
  - Improve bus stop infrastructure/ amenities/accessibility







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Mid-Term Strategies

- Designate a City Transit Coordinator
  - Existing staff or new position
  - Organizes transit in the city
  - Coordinates with regional agencies/ stakeholders
  - Will be the single point of contact on transit and related matters
  - A "seat at the table" when growth and land use discussions happen in the city

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Mid-Term Strategies

- Transit marketing campaign - Phase II
  - Build on Phase I efforts
  - City-wide marketing/awareness drive prior to implementing mid-term improvements

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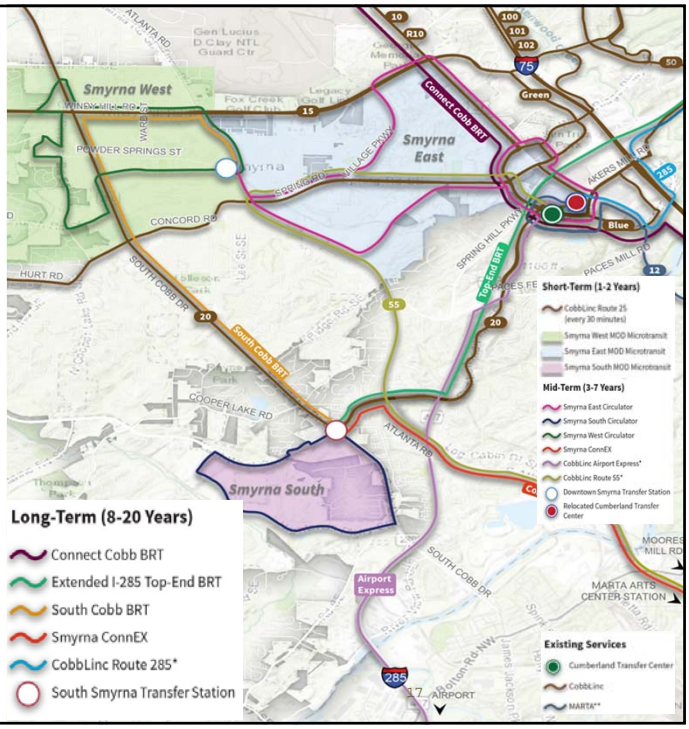
Long-Term Strategies (2030-2040)

- South Cobb Drive BRT
- Extend I-285 Top-End BRT to South Cobb Drive
- Connect Cobb BRT
- Smyrna-Atlanta Express (Smyrna ConnEx)
- Increase frequency to 15 minutes on selected Smyrna circulators
- CobbLinc Express Route 285



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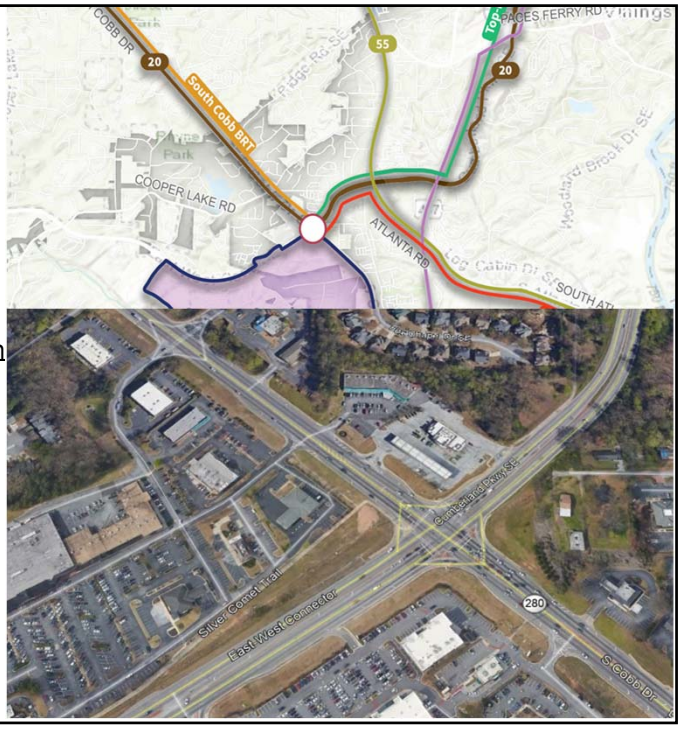
Long-Term Strategies

- South Smyrna Transfer Station
  - At South Cobb Drive and East-West Connector
  - Connects Smyrna ConnEx, South Cobb BRT, Extended I-285 top-end BRT, and Smyrna South Circulator
  - BRT Station/transit mini hub with smaller footprint



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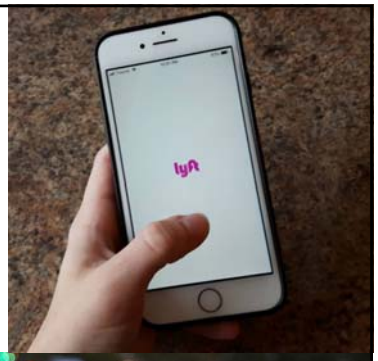
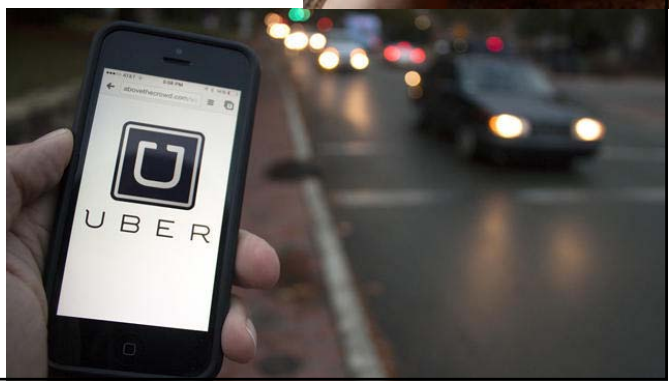
Long-Term Strategies

- TNC-Based After-Hour Rides Program
  - Voucher-based subsidized ride program
  - Expands availability of transit options 24/7 in the city





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Next Steps

- Incorporate public input/feedback
- Finalize 20-Year Transit Improvements
- Develop Draft Plan
  - April/May
- Final Plan
  - June/July

Tindale Oliver

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WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

- Please provide input by Friday, May 8, 2020!
- Complete a brief transit priorities survey and post your comments/questions by going to:
  - www.smyrnaconnects.com
  - Facebook.com/SmyrnaConnects
  - Facebook.com/CityofSmyrnaGA
  - Twitter.com/SmyrnaNews
  - Instagram.com/cityofsmyrnaga
  - Youtube.com/channel/UCDGlZRDAeFrvKGn77y_9UkQ
- For more information on the Smyrna Connects study, call or email Tom Boland, City of Smyrna Economic Development Manager
  - tboland@smyrnaga.gov
  - (678) 631-5348

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