



Atlanta Regional Commission
regional impact + local relevance

ARC 2020 ANNUAL REPORT – **COBB COUNTY**

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page consists of several overlapping, fan-shaped geometric shapes in various colors: dark blue, orange, teal, green, purple, red, and olive green. These shapes radiate from a central point, creating a dynamic, abstract composition.

atlantaregional.org

August 2020

ARC works closely with local governments and community partners in Cobb County to improve quality of life and secure future success. This report measures progress in Cobb in the three long-range goals of the Atlanta Region's Plan: providing **World-Class Infrastructure**, fostering **Healthy, Livable Communities**, and developing a **Competitive Economy**.



WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE

ARC works with its regional partners to develop and maintain world-class infrastructure, including a transportation network that improves mobility, and a sustainable supply of clean water.



Improving mobility in Cobb

A \$128 million in federal and state transportation funds allocated by ARC to the county. Projects include: **widening of SR 360 (Macland Road) from SR 120 in Pauling to SR 176**; Phase 1 of Rottenwood Creek Trail, from KSU-Marietta campus to Franklin Road; and **operating assistance for CobbLINK to add Sunday transit service and enhance Saturday service**.

2.4 million fewer miles traveled by the **2,083 Cobb residents** residents who participated in the **Georgia Commute Options** program, saving them **\$1.4 million** in fuel and vehicle maintenance costs.



Securing a sustainable future

Keep Smyrna Beautiful is working towards becoming a **certified Green Community**.

City of Smyrna participated in the **2019-2020 Sustainable Connections Internship Program**, increasing their sustainability initiatives.

14 Cobb students participated in the Metro Water District's High School Video Contest.



The Metro Water District held their eighth annual, first virtual **Water Drop Dash 5K**, which had nearly 300 runners of all ages.

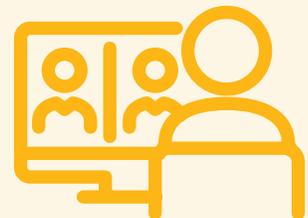
ARC's COVID-19 RESPONSE

Helping organizations transition to teleworking

Georgia Commute Options (GCO), a program managed by ARC, quickly mobilized to help organizations launch teleworking programs as the pandemic led to shelter-in-place orders.

The agency also developed online tools to provide additional guidance, including webinars and a "Telework Quick Start Guide" geared for businesses and local governments.

A GCO survey of business executives found that **69% said more employees will work from home periodically going forward, while 23% said more employees will work from home on a full-time basis**.



HEALTHY, LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

ARC works to foster vibrant, pedestrian-friendly communities and supports healthy living and aging by offering a range of services for older people and individuals with disabilities.



Improving quality of life for Cobb residents of all ages and abilities

\$2 million in state and federal funds to **Cobb Senior Services** for direct services provided to Cobb residents, including **congregate and home-delivered meals, in-home support services, transportation, and case management.**

ARC's **RSVP Volunteer Program** clocked **3,129 volunteer hours** and reached **11,352 individuals.**

Making Cobb an even better place to live, work, and play

\$120,000 **Livable Centers Initiative grant** to rejuvenate downtown Austell, looking at improvements to transportation, zoning and the developing economic development strategies.

\$160,000 **Livable Centers Initiative grant** to provide recommendations to improve the transportation options for all users of Bells Ferry Road using smart technologies and green infrastructure.

Gateway Marietta CID will receive critical planning and technical assistance through the **Community Development Assistance Program** to strategize creative placemaking and pedestrian safety improvements for an underpass that connects the CID's commercial district to a nearby residential neighborhood.

Town Center CID will receive critical planning and technical assistance through the **Community Development Assistance Program** to catalogue the presence and condition of sidewalks throughout the Town Center CID, as well as make recommendations for potential improvement priorities.

BY THE NUMBERS: COBB POPULATION

ARC Population Estimates (2015-2020)



ARC'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Serving older adults and people with disabilities

ARC helped partner organizations adapt their funding to respond to older adults' critical needs, providing weeks of home-delivered meals to those on a high-priority waitlist for this service.



ARC allocated **\$5.4 million** nationwide in federal **Families First and CARES Act dollars**, as well as philanthropic funding, providing a range of critical services including caregiving, wellness support, and nutrition services. By July 2020, ARC had allocated **\$759,013** in Cobb County to help respond to COVID-19 related needs.

COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

ARC works with its regional partners to ensure our economy remains thriving and competitive.

Planning for a stronger, more competitive economy

ARC's CATLYST program is a 5-year effort designed to improve regional competitiveness and collaboration throughout the 10-county region and the City of Atlanta. Through the hard work of volunteer project teams and ARC staff, CATLYST will ensure that metro Atlanta has good jobs, a well-trained workforce, and the regional collaboration needed to invigorate economic growth. CATLYST has launched three work programs:

- **Ramping up Regional Marketing Alliance** – CATLYST continues to convene the Atlanta Regional Marketing Alliance and support the group's efforts to make an even greater economic impact across the region. Through the work of this collaborative group, two regional marketing events were held and the Metro Atlanta Opportunity Zone Prospectus was created (www.metroatlantaOZ.com).
- **Analyzing Root Causes of Disconnected and Displaced Workers** – Through a collaborative effort, CATLYST is supporting a team in exploring the barriers that prevent people from finding meaningful employment and identifying approaches to ease the pathways to good jobs.
- **Identifying Effective Affordable Housing Strategies** – CATLYST continues to support a multi-disciplinary team in creating a regional strategy designed to increase the availability of quality, affordable housing. For more information and the latest updates on the strategy, visit AtlantaRegionalHousing.org.

Cultivating leaders to meet the region's challenges

11 Cobb residents took part in **ARC leadership programs**, including: Regional Leadership Institute (RLI), Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (ALMA), and Model Atlanta Regional Commission (MARC).



ARC's COVID-19 RESPONSE

Supporting Dislocated Workers

WorkSource Atlanta Regional, managed by ARC's Workforce Solutions group, developed new digital tools on atlworks.org to assist people who lost jobs due to the pandemic. These tools included online job listings and virtual training education while Career Resource Centers were closed. Topics included:

- How to Get the Career You Want Now
- Interviewing Tips, and Dealing
- Grief That Comes With Job Loss.

Providing Resources to Local Governments

ARC developed data tools and held a series of weekly webinars to help local governments navigate the health and economic crises. Webinar topics included:

- COVID-19 Economic Impacts on Metro Atlanta
- Adapting Municipal Budgets to COVID-19
- Supporting Local Businesses During COVID-19.



All data is fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 except the population data, which is year ending April 30, 2020.



Atlanta Regional Commission

International Tower, Peachtree Center

229 Peachtree Street, NE | Suite 100

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

atlantaregional.org