
Cobb Community Transit (CCT)



463 Commerce Park Drive
Marietta, GA 30060
770-427-4444

SUMMARY

TTI selected Cobb Community Transit (CCT) in the Atlanta region as a peer example for coordinated transit services. CCT contracts with Veolia for local and commuter bus service. CCT also has an agreement with the regional transportation authority, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) to provide commuter routes in Cobb County. CCT coordinated transportation activities include the following:

- GRTA routes provided by Cobb County are included in the CCT contract with Veolia
- CCT participates in the regional fare card, Breeze Card
- Passengers transfer between MARTA and CCT services without additional fare with the Breeze Card
- CCT uses MARTA and GRTA stops, park and ride, and transit centers based on verbal agreements
- Regional transit providers are working on a transit sign at bus stops shared between multiple providers

FINDINGS

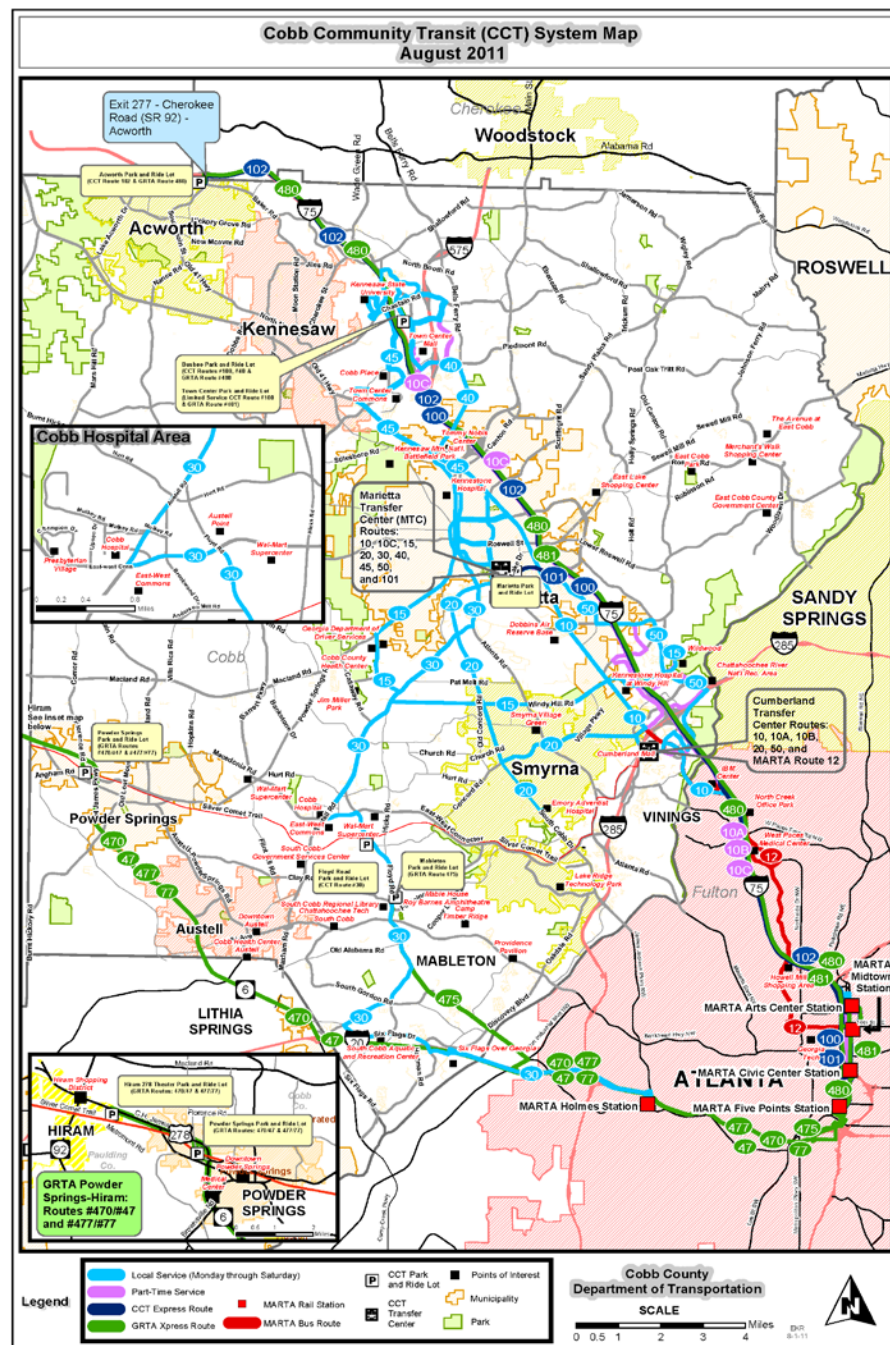
Service Overview

Cobb Community Transit provides local bus service within Cobb County and express bus service connecting Cobb County with Midtown and Downtown Atlanta. CCT is a function of the Cobb County Department of Transportation and is governed by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. The service crosses into the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) service area. Additionally, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority contracts with CCT to operate five of the regional GRTA express routes. CCT contracts with Veolia Transportation to provide all local and commuter bus service. Services offer a connection to downtown Atlanta from the outlying suburbs in Cobb County.

History

In June 1987, Cobb County held a special referendum to submit the following question to the voters of Cobb County: "Shall Cobb County be authorized to expend more than \$25,000 annually for a Cobb County transit authority or system, provided property taxes shall never be allocated to the payment of any transit expense?" A total of 23,055 votes were cast. There were 11,816 votes for transit and 11,109 against the transit initiative, and 130 votes the county declared void. CCT receives funding through federal and state sources as well as county general funds. Commuter bus service started in October 1989 with two express routes. Route 100 operated from leased space owned by Kennesaw State University to downtown Atlanta, and Route 101 operated from the Cobb County Civic Center to downtown Atlanta. Today CCT transit services include local, express, reverse peak, paratransit, and the GRTA Xpress service. Figure 1 illustrates the Cobb County service area.

Service Area



Source: Cobb Community Transit, retrieved from:
http://dot.cobbcountyga.gov/cct/maps/Aug2011_CCTSystem.pdf

Figure 1. CCT Service Area

Size and Population

Table 1 provides the population and land area for the major cities in Cobb County.

Table 1. Area Population and Size

Major City	2000 Population	2010 Population	2010 Land Area (Sq. Mi)	Miles to Downtown Atlanta
Acworth	13,422	20,425	8.24	32.5
Austell	5,359	6,581	5.97	17.9
Mableton	29,733	37,115	20.57	14.7
Marietta	58,748	56,579	23.08	19.7
Kennesaw	21,675	29,783	9.44	26.3
Powder Springs	12,481	13,940	7.17	22.9
Smyrna	40,999	51,271	15.35	15.4
County Total	607,751	688,078	339.55	-

Source: U.S. Census Decennial Census and Google Map

Demographics

A comparison of selected demographics for Cobb County and Fort Bend County as reported in the 2010 Census is contained in Table 2.

Table 2. Selected Cobb County and Fort Bend County Quick Facts

Quick Facts	Cobb County	Fort Bend County
Population, 2011 estimate	697,553	606,953
Population, 2010	688,078	585,375
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2011	9.1%	7.7%
White persons, percent, 2011 (a)	66.7%	58.3%
Black persons, percent, 2011 (a)	25.9%	21.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2011 (a)	0.5%	0.6%
Asian persons, percent, 2011 (a)	4.7%	17.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander persons, percent, 2011 (a)	0.1%	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2011	2.2%	1.9%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin, percent, 2011 (b)	12.5%	24.2%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2011	56.0%	36.1%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2006-2010	15.2%	24.5%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2006-2010	19.5%	37.0%
Veterans, 2006-2010	47,766	25,352
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2006-2010	29.7	30.6
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2006-2010	25.1%	10.2%
Median household income 2006-2010	\$65,522	\$79,845
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2006-2010	10.6%	8.0%

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.

(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.

Source: U.S. Census Quick Facts.

CCT Service Characteristics

Service Description

CCT operates local, express, reverse peak, and GRTA Xpress service. Table 3 provides an overview of the services offered by CCT.

Table 3. Cobb Community Transit Services

Type of Route	Days of Operation	Purpose of Route	Number of Routes
Local	Mon-Sat	In county transportation but does provide trips to MARTA stations for transfer	7
Express	Mon-Fri (peak periods only)	Trips to out-of-county locations during peak periods. Trips to employment centers and MARTA transfer centers.	3
Reverse Peak	Mon-Fri (peak periods only)	Commuter service to employment centers within Cobb County.	5
GRTA Xpress	Mon-Fri (peak periods only)	Regional routes to and from MARTA stations and employment centers. GRTA Xpress service contracted to Cobb County	5
Paratransit	Mon-Sat	Within $\frac{3}{4}$ of all local fixed route services.	N/A

Source: Cobb Community Transit

Table 4 provides 2010 National Transit Database Statistics for CCT. These data include the GRTA Xpress contracted services.

Table 4. 2010 National Transit Database Modal Characteristics

Mode	Operating Expense	Passenger Trips	Passenger Miles	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours
Demand Response	\$3,546,673	80,866	811,419	750,958	50,625
Fixed Route- Bus	\$17,422,022	4,598,516	40,781,252	3,648,183	191,909

Source: National Transit Database 2010

Trip Origins and Destinations

CCT has two major transfer centers within Cobb County. These transit centers are Marietta Transfer Center and Cumberland Transfer Center (at Cumberland Mall near Smyrna). These transfer centers are located near I-75 which is the main corridor traveling into Atlanta.

CCT operates service from eight park and ride lots with a cumulative total of 2,646 parking spaces. CCT has four park and ride lots located near I-75: Acworth, Busbee, Town Center, and Marietta. There are four additional park and ride lots: two near Mableton, one in Hiram, and one in Powder Springs. Three of the park and ride lots serve GRTA Xpress routes (owned by GRTA, but service is contracted to CCT) - one in Mableton, one in Powder Springs, and one in Hiram. Table 5 provides details on CCT park and ride lots.

Table 5. Cobb Community Transit Park and Ride Lots

Park and Ride	Capacity	Routes Served	Ownership
Acworth	500	102, 480	CCT
Busbee	350	40, 100, 480, 481	CCT
Town Center	646	481/100	GRTA
Marietta	300	10, 10C, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45, 50, 101	CCT
Hiram	150	470/47, 477/77	GRTA
Powder Springs	270	470/47, 477/77	GRTA
Floyd Rd	215	30	CCT
Mableton	215	475	GRTA
Total	2,646		

Source: Cobb Community Transit

The majority of Cobb County's employers are located along I-75, which is also a concentration of CCT transit service. The study "Cobb Community Transit Service and Marketing Study" (HDR 2011), indicates that 49 percent of the total jobs in Cobb County are located within a quarter mile of a CCT fixed route system and 58 percent within a half mile. CCT commuter transit services focus on getting passengers to Atlanta. CCT has commute and reverse commute services (reverse commute traveling from Atlanta to Cobb County for work). CCT has several drop-off locations within Fulton County. The CCT routes traveling to Atlanta stop at the MARTA Arts Center, IBM Tower, MARTA Civic Center, MARTA Peachtree Center, and MARTA Five Points. The reverse commute routes travel from downtown Atlanta and go to employment locations in Cobb County such as Riverwood Center (office space), Sprint, Cumberland Mall, Galleria Center (office space), Wildwood Center (office space).

GRTA has service that crosses Cobb County and goes into Hiram in Paulding County (GRTA Route 470). Route 47 is the reverse commute of GRTA Route 470. GRTA Route 475 starts in Cobb County and travels outside of the county. Route 77 is the reverse commute of GRTA route 477. Route 480 travels from northern Cobb to downtown Atlanta. Table 6 provides information on each express route service. Figure 2 provides the park and ride locations.

Table 6. CCT Express Route Destinations

Route	Type of Service	Destination
10a	Reverse Peak Express	Cumberland Transfer Center, Cobb County
10b	Reverse Peak Express	Cumberland Transfer Center, Cobb County
10c	Reverse Peak Express	Town Center Mall via MTC to MARTA Arts Center Station
47	Reverse Peak Express	Reverse of Route 470
77	Reverse Peak Express	Reverse of Route 477
100	Express	Downtown Atlanta
101	Express	Downtown Atlanta
102	Express	MARTA Arts Center
470 (GRTA)	Express	Florence Road Silver Comet Trail Head Park and Ride
475 (GRTA)	Express	Downtown Atlanta
477 (GRTA)	Express	Florence Road Silver Comet Trail Head Park and Ride
480 (GRTA)	Express	Downtown Atlanta
481 (GRTA)	Express	MARTA Civic Center, MARTA Arts Center, and MARTA Midtown

Source: Cobb Community Transit

Contracts for Service and Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA)

CCT purchases transit service from Veolia Transportation (the most recent Veolia contract was renewed July 2012). CCT provides the vehicles while Veolia operates and maintains the vehicles. The current contract per revenue hour rate of \$63.55 (this rate does not include vehicles or fuel). This rate applies to all of CCT's routes.

GRTA has an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with CCT to provide five express routes. On March 26, 2002, the Cobb County Board of Commissioners approved an IGA between Cobb County and GRTA for arterial road improvement projects and regional express bus service. Per the terms of this Agreement, the State Road and Toll way Authority provided GRTA with funds to implement arterial road improvement projects and Cobb County gave GRTA \$2.7 million to assist in the implementation of regional bus service. Based on the original Agreement, GRTA is responsible for operating the Land Public Transportation System, however, the Agreement included a provision that GRTA could contract a portion of the service to local governments already operating or projected to operate within the service area by separate agreement.

CCT contracts with Veolia to provide these services at the same rate as CCT's other services. CCT bills GRTA for the Veolia revenue hour cost. CCT does not bill GRTA for administrative or overhead expense. CCT calculates revenue hours based on the scheduled service of the five GRTA routes. CCT incurs the cost for the GRTA routes and GRTA reimburses.

Performance Monitoring

CCT does not have adopted performance standards used to monitor its service. GRTA is responsible for evaluating the performance of its Xpress routes.

Table 7 summarizes performance statistics as calculated from National Transit Database information for Cobb County for 2010.

Table 7. 2010 National Transit Database Modal Characteristics

Mode	Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour	Farebox Recovery
Demand Response	\$70.06	\$43.86	1.6	24%
Fixed Route- Bus	\$90.78	\$3.79	23.96	

Source: National Transit Database 2010

The study "Cobb Community Transit Service and Marketing Study" (HDR 2011) provides ridership projections by service type. This study estimates that express ridership should decrease as fare prices increase, based on fare elasticity of -0.30 (i.e. a 10 percent increase in fares would result in a 3 percent decrease in ridership). Table 8 provides ridership estimates through 2015 and 2016.

Table 8. Ridership Estimates

	Actual	Estimated	Near-Term Plan		Mid-Term Plan		
Annual Ridership	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Local Service Ridership	3,942,331	3,838,569	3,319,020	3,751,525	4,085,989	4,420,453	4,754,918
Express Service Ridership	655,554	655,554	606,387	606,387	606,387	606,387	588,196
Paratransit Ridership	80,956	75,400	58,730	58,730	64,590	70,450	76,310
Total Ridership	4,678,841	4,569,523	3,984,137	4,416,642	4,756,966	5,097,290	5,419,424

Source: <http://dot.cobbcountyga.gov/cct/Study/DraftFinalReport102611.pdf>

Fares and Transfers

CCT sets its own fares. The fares on the GRTA routes and buses operated by CCT are the same as the CCT rates. The transit providers in the region have implemented the Breeze card (Figure 3), which is a seamless smart card that works between MARTA, Gwinnett County, Cobb County, and GRTA transit services.

CCT and MARTA offer free transfers between MARTA and CCT services.

The Breeze system recognizes if a passenger transfers from MARTA to CCT or CCT to MARTA. CCT and MARTA agreed to do this as incentive for passengers riding transit to/from Cobb County and transferring to/from a MARTA services. Passengers do not get a free transfer if they use cash to pay for the fare – passengers must use the Breeze smart card. MARTA tallies and distributes the smart card revenue to the participants based on where rides originate (i.e. if the trip originates on a CCT vehicle or operated vehicle the revenue goes to CCT). Revenue generated by the GRTA buses operated by CCT are deducted from the invoice given to GRTA by CCT.



Figure 3. The Breeze fare card is in use in the greater Atlanta region.

There are a number of employers in downtown Atlanta who purchases CCT fare media for distribution to their employees. Table 9 provides the CCT fare structure.

Table 9. Cobb Community Transit Fare Structure

Type of Service	Fare
Adult Local Cash Fare	\$2.50
Adult Local Single Ride Ticket	\$2.50
Senior and Disabled Cash Fare	\$1.00
Youth Cash Fare	\$1.50
Adult Express Cash Fare	\$5.00
Adult Express Single Ride Ticket	\$5.00
10-Ride Local Ticket	\$18.00
31-Day Local Ticket	\$72.00
20-Ride Express Ticket	\$65.00
31-Day Express Ticket	\$125.00
Paratransit Cash Fare	\$4.00
Paratransit Single Ride Ticket	\$4.00
Paratransit 10-Ride Ticket	\$30.00
Paratransit 31-Day Ticket	\$115.00
Breeze Card	\$1.00

Source: Cobb Community Transit

Fare Box Recovery

The CCT system recovered approximately 24 percent of the total operating funds expended in 2010 from farebox revenues, as reported to the National Transit Database. Table 10 provides fare box recovery rates for of the express routes operated by CCT.

**Table 10. Cobb Community Transit Express
Route Fare Box Recovery Rates**

Route	Fare Box Recovery Rate
Route 100 (CCT)	43%
Route 101 (CCT)	50%
Route 102 (CCT)	30%
Route 470 (GRTA)	44%
Route 475 (GRTA)	18%
Route 477 (GRTA)	28%
Route 480 (GRTA)	31%
Route 481 (GRTA)	27%

Source: <http://dot.cobbcountyga.gov/cct/Study/DraftFinalReport102611.pdf>

Fleet

CCT utilizes 45-foot MCI vehicles (see Figure 4) for the express bus service. These vehicles have the capacity to seat 57 passengers and are equipped with reclining seats and reading lights. GRTA owns 26 of the coach buses utilized in the express service. These vehicles are to serve the GRTA funded routes and include the GRTA brand; however, CCT operates the vehicles intermixed.



Figure 4. Cobb Community Transit Bus and Logo

Table 11 provides the CCT fleet mix as reported in the NTD.

Table 7. Cobb Community Transit 2010 Vehicle Data

Mode Code	Total Fleet	Year	Manufacturer	Fuel Type	Vehicle Length	Seating Capacity	Standing Capacity
DR	10	2008	Goshen Coach	Diesel	22	12	0
DR	6	2009	Goshen Coach	Diesel	22	12	0
DR	14	2008	Goshen Coach	Diesel	22	12	0
MB	19	2006	Motor Coach Industries Int'l (DINA)	Diesel	45	57	15
MB	9	2005	Flyer Industries Ltd (aka New Flyer Industries)	Diesel	40	39	20
MB	11	2003	Motor Coach Industries Int'l (DINA)	Diesel	45	57	15
MB	15	2006	Motor Coach Industries Int'l (DINA)	Diesel	45	57	15
MB	8	2002	NOVA Bus Corporation	CNG	40	41	20
MB	7	2002	NOVA Bus Corporation	CNG	40	37	18
MB	20	2004	Flyer Industries Ltd (aka New Flyer Industries)	Diesel	40	39	20
MB	6	2008	Flyer Industries Ltd (aka New Flyer Industries)	Diesel	40	39	20

Source: 2010 NTD

Facilities

CCT utilizes both MARTA and GRTA transit facilities for its services; however, CCT has no formal arrangements for sharing facilities. CCT owns five of the eight park and rides in CCT's service area. GRTA owns three of the park and rides. The entity that owns the facility is responsible for maintenance and upkeep, legal liability, and operations. There are no agreements to share maintenance expense even when other bus services use the facility.

Promotion and Public Information

GRTA is responsible for marketing GRTA Xpress. However, any promotions that CCT conducts always include information regarding the GRTA routes that CCT operates. CCT treats GRTA routes just as if they were CCT routes. Any information/questions/complaints related to the GRTA routes that CCT operates are responded to by CCT.

There are some current regional discussions about a one call/one click system, but these are in the early discussion stages.

Challenges and Barriers



One of the current challenges to commuter service to downtown Atlanta is the fact that there are so many providers operating downtown Atlanta – CCT, GRTA, Gwinnett County, and MARTA. Passengers get confused on what bus they should ride. Recently there have been regional transit efforts to implement a “regional bus sign” and have the express buses all stop at the regional stops. MARTA has installed temporary bus signs (see Figure 5) at select locations in downtown Atlanta meant to serve as a shared stop for regional commuters. MARTA is project lead and funding is coming from the Atlanta Regional Commission with a local match from the regional providers.

Figure 5. Regional Transit Bus Sign