



Special Report

**ACCESS TO JOBS:
PRE-COVID AND PEAK-COVID
TRENDS IN THE ATL REGION**



JOB ACCESS IN THE ATL REGION

What does job access mean?

- > Job access measures a transit system's ability to help people reach their place of employment or a potential employment opportunity.



Why measure job access?



- > Measuring access demonstrates the extent to which transit supports rider needs and the regional economy.

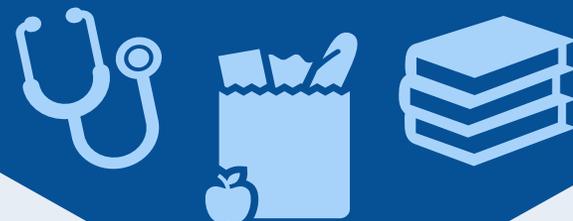
Why is job access via transit so important?

- > Transit provides access for many workers who must be physically present to perform their jobs.



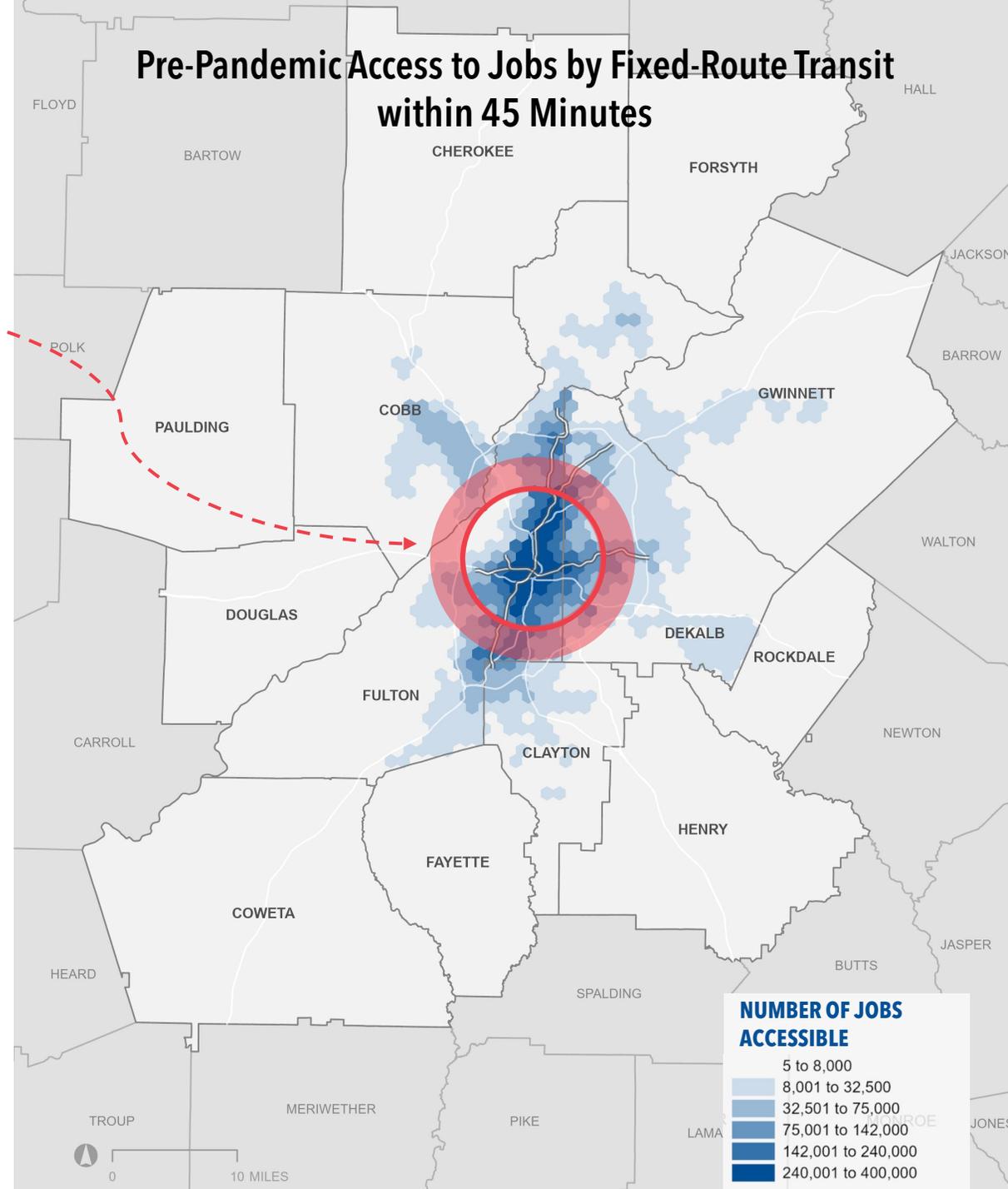
Two-thirds of transit commuters perform essential functions that keep the economy and society going, benefiting the public at large.

Jobs are also a **proxy for other economic activities** that are relevant to all residents.



Job Access

- > Pre-COVID, access to jobs by transit throughout the region was already limited outside the urban core.
- > People who live in downtown Atlanta and along the major rail lines can access many more jobs in a 45-minute period.
- > In contrast, people who live farther from the center of the region can access fewer jobs by public transit.

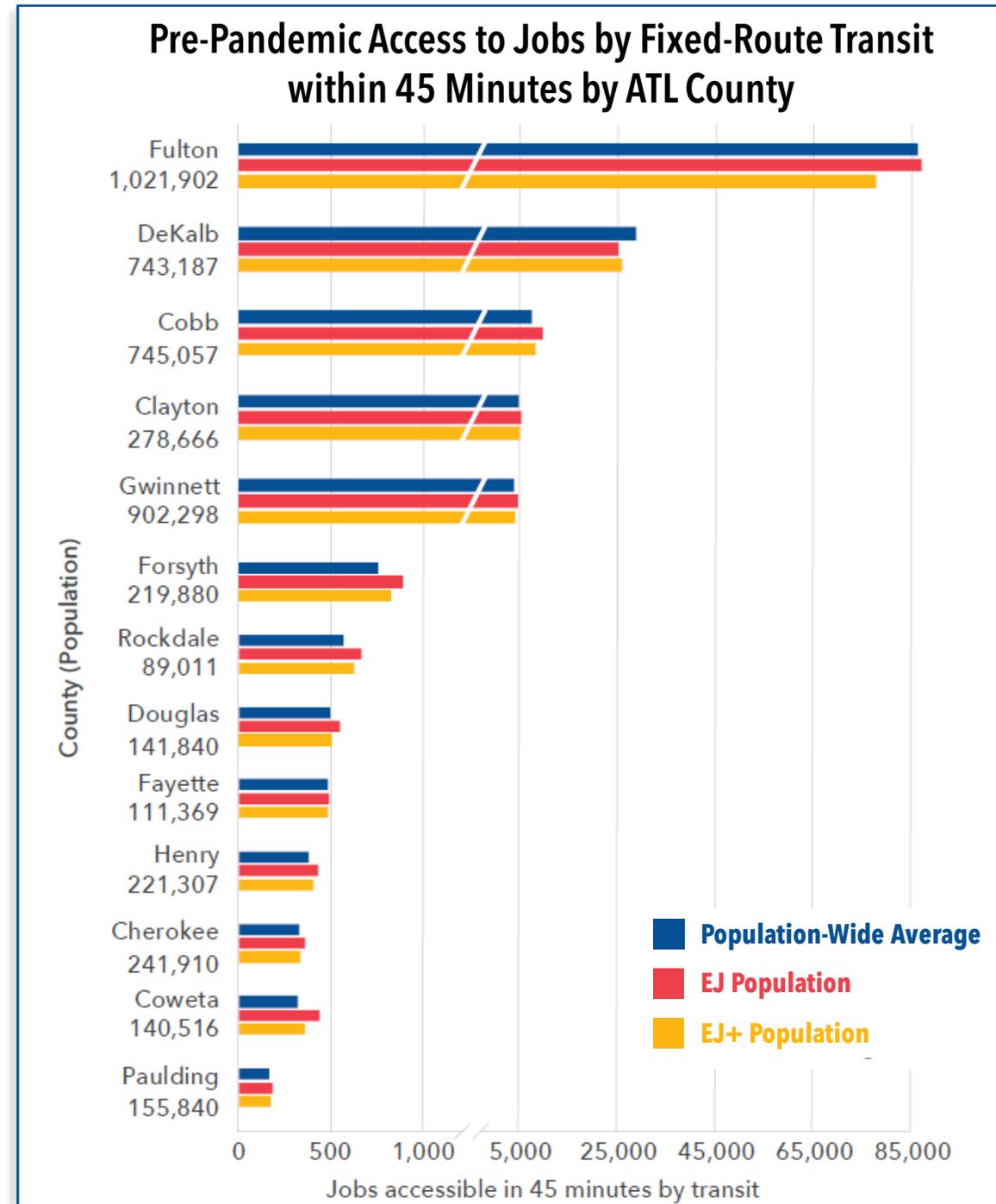


Job Access

- > Outer counties that are more suburban and rural, such as Cherokee, Coweta, Henry, and Paulding, have lower levels of transit access.
- > These suburban and rural counties are also home to a relatively small share of the regional population.

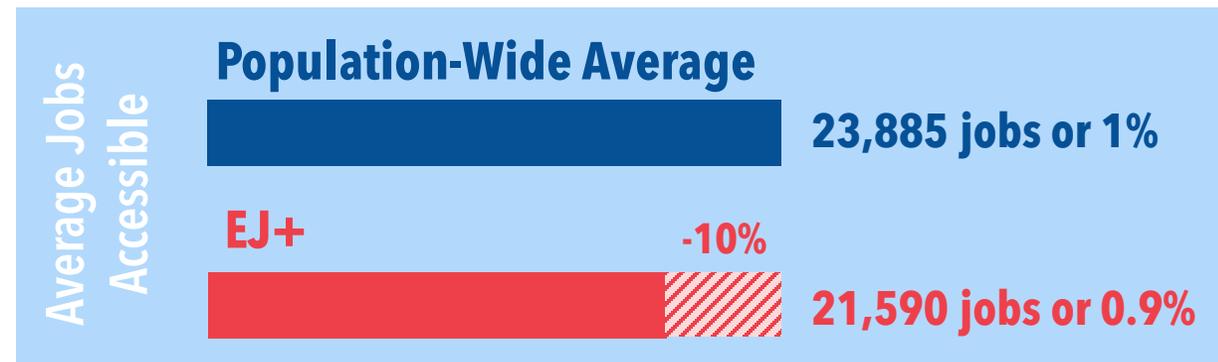
Who makes up Environmental Justice (EJ) and EJ+ Populations?

- EJ includes racial and ethnic minorities, as well as low-income populations.
- EJ+ includes racial and ethnic minorities, low-income, limited English proficiency, older adults, youth, national origin, females, and people with disabilities.



Job Access

- > Access to jobs varies not only by county, but also by demographic group.
- > Places with a high prevalence of racial minority, ethnic minority, and low-income people have better access to jobs via transit compared to the region as a whole.
- > Access to public transit is critical for these communities and the region as frontline workers are likely to be Black and people of Hispanic or Latino origin.
- > When accounting for other population groups such as youth, older adults, or people with disabilities, job accessibility is worse than the region average.
- > These groups may be unable to drive or less likely to have access to a car, meaning that lack of public transit access to jobs can come at a social and economic cost.



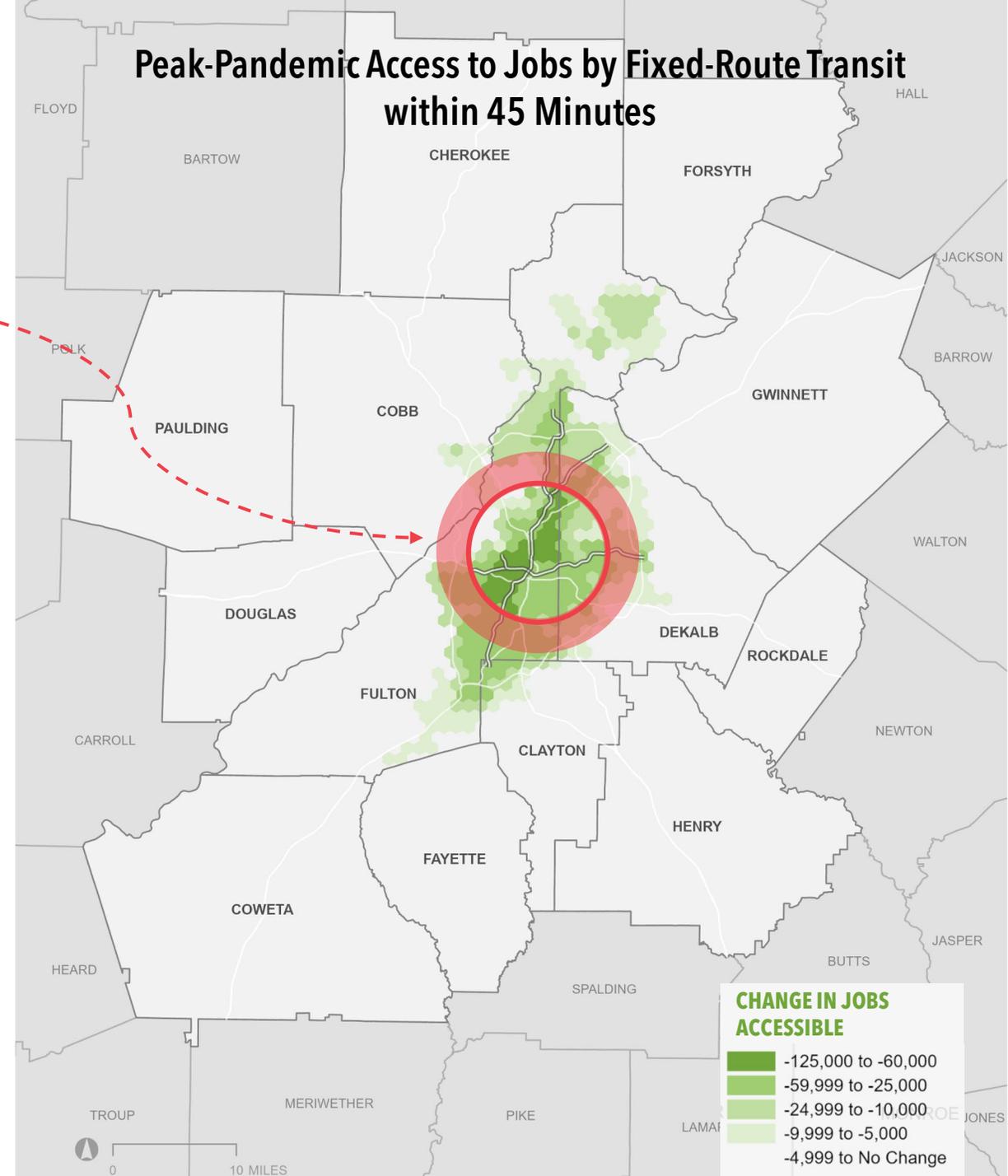
Job Access

- > As expected, transit accessibility decreased overall due to COVID-19 related service cuts.

28%

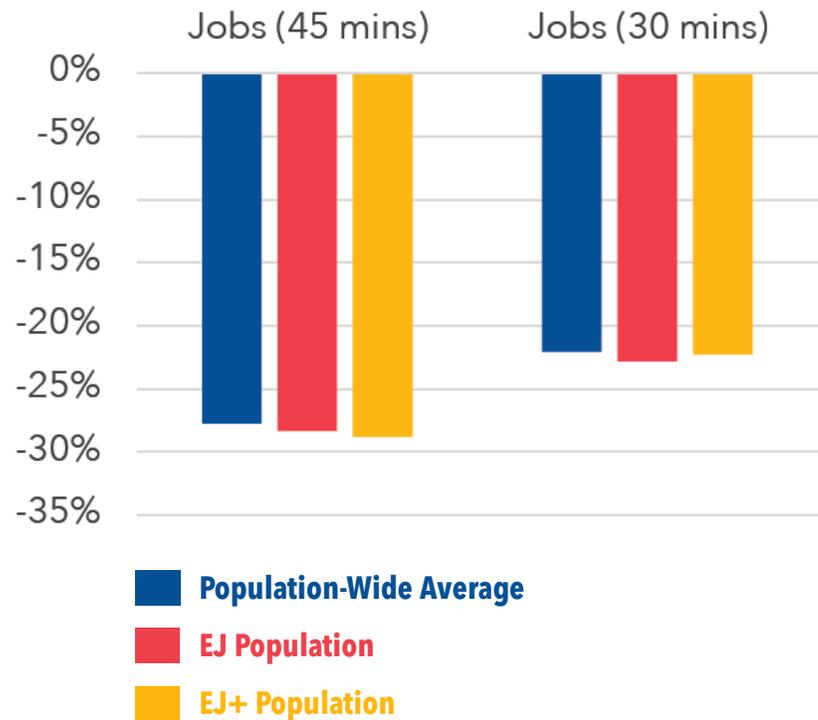
Percent decrease in jobs accessible by transit within 45 minutes during the peak of the pandemic.

- > The largest decreases in job access from Peak-COVID service are concentrated in the urban core.
- > Job access was more stable outside the region's core in areas with fixed-route service, particularly in Cobb, Gwinnett, eastern DeKalb, and central Clayton counties.



Job Access

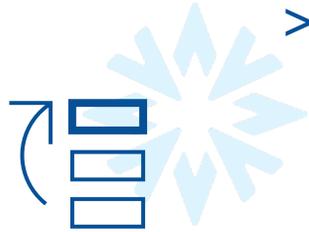
Percent Change in Accessibility by Fixed-Route Transit to Jobs, Comparing Peak-COVID to Pre-COVID Service



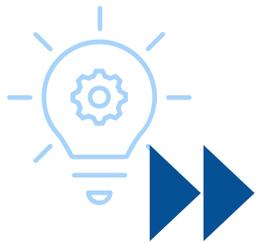
- > Localized access (30 minutes) was less affected by service cuts compared to longer-distance job access (45 minutes).
- > There were minimal differences in jobs access for environmental justice communities when compared to the region's population as a whole.
- > Transit operators made significant efforts to maintain basic access, which limited negative impacts during the initial months of the pandemic. However, even a small decrease in access has significant impacts for those affected.

Job Access

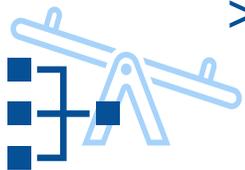
How can the ATL and our partners improve job access?



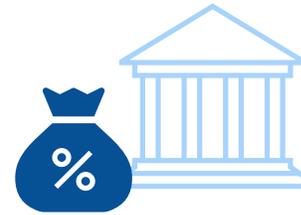
> Prioritize projects in the ATL Regional Transit Plan (ARTP) based on increased access to jobs and key destinations.



> For operators, leverage analyses from the Annual Report and Audit (ARA) and ARTP to improve planned projects or advance projects which are most impactful.



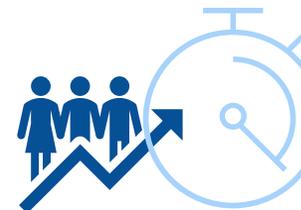
> For ARC, leverage analyses to inform Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) project selection.



> Coordinate and prioritize discretionary grant applications with workforce, hazard mitigation, and equity components as these are federal priorities.



> Connect local officials and decision-makers with major employers when developing transit and transportation plans.



> Track project implementation progress which improve job access through ARTP Performance Monitoring Program.



For details on the job access information cited in this special report, check out the 2021 and 2020 ATL Annual Report and Audit at www.ATLtransit.ga.gov/ARA and the Network Analysis Report from the ATL Regional Transit Plan at www.ATLtransit.ga.gov/ARTP