

Population Estimates for the Atlanta Region: Steady and Ready to Grow

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The Highlights

- The 10-county Atlanta region is now home to 4,480,100 in 2017, up from 4,401,800 in 2016. From April 1, 2016 to April 1, 2017 the region **added 78,300 new residents**. This represents the largest single-year increase since 2007-2008. The Atlanta region's 2017 population is larger than that of 24 states.
- From 2016 to 2017, **Fulton added 17,100 new residents**, the largest single-year growth in the region. Next were Gwinnett with 16,900 new residents, Cobb with 12,800 new residents, and Cherokee with 7,300 new residents.
- The City of Atlanta, too, is experiencing continued impressive growth. Again fueled by a boom in multi-family development, **the city added 9,900 new residents between 2016 and 2017**, the largest single-year estimated population increase since the Great Recession.
- In 2016, there were **over 27,100 new residential units permitted in the 10-county region**, which was almost 5,000 more than the number permitted in 2015, and the highest annual performance of the decade. Still, current building permit activity for the 10-county region is quite a bit lower than pre-recession permit levels.

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	Average Annual Change 2010-2017	Average Annual Change 1990-2010
Atlanta Region	1,500,823	1,896,182	2,557,800	3,429,379	4,107,750	4,332,600	4,401,800	4,480,100	53,193	77,498
Cherokee	31,059	51,699	91,000	141,903	214,346	233,300	240,100	247,400	4,722	6,167
Clayton	98,126	150,357	184,100	236,517	259,424	266,900	270,600	275,300	2,268	3,766
Cobb	196,793	297,718	453,400	607,751	688,078	727,600	737,500	750,300	8,889	11,734
DeKalb	415,387	483,024	553,800	665,865	691,893	718,400	725,000	733,900	6,001	6,905
Douglas	28,659	54,573	71,700	92,174	132,403	137,400	139,000	140,900	1,214	3,035
Fayette	11,364	29,043	62,800	91,263	106,567	110,700	112,300	114,000	1,062	2,188
Fulton	605,210	589,904	670,800	816,006	920,581	970,400	985,700	1,002,800	11,746	12,489
Gwinnett	72,349	166,808	356,500	588,448	805,321	859,800	877,100	894,000	12,668	22,441
Henry	23,724	36,309	59,200	119,341	203,922	218,700	223,600	229,000	3,583	7,236
Rockdale	18,152	36,747	54,500	70,111	85,215	89,400	90,900	92,500	1,041	1,536
City of Atlanta	495,039	424,922	415,200	416,474	420,003	431,700	439,600	449,500	4,214	240

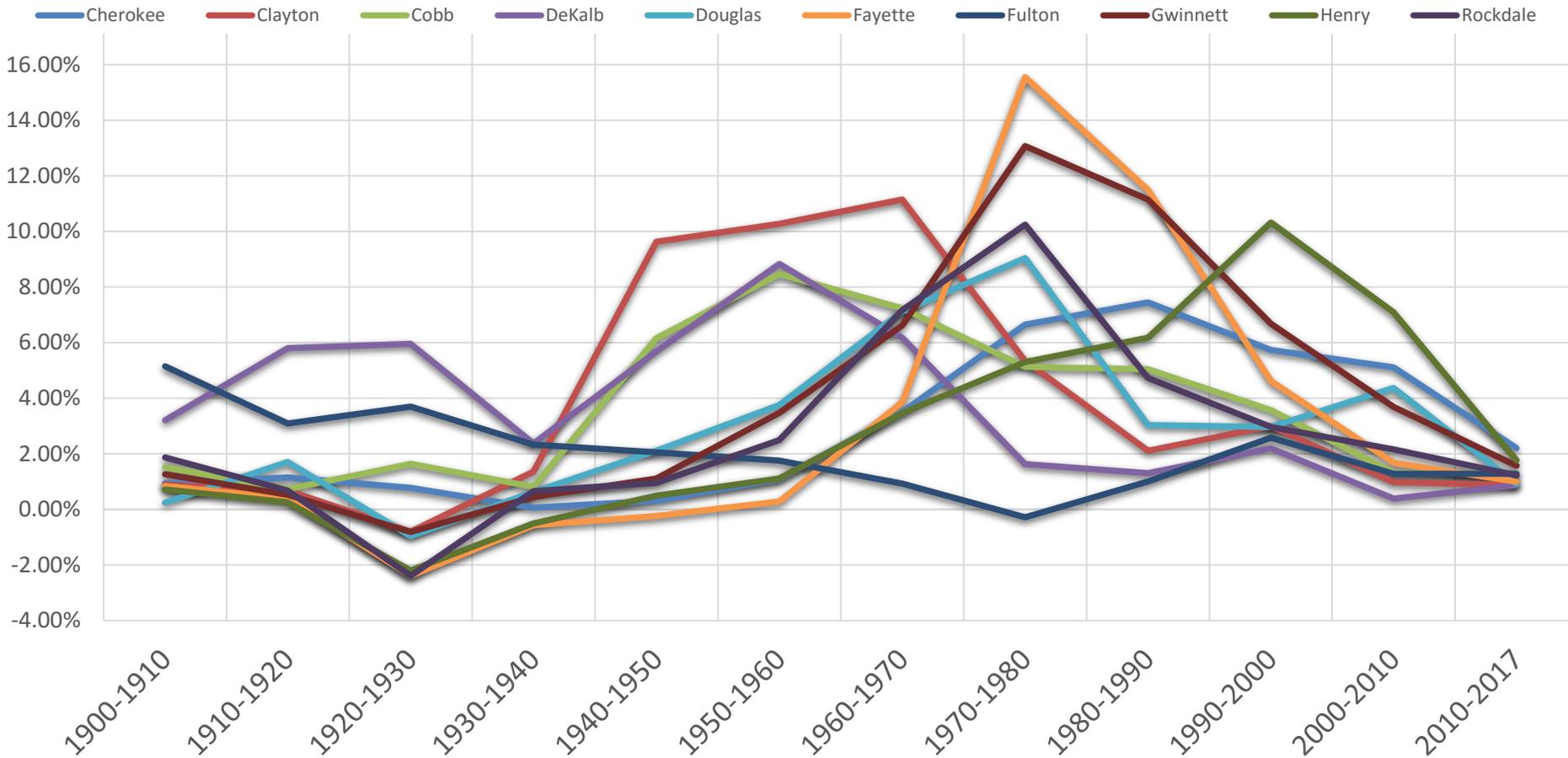
While the Atlanta region added more than 78,000 new residents over the past year, the average growth for this decade still lags the average annual growth of the previous two decades. Still, the 78,000 population growth is slightly more than the annual average from 1990-2010.

Population Estimates: Fulton Leads the Region in Growth

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	Average Annual Change 2010- 2017	Average Annual Change 1990- 2010
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Fulton County added the most new residents last year, up just over 17,000. This surpasses the annual average growth seen over the past three decades. Gwinnett County, up 16,900, has been the overall leader in population growth for the past 20 years.

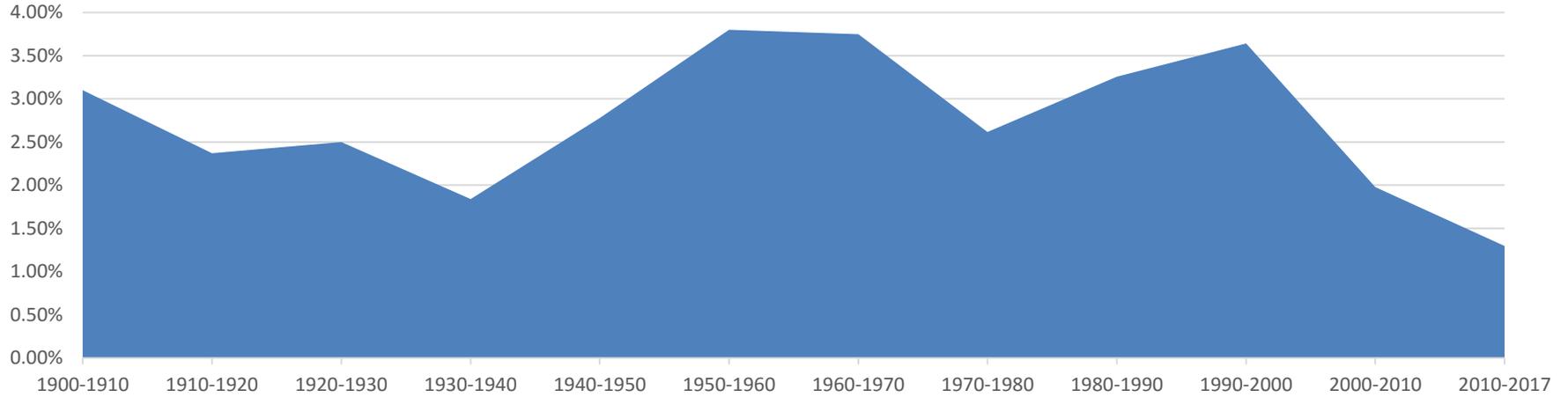
Peak Growth: Look at Growth By Decade



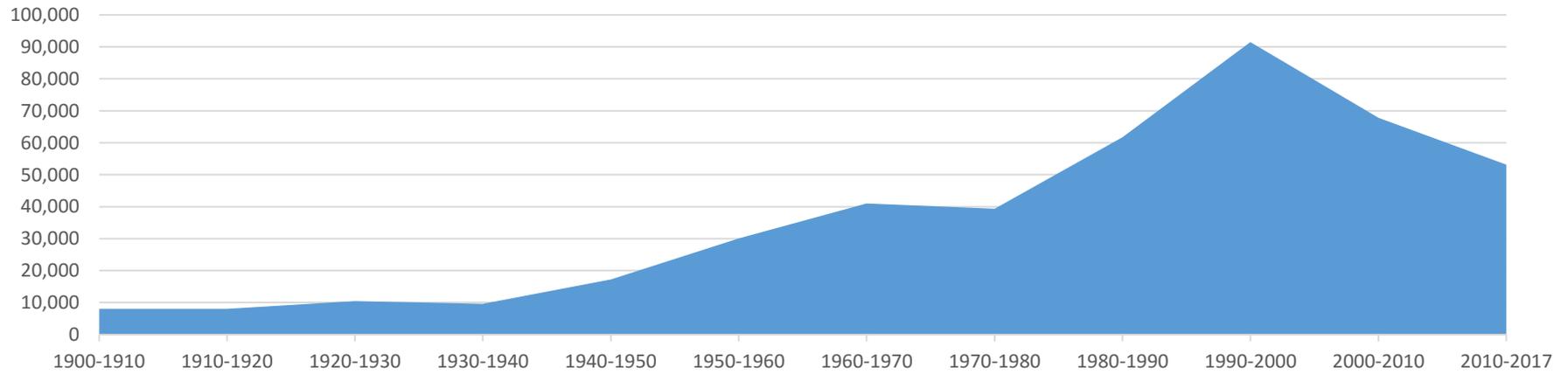
Different jurisdictions had their “growth spurt” at different times. Fulton, for example, had its largest annual percent change during the 1910s, while Henry had its peak growth during the 1990s.

Population Growth Through the Decades

Average Annual PERCENT Change by Decade - ARC 10 County Area

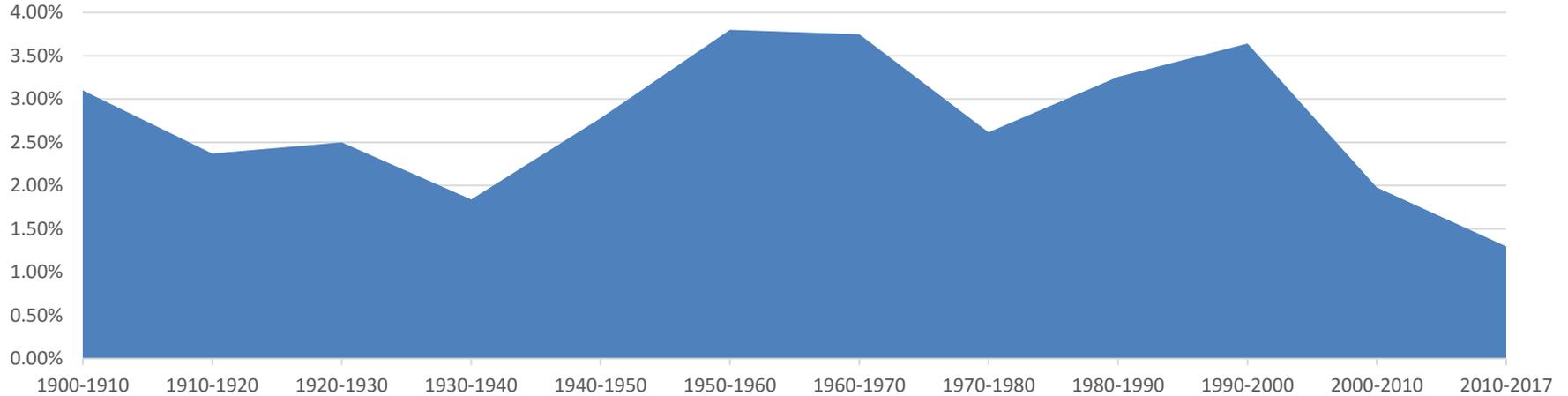


Average Annual RAW Change by Decade - ARC 10 County Area

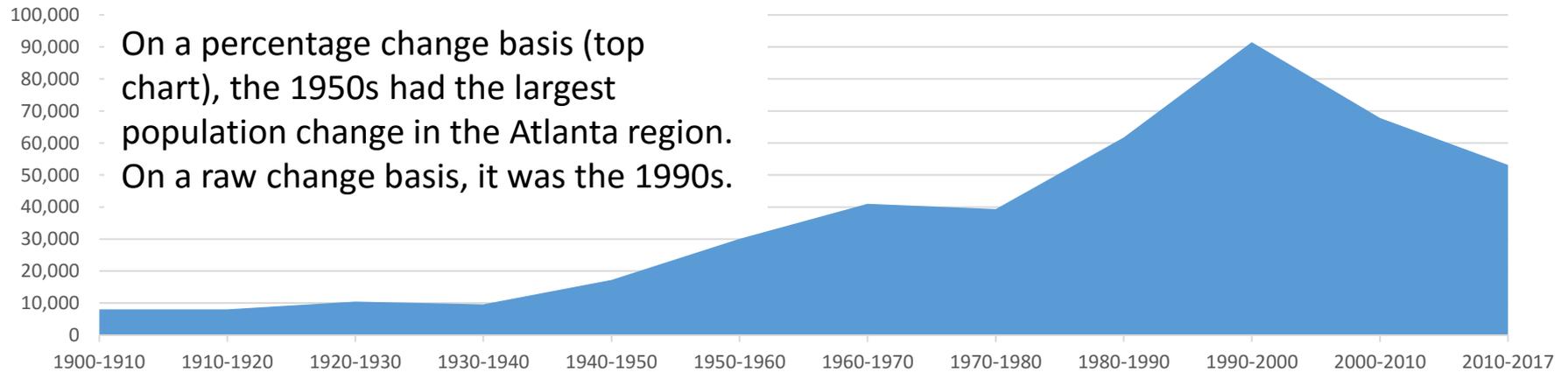


Population Growth Through the Decades

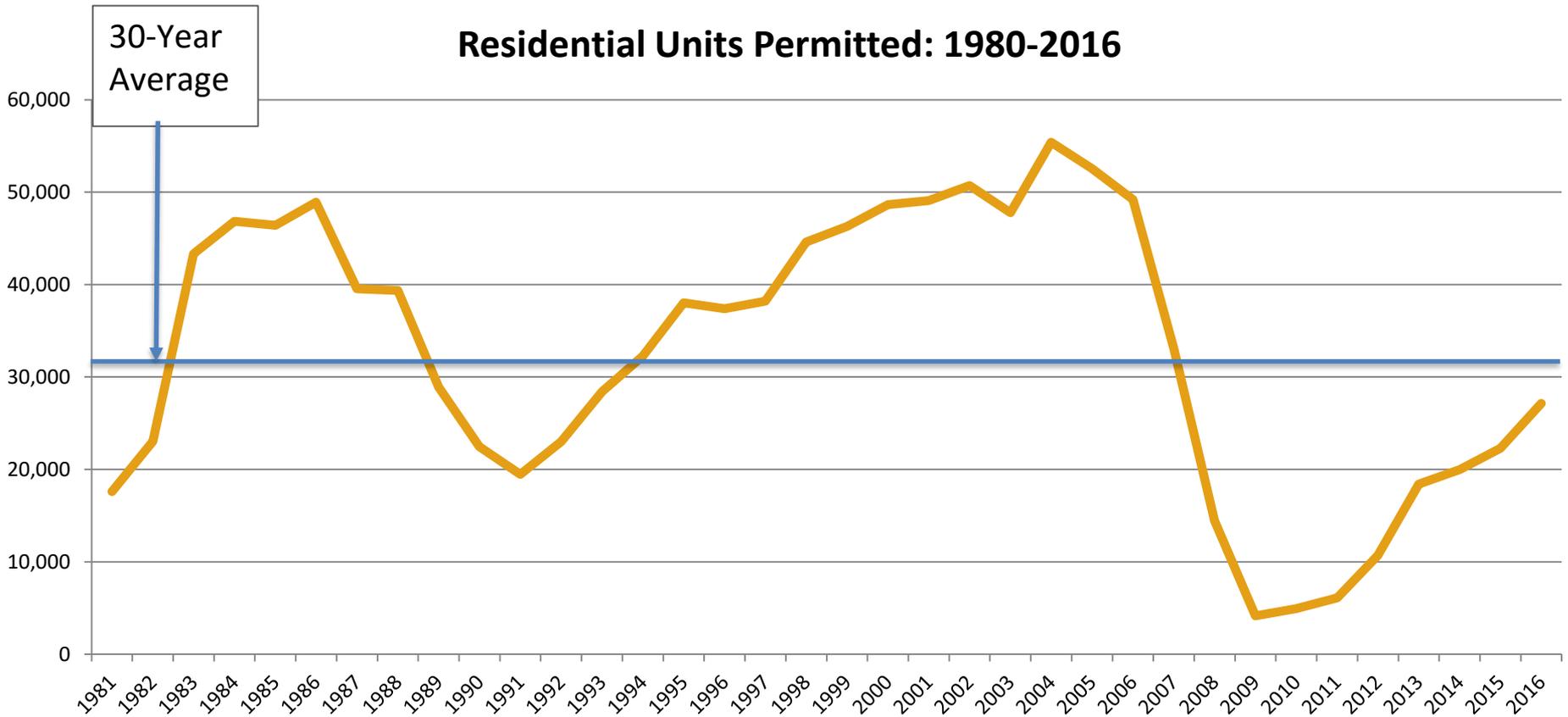
Average Annual PERCENT Change by Decade - ARC 10 County Area



Average Annual RAW Change by Decade - ARC 10 County Area



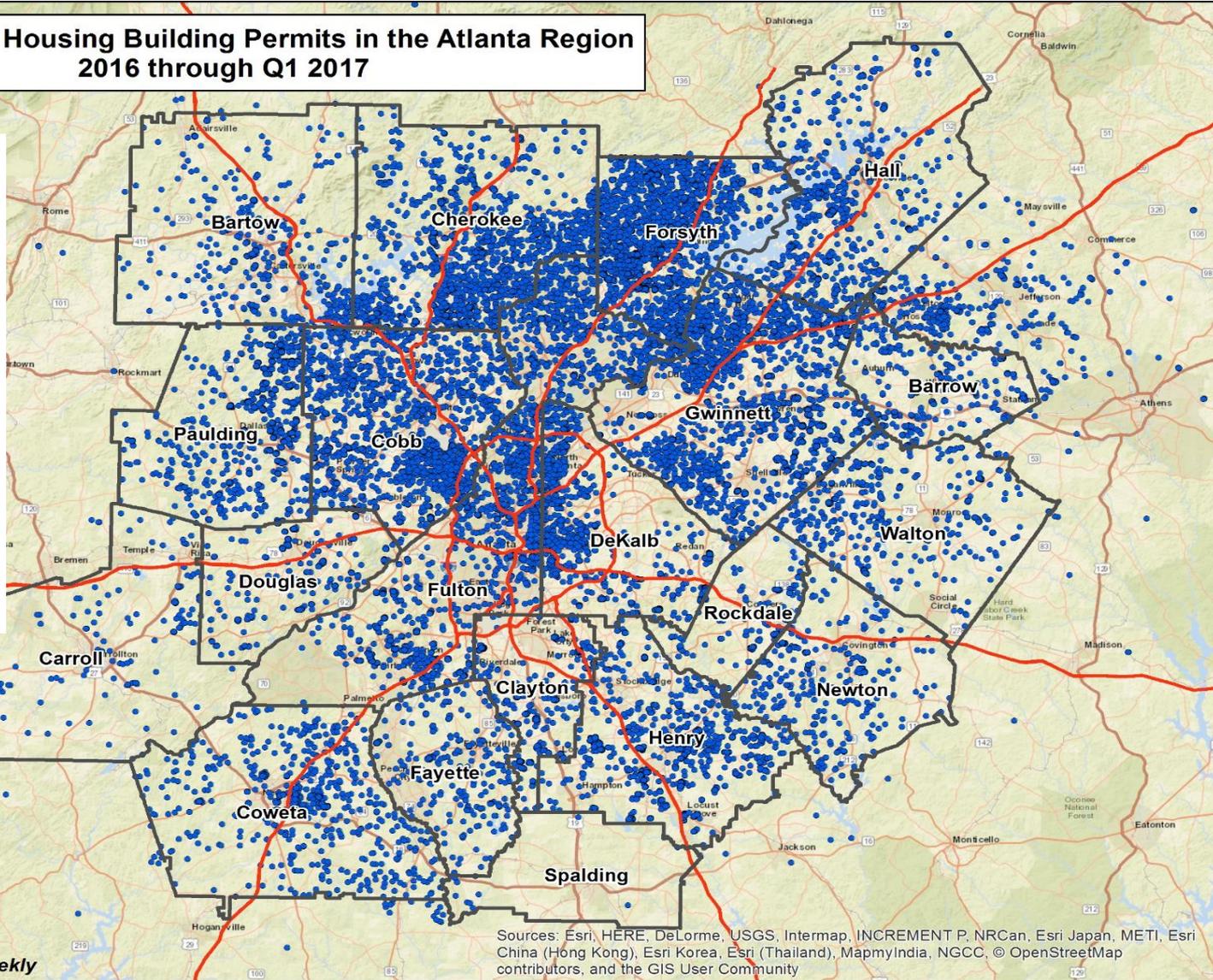
Number of Units Permitted Getting Closer to Historical Average



Building permit activity is recovering from the near-record lows of the late 2000s and early years of this decade. Between 1980 and 2016, the 10-county Atlanta region averaged roughly 32,000 residential units permitted each year. In 2016, that number was about 27,100, an increase of 5,000 permitted units from 2015 levels.

Where Growth is Going—Single-Family

Single Family Housing Building Permits in the Atlanta Region
2016 through Q1 2017



Data Source: HB Weekly

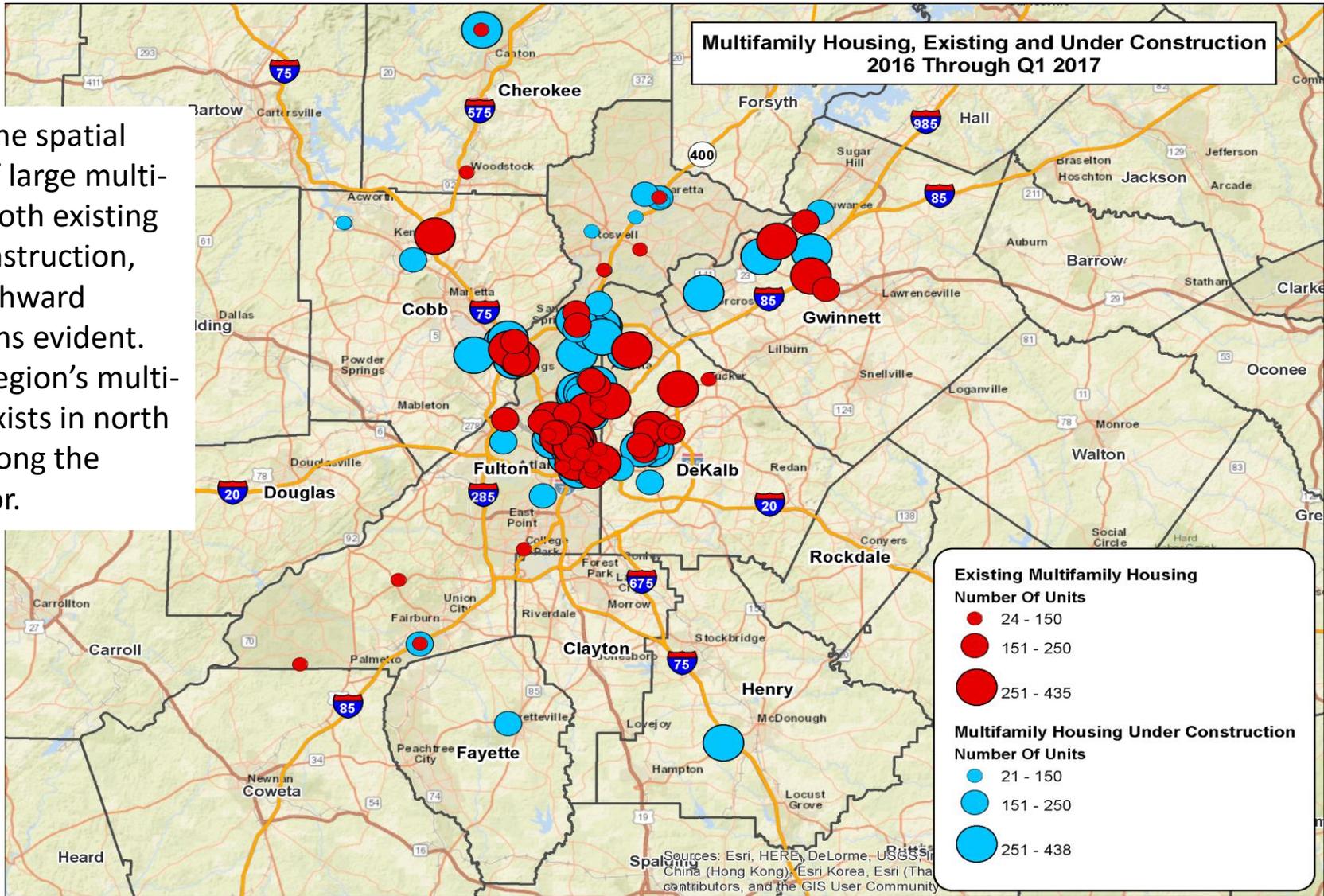
Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, NGCC, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

In looking at the spatial distribution of single-family building permits issued since 2016, the map shows that the majority of permit activity is occurring in the northern parts of the region, although many permits for single-family units are located with the I-285 perimeter.

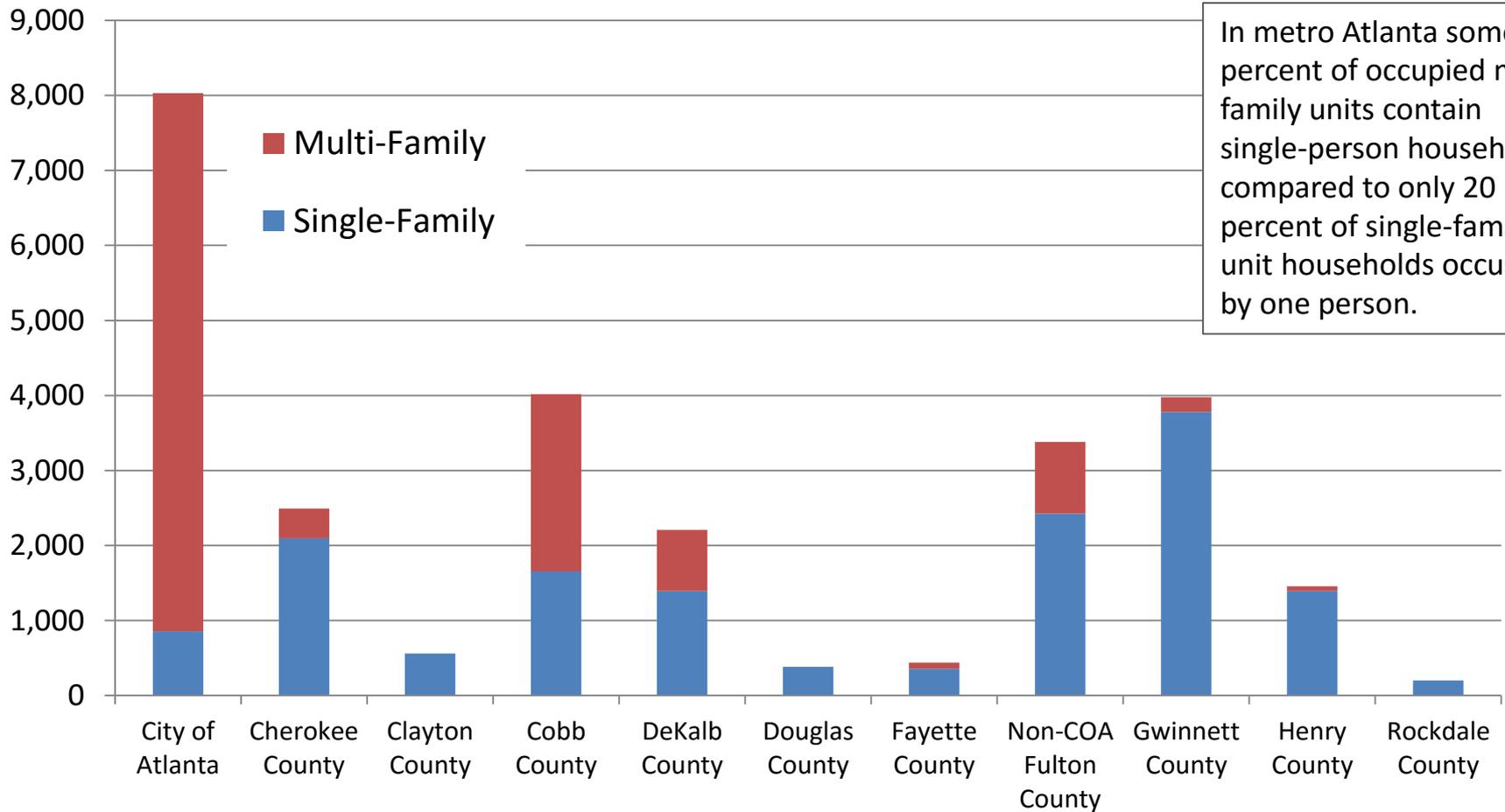


Where Growth is Going--Multifamily

In looking at the spatial distribution of large multifamily units, both existing and under construction, the same northward pattern remains evident. Much of the region's multifamily stock exists in north Atlanta and along the GA400 corridor.



Units Permitted By Jurisdiction, 2016

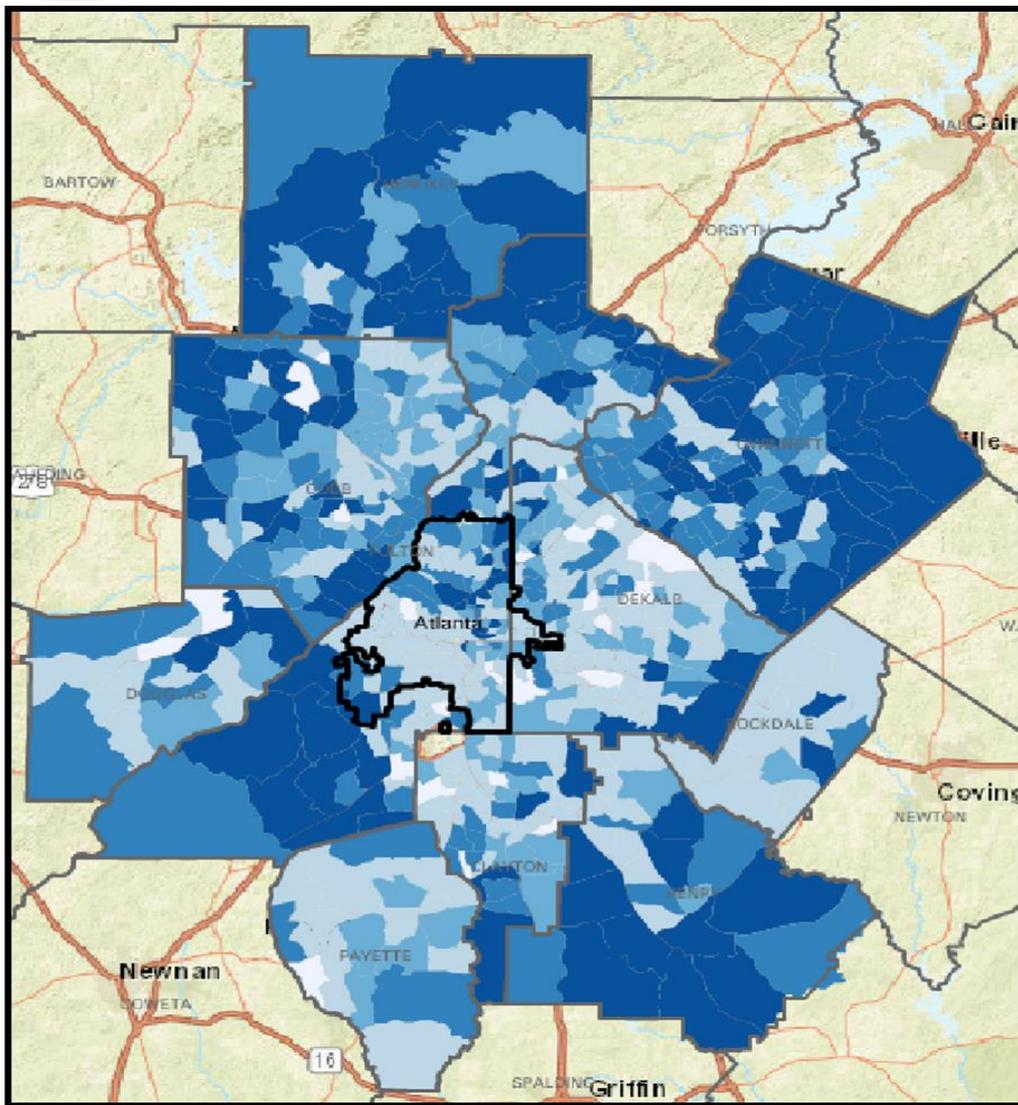


In metro Atlanta some 43 percent of occupied multi-family units contain single-person households, compared to only 20 percent of single-family unit households occupied by one person.

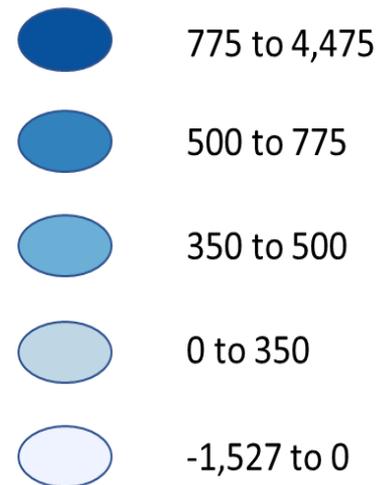
The City of Atlanta issued permits for approximately 8,000 units, the vast majority of which are for multi-family. As the chart shows, this is around double the permit activity experienced in any other jurisdiction for 2016.



Where Growth is Going--Totals

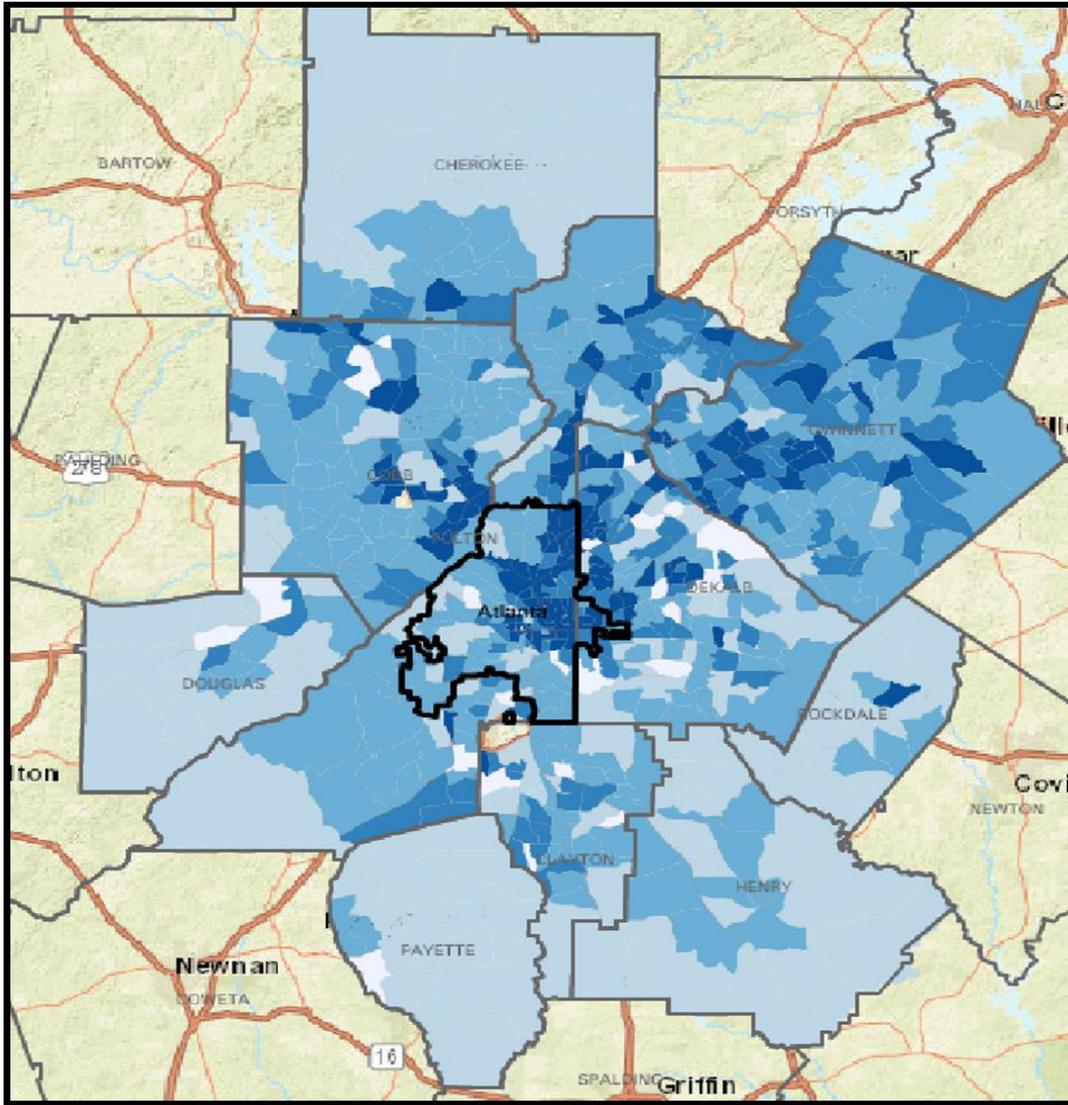


Total Population Change:
2010 to 2017

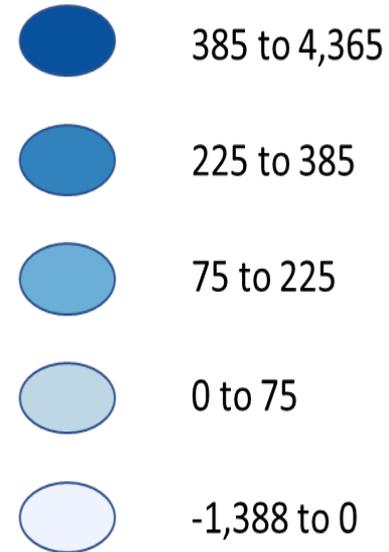


Using ESRI's small-area (Census Tracts) population estimates for 2017, we can see that on a raw change basis, many of the outlying areas – where the census tracts are larger – added the most new residents since 2010.

Where Growth is Going--Density



Total Population Change, Per Square Mile (Densification):
2010 to 2017



This map looks at population change per square mile, so this measures densification change. Here we see that many neighborhoods within the City of Atlanta had the largest changes on per square mile basis.