



ONE
great
REGION



2023 Population Estimates

adopted August 9, 2023

Mike Carnathan
Managing Director, Research & Analytics Department
mcarnathan@atlantaregional.org

The Highlights

- 📊 The 11-county Atlanta region is now home to 5,158,374 residents in 2023, up from 5,091,644 in 2022. From April 1, 2022 to April 1, 2023 the region **added 66,730 new residents**. This represents an increase in growth compared to the 64,940 increase the region experienced 2021-2022, but still trails (but only slightly) the average annual increase in the 2010s, of 68,245.
- 📊 The upward trend of growth this past year reflects **strong permit activity and continued growth of our job base** to levels that now well exceed the pre-pandemic levels. Housing demand is very high—and prices as a result very high—which does act as a brake on population growth. Single-family permits remain constrained, balanced by historically high multifamily permitting levels.
- 📊 From 2022 to 2023, **Fulton added 18,500 new residents**, the largest single-year numeric increase in the region. Next were Gwinnett with 13,510 new residents, Cherokee with 7,120 new residents, and Cobb with 6,100 new residents.
- 📊 **The City of Atlanta set the pace in the leading county of Fulton**, continuing the momentum from 2021-2022. With a year-over-year increases in single-family permits and an all-time high of multifamily activity, **the city added 14,300 new residents between 2022 and 2023**, up close to threefold from 5,070 last year. The 2022-23 increase exceeds the previous record increase of 2018-2019 (10,900)
- 📊 **Cherokee County leads the region in percentage increase, 2022-23, at 2.5 percent**. Forsyth and Henry follow at 2.1, with Rockdale (2.0) following. The 2022-23 acceleration for Rockdale is notable, compared to 2021-22's 1.3% increase.
- 📊 In 2022, there were **36,074 new residential building permits in the 11-county region**, which was an increase of nearly 9,000 permits (far more multifamily but fewer single-family) from 2021 calendar year totals. Current building permit activity for the 11-county region remains lower than pre-Great Recession permit levels but did exceed the 1980-2022 average annual level of 33,540.

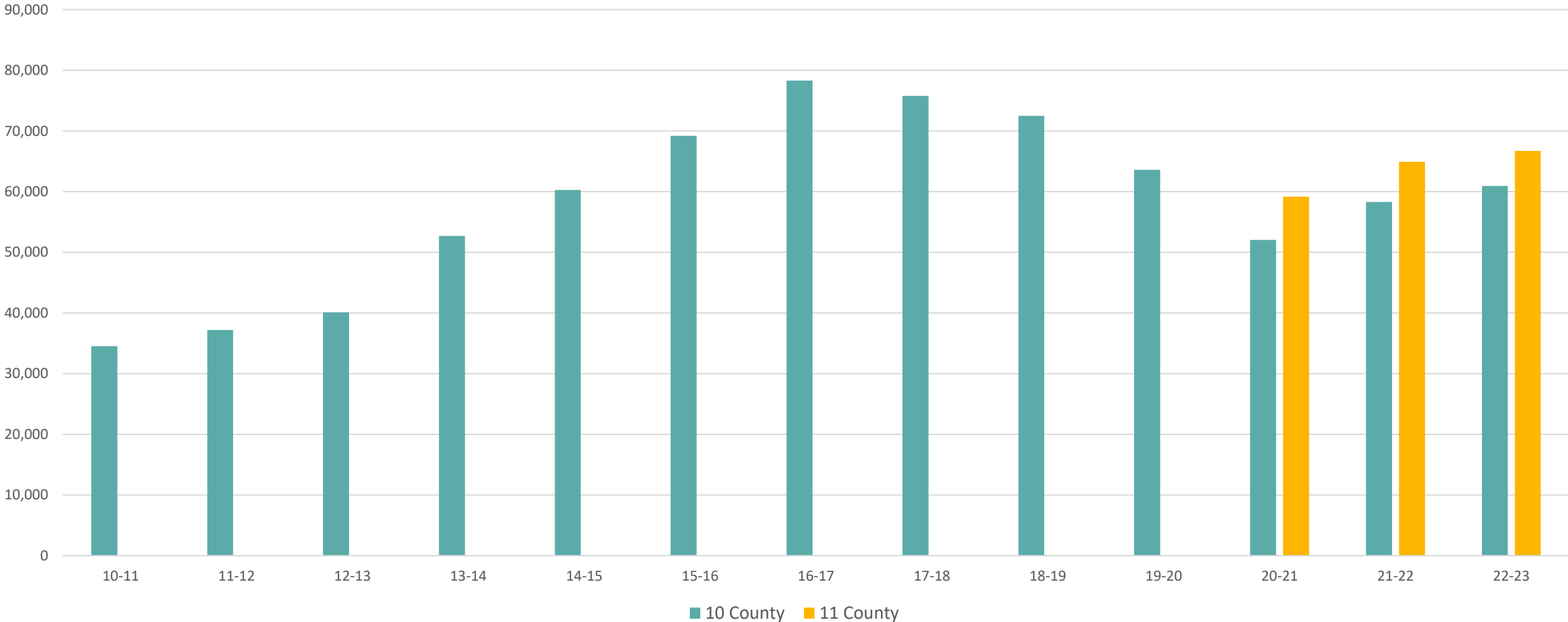
The Estimates: 2023 ARC Population

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2022	2023	Average Annual Change, 1980-2010	Average Annual Change, 2010-2020	Average Annual Change, 2020-2023
Atlanta Region	1,924,140	2,601,883	3,527,779	4,283,261	4,967,514	5,091,644	5,158,374	78,637	68,425	63,620
Cherokee	51,699	91,000	141,903	214,346	266,620	279,840	286,960	5,422	5,227	6,780
Clayton	150,357	184,100	236,517	259,424	297,595	302,285	303,315	3,636	3,817	1,907
Cobb	297,718	453,400	607,751	688,078	766,149	779,249	785,349	13,012	7,807	6,400
DeKalb	483,024	553,800	665,865	691,893	764,382	775,022	779,442	6,962	7,249	5,020
Douglas	54,573	71,700	92,174	132,403	144,237	149,297	150,697	2,594	1,183	2,153
Fayette	29,043	62,800	91,263	106,567	119,194	122,684	124,284	2,584	1,263	1,697
Forsyth	27,958	44,083	98,400	175,511	251,283	265,033	270,833	4,918	7,577	6,517
Fulton	589,904	670,800	816,006	920,581	1,066,710	1,087,170	1,105,670	11,023	14,613	12,987
Gwinnett	166,808	356,500	588,448	805,321	957,062	983,702	997,212	21,284	15,174	13,383
Henry	36,309	59,200	119,341	203,922	240,712	252,502	257,802	5,587	3,679	5,697
Rockdale	36,747	54,500	70,111	85,215	93,570	94,860	96,810	1,616	836	1,080
City of Atlanta	424,922	415,200	416,474	420,003	498,715	507,015	521,315	(164)	7,871	7,533

The average annual increases since 2010 (the depth of the Great Recession) have trailed the average growth from 1980-2010 by over 15%. The period of the 1990s saw the strongest growth. This pattern does not hold for all the subregion areas though. Cherokee and Forsyth have grown faster (in absolute terms) since 2010, and the City of Atlanta went from losses 1980-2010 to strong recovery since then.

Some Background: Estimates Over The Past Decade

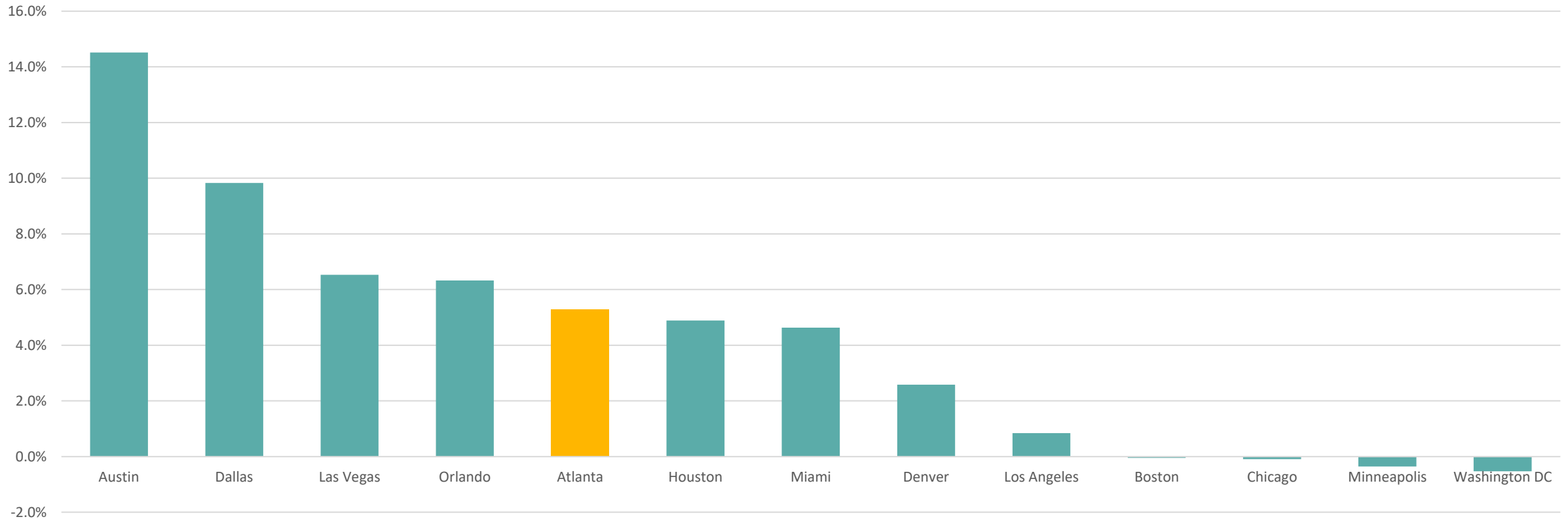
Annual Population Change, ARC Estimates



The average annual population growth (10-county) did not bounce back, post-Great Recession, to 50,000-plus until 2013-14. While growth then climbed to nearly 80,000 in 2016-17, this was followed by declines until and including the 2020-2021 “year of COVID onset. There has been moderate recovery since then (2021-2023)--while the job market recovered, migration was constrained by factors like reduced housing supply and affordability.

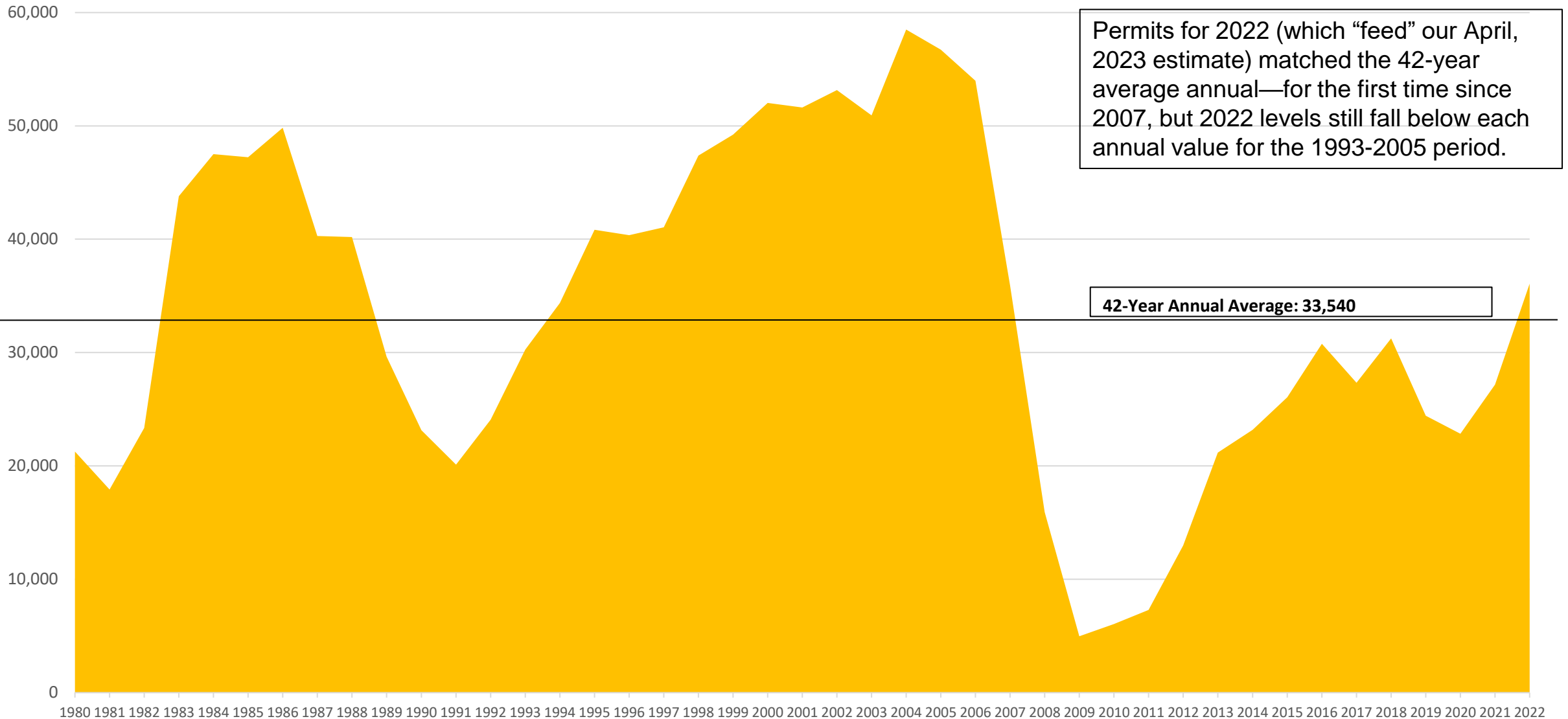
The Supporting Facts: Job Increases

% Change since Pre-Pandemic (Feb. 2020 – May 2023)



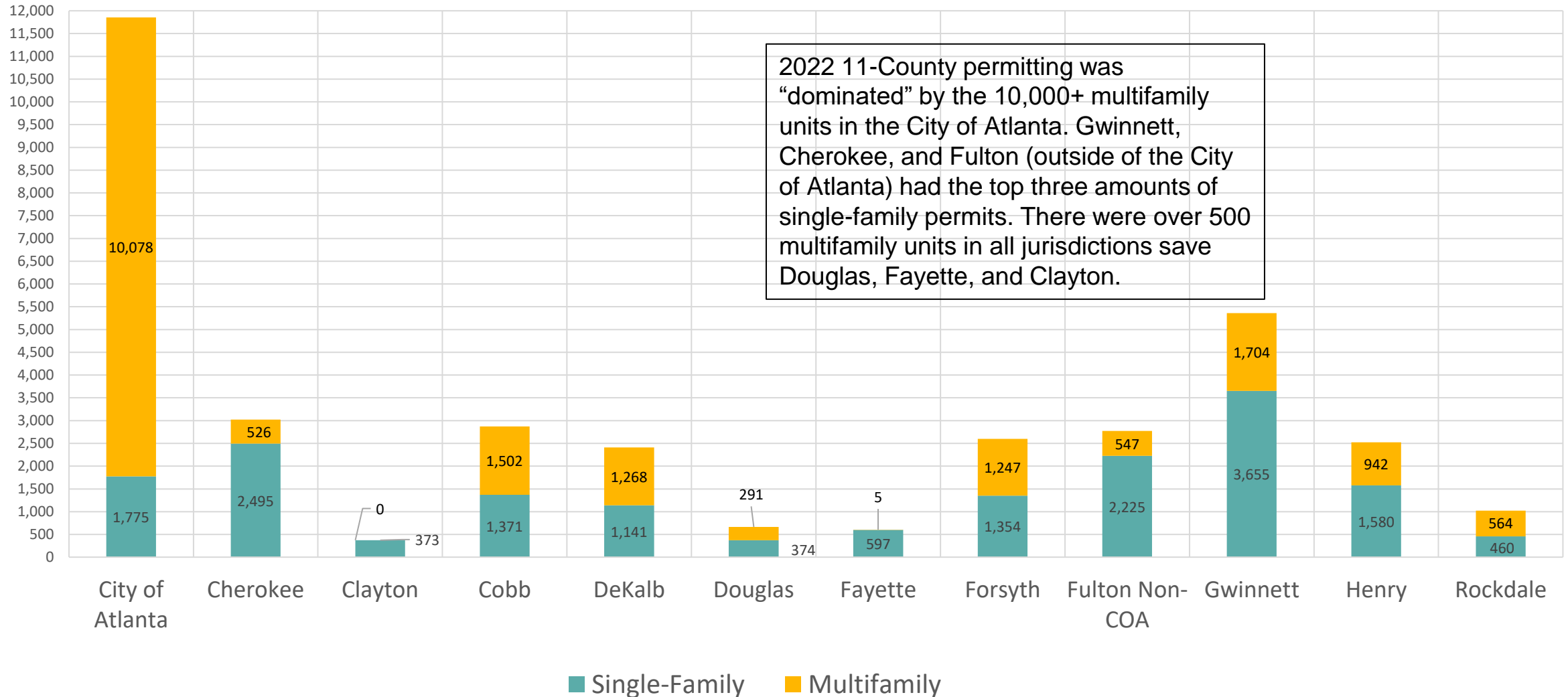
More on that job growth—Atlanta ranks fifth in percentage growth in job base over the span of the pandemic and recovery. Dallas is the only MSA of comparable size that has matched the rate of job recovery in Atlanta. Many larger metros (E.G. Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago) have substantially lagged Atlanta’s job base growth February 2020 through May 2023.

The Supporting Facts: Building Permits – Long View



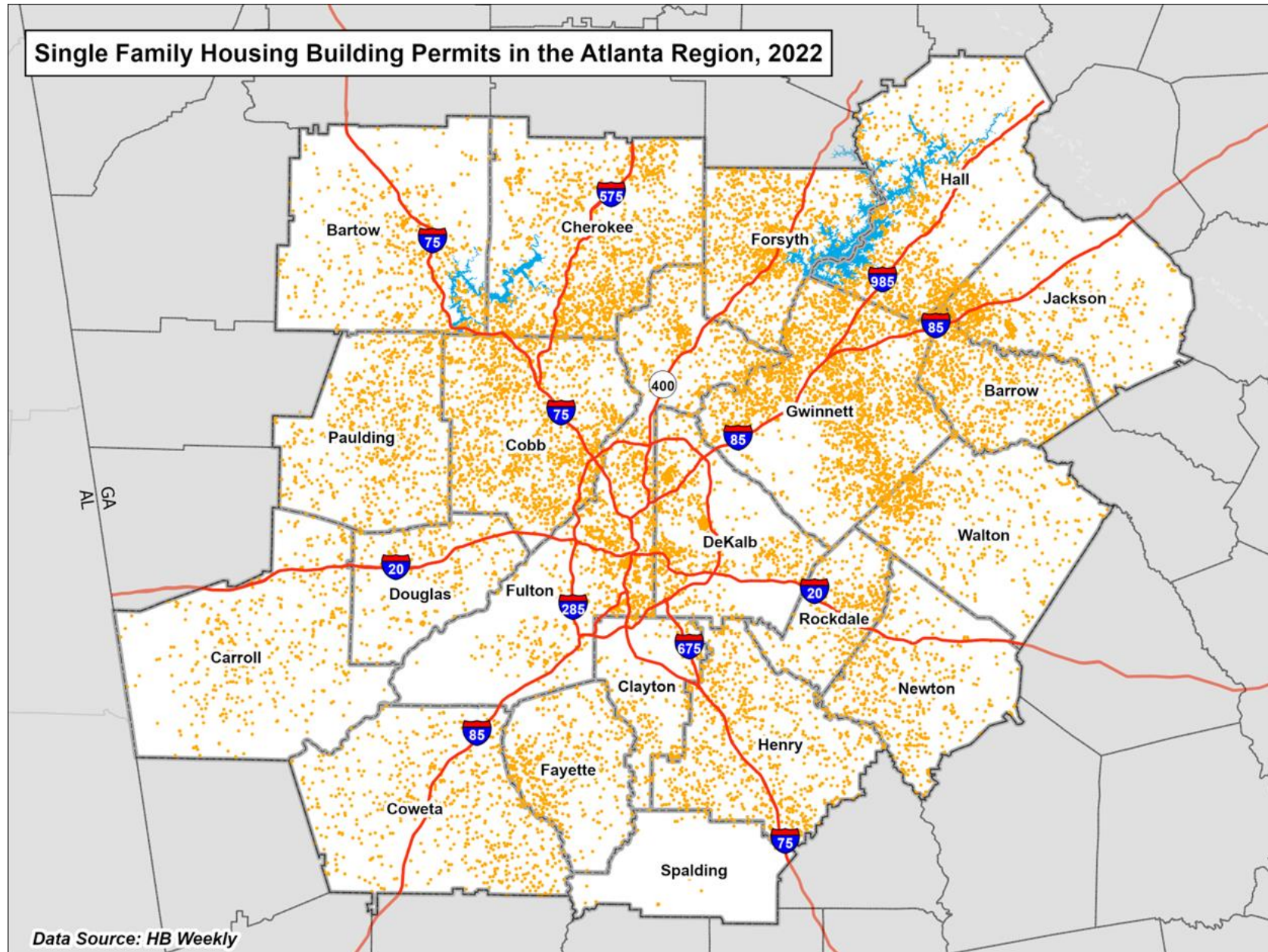
The Supporting Facts: Building Permits – Last Year (2022)

Residential Units Authorized By Building Permit, 2022 (11-County)



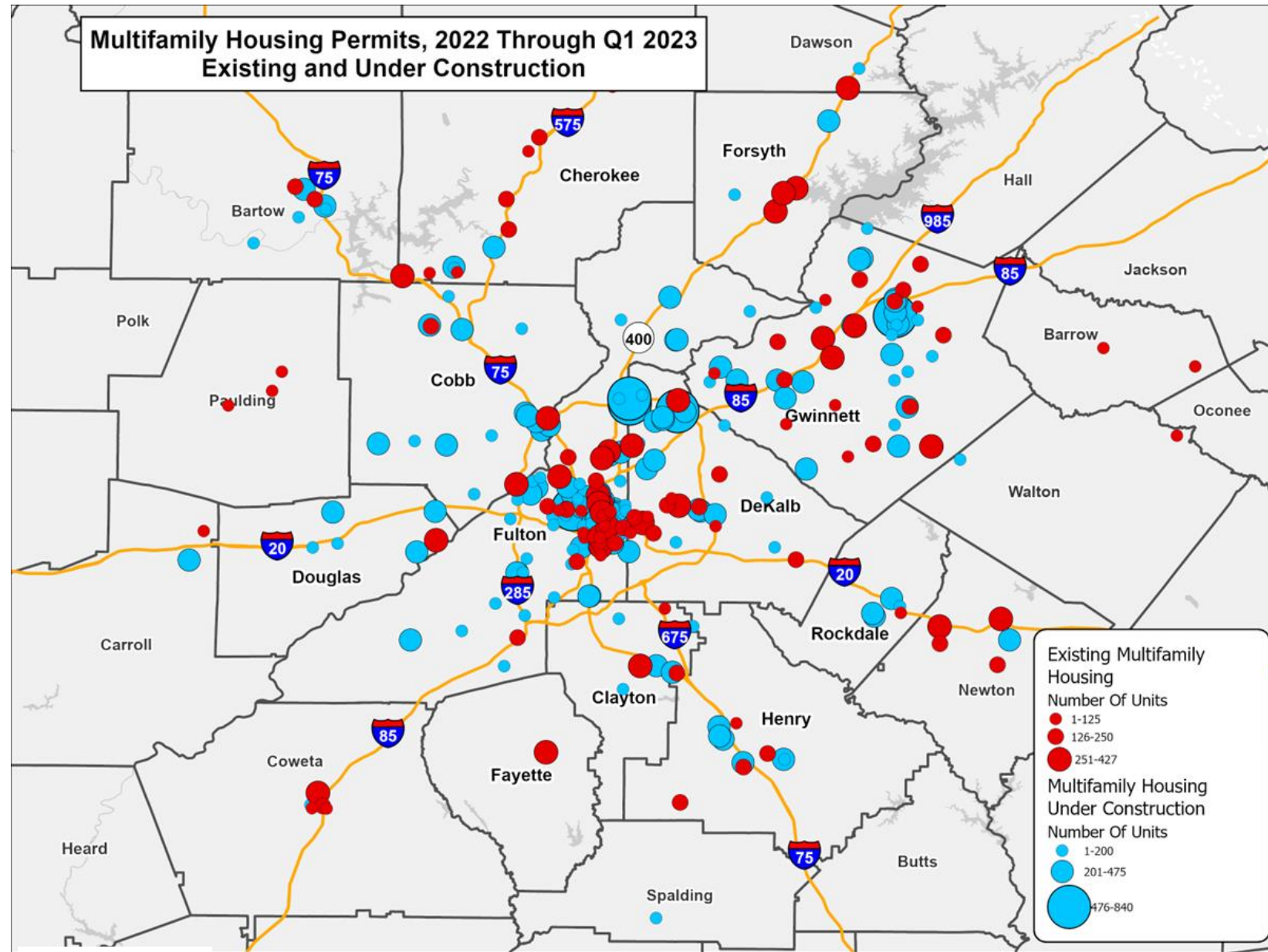
The “Good To Have” Information: Mapping Single-Family Permits

Permits in 2022, for the 11-County area, continued to cluster to the north of I-20, outside the 285 Perimeter, in areas off the I-85 and I-75 corridor. Single-family permitting is healthy in the City of Atlanta, growing in Henry County and West Fayette, and spinning up along I-20 East in Rockdale and Newton Counties. NOTE: A share of these permits are on recently created streets, cannot be precisely geocoded, and as a result are allocated to tract or zip centroid.



The “Good To Have” Information: Mapping Multi-Family Units

As the permit slides showed earlier, plans for and construction of multifamily projects has exploded in 2022. Development activity has spread further out along the interstate corridors, but the larger recently built or ‘under construction’ projects continue to cluster in the core and the portion of the region north of I-20. This multifamily clustering to the north is even more dramatic than with single-family development.



Source: Co-Star