



COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

2007 Popular Report

From the Chairman



Sam Olens, *Chairman, Board of Commissioners*

Cobb County Government has one focus – improving the quality of life for our residents and businesses. You can see examples of this in every effort, ranging from our constant enhancements to public safety to the attention we focus on our residents’ well-being.

During the past year we have seen the opening of metro Atlanta’s newest entertainment venue, the impressive \$145 million Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. It is the first major performing arts facility in the metro area in four decades and the new home for the Atlanta Opera. This distinguished venue will bring exceptional entertainment to Cobb County, letting us

show visitors what our residents already knew: This is a great place to live.

For more than a decade, our government has received “Triple A” ratings from the nation’s top three bond agencies. Likewise, our Water System has earned the same honor for seven years running. We have continued our tradition of having the lowest property taxes in the metro area.

We recently opened the Mud Creek Soccer Complex, offering recreation on 26 acres of land in southwest Cobb. We added positions for Cobb County Public Safety and the Sheriff’s Office and continue to recruit quality personnel on a regular basis. From our existing staff, we created a “Quality of Life” unit, using sworn officers to help Code Enforcement deal with violations.

Even as we celebrated our 175th Anniversary this past year, we continue to plan for the future. These plans will build on the numerous resources and helpful programs already in place for your family to ensure outstanding quality of life. You should expect no less.

Samuel S. Olens



District Commissioners



Helen Goreham, Commissioner, District 1

In 2007 we reviewed and updated our development plan and stressed citizen participation every step of the way. Our Livable Cities Study and Macland Road Corridor Study confirmed that our retail nodes are working well, and that mixed use densities are more appropriate in our cities than in unincorporated District 1. Traffic efforts included public review of design work for many intersections that will be rebuilt in 2008 with SPLOST funds. We also approved the new Windy Hill – Macland Road connector. Our Citizens Committee completed its recommended list of properties for consideration under the \$40 million park bond effort and design for the Leona Price property on Stilesboro Road was completed. I look forward to your suggestions as we continue to plan our future together.

Helen C. Goreham



Joe L. Thompson, Commissioner, District 2

District 2 has experienced a year like no other. From the grand opening of the highly acclaimed Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre to the first class additions and renovations at Cumberland Mall, this area is now the envy of metro Atlanta. Once again the Cumberland Galleria area has become the focal point for fine dining, performing arts and shopping. Plans are underway to bring several new village concept projects to the area as well. This concept is having great success along Atlanta Road in the Oakdale area as people once again discover this wonderful community. New sidewalks and bike trails are on the way for Lower Roswell Road as the county continues to enhance our quality of life.

Joe L. Thompson

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT



Tim Lee, Commissioner, District 3

In District 3, we've worked hard to provide you with improvements and foresighted planning. Our year-long initiative to complete the county's Senior Services 10-year master plan included adding strategies for handling transportation and housing issues. Safety and pedestrian improvements are priorities on Canton Road while the Police E-mail Notification System started as a pilot program in our district and spread to the rest of the county. Residents have enjoyed the results of the new dog park at Sweat Mountain and the number of weekend road signs was reduced because of our new ordinance. We are expecting the results of a funding feasibility study that will be the first step in helping sustain Cobb County's arts community. These milestones show the difference the right decisions can make. They also help me look forward to the coming year and the progress we can expect in our district.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy D. Lee".



Annette Kesting, Commissioner, District 4

New developments in District 4 show our continued momentum forward. We recently opened the \$4.5 million Mud Creek Soccer Complex and the Ron Anderson Recreation Center was reopened in August after a \$2 million renovation and expansion. We completed a Livable Centers Initiative Study of the Austell Road Corridor, which will help link transportation improvements with development plans. We are in the process of building a new fire station, combined with a mini police station, in the Six Flags and Austell area. Engineering work continues on the Windy Hill and Macland Road connector. Each of these examples means progress for the county, good results for our residents and an excellent outlook for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annette Kesting".

SPLOST Transportation Projects



■ Since Cobb County voters approved the 2005 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, a tremendous effort has been made to accomplish the goals established in the Transportation Improvement Projects. Nearly two years have passed since voters approved SPLOST, and its transportation projects have progressed ahead of schedule and within budget.

■ To date, 202 transportation projects are underway or completed. Of these, 32 are in the right-of-way acquisition phase, 31 are in the construction phase and 37 have been completed. Completed projects include:

- Six school zone improvement projects valued at \$1.1 million
- Nine bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects
- Seven intersection safety and operational improvements
- Resurfacing 550 roads (124 miles) at a value of \$14 million

■ Also of note is the design completion on key projects, with total project costs estimated at \$12 million: Stilesboro Road, North Booth and Wooten Lake intersection, Post Oak Tritt Road and Woodlawn Drive. These projects were bid for construction at the end of 2007.

■ In 2008, with 30 major projects in design and approximately 50 projects planned to bid, Cobb County residents can expect to see a lot of dirt moving.

■ Construction is underway to create a new two-lane roadway from the East-West Connector to Mulkey Road connecting through Austell Road. This \$2 million project will improve access to the recently expanded WellStar Cobb Hospital and relieve traffic congestion in the Austell Road Corridor. Completion of this project is expected in early 2008.

■ The Stilesboro Road project, valued at approximately \$9 million, consists of three distinct project sections along a 7.4-mile corridor. Section one, located at Mars Hill Road to Rose Hedge Way, covers this western section from the Allatoona Creek bridge with five lanes through the Mars Hill intersection into Brookstone. Section two from Paul Samuel Road to Pine Mountain Road will be improved by the addition of turn lanes at intersections. The third section is located between Kennesaw Due West Road and Barrett Parkway. The proposed four-lane from just west of the Kennesaw Due West intersection through

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Metro Area Sales Tax Comparison

Atlanta	8%
Fulton	7%
DeKalb	7%
Gwinnett	6%
COBB	6%

Cobb County's sales tax is 6 percent

the Barrett Parkway intersection will improve traffic flow. Completion of this project is planned for fall 2009.

■ Woodlawn Drive can expect multiple improvements consisting of leveling of the road, connecting sidewalk gaps, making two hill cuts to improve sight distance and significant lane adjustments to improve access into Dickerson Middle School. The length of Woodlawn Drive between Lower Roswell Road and Johnson Ferry Road will be widened and completed in 2008.

■ The North Booth Road and Wooten Lake Road projects will focus on the intersection improvement at Shiloh Road. Since the current intersection does not align, this project will shift North Booth Road westward to align with Wooten Lake Road. Left and right turn lanes will also be added at all approaches of the intersection and the traffic signal at Wooten Lake Road and Shiloh Road will be rebuilt. As a second phase to this project, road widening will occur on both North Booth Road and Wooten Lake Road. Completion of these projects is planned for late 2008.

Sample Cobb Property Tax Bill

Homestead Exemptions:

\$10,000 County BOC / \$10,000 Schools / \$2,000 State

Based on residential home with market value of \$180,000

County Schools (BOE)	\$1,171.80
Maintenance & Operations	\$1,171.80
County Government (BOC)	\$623.00
General Fund	\$422.84
Fire District	\$184.32
Debt Service	\$15.84

State Government	\$17.50
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Governor's Tax Credit	-\$228.24
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TOTAL	\$1,584.06
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(BOE) 65%	\$1,171.80
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(BOC) 34%	\$623.00
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(State) 1%	\$17.50
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Governor's Tax Credit	-\$228.24
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TOTAL	\$1,584.06
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Other exemptions include BOC Floating Homestead Exemption & BOE Exemption for homeowners over 62

■ Information relating to SPLOST Transportation Projects is updated monthly and can be viewed at cobbcp.org.

Economy

■ Community Development completed work on the 10-year county comprehensive plan – 2030 Comprehensive Plan: Mapping Cobb’s Future. The plan establishes a vision for the growth of the county so we can meet the needs of existing and future residents. The update allowed us to retain our Qualified Local Government status with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, continuing our ability to receive state grants for various public improvement projects.

■ In July, Quintiles Transnational Corporation, one of the world’s top contract research organizations, announced plans to expand and consolidate its global laboratory and clinical development services in Cobb County, making this its headquarters for worldwide laboratory operations. Quintiles will invest \$19 million in the expansion, retaining 450 jobs and creating 400 new high-level positions. This facility will be operational by the second quarter of 2008.

■ In June, UCB Pharma SA, the fifth largest biopharmaceutical company in the world, announced a \$5 million expansion of its North American subsidiary located in Smyrna. UCB Pharma, Inc. currently employs approximately 650 at this location and the headquarters expansion will add another 100 jobs related to fighting such diseases as epilepsy, allergies and other disorders.

■ In October, Chairman Sam Olens led a delegation



of 20 individuals representing local government, public school systems, public universities, technical colleges, Chamber of Commerce and various businesses to the province of Seongdong-Gu in South Korea to formalize a Sister City relationship. This marks the first time in our history that the county has participated in such an initiative to establish cultural, educational and economic development ties.

■ We marked the 11th straight year for one of our remarkable financial achievements. The county once again earned “Triple A” ratings from the nation’s top three bond rating agencies, Moody’s, Standard and Poor’s and Fitch Ratings.

■ Our low tax rates, assessed valuation (AV) growth averaging 7 percent annually over the past five years and prudent budgeting practices have contributed to a strong financial position. The county ended fiscal year

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

2006 with a healthy operating surplus of \$3.9 million in its general fund and an unreserved, undesignated fund balance equal to a strong 13.3 percent of spending and other uses.

■ We continue to have the lowest unincorporated millage rate in the metro Atlanta area, demonstrating our ability to provide you with superior service at the minimum possible cost to you.

■ Naval Air Station Atlanta, located in Cobb County, began its handover in September to the Georgia National Guard as part of the Base Realignment and Closure program. The National Guard headquarters unit will be the first to move to the new location with the transfer being finalized in 2008. By the time the transition is complete, an estimated 1,500 drilling National Guardsmen will be stationed at the property. This transfer ensures the location will continue to be an important contributor to the county's economy.

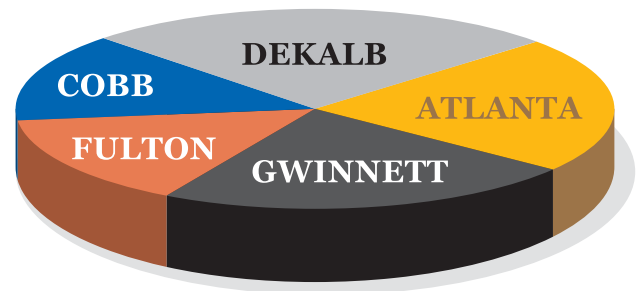
■ During the summer, Cobb County hosted – on behalf of the American Council of Young Political Leaders – a delegation of young political leaders from Israel. The delegates had an opportunity to tour the Kennesaw National Battlefield, Lockheed Martin Aeronautical and GE Energy.

Total Unincorporated Tax Millages

KEY	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07
Atlanta	22.83	21.67	21.22	20.91	19.20
Fulton	16.63	16.38	16.38	16.08	14.15
DeKalb	15.58	15.48	15.48	16.07	16.05
Gwinnett	11.50	11.47	11.47	11.30	11.08
COBB	9.72	9.72	9.72	9.60	9.60

Figures are without school & state taxes (based on Financial Year)

Total Operating & Capital Budgets



City of Atlanta	\$ 1,320,991,731
Fulton County	\$ 974,353,563
DeKalb County	\$ 1,818,914,941
Gwinnett County	\$ 1,675,049,117
COBB COUNTY	\$ 852,464,728*

Full-time Government Employees

Atlanta	9751
Fulton	6440
DeKalb	8458
Gwinnett	4797
COBB	4916*

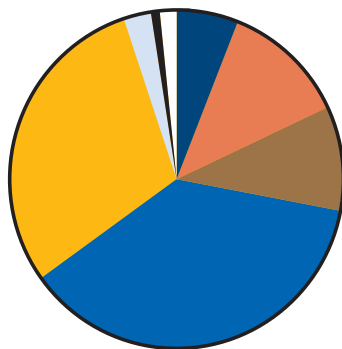
*Cobb County figures = FY 08, other jurisdictions = FY 07

Where the money comes from...

Major sources of revenues for the County include property taxes, sales taxes, charges for services and grants & contributions. Total revenues for FY07 were \$845,313,302. This is a 9.0% increase over FY06. The largest increase in revenues is due to the collection of the one-cent sales tax from the 2006 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program.

Property Taxes	\$ 238,915,529	Charges for Services	\$ 285,925,173
Sales Taxes	134,143,700	Operating Grants	18,013,520
Insurance Premium Tax	21,012,449	Restricted Capital Grants & Contributions	81,943,300
Alcoholic Beverage Tax	4,786,541		
Hotel/Motel Tax	10,625,801	Total Program Revenue	\$ 385,881,993
Real Estate Transfer Tax	2,381,465	Miscellaneous	\$ 8,282,934
Miscellaneous Taxes	10,213,949	Grants & Contributions not Restricted	11,291,129
Total Taxes	\$ 422,079,434	Gain on Sale of Capital Assets	208,153
		Unrestricted Investment Earnings	17,569,659
		Total Other Income	\$ 37,351,875
		TOTAL MONEY IN	\$ 845,313,302

FY07 Total Revenues



● Charges for Services	34 %
● Property Taxes	28 %
● Sales Taxes	16 %
● Capital Grants & Contributions	10 %
● Other Taxes	6 %
● Miscellaneous Revenue	3 %
● Operating Grants & Contributions	2 %
● Grants & Contributions not Restricted	1 %

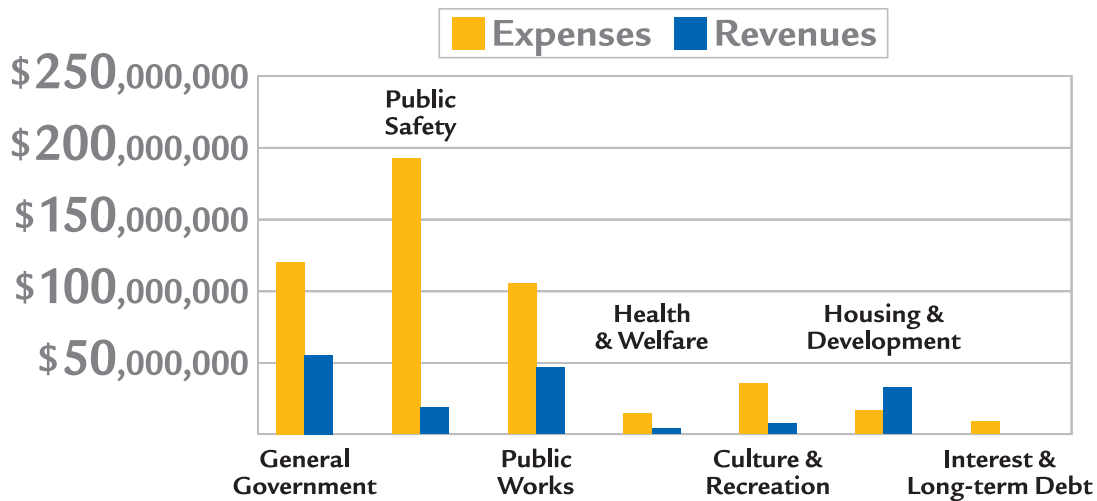
Where the money goes...

The County's total expenses increased 6.4% in FY07 over FY06. The two largest program functions in FY07 were Public Safety and General Government. However, the largest increases were in the Public Works and Public Safety functions due to replacement costs of major capital items such as the E911 Telephone System Switch and 800 MHz radio equipment as well as various SPLOST construction and engineering projects such as road resurfacing, roadway and intersection safety and improvements, bridge rehabilitation and thoroughfare improvements.

General Government	\$ 120,717,451	Water and Sewer	\$ 145,833,553
Public Safety	193,571,694	Solid Waste	11,953,423
Public Works	104,327,448	Transit	19,686,139
Health and Welfare	13,616,494	Cobblestone Golf Course	1,741,765
Culture and Recreation	35,607,314		
Housing and Development	14,722,882	Total Business-type Activities	\$ 179,214,880
Interest on Long-term Debt	6,685,179	TOTAL MONEY OUT	\$ 668,463,342
Total Governmental Operations	\$ 489,248,462		

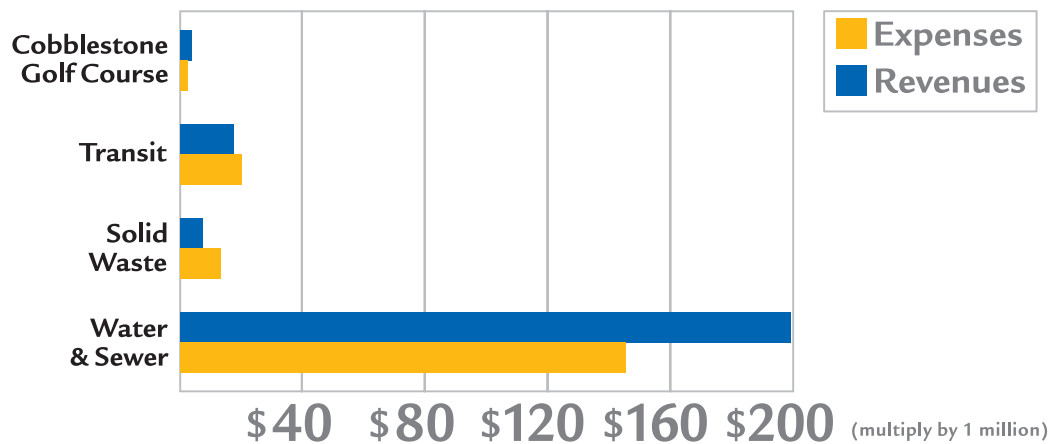
COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Expenses & Program Revenues - Governmental Activities



The County's "business-type" operations include the Water and Sewer Fund, the Solid Waste Disposal Fund, Transit Fund and the Cobblestone Golf Course Fund. The business-type operations are designed to recover 100% of their costs, including debt payments and depreciation or 100% of their cash flow needs.

Expenses & Program Revenues - Business Type Activities



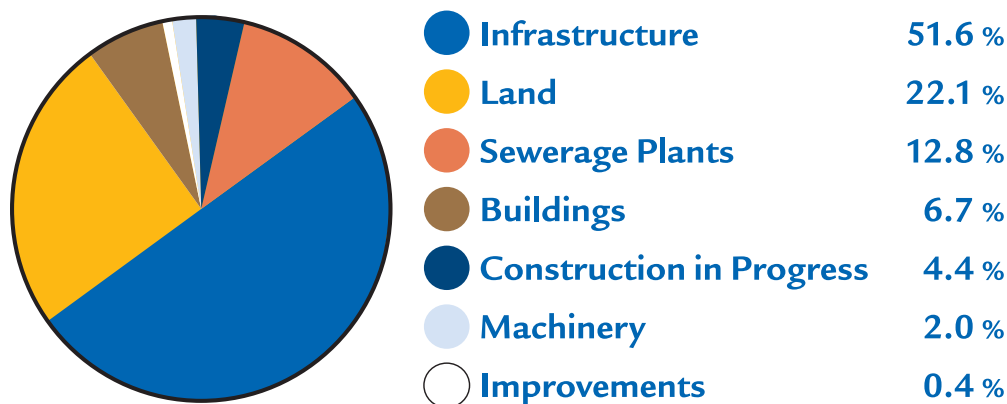
How the money is budgeted:

The 2007 operating budget which was prepared in the fall and submitted to the Board of Commissioners at the end of fiscal year 2006, totaled \$702.9 million. The most significant budgeted fund is the General Fund. The adopted budget for the General Fund was \$329.9 million. The Board of Commissioners amended the General Fund budget throughout FY07, and these amended budget appropriations totaled \$17.1 million. The most significant expenditure amendments were for personal services due to the pay class compensation study and fund balance reserve appropriations.

Capital Assets:

Capital assets include property, plant, equipment and infrastructure assets (e.g., roads, bridges, sidewalks, and similar items). Capital assets are defined by the government as assets with an initial, individual cost of more than \$5,000 and an estimated useful life in excess of two years. Such assets are recorded at historical cost or estimated historical cost. However the cost of capital assets are not recognized in the year the assets was purchased or constructed, but over the life of the assets as depreciation expense. Donated capital assets are recorded at estimated fair market value at the date of donation.

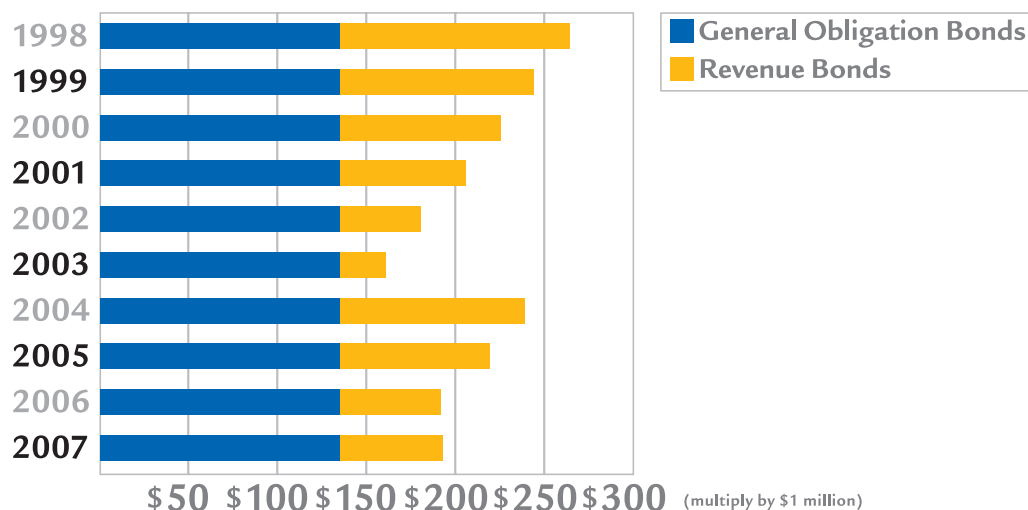
FY07 Total Capital Assets Net of Accumulated Depreciation



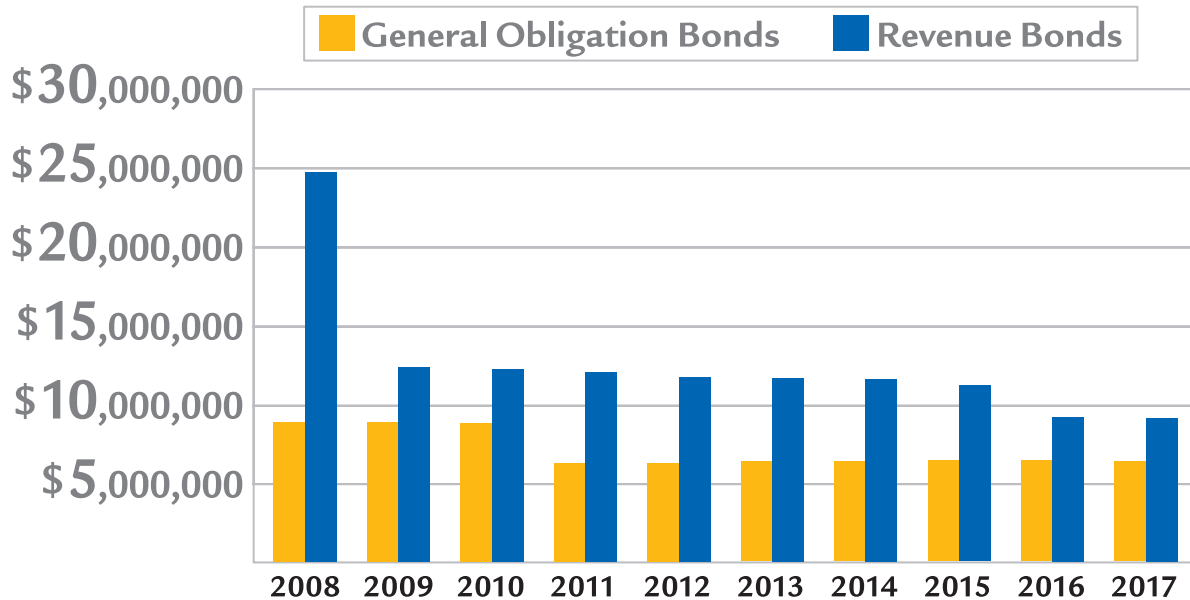
Long-term Debt:

As of September 30, 2007, Cobb County had \$193.7 million in outstanding long-term debt, which does not include interest expense. Of this amount, \$58.1 million comprises general obligation debt backed by the full faith and credit of the government and \$135.6 million in revenue bonds. The County retired \$24.3 million of outstanding bonds in FY07.

Total General Obligation & Revenue Bonds by Year



Debt Service Requirements for the Next Ten Years



Request for Information

For additional financial information or questions concerning any of the information provided in this report please contact the Director of Finance / Comptroller, 100 Cherokee Street, Suite 400 Marietta, Georgia 30090-9610. A Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is also available at <http://finance.cobbcountyga.gov>.

Services

- As part of a long term plan to improve energy efficiency, the county began replacing outdated heating and air conditioning equipment at the East Cobb Government Center. The new equipment will be approximately 50 percent more efficient, saving the county more than \$7,000 annually in utility bills.
- The Fleet Division, after a trial period, has moved to using biodiesel to fuel county trucks and heavy equipment. Biodiesel is a blend of 80 percent regular diesel fuel and 20 percent biofuel, which is derived from soy, used oils or fats material. In addition to helping meet EPA sulfur emissions standards, equipment using this blend are performing better with reduced overall emissions.
- In association with the Trust for Public Land,

Community Development completed and implemented the Cobb County Greenprint. This is a Geographic Information Systems modeling program that allows our staff to manage and prioritize the remaining undeveloped land and sensitive habitat in the county. This program will assist in developing growth management policies and in the purchase of new greenspace and parks land.

- Community Development made public access easier. Monthly zoning ordinance information is now available on the county Web site so interested individuals can access case information prior to public hearings. Also, new methods of participation, such as image preference surveys, design workshops and visioning sessions, are being used when developing studies to increase involvement.

- Renovation work began on the Central Library in April. The \$250,000 project included re-carpeting, painting, constructing a large quiet study room and expanding the Georgia Room to increase its capacity to house Georgia and Cobb County history, genealogy and other research collections – including recently purchased issues of the Atlanta Journal on microfilm dating back to 1883.

- We broke ground in January on a new Powder Springs Branch Library. Located on the George E. Ford Center campus, the nearly \$1.7 million project is jointly



COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT



funded by the City of Powder Springs and Cobb County. At 10,000 square feet, the new library on Atlanta Street will be nearly twice the size of the current facility and have ample parking.

- Construction will begin in early 2008 on the renovation and expansion of the Mountain View Regional Library on Sandy Plains Road. The \$2.29 million project will add 4,000 square feet to the 16,000 square foot facility and add 61 new parking spaces.

- Senior Services began a free 13-month program for seniors who are at risk for – or have – heart issues, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes. We formed a partnership with the Atlanta Regional Commission's Division of Aging, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Lockheed Martin and WellStar to design "Cobb Health University." Benefits of enrollment include free medical screenings, informational monthly sessions and incentive prizes to

reward progress on individual health goals. Attendance totaled 1,361 through September.

- Senior Services received state and federal grants to help clients on the waiting list for agency-provided transportation. Clients can now get vouchers to purchase transportation for medical visits, grocery shopping and other necessary appointments and visitations. Clients can select from a list of approved Senior Services vendors.

- We improved the performance and reliability of our voice and data networks by replacing Internet filtering software, providing a backup through a second Internet connection and deploying a new voiceover IP telephone system at a cost of \$3.5 million. The new phone system is expected to save us \$750,000 a year after we cover the capital cost.

- We generated more than \$100,000 in sales of maps and data from the base map of Cobb County showing topography, transportation features and waterways.

- Cobb County Extension family and consumer sciences continued monthly diabetes self-management programs in collaboration with the Diabetes Association of Atlanta. Participants received individual consultations that included the hemoglobin A1C lab and

Services

participated in a group class to learn about diabetes, medications and meal planning. The bimonthly Diabetes LifeLines newsletter was distributed to 5,600 people.

- The Cobb County Extension and Cobb and Douglas Public Health “BreasTEST and More” program distributed coupons for free and low-cost mammograms and pap tests to women 40-64 years old who have no health insurance and are rarely screened.

- Cobb County Extension, Cobb and Douglas Public Health Center for Environmental Health and the Georgia Restaurant Association taught food service and restaurant managers during three two-day ServSafe Food Safety Manager Certification trainings. A total of 532 managers have attended the training since 2000.

- Cobb County Extension volunteer Master Gardeners provided residents research-based horticulture education by volunteering more than 15,285 hours to the county. These hours, valued at \$275,742, were worked on the Horticulture Hot Line at the Extension office, plant doctor clinics, speaking engagements, writing publications and in 18 demonstration gardens. During the year, 22,306 county residents received answers to their landscape-related questions.

- Cobb County 4-H educated more than 4,000 youth with its AgriScience, Earth and Life Science standard-



based curriculum, Garden Earth Naturalist curriculum, leadership and community service activities. Financial literacy and career preparation are two issues addressed for middle and high school students. These programs provide an awareness of financial security and provide an opportunity to explore numerous career choices.

- Cobb County 4-H Youth Summit Team delegates from the Third Biennial Georgia Youth Summit presented interactive, hands-on programs on drug awareness at the Cobb Egg Hunt and Cobb County libraries during summer programs. The goal of the summit was to equip youth to become active and better their communities by identifying issues and developing solutions related to economic development, education, health and safety.

- The Cobb County Public Library System held two book sales which raised \$54,882 with help from volun-

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

teers from the Friends of the Library and the Marietta and Lost Mountain Golden K Kiwanis clubs. Proceeds from the sales are used to purchase new materials for all 17 library locations.

■ In June, the Library System received a \$6,800 Library Services and Technology Act grant to supplement Vacation Reading Program activities. Funds were used to hire professional storytellers, purchase puppets for programming use and purchase books and DVDs for all libraries

to support this summer's programming theme.

■ Cobb County's Fleet Division joined an elite group of private and public automotive repair facilities approved by the National Institute for Automotive Services Excellence. The certification is based upon documented performance levels in automotive, heavy truck and customer service. It also requires at least 75 percent of technicians to be ASE certified. The result is a fleet that is well maintained and meets the county's needs through a longer, more cost-effective vehicle life.

■ Along with the many awards Keep Cobb Beautiful received for its programs this year, it was designated a first place affiliate at both the state and national level. Keep America Beautiful named KCB as a top affiliate in December. In October, Keep Georgia Beautiful gave the Cobb affiliate three first place and two second place awards.

■ During our Electronics Recycling Day, 2,294 drivers dropped off 173,234 pounds of electronics at two locations in four hours. A total of 1,929 personal computers and 1,704 monitors were brought in for the annual event sponsored by Keep Cobb Beautiful. These efforts keep hazardous waste from being placed in landfills. Those who don't want to wait for the next event can go to Cobb County Solid Waste, which offers daily electronic recycling at the Transfer Station, 1897 County Services Parkway, Marietta.



Public Safety



- We implemented a Quality of Life unit in January. The unit, which started with a sergeant and two officers from existing personnel, works with the Cobb Code Enforcement Unit to identify enforcement and revitalization initiatives. We purchased two specially equipped trucks and later the unit obtained two new officer positions with supporting equipment and vehicles.

- The department implemented a successful Police E-Mail Notification System program where homeowners and business owners are advised of crime trends, suspect lookouts and other important information from their local precinct via e-mail. The PENS project has further improved police department and community information flow and relations. To sign up, visit cobbpolice.com.

- The Georgia Emergency Management Agency awarded us a \$345,876 grant to buy a hazardous

material response vehicle and related chemical and biological equipment for the police department. In return, we committed to be the Region Seven Law Enforcement Designated Responding Agency at regional incidents.

- Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police Certification Program awarded re-certification to the Cobb Police Department in July. This was the department's first re-certification since its initial state certification in 2002.

- During the year, Internal Affairs processed 1,851 applicants for Public Safety positions, resulting in 167 persons hired in police, fire and 911 Communications. Of those, 92 were sworn police officers. While many police agencies struggle with vacant positions, our department was fully staffed during the summer.

- We renovated and expanded the Recruiting and Internal Affairs office, allowing for a professional lobby area and increased office space.

- We purchased a \$9,200 software upgrade for the police firearm simulator system at the Public Safety Training Center. The software upgrade allows for interactive police shooting scenarios in the classroom. We also created a new program to develop field training officers.

- We helped create the multi-jurisdictional School Violence Working Task Force. This task force improves

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

communication and coordination in case an incident occurs on a school or university campus. A practical drill took place at North Cobb High School in July.

■ Planning and fundraising continued for the Safety Village project, which will be a one-stop location for interactive education. Children will be taught bus safety, railroad safety, pedestrian safety, accident reduction and other measures in a miniature village environment.

■ We began a \$27,986 vehicle processing facility in early September for identifying and securing items of evidence from vehicles by renovating an old training facility located in the police headquarters complex. The construction included a hydraulic vehicle lift and the installation of two garage-type doors, allowing evidence to be protected in a climate-controlled area.



■ In April, the Domestic Violence Unit was relocated into a new facility at the West Park Government Complex on Whitlock Avenue. The Crimes Against Children Unit also relocated into the new facility within the West Park complex.

■ The \$40,000 renovation of offices at police headquarters provides for more efficient communication among the chief's office and units housed there.

■ The department is developing and implementing a Robbery Interdiction Unit in response to incidents in targeted areas. The unit will be developed from existing personnel and implemented on a trial basis.

■ The Crime Data Analysis Unit was moved to police headquarters and a crime analyst was added along with a part-time clerk position to handle administrative requirements.

■ We want our police officers on the street to have the best technology possible. The department updated the patrol fleet with 30 in-car computer laptops at a cost of \$127,710. The department began upgrading patrol vehicle video cameras with digital technology in July. A total of 49 MPH Trueview Digital Mobile Video Systems were installed at a cost of \$125,785.

■ The Fiscal Year 2008 budget provides several new

Public Safety

police officer positions, including a lieutenant, two sergeants and eight patrol officers, bringing the total number of sworn personnel to 606.

■ We achieved a better balance of responsibility between Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services and Marietta Fire Department through a review of the automatic mutual aid agreement. We reorganized and added resources to handle adjusted coverage, including the use of two roving Medical Response Units during peak times.

■ An additional engine company, Engine 30, was added to cover the response zones on the south side of the Marietta/Cobb border, to which the city no longer automatically dispatches. The facility, now designated Station 30, was placed at low cost by reactivating a building on Austell Road that had previously been a fire station.

■ Cobb Fire and Emergency Services purchased numerous specialized vehicles during the past year, including pumpers, an air and light unit, two Advanced Life Support transports and one heavy-duty technical rescue vehicle. A new 100-foot platform truck is scheduled to be delivered in the spring.

■ Construction for the relocation of Fire Station 9 began in March. The \$2.3 million new station will house a satellite police mini-precinct. The more than 8,000 square foot facility in Austell is scheduled to

open in February.

■ In May, we acquired property for the relocation of Fire Station 1 in Mableton. The new site is located just south of the existing station on Mableton Parkway and will incorporate a police mini station.

■ We are constructing a new fire station in the Acworth area as well. A satellite Cobb County Tag Office will be incorporated into this \$3.36 million building on Kemp Ridge Road. The 10,698 square foot facility known as Fire Station 28 is scheduled



COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

to be completed in September and open in October.

■ After extensive analysis of services in the Vinings area, it was determined that Station 5 on Paces Ferry Road was inadequate for service needs. A new \$2.69 million facility, the first two-story fire station in Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services' history, will be built on the same site and is scheduled to open in October.

■ The upgrade of the 911 phone system was installed in May. One aspect of the new \$1.27 million system is that it is the same as the backup center. Operators can receive and enter calls from the back-up center into the live Computer Aided Dispatch at the primary 911 center.

■ Wireless Internet was installed in the 911 center to provide dispatchers access to resources such as Department of Transportation cameras, Haines Criss Cross, robbery tracking devices, weather satellite and Geographical Information System mapping.

■ Through federal funds provided by Georgia's Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, Cobb County was the first site in Georgia to install interoperable communications to reach state and local agencies. The system provides a means of communication between 172 jurisdictions and enhances interagency cooperation.

■ In 2004, the Board of Commissioners upgraded to



the new digital radio system. A new tower site, located at the new Fire Station 9 on Factory Shoals Road, will meet the growing coverage need in the southern part of the county.

■ Cobb Emergency Management Agency, in collaboration with Cobb and Douglas Public Health, initiated a program to provide for special needs residents during disasters. Approximately 35 organizations and agencies partnered to create a registry to provide emergency workers with critical information about residents with disabilities or special needs. CEMA also provided a pamphlet they and caregivers can use to prepare for emergencies.

Judicial Services



- Using federal grant funds, the Sheriff's Office has upgraded the security monitoring and control infrastructure for the county Courthouse Complex. This system provides closed-circuit digital video and audio monitoring as well as controlled access for portions of the complex.

- Information Services implemented a \$1.4 million comprehensive document imaging solution for Juvenile Court, Magistrate Court, Department of Transportation, Water System, the Sheriff's Office and Fire and Emergency Services. It improved access to documents, allowing departments to share information more easily.

- This past year, Immigration and Customs Enforcement trained 12 Cobb County Sheriff's deputies, enabling them to identify, process and, when appropriate, detain immigration offenders brought to the jail.

- To provide information about registered sex offend-

ers, the Sheriff's Office began using OffenderWatch, which is accessible on the Web through cobbsheriff.org. The application lists registered sex offenders and allows residents to be notified when one moves near their home, place of work, school or day care center.

- Using confiscated funds from federal forfeiture sharing, the Sheriff's Office purchased an \$113,000 video-based firearms training simulator. To make this training available for law enforcement officers throughout the region, the simulator was placed at the North Central Law Enforcement Academy.

- We upgraded the Justice Information System used by the Magistrate, State and Juvenile Courts as well as the district attorney, solicitor and sheriff. The \$1.05 million technology improves access to court records for all parties and promotes ease of maintenance and training.

- The Magistrate Court added all court calendars to its Web site to provide hearing information to the public and added a new pretrial release officer to decrease the number of defendants supervised per officer.

- In coordination with Property Management, Magistrate Court renovated the customer service area in its front lobby, the customer service windows in the clerk's office and administration office. The court also added a post-release interview room for Pretrial Court Services,

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT



allowing two defendants to be interviewed simultaneously and reducing wait time.

- State Court Administration made Wi Fi Internet available to the Jury Assembly room and placed reporting information for jurors on its Web page.

- The State Court Clerk's Office, with the help of the Communications Department, changed its Web site, providing additional interactive forms and enhanced court calendars. The Clerk's Office also converted nearly

10 years of microfilm data to digital storage, allowing improved access to court records.

- In 2007, Juvenile Court reclassified a position to add a family therapist to treat Drug Court clients. The four family therapists work as a team to consider therapeutic needs, including individual and group sessions.

- More than 7,000 warrants were processed through the Solicitor General's Office, resulting in 6,080 accusations filed with the State Court Clerk's Office; 251 cases diverted through the Pre-Trial Diversion Program and 2,016 domestic violence cases in Magistrate Court.

- With the Records Management Division, Probate Court arranged to store deteriorating record books at the new state archives facility and obtained a full-time estate processor to improve productivity.

- Superior Court added an in-house drug testing lab to provide immediate results and help expedite cases.

- Security-protected court and real estate records have been launched on the Superior Court Clerk's Office Web site, and soon criminal accusations and indictments will be available online within 30 minutes from time brought to the clerk's office. Real estate deeds are accessible to the public online within two hours of filing, unlike other counties where the time lag is weeks or months.

Transportation

■ The Cobb County Department of Transportation is finalizing the 2006 Long Range Comprehensive Transportation Plan that focuses on the impact of Paulding traffic on the county road network. For the first time, the county included all six of the local municipalities to get their input for this important endeavor. This \$1.25 million project will help guide planning for transportation infrastructure for the next 25 years.

■ During the past year, Cobb DOT completed its conversion of traffic signals countywide to new LED signal lamps, which are 60 percent more efficient than traditional lamps. The new LED signals will save more than 2 million kilowatt hours annually, enough electricity to serve more than 1,700 average Georgia homes.

■ Design is nearing completion and right-of-way acquisition is underway on several major capital projects. The Atlanta Road Bridge over the Chattahoochee River is now under construction. The \$7.36 million project, expected to be completed in 2009, will replace an obsolete two-lane bridge with a modern four-lane bridge that includes a median, a sidewalk on one side and a multi-use trail on the other.

■ The Robert M. Callan Trail, a two-mile multi-use path along Rottenwood Creek and the Chattahoochee River, was completed in the summer and features three bridges and three boardwalks.



■ Our Planning Division completed a \$99,000 Senior Adult Transportation Study to identify and evaluate transportation options for older adults. We also completed a \$155,000 Livable Centers Initiative Study of the Austell Road Corridor to link transportation improvements with land use development strategies to create sustainable, livable communities.

■ The Atlanta Road at Cumberland project has added triple left turn lanes from Atlanta Road to westbound Cumberland Parkway, thus reducing congestion at the major intersection. Design of the Interstate 285 and Atlanta Road Interchange is proceeding. Acquisition for the Mableton Park and Ride Lot is nearing completion, which will allow construction to begin.

■ The traffic signal department began a \$2.5 million fiber-optic network expansion project. It includes install-

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

ing an additional 42 miles of fiber-optic cable used by the Traffic Control Center to communicate with traffic signals and closed-circuit TV cameras. This project will be completed in 2008 and will include 15 additional closed-circuit dome cameras to monitor traffic flow.

- Cobb DOT oversees the county's Enterprise Transportation GIS database CobbETRANS, which provides an up-to-date inventory of the county's roads, sidewalks and bus stops. This past year we connected CobbETRANS to the Work Order and Pavement Management System, which eliminates duplicate work and shows pavement conditions and the status of work orders on maps.

- We also gave the public convenient and easy access to our traffic count data on the county's GIS Web mapping site.

- Cobb Community Transit added more than 13,000 annual hours of service to local bus routes, including an expansion of the paratransit service area. CCT also added a Georgia Regional Transportation Authority bus route, the GRTA 475, providing express service from Austell and Six Flags to the MARTA Civic Center.

- CCT installed public restrooms at both the Marietta Transfer Center and Cumberland Transfer Center, replaced old bus stop signs with informative and attractive

signage that includes route information. We also ordered six new local buses and 10 new paratransit buses.

- With the Cobb County Airport currently at storage capacity, an existing undeveloped six acre parcel was leased to an air charter operator to construct 70,000 square feet of additional hangar space.

- A \$2.87 million federal grant was used to rehabilitate the airport's parallel Taxiway A and upgrade the runway safety areas by installing a storm water drainage system and grading the shoulders.



Recreation



■ We celebrated the opening of the \$145 million Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre in the Cumberland-Galleria area, the first major performing arts facility to open in the Atlanta area in four decades. The 2,750-seat theatre now serves as home for the Atlanta Opera and a premier showplace for concerts, Broadway shows, ballet and other events.

■ A record 39 projects were completed through the department's matching grant program this year, resulting in more than \$350,000 in park improvements. The program provides matching funds for capital improvements

to volunteer associations that offer programs in county parks. Since the program's inception, more than \$2.6 million in improvements were made to parks throughout Cobb.

■ The Mud Creek Soccer Complex opened on Barrett Parkway. The 26-acre \$4.5 million complex has five lighted soccer fields, a concession/restroom building, a playground, abundant parking and a half-mile long concrete walking loop. Association practices and games started in September.

■ The Ron Anderson Recreation Center, located in Wild Horse Creek Park in Powder Springs, reopened in August after a \$2 million renovation and expansion. The center now houses a full sized gymnasium lined for basketball and volleyball, a well-equipped game room and plenty of meeting space served by a complete caterer's kitchen.

■ In June, the \$1.4 million renovation and expansion of the Cobb County Gymnastics Center was completed and opened to the public.

■ We completed the Cato Environmental Education Center and the Natural Resources Management Unit began running programs there. A trail system is being built around the 12-acre woodland property on Austell Road.

COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

■ Cobb's tennis program hosted the United States Tennis Association National 16's Open for the sixth consecutive year, drawing many of the top 16 and under tennis players from around the country. The program also hosted seven Georgia state championship tournaments, the Georgia Tennis Association Super Championship tournament, the Georgia Games State Championships and 24 other USTA-sanctioned tournament events.

■ The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department began distributing Recreation Cobb eNews, providing department and programming information to about 10,000 residents by e-mail newsletter.

■ A significant upgrade has been completed at the quarter-mile oval track at Larry Bell Park. This should be an even more popular location for walkers and joggers now that the asphalt track has a rubberized surface made from recycled tires. The infield area was irrigated and covered with sod. Trees will be added to the perimeter during the next planting season.

■ Major improvements at Thompson Park included new asphalt, curb and gutter and striping of all parking and roadways as well as installation of new security gating. The restrooms and pavilion were refurbished and a new playground installed at the front of the park with new fencing. We completed a major cleanup of the lake area.

■ We completed removal and replacement of crosstie walls at Sweat Mountain Park, Terrell Mill Tennis Center area and Oregon Park. We also removed 15 sets of crosstie steps at nine parks and replaced them with concrete steps and new handrails.

■ Attendance at the Mable House Barnes Amphitheatre increased by 40 percent and revenues were up during its fifth season. Meanwhile, the Encore Series at the Anderson Theatre gave Cobb residents another season of sold out performances and high-energy entertainment.

■ At the Lost Mountain Tennis Center, we resurfaced 12 courts and at Fair Oaks Tennis Center started renovating 12 courts in September. The renovation includes tennis court light upgrades.



Water and Environment

■ In November, the Board of Commissioners approved a \$365,400 program to replace the older restroom fixtures in county buildings with low-flow and waterless toilets. The program is estimated to save more than 13 million gallons of water and reduce the county's water bill by \$116,000 each year, meaning the program will eventually pay for itself.

■ The \$29 million Northwest Water Reclamation Facility expansion was completed, bringing an increase in plant treatment capacity to 12 million gallons per day. This project increases the county's total wastewater treatment capacity to 132 million gallons a day – a projection that would meet our needs through the year 2030.

■ We completed the design on the South Cobb Tunnel

and bids were accepted for the contracts during the last quarter of 2007. Construction will begin in 2008 on approximately six miles of a 27-foot diameter hard rock tunnel to provide for wastewater conveyance in the southern part of the county and flow equalization at the South Cobb Water Reclamation Facility. Construction completion is projected for 2013.

■ Cobb Water continued to receive honors and recognition for outstanding operations and community outreach programming. This year's operational awards included Wastewater Collection and Water Distribution System of the Year awards from the Georgia Association of Water Professionals and Gold and Platinum awards for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Compliance at three wastewater treatment facilities. The past year's program awards included the Georgia Association of Water Professionals Fox McCarthy Water Wise Award and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division Adopt-A-Stream in Action Award.

■ The Water System created a Water Restriction Message Center – a telephone help line where customers can leave a recorded message to request more information on drought conditions and water use restrictions or to report a concern about the water ban. Cobb Water customers can call 770-419-6278, 24 hours a day, seven days a week to leave a message.



Celebrating 175 Years of Service



In 1832, Cobb was one of 10 northwest Georgia counties formed from Cherokee Indian lands. This past year marked our 175th Anniversary as a thriving community and we celebrated in numerous ways.

We held a birthday party in December at the new Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, giving the public free tickets for a variety show with hundreds of local performers. It was rebroadcast on TV23 and on our Web site cobbcounty.org.

This past year we implemented our first historic marker program. We completed 12 of the original marker sites and continue to make progress on the remaining eight locations. Also, we updated our Historic Resources Survey, which is an evaluation of our historic structures and archeological resources.

Our government access channel TV23 broadcast a weekly history program featuring Dan Cox, founder of the Marietta Museum of History, interviewing various local personalities. The guests include former County Chairman Phil Secrist, former State Sen. Chuck Clay and Kennesaw State University history professor Tom Scott.

The Art Place-Mountain View won the Georgia Assembly of Community Arts Agencies Kaleidoscope Award for Outstanding Community Programming in the Arts in 2007. The winning “Hands of Time” program, viewed by more than 600 adults and children, included molds made of more than 15 senior adults hands, their photos and stories of growing up in Cobb County.

Throughout the year, Senior Services hosted historical lectures and presentations for the public. It also produced a calendar featuring Cobb historic sites, with funds going to support senior programs.

In association with local Convention & Visitors Bureaus and historic organizations, we completed the historic driving tour brochure. This resource provides the opportunity to discover the numerous sites and landmarks that highlight the unique past of our community.



Remarks from the County Manager



David Hankerson, County Manager

With each passing year, Cobb County employees remain dedicated to providing the extraordinary level of service our residents and elected officials have come to expect. These quality workers are always willing to step up and accomplish the priorities of our community.

Because of their work and the leadership of the Board of Commissioners, we remain in a good position despite the economic slow down. County revenues were down substantially due to a downturn in residential and commercial development resulting in a decrease in building permits and other related revenue sources while demand for government services increased. Thanks to tight expenditure controls and the efforts of our employees, the county was

able to close out the year with a modest budget surplus compared to other years.

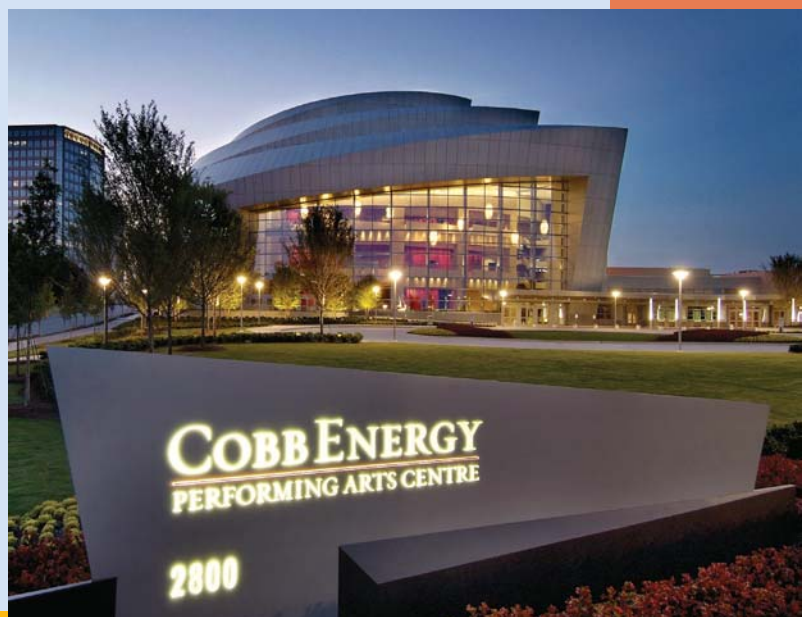
The quality of our government personnel is important to keeping Cobb County running well. We focus on recruiting talented and energized professionals to be a part of our team while also encouraging ongoing training for our employees. Some key areas we focused on in 2007 included enhanced training and essential equipment for public safety, transportation and water. These and other proactive efforts throughout the county have shown positive results for our community.

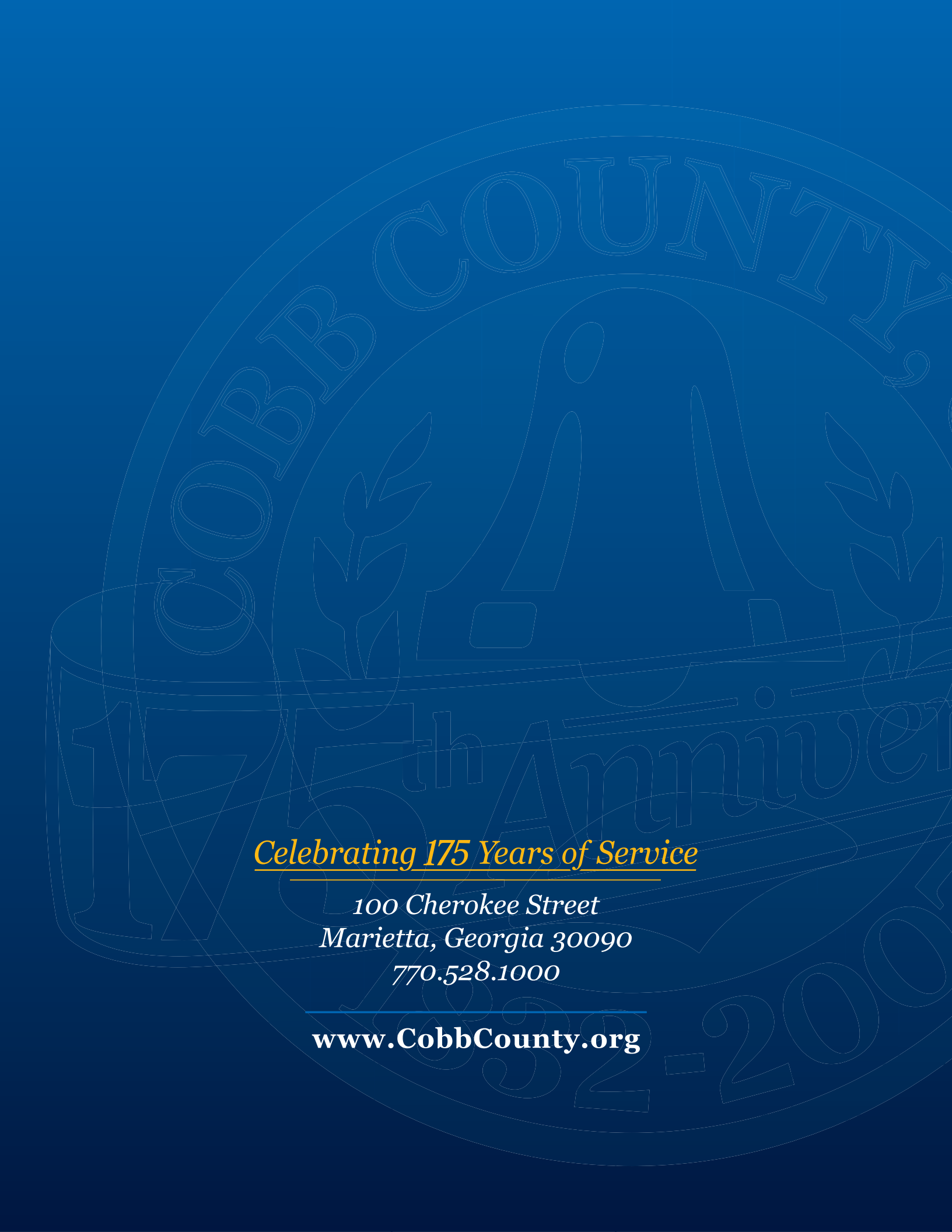
Projects funded through the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax are proceeding as scheduled and funding is coming in as projected. The ongoing \$40 million parks bonds approved by voters in 2006, continues on target.

Once again, we have earned the distinction of being awarded three “Triple A” ratings in general government and the Water System by the nation’s top bond rating agencies.

Overall, we have had a great year thanks to Cobb County employees and our elected officials. Their work will continue to be an important part of our success on behalf of the community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Hankerson".





Celebrating 175 Years of Service

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