

# METRO ATLANTA SPEAKS



*Perceptions of Life in Metro Atlanta*

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## Transportation stays the #1 concern, with a greater share over 2017

### Transit support remains strong

- **50 percent** of respondents would be **willing to pay more in taxes to expand public transit**
- **Nearly 48 percent** of respondents chose “**expand public transit**” as the **best long-term fix to traffic challenges**, which is the highest percentage in the five years of asking this question

### Economy is getting better and better

- **Drops to 6%** as biggest problem, down from 24% in 2013

### Economy not improving for everyone equally

- **Some 26 percent** of respondents would **struggle paying for an unexpected financial emergency of \$400**
- **Almost 17 percent** of respondents reported that they **skip meals due to lack of money**

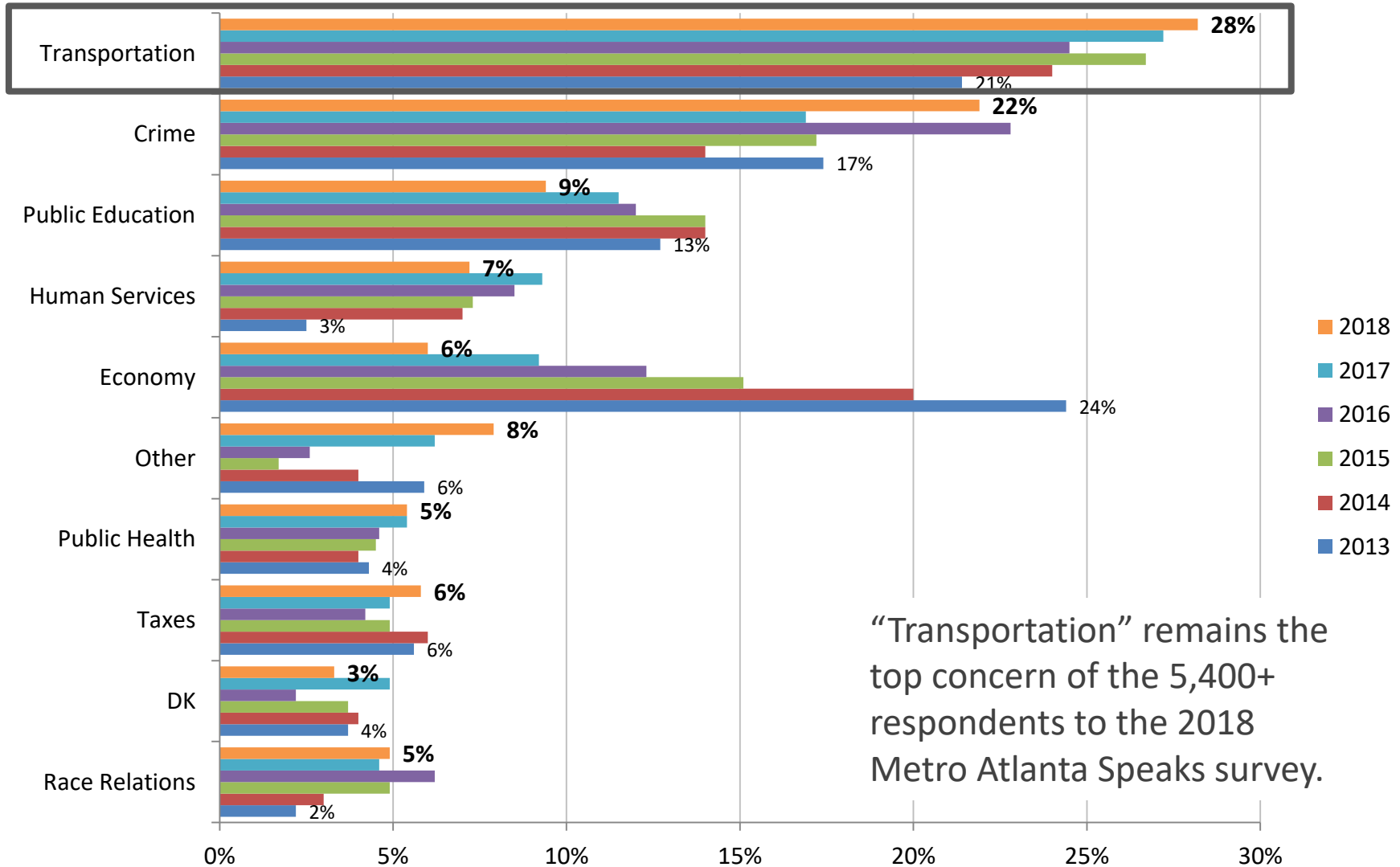
### Concern over crime jumps back up

- In 2017, only 17 percent chose Crime as the #1 concern. **Jumped back up to 22% in 2018** (on par with 2016).

### Housing Affordability a major concern

# *Transportation*

# Biggest Problem Facing Residents of Metro Atlanta 2013-2018



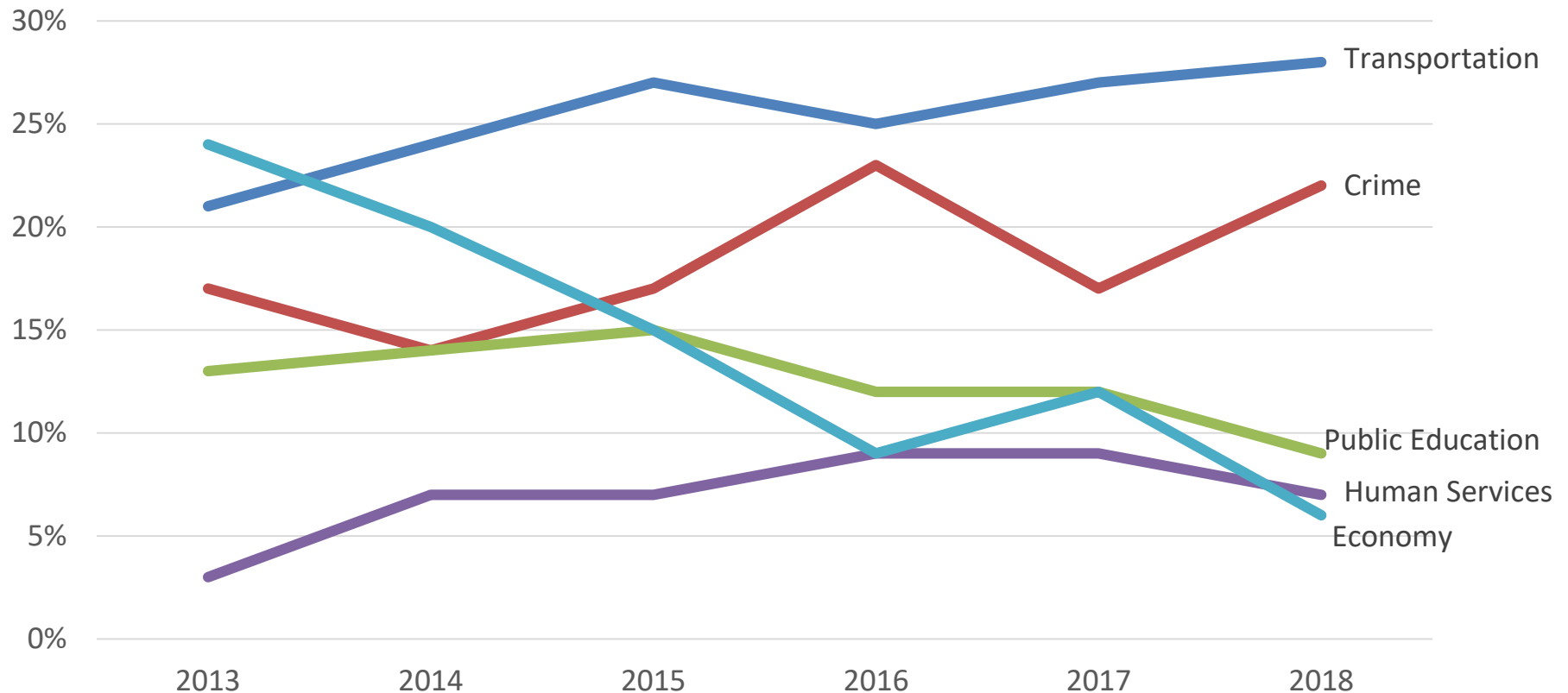
“Transportation” remains the top concern of the 5,400+ respondents to the 2018 Metro Atlanta Speaks survey.

# Most Likely to Say that Transportation is the #1 Issue?

- Residents of Cherokee, Gwinnett, and Cobb
- Males
- White Respondents
- Younger residents (18-34)
- Those with at least a bachelor's degree
- Those with higher incomes

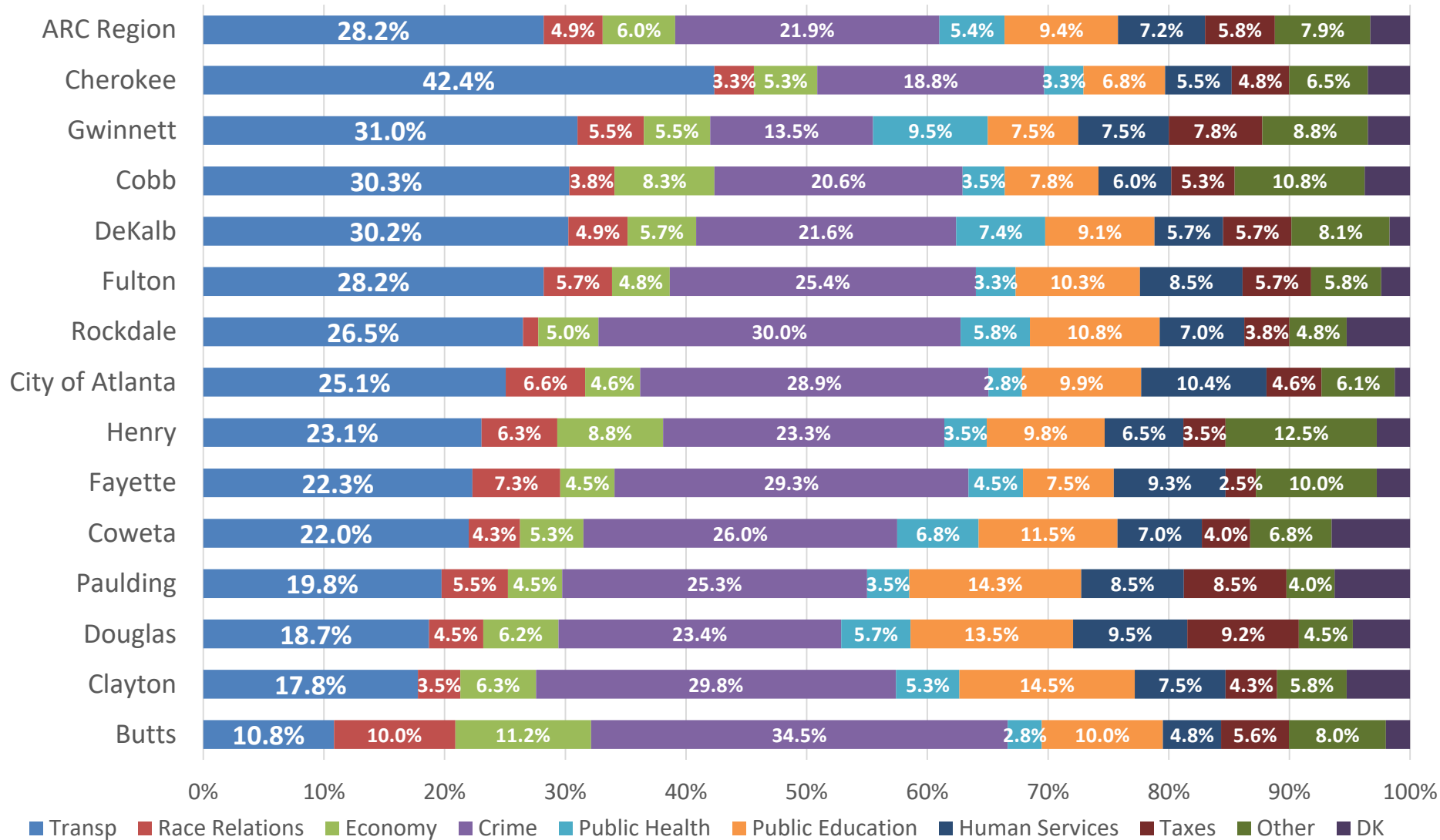


# Change in Perceptions of the Region's Biggest Problem – 2013-2018

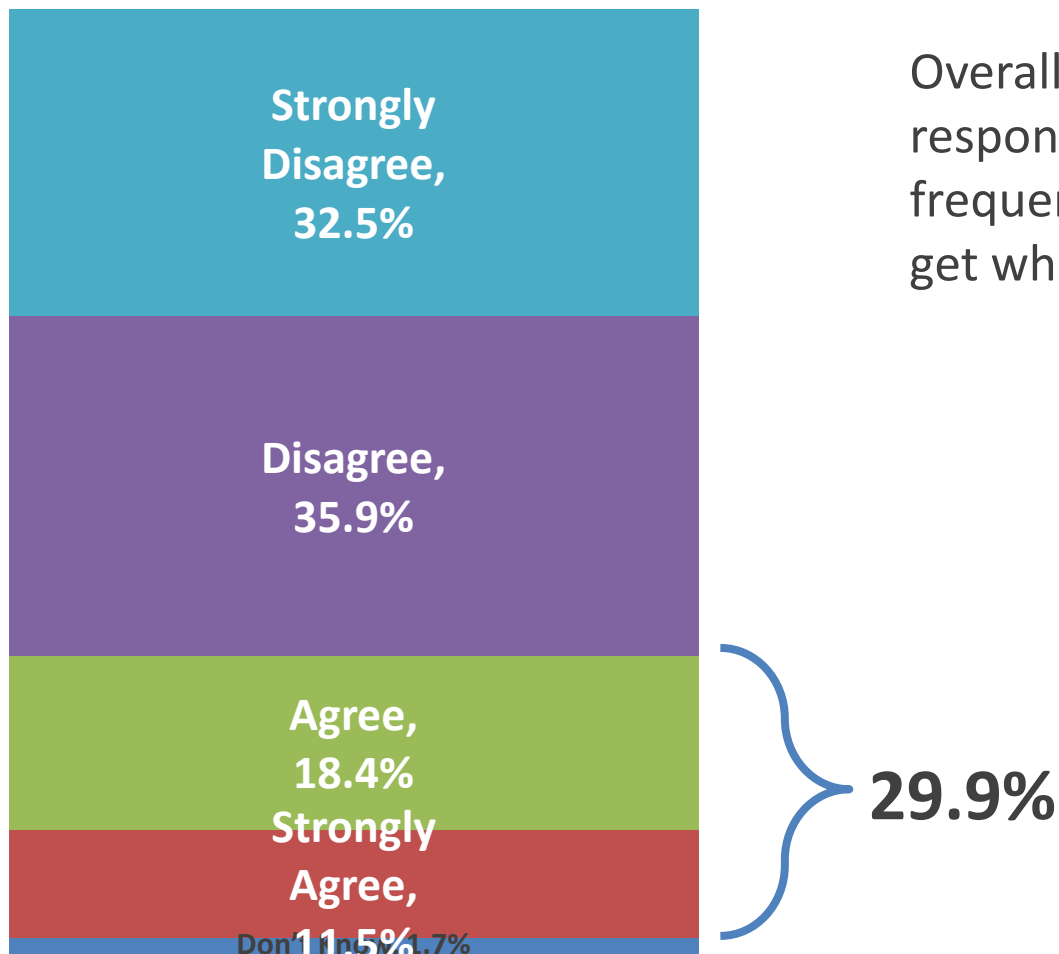


While “transportation” has remained the top concern for the last four years, the decline of “economy” as a concern has been the biggest change over the history of the survey. In 2013, almost 25 percent of respondents chose “economy” as the top concern. This year, only six percent chose economy – the same percentage as those choosing “taxes.”

# Biggest Problem for Metro Atlanta, by Jurisdiction (2018, Sorted by "Transportation" Responses)



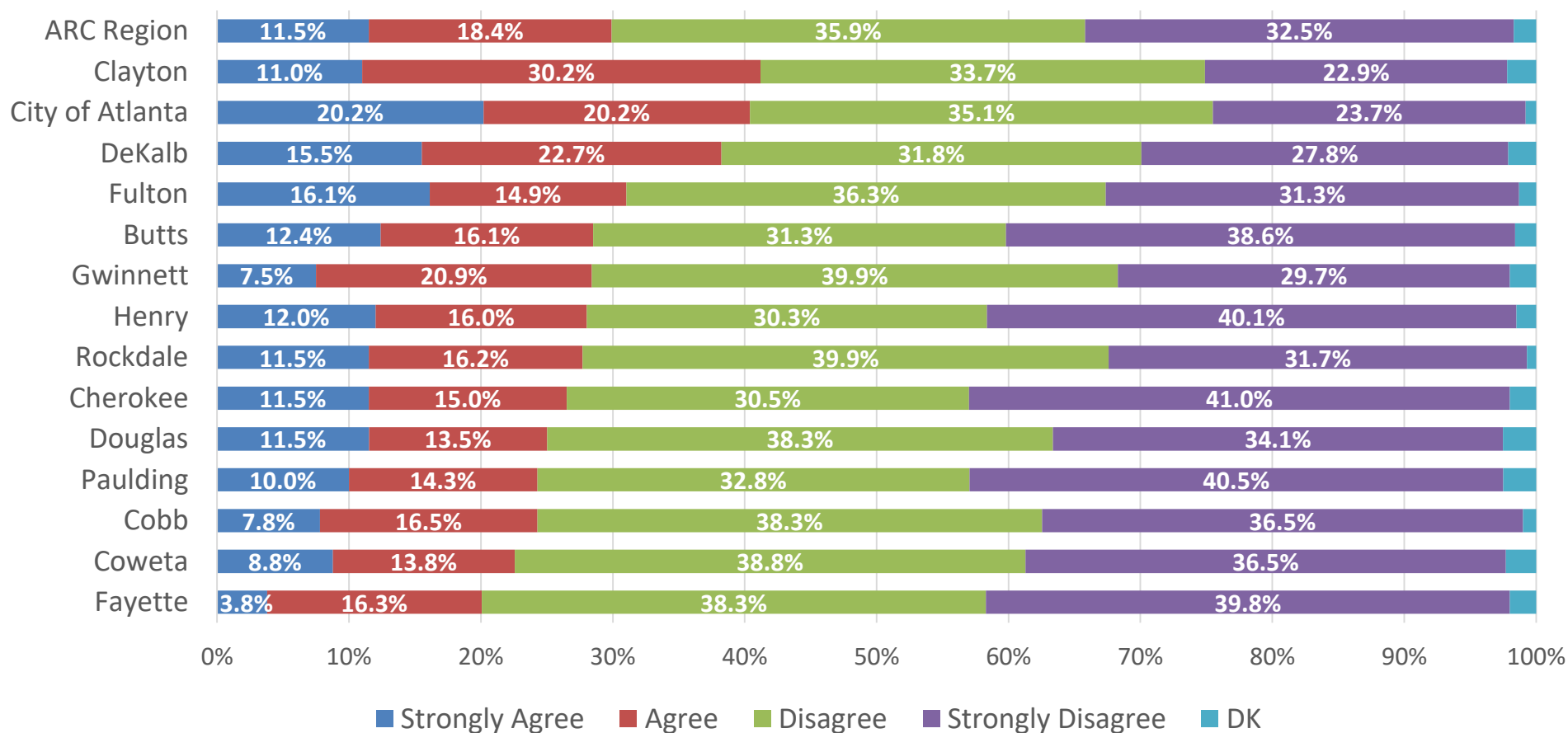
# "I Frequently Lack Transportation to Get to Places I Need to Go..." (2018)



Overall, roughly 30 percent of respondents indicated that they frequently lack transportation to get where they need to go.



# "I Frequently Lack Transportation to Get to Places I Need to Go..." by Jurisdiction, 2018 (Sorted by Strongly Agree + Agree Responses)



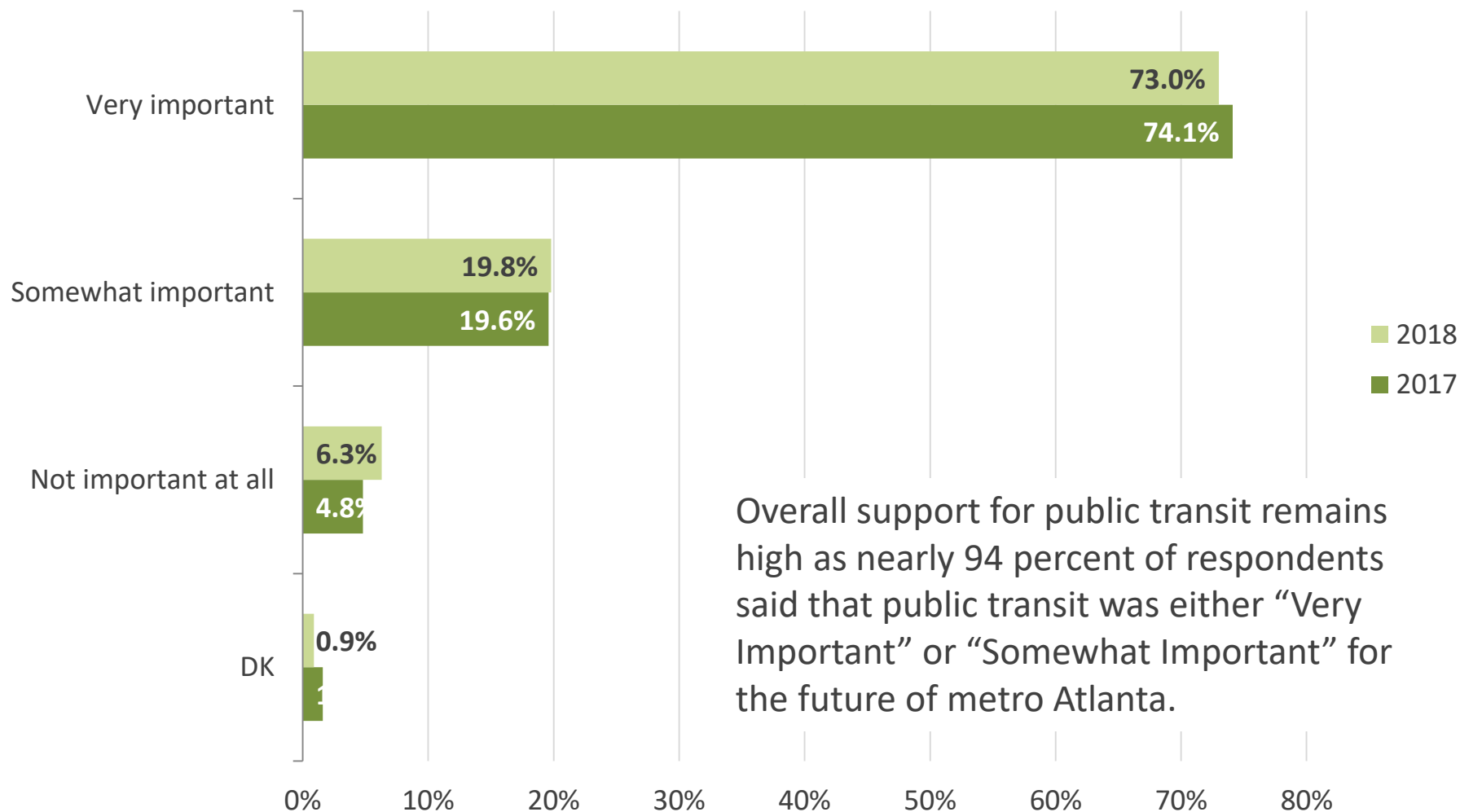
Overall, roughly 30 percent of respondents indicated that they frequently lack transportation to get where they need to go, but in jurisdictions like Clayton County (41.2%), the City of Atlanta (40.4%), and DeKalb County (38.2%), those percentages are significantly higher.

# Most Likely to Indicate Having Problems with Accessing Needed Transportation...

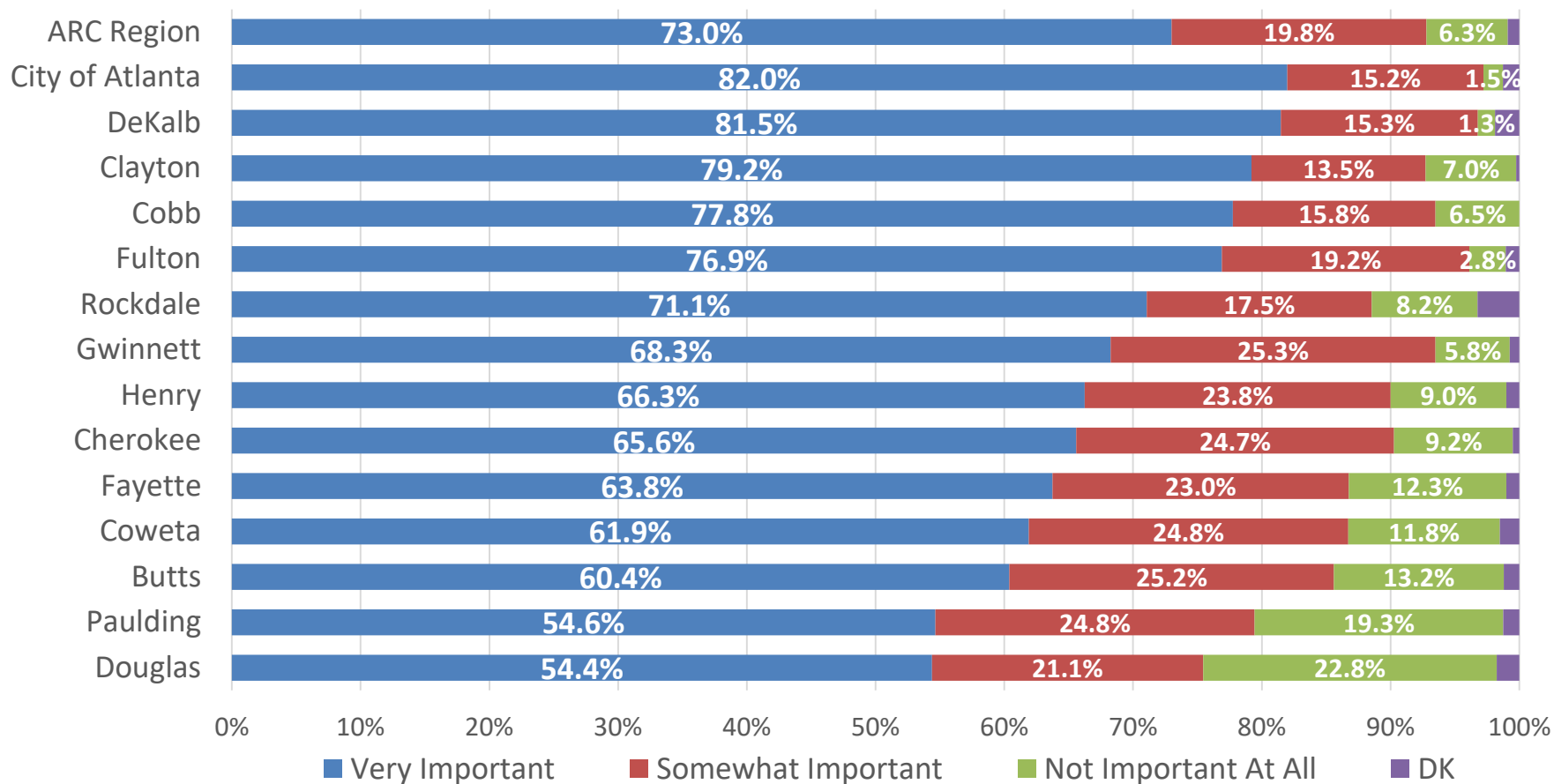
- Residents of the City of Atlanta, Clayton, and DeKalb
- Boomers and Seniors
- Those with lower levels of education
- Black and Latino Respondents



# Importance of Public Transit (2017-2018)

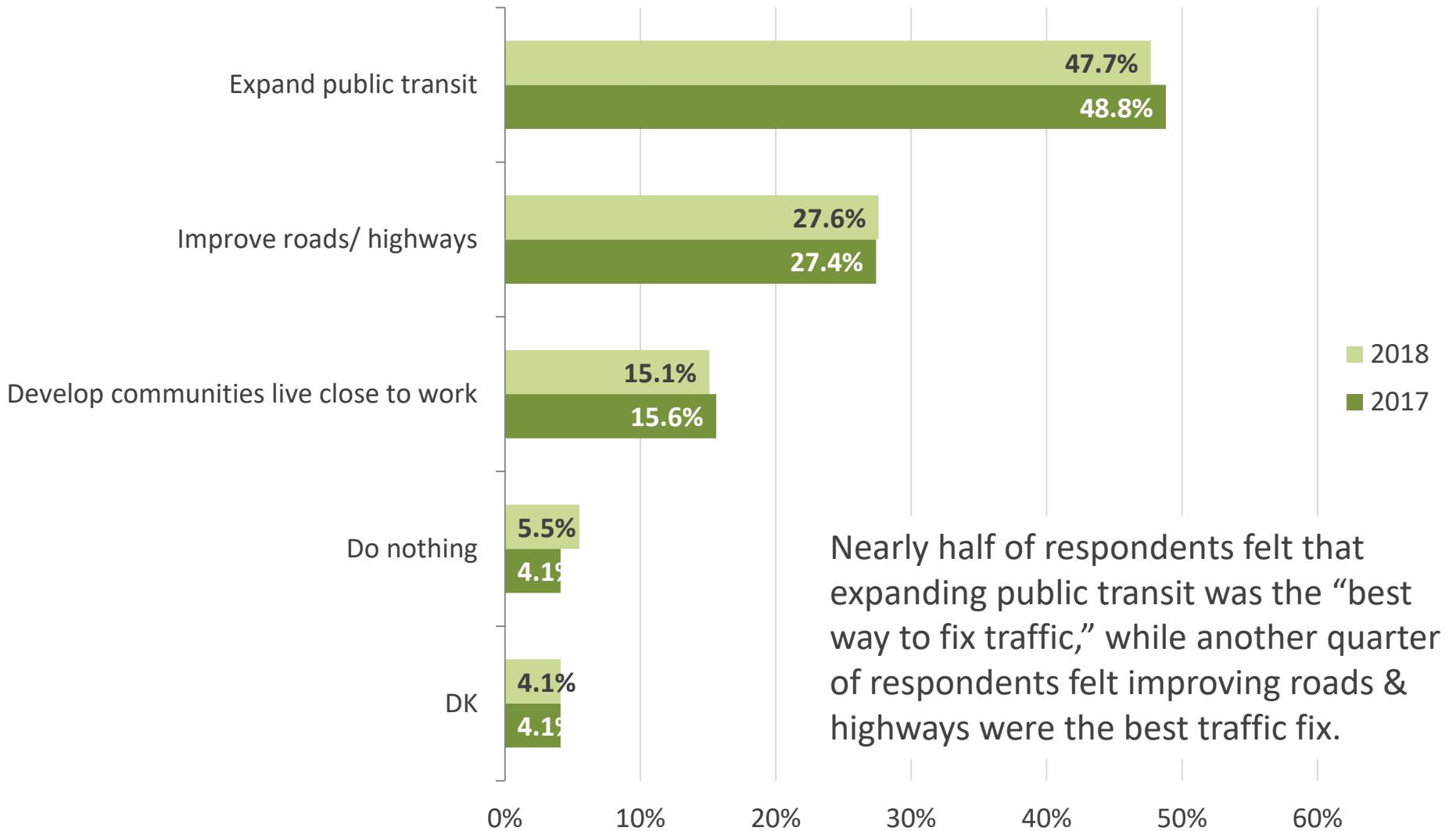


# Importance of Public Transit to the Region (2018)

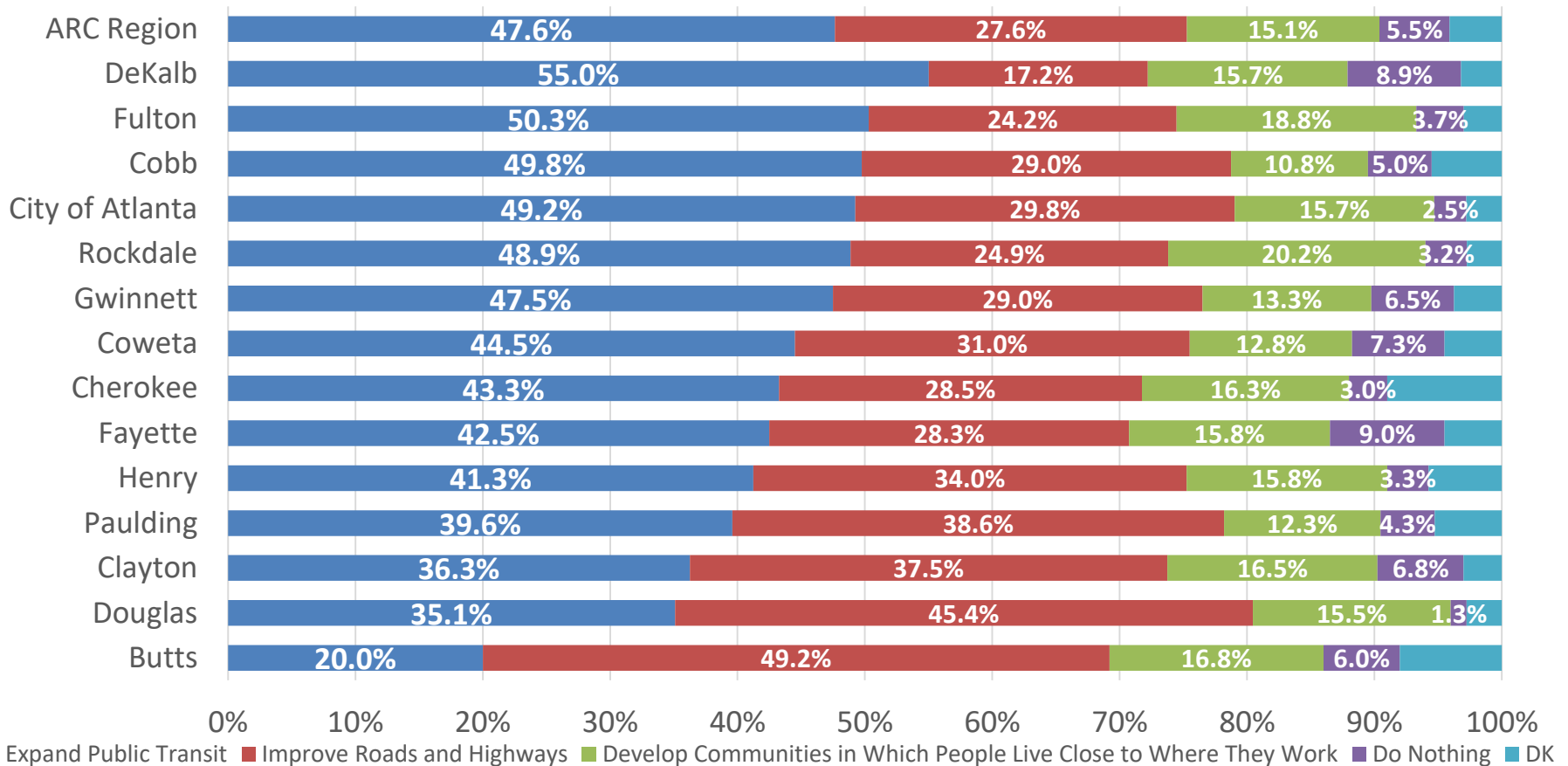


73 percent of respondents indicated that public transit was “very important” to the region, but in jurisdictions like the City of Atlanta (82%) and DeKalb County (81.5%), those percentages are significantly higher.

# Best Way to Fix Traffic? (2017-2018)



# Best Long-term Solution to Traffic? (2018)



Nearly half of respondents indicated that expanding public transit is the best long-term solution to traffic, with most of the region's counties following the same trend. However, nearly half of the respondents from Butts (49.2%) and Douglas (45.4%) counties, felt improving roads and highways was the best long-term solution.

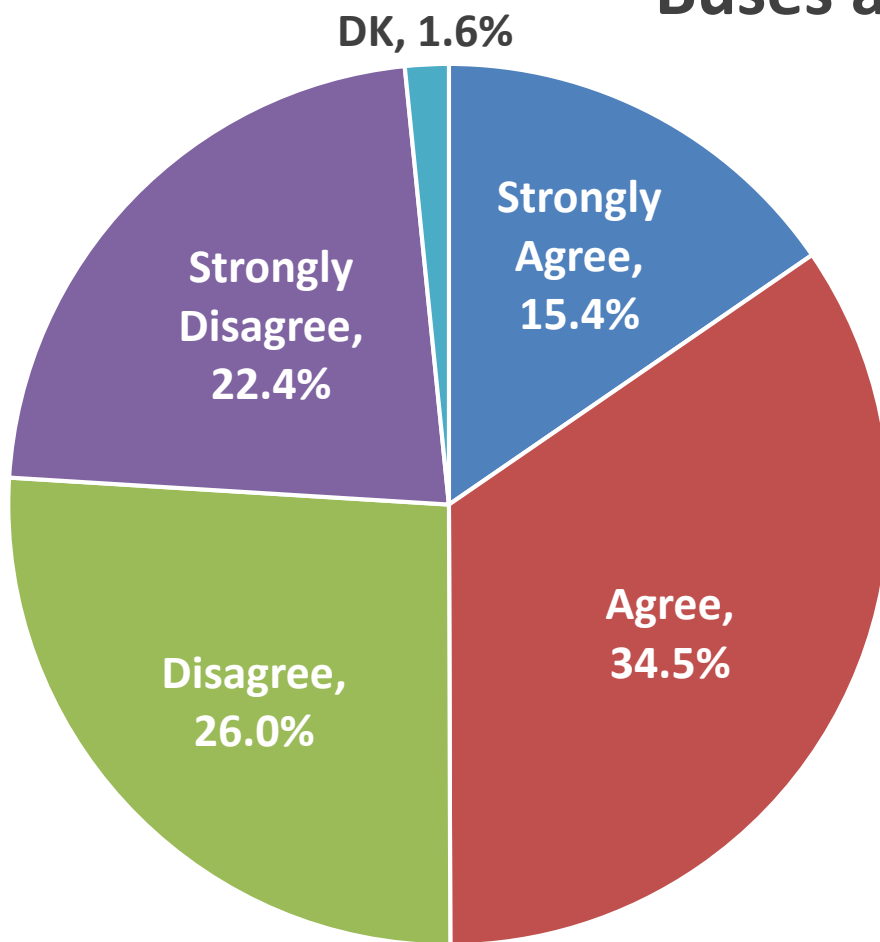
# Most Likely to Indicate “Expanding Public Transit” as the Best Long-Term Fix to Traffic Problems...

- Residents of City of Atlanta, DeKalb, and Clayton
- Females
- Minorities
- Those in Labor Force
- Higher Educational Attainment





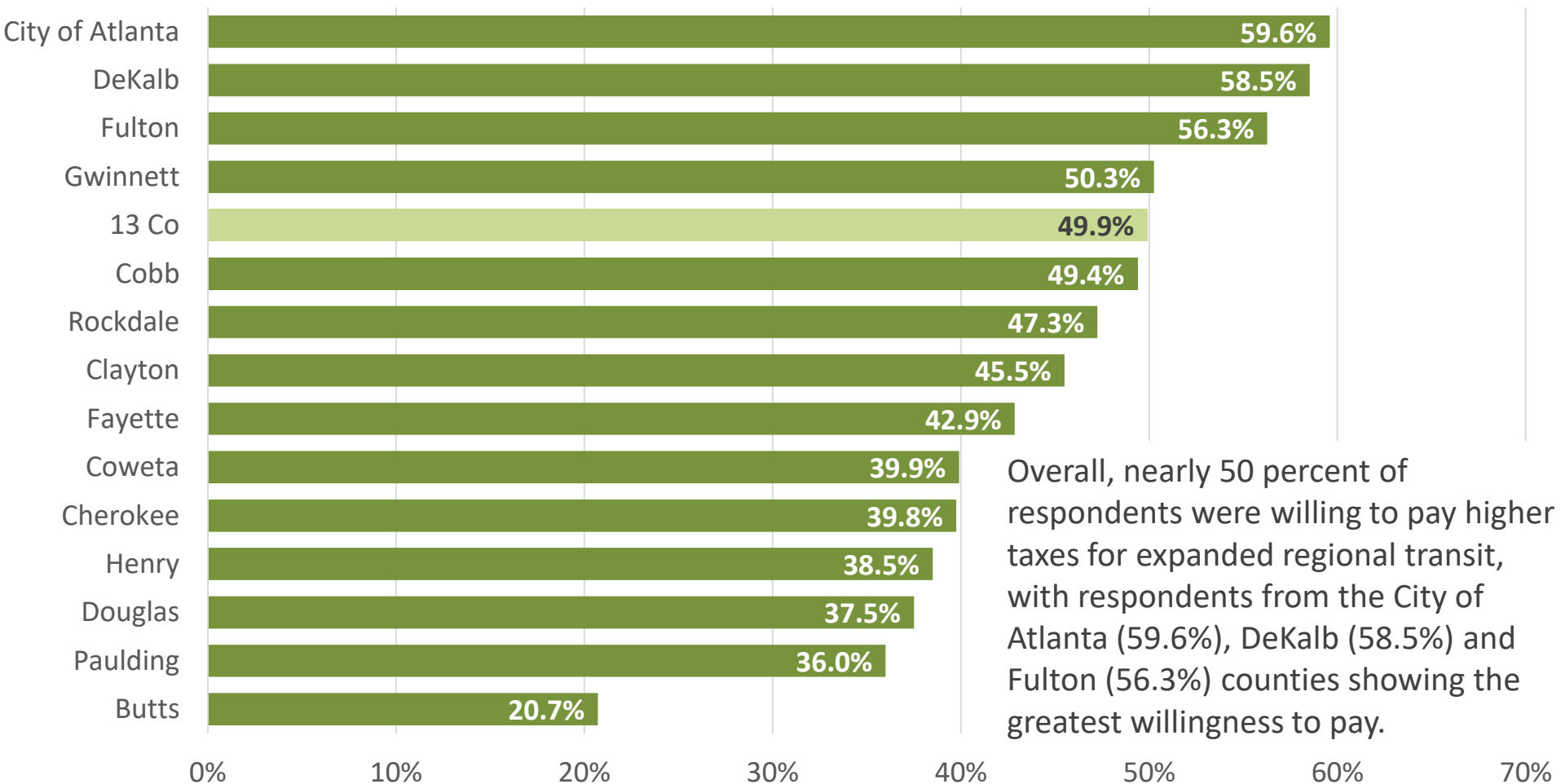
## “I am Willing to Pay More in Taxes to Fund Expanded Regional Public Transit that Includes Buses and Rail.” (2018)



Almost half of respondents indicated that they are willing to pay more in taxes to expand public transit that includes buses and rail.



# “I am Willing to Pay More in Taxes to Fund Expanded Regional Public Transit that Includes Buses and Rail.” (2018, Strongly Agree or Agree, by Jurisdiction)



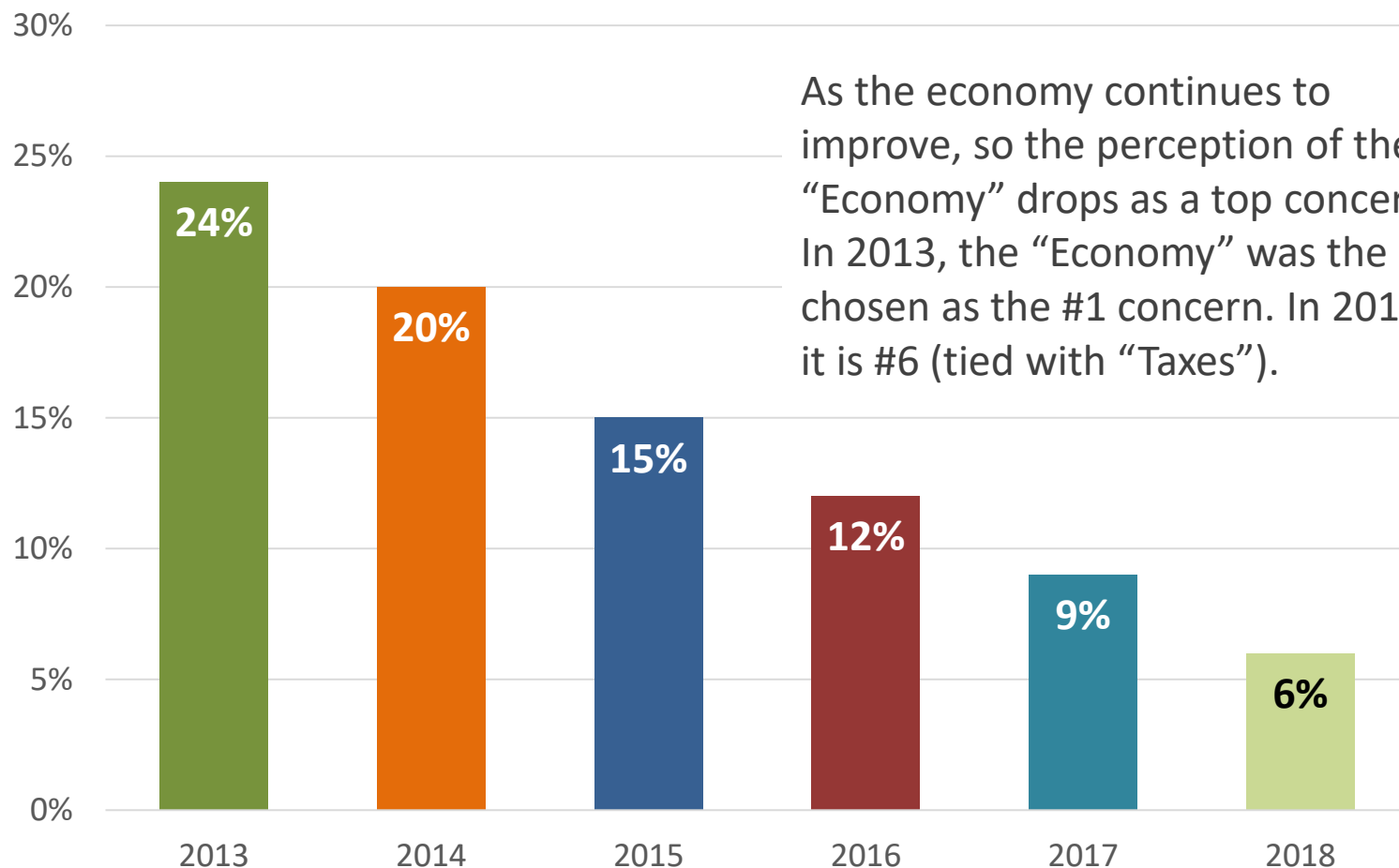
# More likely to be willing to pay more taxes to fund expanded regional transit...

- Residents of the City of Atlanta, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett
- Younger cohorts
  - 58% willing in 18-34 age group
  - Down to 37% for age 65+
- More highly educated
- Residents newer to the metro area (<10 years)
- Renters



# *Economy*

# Percent of Respondents Choosing “Economy” As Region’s Biggest Problem (2013-2018)

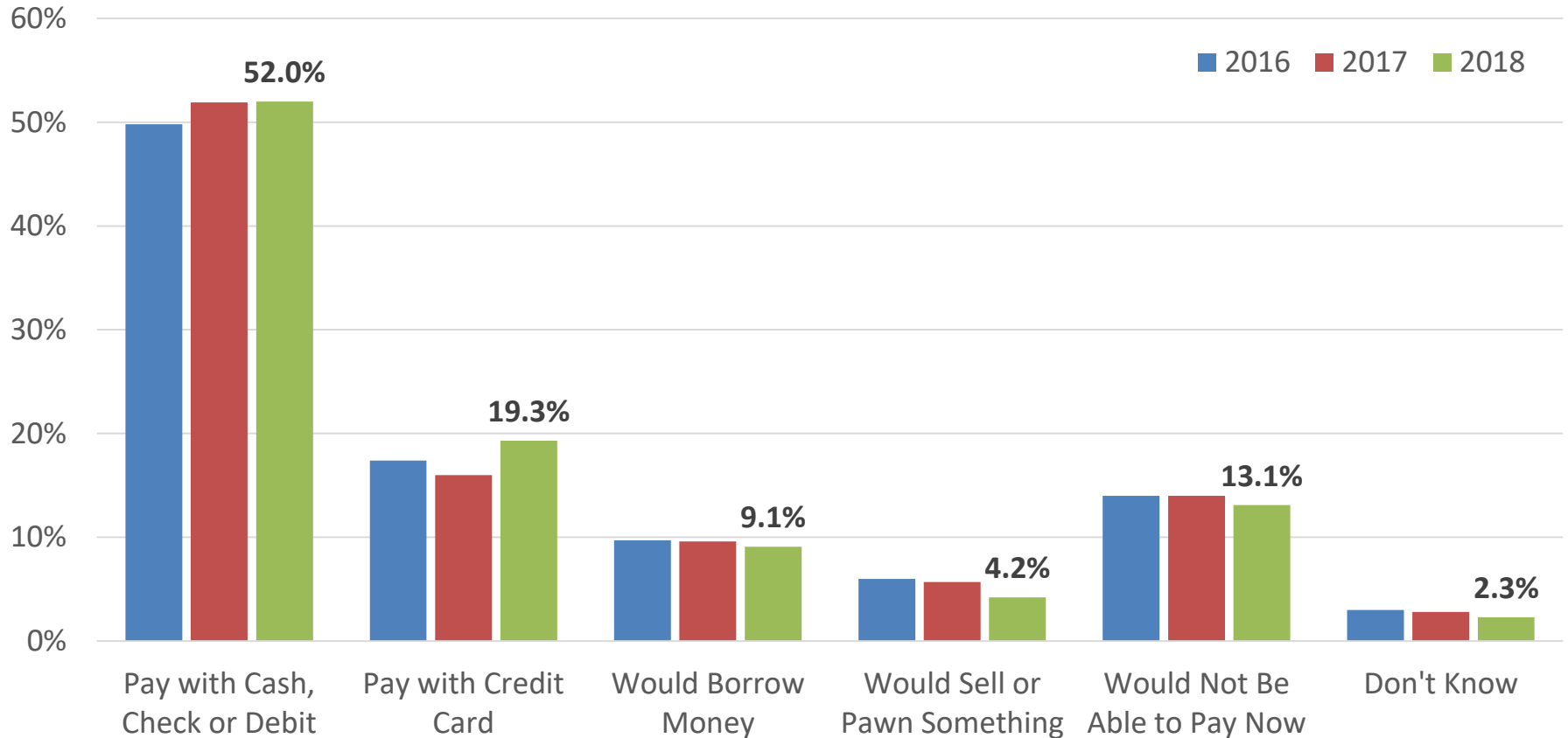


# Most Likely to Say the Economy is the #1 Issue?

- Residents of Butts, Henry, and Cobb
- Those aged 18-34
- Minorities
- Those with lower incomes (but not those with lower education levels)
- Those of Workforce Age, but out of the Workforce

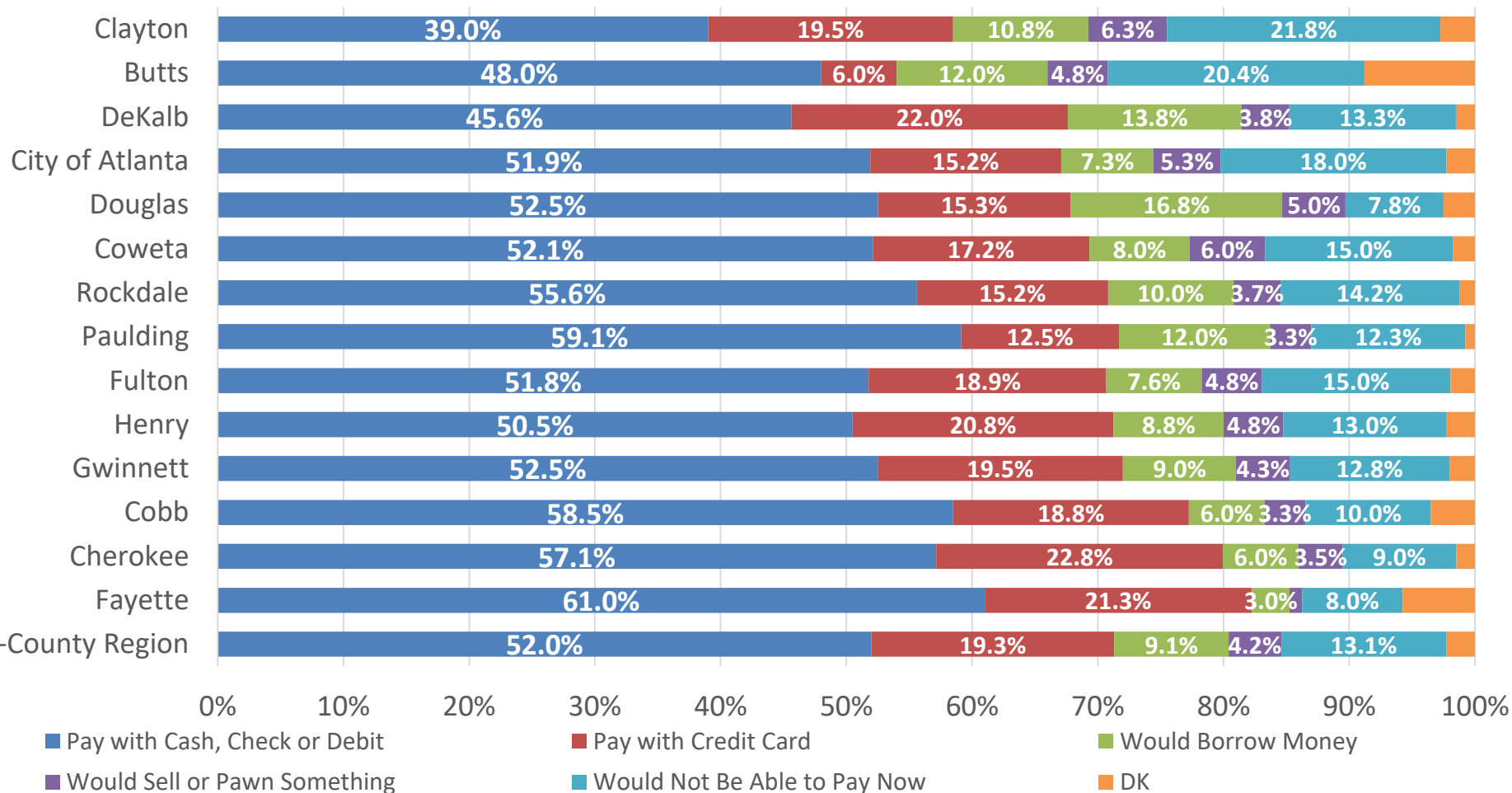


# Methods of Paying for a \$400 Financial Emergency (2016-2018)



In 2018, over half of respondents indicated they would be able to pay for an emergency with cash, check, or debit, the other half of respondents would not have resources on hand to pay. Nearly 20 percent would need to rely on credit, and another 13 percent would not be able to pay at all.

# \$400 Emergency by Jurisdiction (2018)



Like the region as a whole, in the majority of jurisdictions nearly half of respondents would be able to pay for an emergency with cash/debit. However, Clayton and Butts counties saw fewer residents able to pay with cash/credit, and over 20 percent of residents not able to pay at all.

## Skipped Meals or Reduced Portions Due to Lack of Money (2018)

DK, 0.2%

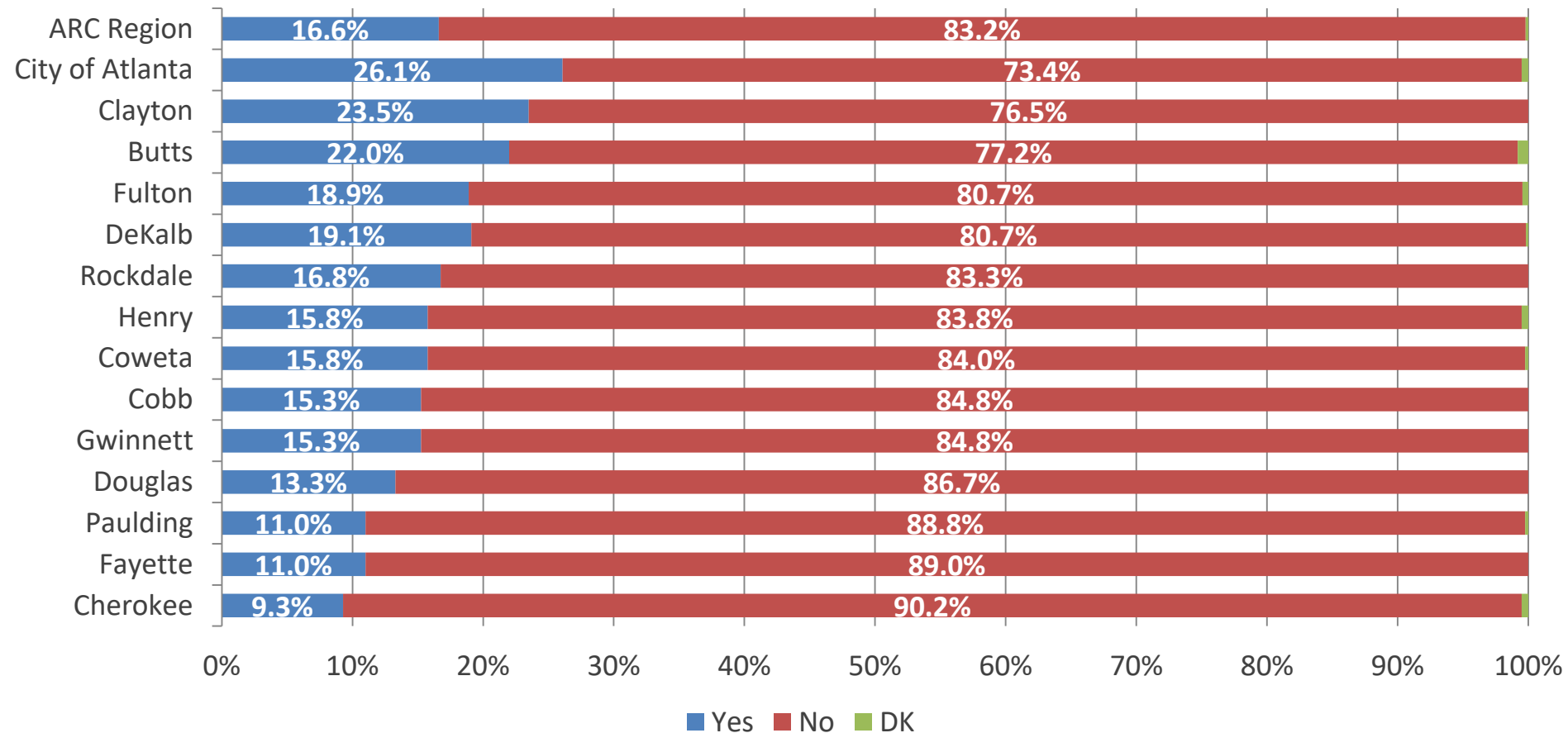
Yes, 16.6%

No, 83.2%

Overall, over 16 percent of respondents in the region reported skipping meals or reducing portions due to a lack of money.



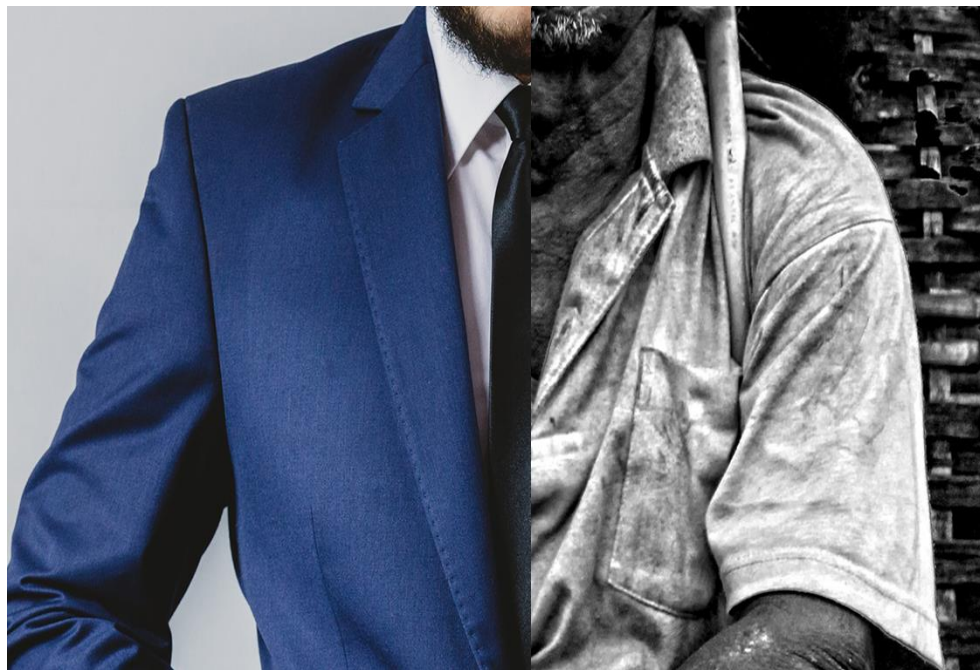
# Skipped Meals or Reduced Portions by Jurisdiction (2018)



While overall roughly 17 percent of the respondents in the region reported skipping meals or reducing portions for financial reasons, in the City of Atlanta (26.1%), Clayton (23.5%) and Butts (22.0%) counties, nearly one-quarter (or more) residents reported doing so.

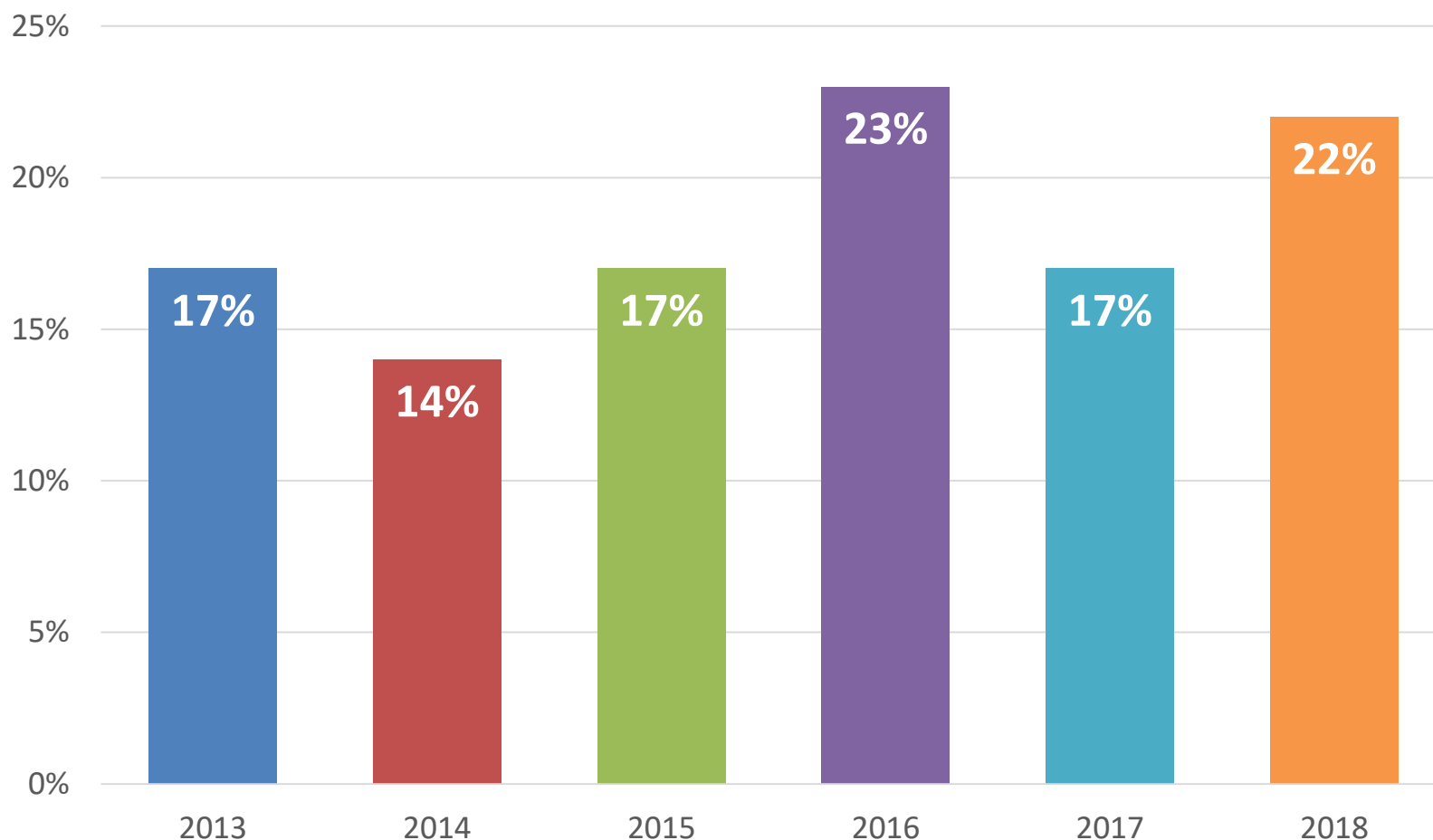
# Most Likely to Experience Stress from Food Insecurity?

- Residents of City of Atlanta, Clayton, Butts, DeKalb, and Fulton
- Those aged 18-34  
—6% at 65+
- Minorities
- Those with lower incomes and education levels  
—4 in 10 at < \$25K



# *Crime*

## Crime as Biggest Problem Facing Residents in Metro Atlanta: Shares - 2013-2018



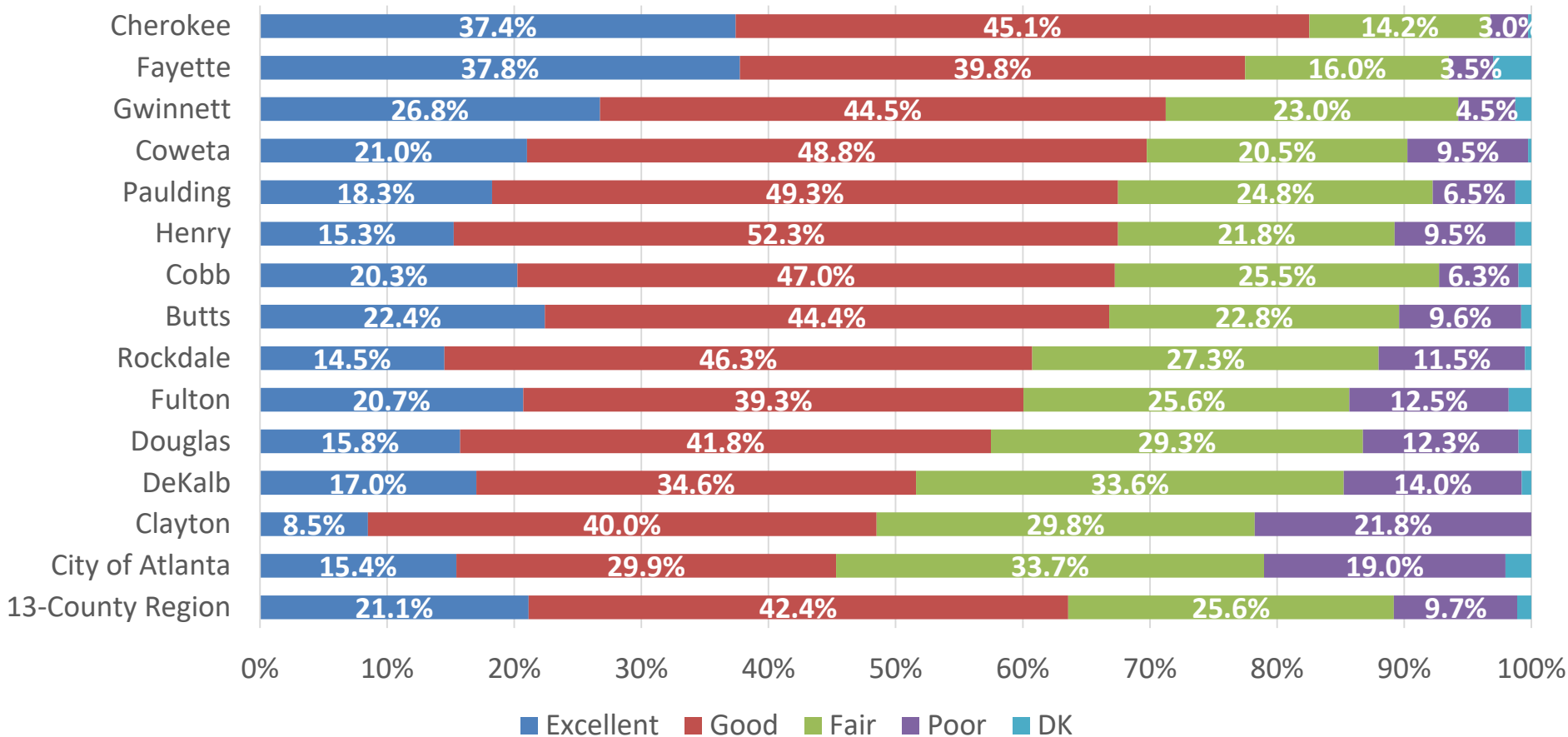
After falling to 17 percent in 2017, “Crime” has again begin cited as a top concern in 2018, increasing to 22 percent (on par with 2016 levels).

## Most Likely to Say that Crime is the #1 Issue?

- Residents of Butts, Rockdale, Clayton, and Fayette
- Seniors/ Retired
- Those with the least amount of education
- Black Respondents
- South of I-20
- Owners



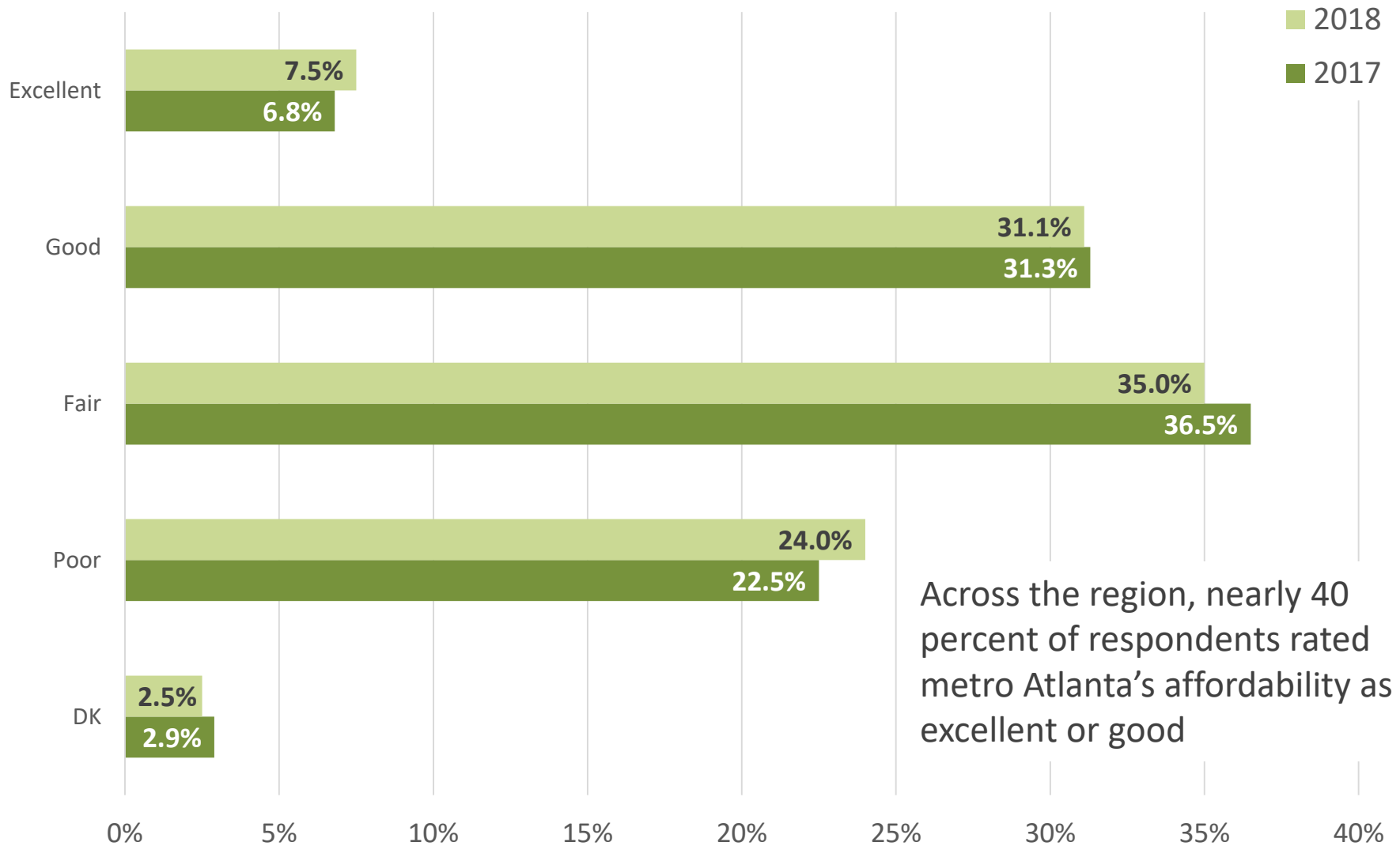
# Resident Safety Ratings by Jurisdiction, 2018



Across the region, the majority of respondents rated resident safety in their community as “excellent” or “good.” However, two jurisdictions (City of Atlanta and Clayton County), more than half of respondents rated their community’s safety as “fair” or “poor.”

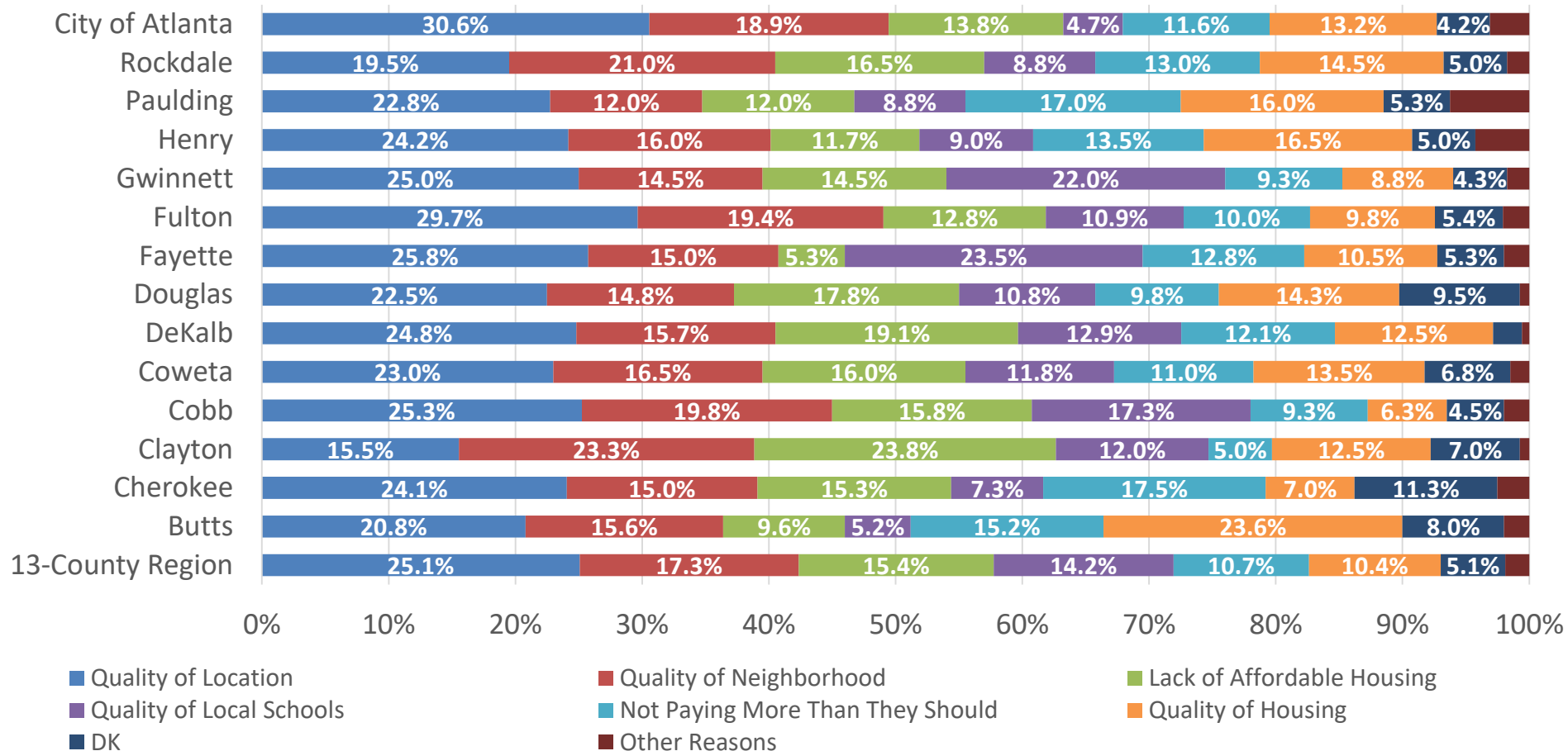
# *Housing*

# Metro Affordability “As Place to Live” (2017-2018)



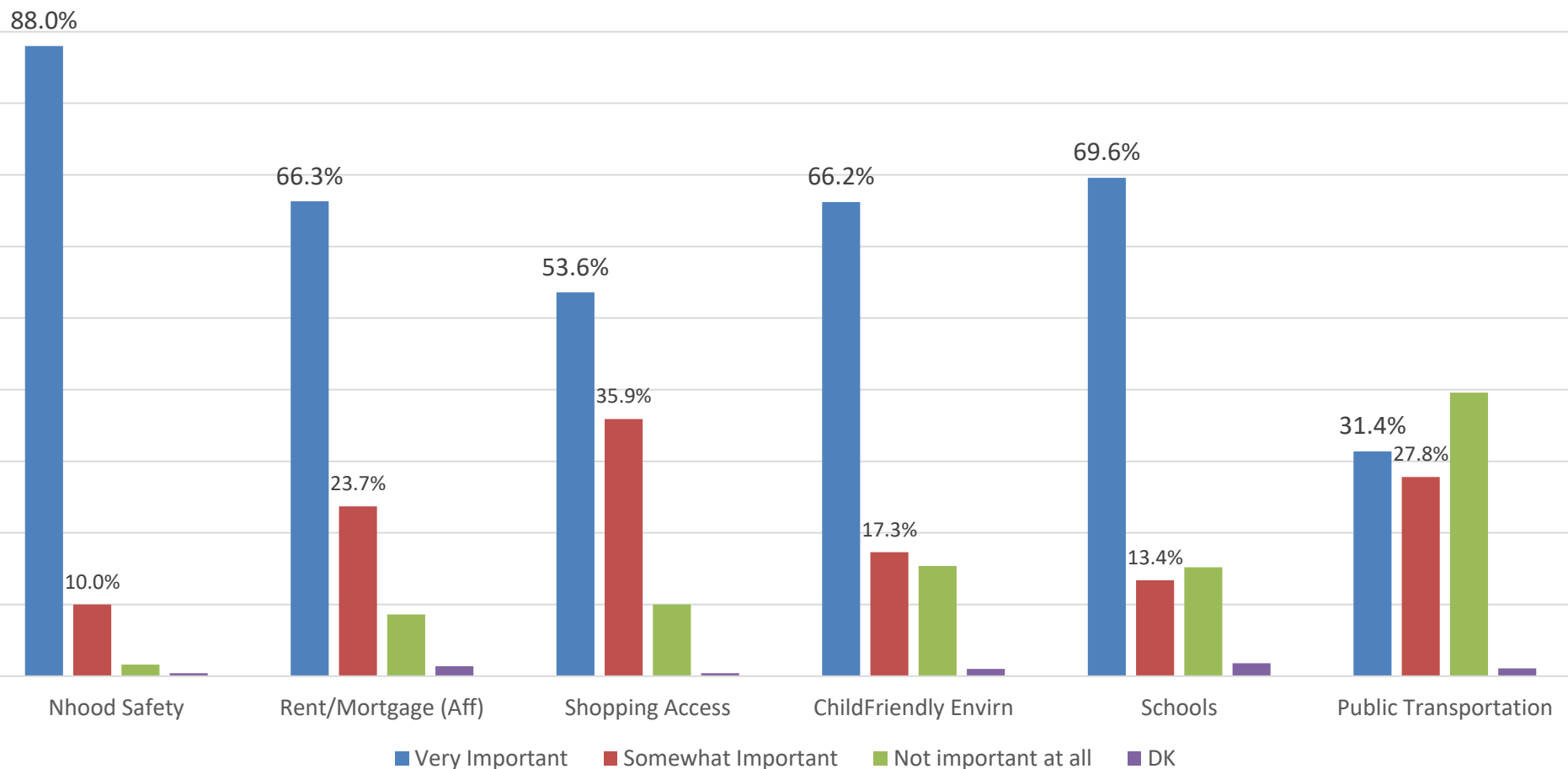


# Biggest Reason Paying Too Much for Housing (2018)



Across the region, respondents felt “Quality of Location” was the biggest reason they were paying too much for housing, followed closely by “Quality of Neighborhood.” Cherokee, Clayton, DeKalb, and Douglas counties cited a “Lack of Affordable Housing” as a key contributor to rising housing costs, while Fayette County respondents cited the “Quality of Local Schools.”

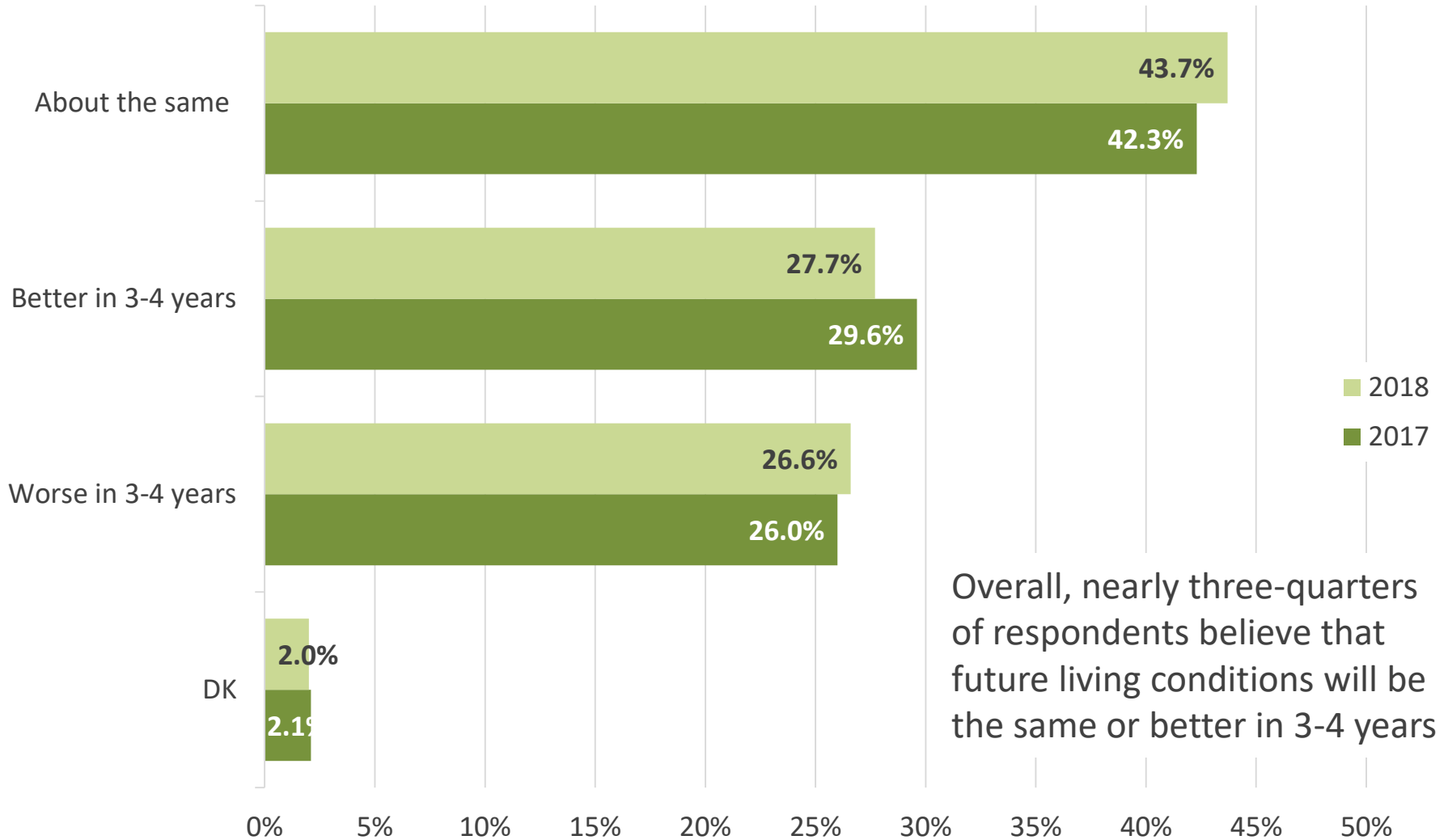
# Importance of Factors in Housing Choice (2018)



Overall, “Neighborhood Safety,” “Schools,” “Rent/Mortgage Affordability,” and a “Child-Friendly Environment” were cited by respondents as the most important factors in housing their choice.

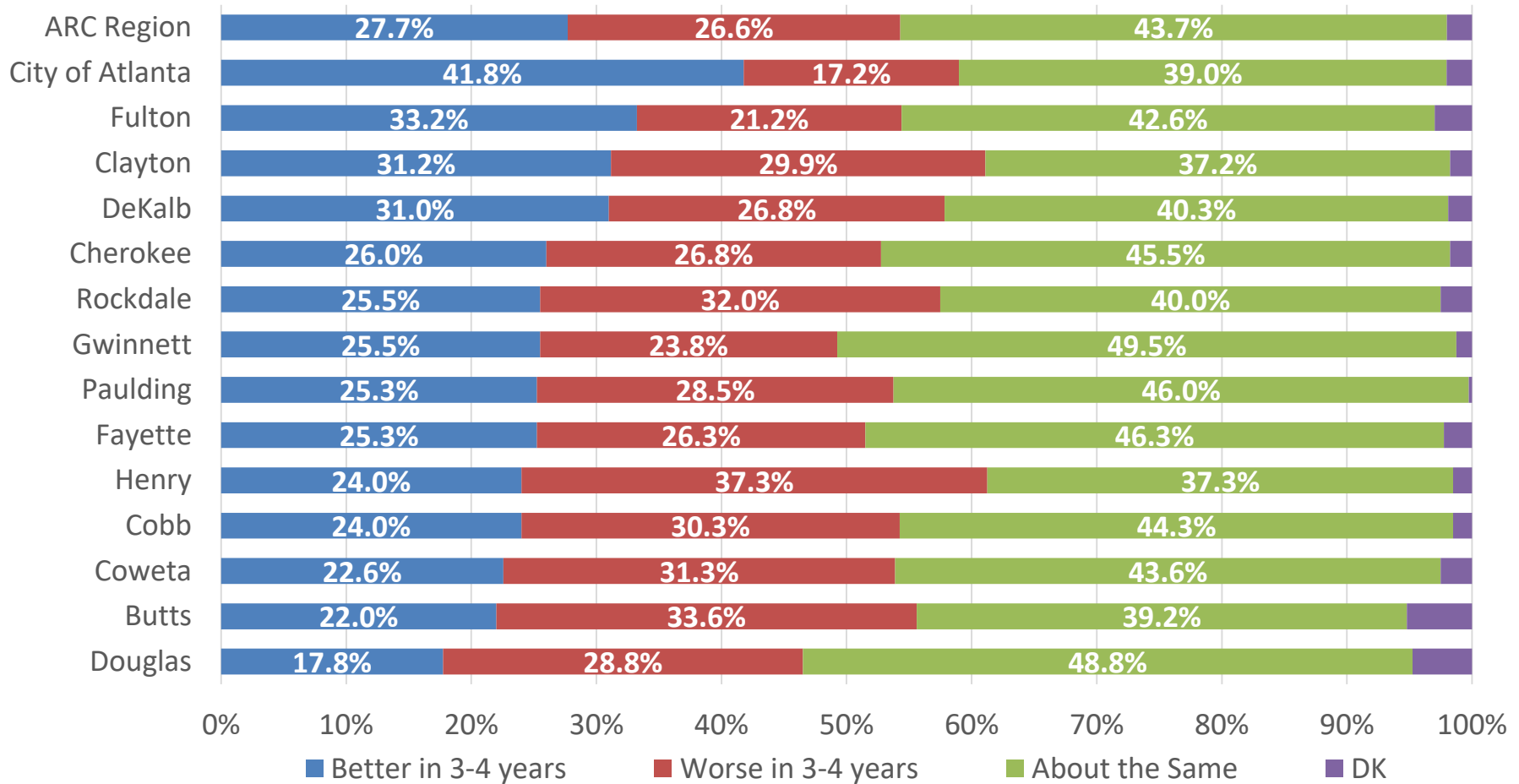
# *The Future*

# Future Assessment of Living Conditions (2017-2018)



# Things in the Future Will Be... by County, 2018

*(Sorted by Percent of Respondents Choosing "Better")*



One thing that has remained fairly consistent over the six years of this survey is that respondents in lower-income jurisdictions like City of Atlanta, Clayton and DeKalb have among the highest levels of optimism for the next 3-4 years.

# Most Likely to Say That Things Will Be Better in 3-4 Years

- Residents of City of Atlanta, Fulton and Clayton
- Millennials
- Blacks and Latinos
- Highest- Income Households and Lowest- Income Households
- Those recently moving to the region



## Metro Atlanta Speaks Data Dashboard

Introduction Transportation Local Economy Housing & Affordability Amenities & Quality of Life Civic Engagement The Future Other Regional Issues

Of the following, which issue is the biggest problem facing residents in the metro Atlanta area today?

How important for metro Atlanta's future is an improved public transit system, including buses and trains?

Please tell me if you agree, or disagree with this statement: "I frequently lack the transportation I need to get to where I need to go."

### Choose by

- ☒ 2018
- ☐ 2017
- ☐ 2016

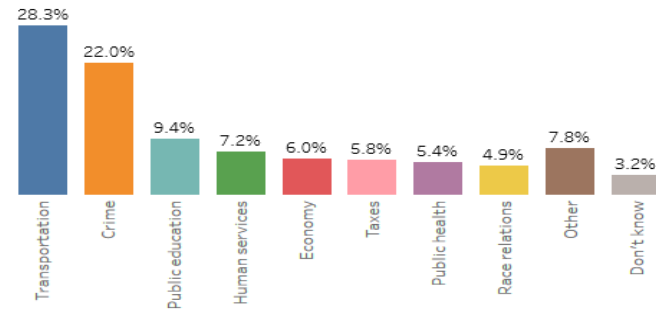
### Choose by Subset

- ☒ County
- ☐ Race/Ethnicity
- ☐ Gender
- ☐ Age
- ☐ Income
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Children in household
- ☐ Employment status
- ☐ Years in metro Atlanta
- ☐ North/South of I-20
- ☐ Own/Rent house

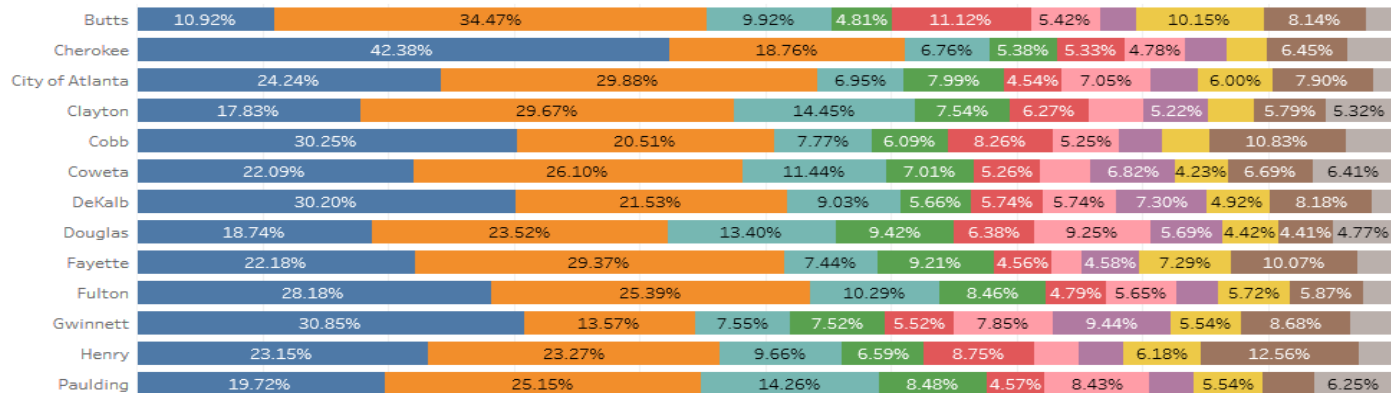
### Possible Answers

- Transportation
- Crime
- Public education
- Human services
- Economy
- Taxes
- Public health
- Race relations
- Other
- Don't know

### Regional Snapshot (All Respondents, 13 County-Region)



### Results by Year and Subset



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