



Regional Snapshot

National Aging Trends and the Atlanta Region

May 2024



Vision

ONE **great** REGION

Mission

Foster thriving communities for all within the Atlanta region through collaborative, data-informed planning and investments.

Values

Excellence | **Integrity** | **Equity**

Goals



Healthy, safe, livable communities in the Atlanta Metro area.



Strategic investments in people, infrastructure, mobility, and preserving natural resources.



Regional services delivered with **operational excellence** and **efficiency**.



Diverse stakeholders engage and take a regional approach to solve local issues.



A competitive economy that is inclusive, innovative, and resilient.

May is National Older Americans Month!



POWERED BY CONNECTION: MAY 2024

- Goals of Older Americans Month:
 - Recognize older Americans' contributions
 - Highlight aging trends
 - Reaffirm commitments to serving the older adults in our communities
- This year's theme is "Powered by Connection"
- What impact do meaningful connections have on the well-being and health of older adults?

According to the Surgeon General...

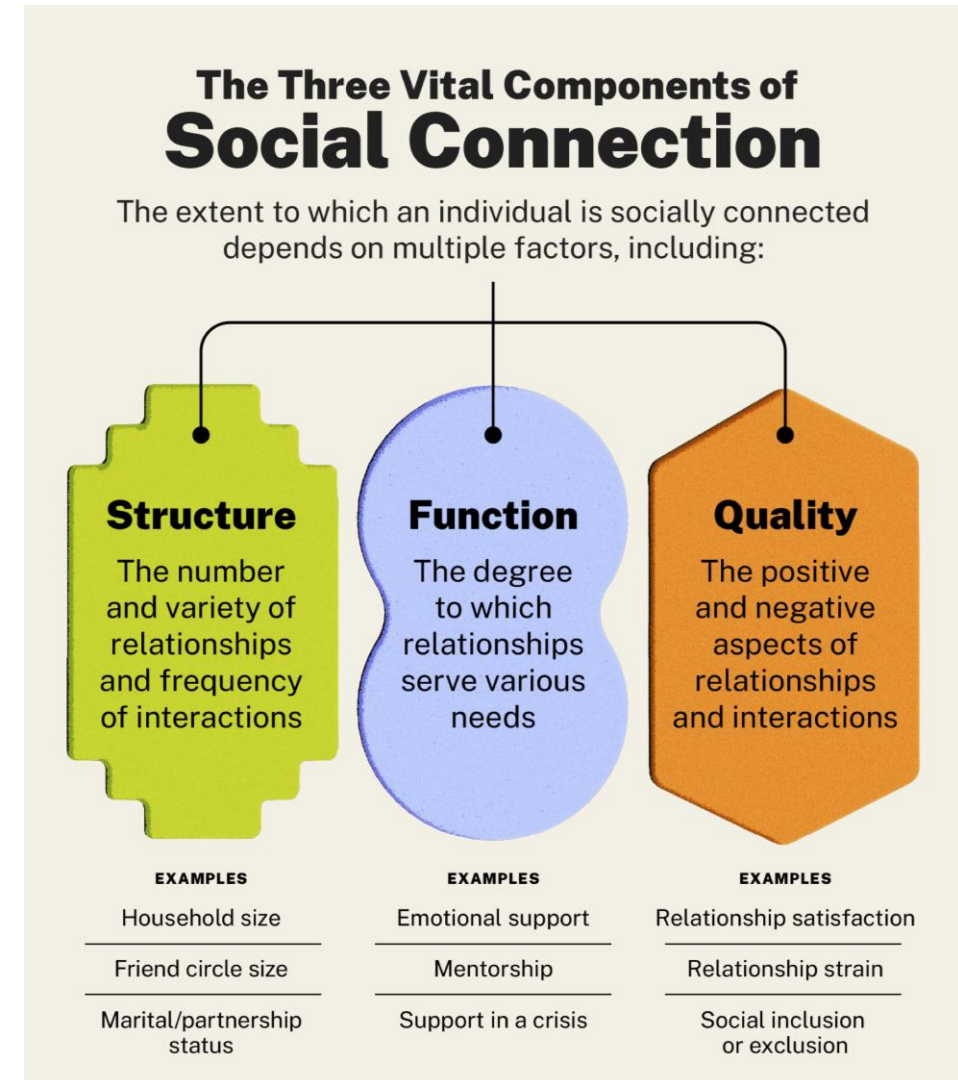
📌 **Connection** is defined as

- The interactions, relationships, and roles individuals, communities, or society may experience

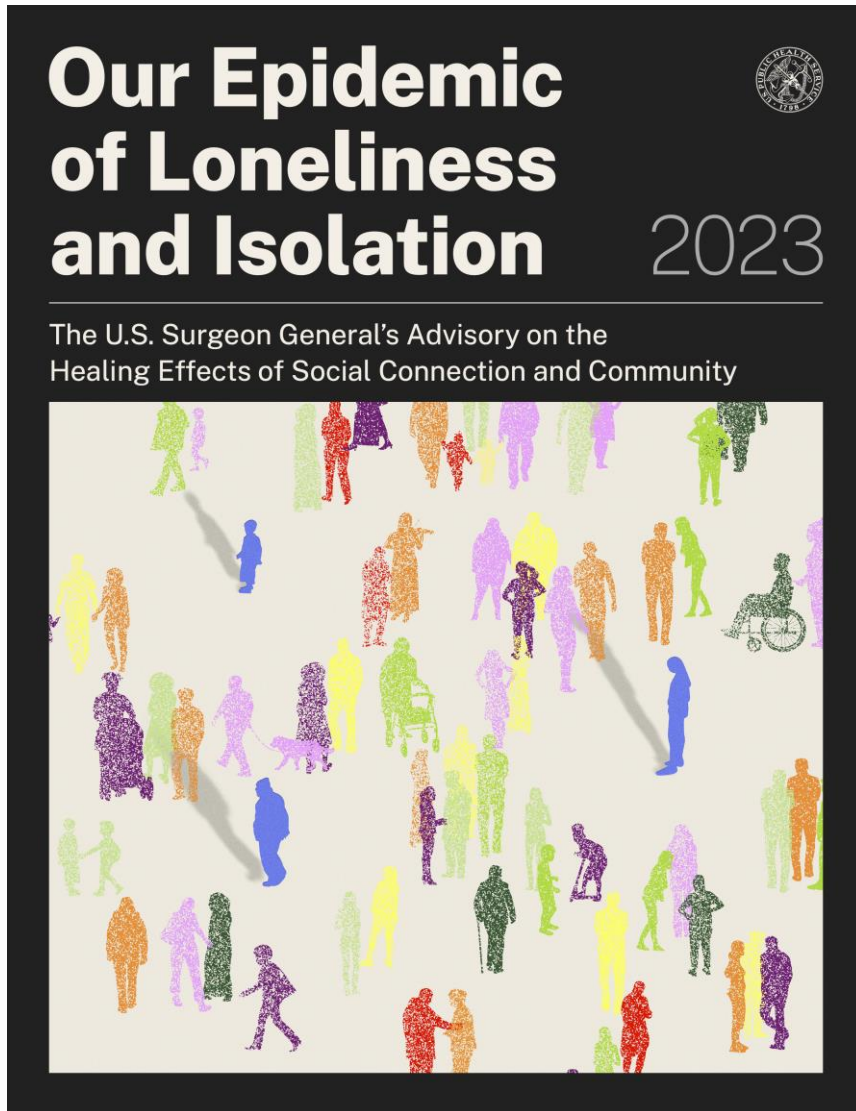
📌 There are three vital components of social connection:

- Structure
- Function
- Quality

📌 These three vital components of social connection influence health in different ways



According to the Surgeon General...



■ Lack of connection through isolation and loneliness is a national trend that presents a profound threat to human health and well-being

■ **Social Isolation** means

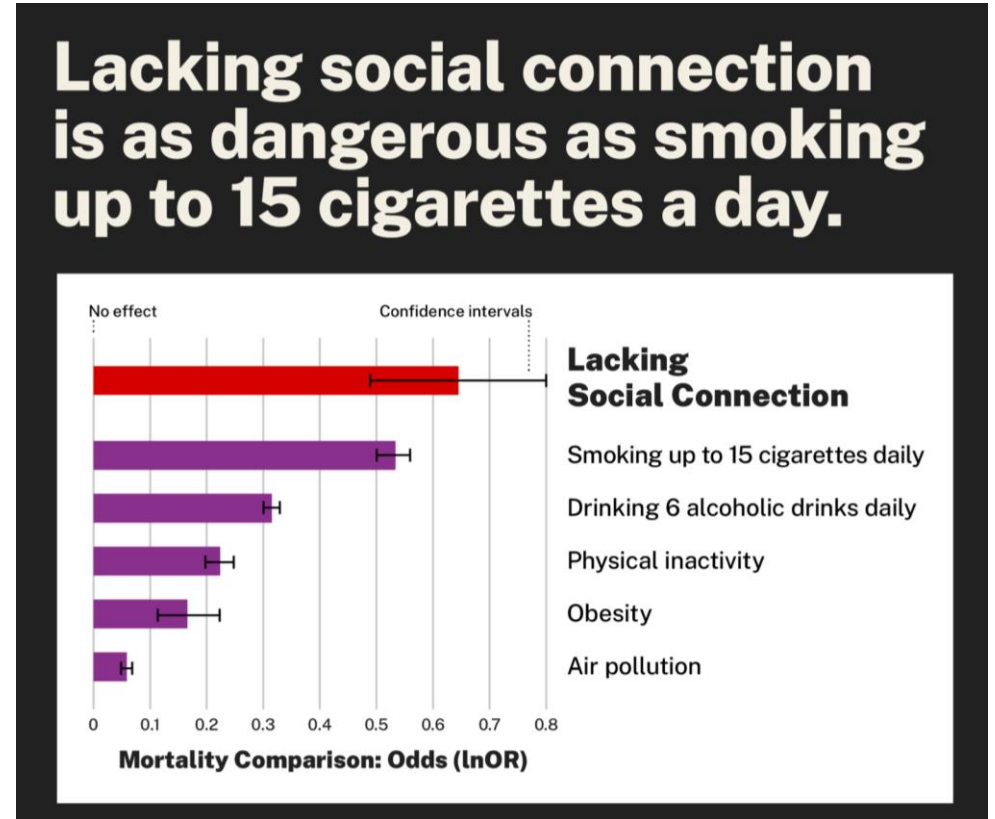
- Objectively having few social relationships, social roles, group memberships, and infrequent social interaction

■ **Loneliness** means

- A subjective distressing experience that results from perceived isolation or inadequate meaningful connections

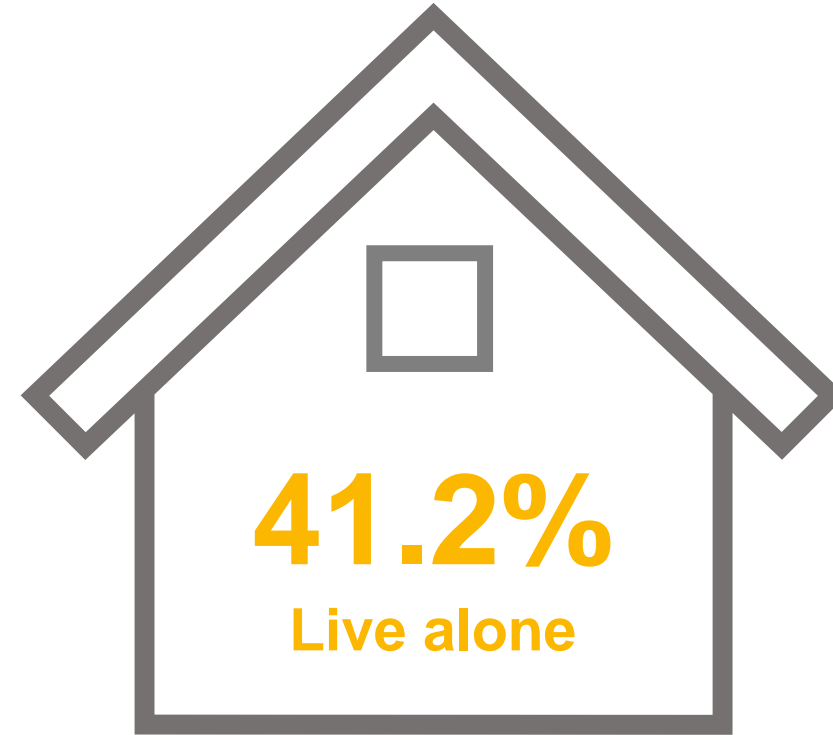
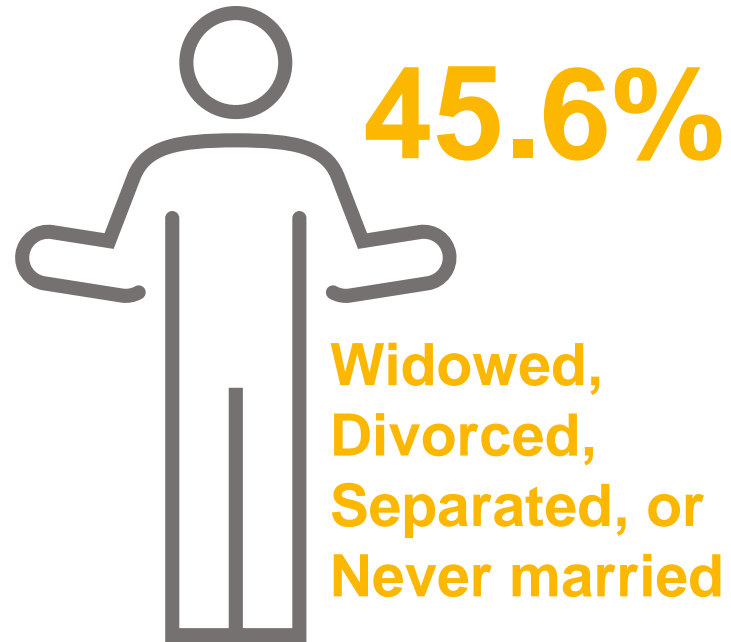
According to the Surgeon General...

- Chronic loneliness and social isolation can increase the risk of developing dementia by approximately 50% in older adults
- Social isolation among older adults accounts for an estimated \$6.7 billion in excess Medicare spending annually
- Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk for premature death by 26% and 29%, respectively



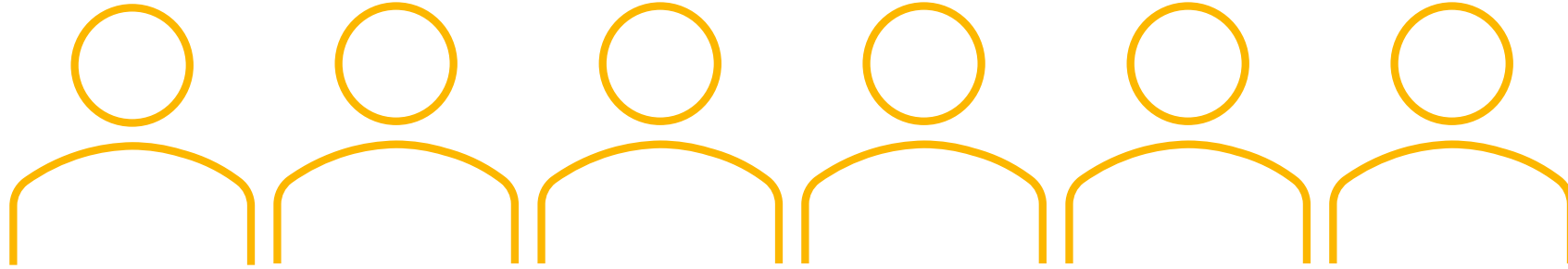
The effects of social isolation on life expectancy are greater than those of many other risk factors

What does this mean for the Atlanta region?



Some older adults may struggle to form social connections due to structural barriers like household size and marital status. In the 11-county Atlanta region, **41.2% of householders** age 65+ live alone (that's about **151,000 people**) and **45.6% of people** 65 years or older are widowed, divorced, separated, or never married (that's over **280,000 older adults**).

What does this mean for the Atlanta region?

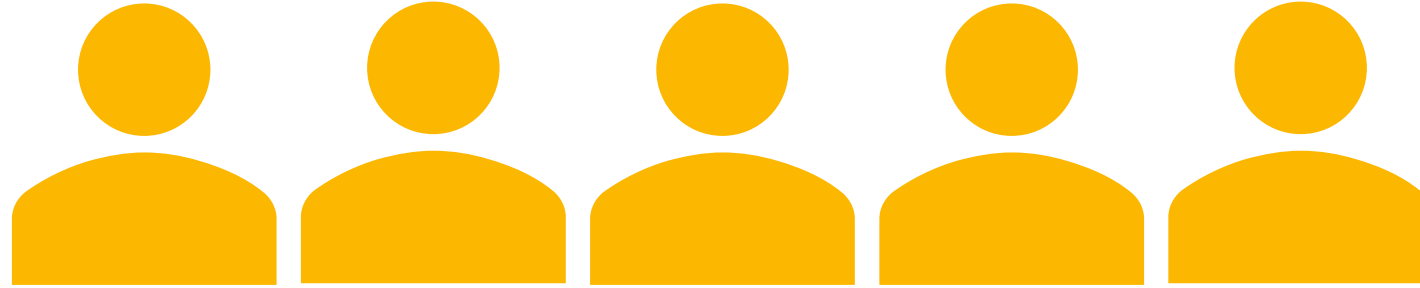


1 out of 7 older adults “rarely” or “never” get the emotional support they need



Other older adults may have a hard time experiencing social connection due to functional barriers, or the degree to which a person’s relationships serve their various needs. When a recent survey asked how often they get the social and emotional support they need, nearly **1 out of 7 people** age 60+ in the Atlanta MSA (or about **14.1%**) responded that they “rarely” or “never” get the support they need.

What does this mean for the Atlanta region?

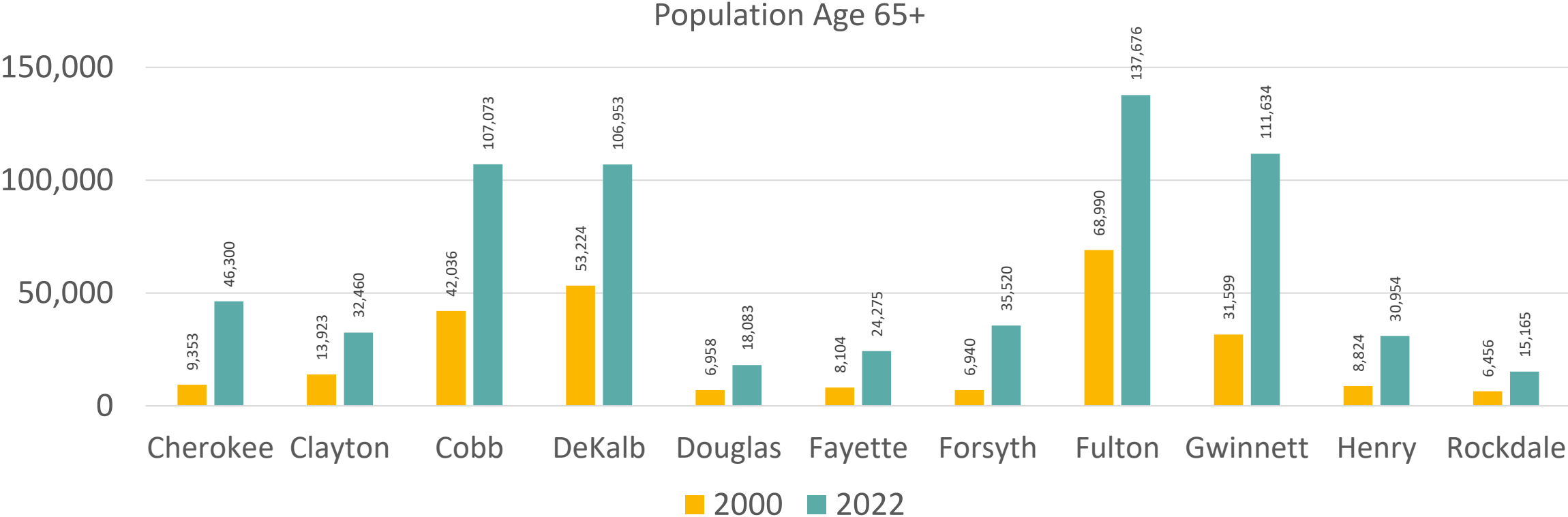


63% of older adults “rarely” or “never” feel lonely



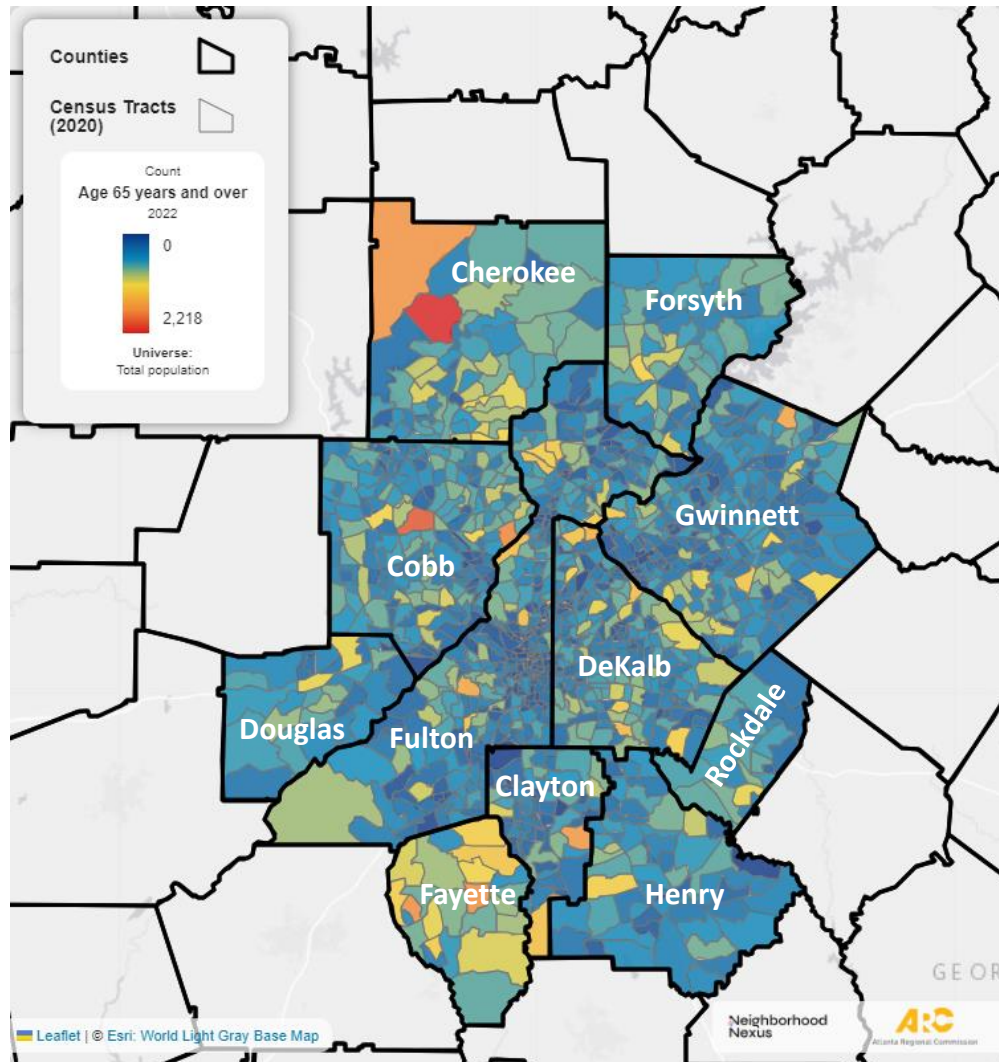
Despite the previously mentioned barriers, many older people in the Atlanta MSA still appear to have high quality relationships. A survey also asked how often respondents feel lonely. More than **5 out of 8 people** age 60+ (or about **63%**) responded that they “rarely” or “never” feel lonely. We must celebrate these meaningful relationships that older adults contribute to!

What does this mean for the Atlanta region?



It's also worth noting that a demographic shift has occurred. The number of people age 65+ in each of the Atlanta region's 11 counties has skyrocketed between 2000 and 2022. During that 22-year time period, Forsyth County's older adult population saw the fastest rate of growth (over **400%**), and the Atlanta region became home to an additional **400,000 seniors**.

What does this mean for the Atlanta region?

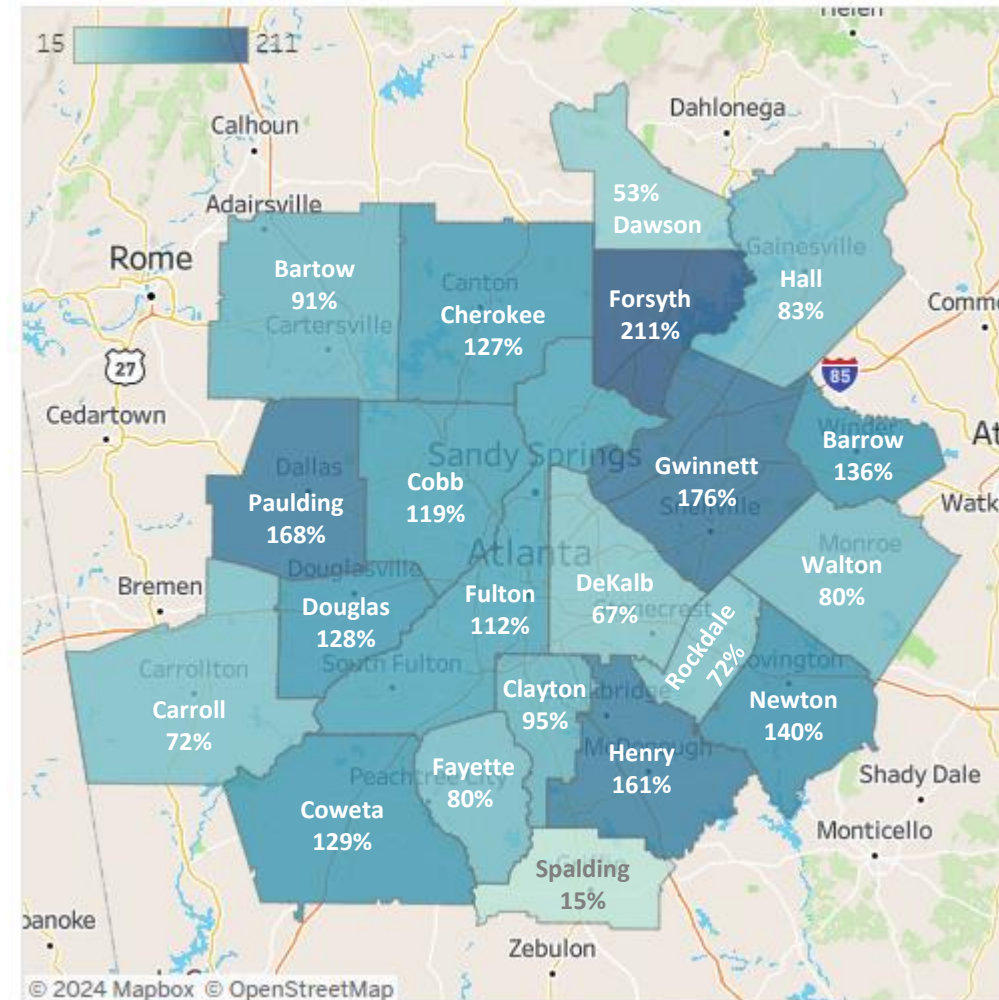


- Every county in the Atlanta region currently has pockets with larger older adult populations
 - These areas are shown in **red, orange, and yellow** in the map on the right
- As a result, meeting the needs of seniors is of regional concern

What does this mean for the Atlanta region?

- By the year 2050, the 11-county Atlanta region is forecast to be home to over **1.3 million people** age 65+
- That is an increase of **122%** from 2020 population estimates, making 65+ the fastest growing age cohort
- With these trends in mind, it is imperative that the social connection needs of this expanding population be addressed

% Change, 2020-50, Ages 65+ by County



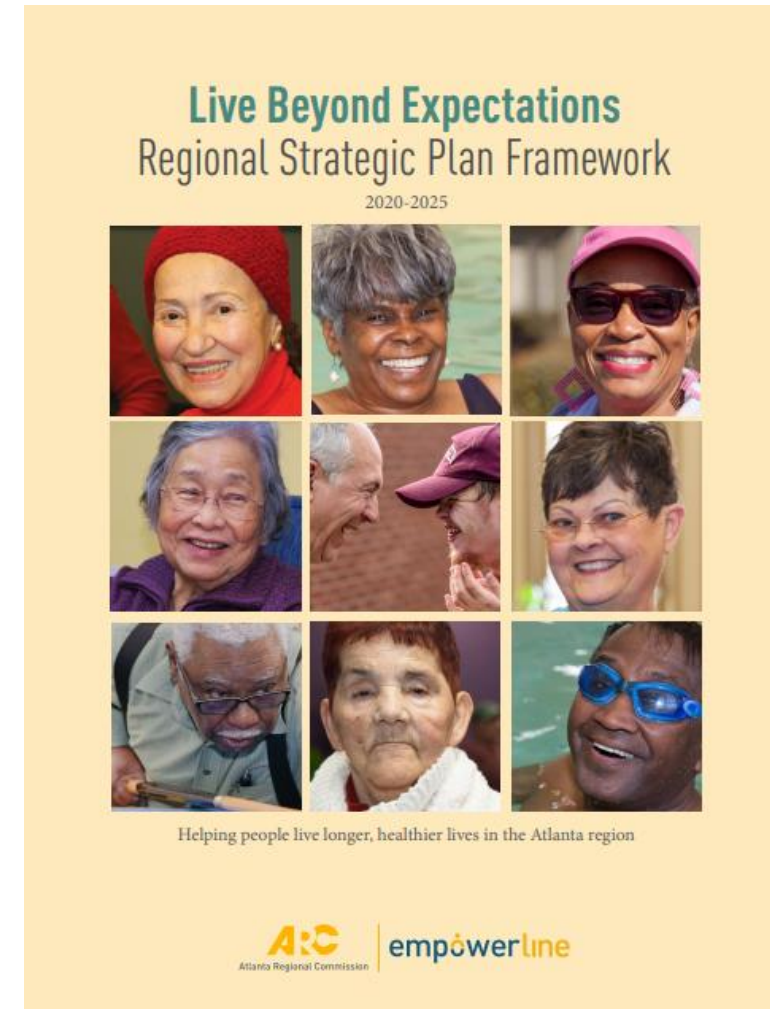
Commitment to Older Adults



- In FY2023, ARC's Aging & Independence Services provided:
 - Home and community-based services like personal care and homemaking to 19,152 people
 - 927,048 home delivered and group meals
 - 1,214 One2One Telephone Reassurance calls
- All of these services help metro Atlanta seniors stay connected to their local communities
- For more information on these services, check out [Empowerline.org](https://empowerline.org)

Commitment to Older Adults

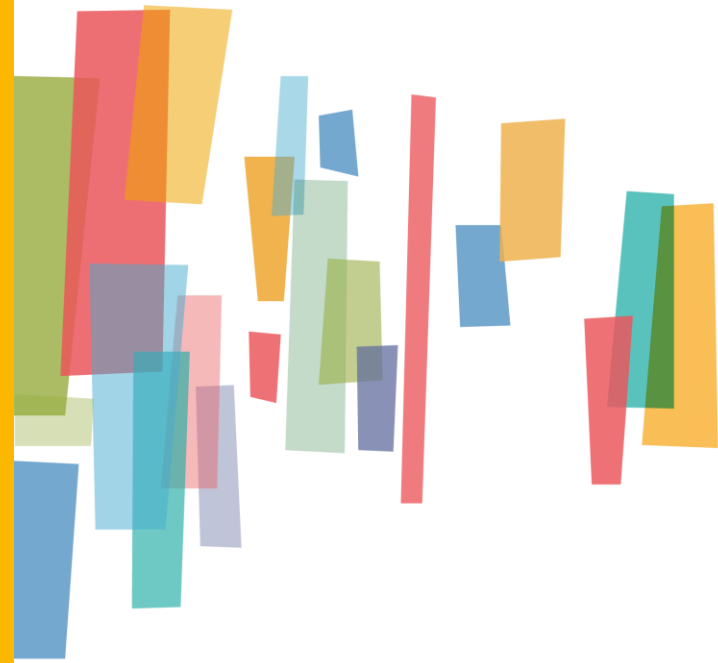
- ARC's Aging & Independence Services is also planning for the future!
- The Live Beyond Expectations Regional Strategic Plan identifies and seeks to address inequities that create disparities in life expectancy across the Atlanta region
- Learn more about the plan here:
<https://atlantaregional.org/lbe-2020-2025>



Questions?

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