

Update on Congestion Snapshot Reports



REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

January 2012

Metro Atlanta and Congestion: How We Compare and Compete

This *Regional Snapshot* looks at several of different sources of traffic congestion data and finds that metro Atlanta is one of the most congested areas in the Southeast. It also shows the strong link between those places with the largest job bases tend to have more congestion.

The data analyzed here come from the American Community Survey, the American Transportation Builders Institute, and the Texas Transportation Institute. They show various ways in which Atlanta compares nationally. They also give clues to how Atlanta may compare to other major metropolitan areas.

METRO ATLANTA RANKS IN TOP 20 PERCENT FOR CONGESTION COST

By assigning a dollar amount to time spent in traffic, the Texas Transportation Institute estimates a congestion cost for each area using a formula that takes into account both traffic volume and fuel. For a full discussion of the methodology, go to tti.tamu.edu/nsmj/. As Figure 1 shows, metro Atlanta (including the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area) ranks in the highest range (top 20 percent) in congestion cost per commuter in 2010, and one of the highest in the Southeast.

Figure 1 - Congestion Cost

Cost of Congestion per commuter, 2010

- 785 to 1,868
- 535 to 785
- 427 to 535
- 324 to 427



24 PERCENT OF REGIONAL COMMUTERS HAVE 45+ MINUTE ONE-WAY COMMUTE

On average, commuters in the 20-county region spend 1.7 hours traveling to work each year, which translates into more than three work weeks. This *Regional Snapshot* explores county-level travel trends from the American Community Survey to show in which areas of the region commuters spend the most time traveling to work.

It also looks at small area trends that show, in general, that the areas around the region's biggest employment centers have the shortest commutes. But this isn't always the case. A future *Regional Snapshot* will explore worker flows and characteristics for specific employment centers.

The American Community Survey (ACS) asks respondents who do not work from home how long they typically spend in driving time from home to work. Table 1 summarizes the responses for the 20-county Atlanta region. Overall, 24 percent of the region's commuters spend at least 45 minutes traveling from home to work each day.

Table 1. Travel Time From Home To Work

County	Travel Time to Work: Percent of Commuters with a...				
	Less than 10 minute commute	10-30 minute commute	30-45 minute commute	45+ minute commute	45+ minute commute
Barrow	10.0%	20.0%	14.0%	23.4%	28.0%
Cherokee	18.5%	31.0%	21.0%	15.2%	19.0%
Clayton	8.0%	27.4%	18.0%	24.0%	20.0%
Cobb	7.1%	20.0%	16.0%	21.0%	20.0%
Crawford	8.3%	22.1%	20.0%	18.2%	20.0%
Dekalb	8.4%	23.1%	15.2%	23.9%	20.0%
Douglas	8.5%	22.0%	18.0%	24.0%	20.0%
Fayette	12.0%	21.2%	16.0%	27.0%	20.0%
Fulton	7.2%	22.4%	18.0%	24.1%	20.0%
Gwinnett	8.8%	25.1%	20.0%	22.9%	20.0%
Spalding	8.8%	27.9%	20.0%	20.0%	18.0%
Whitfield	10.0%	25.6%	18.0%	20.0%	18.0%

In contrast, Carroll County (16 percent) has the highest percentage of commuters with a commute of less than 10 minutes, followed by Spalding (13 percent) and Fayette (12 percent).

Of course, the farther away from the urban core, but commuters in these counties do have unique challenges in accessing a cluster of employment centers that generally extend northward from the core. The maps on subsequent pages explore this further.

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

March 2012

County-Level Congestion Trends: Jobs Play a Key Role

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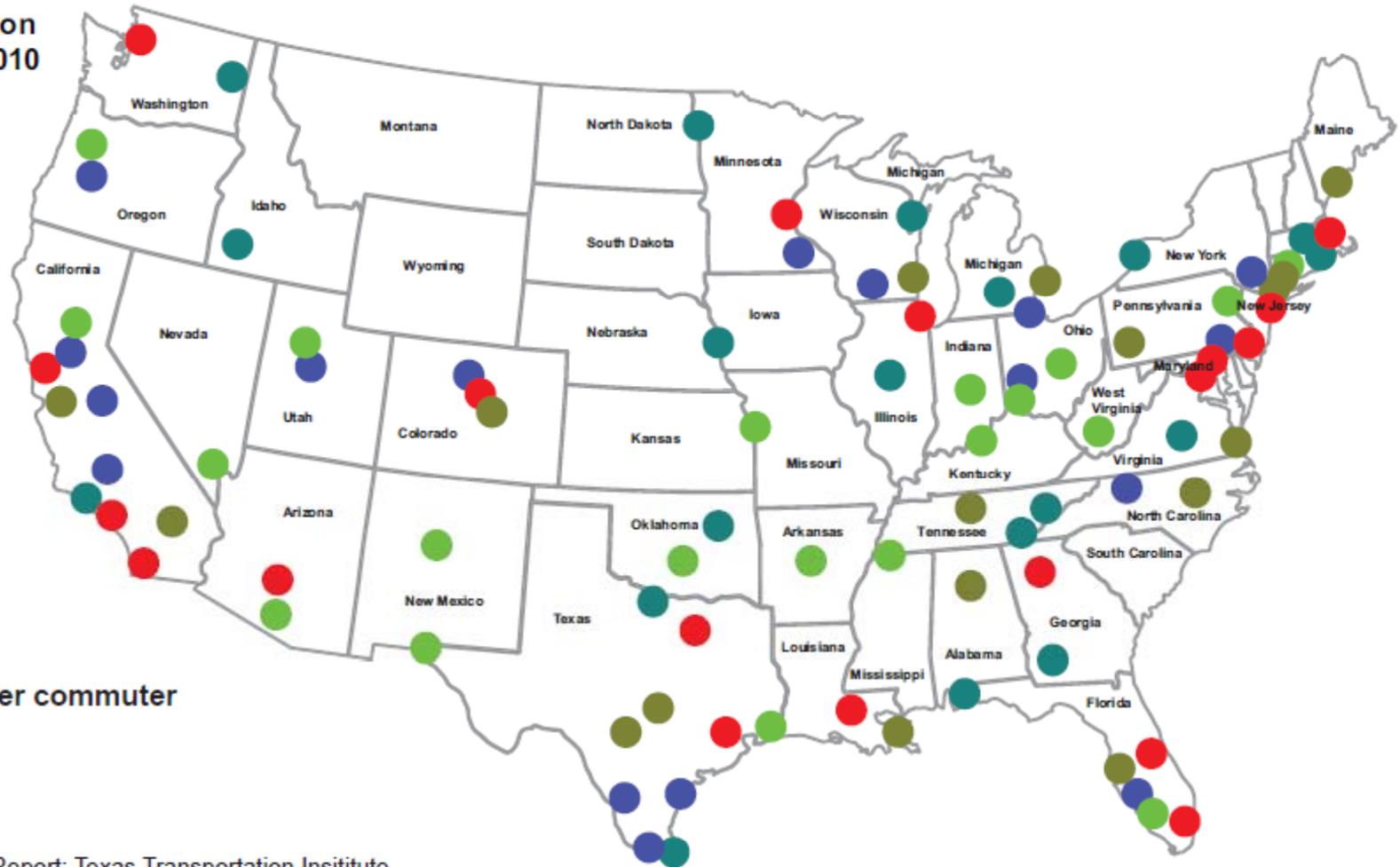
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Cost of Congestion Per Commuter

Cost of Congestion per commuter, 2010

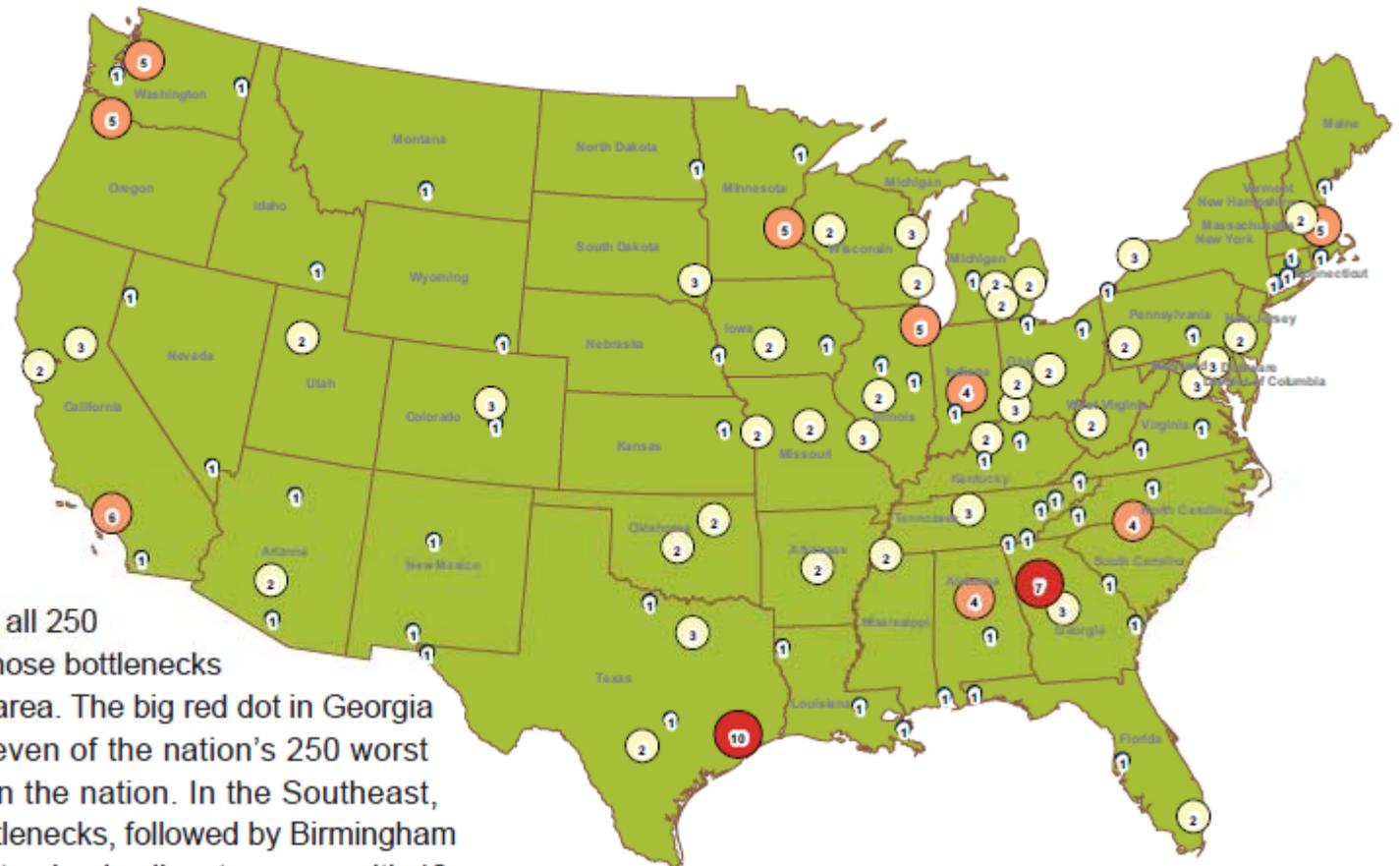
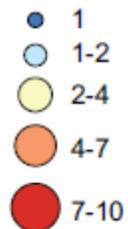
- 785 to 1,568
- 533 to < 785
- 427 to < 533
- 321 to < 427
- 125 to < 321



Source: Urban Mobility Report; Texas Transportation Institute

Atlanta Region is Second only to Houston in Number of Bottlenecks

Bottlenecks Interchanges



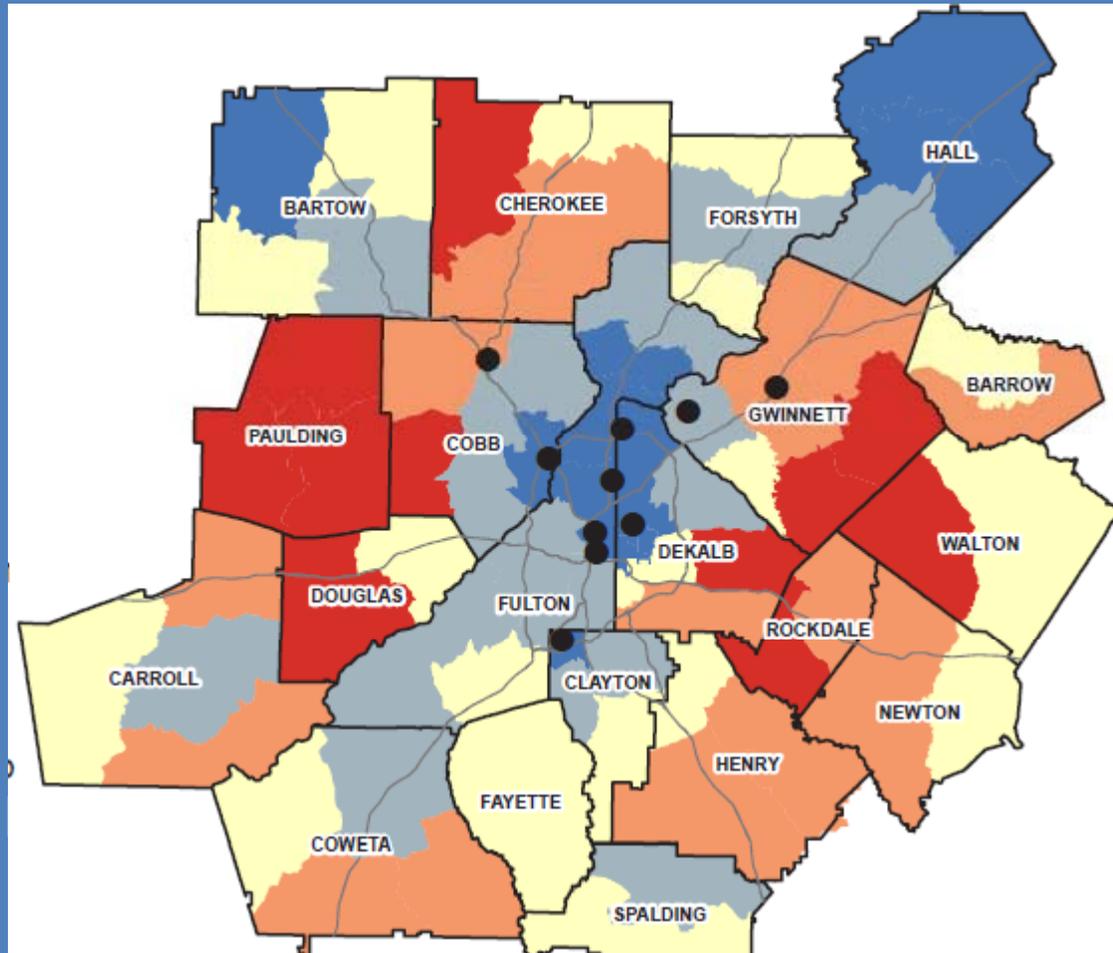
Map 1 shows ATRI's ranking of all 250 bottlenecks by the number of those bottlenecks occurring in each major metro area. The big red dot in Georgia is metro Atlanta, which has seven of the nation's 250 worst bottlenecks, second-highest in the nation. In the Southeast, metro Atlanta has the most bottlenecks, followed by Birmingham and Charlotte. Nationally, Houston leads all metro areas with 10 of the most congested bottlenecks.

Seven of the Nation's Worst Interstate Bottlenecks Are In the Atlanta Region

Congestion Ranking	State	Metro Area	Interchange	Congestion Ranking	State	Metro Area	Interchange
9	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-285 at I-85 (North)	99	AL	Montgomery, AL	I-85 at I-65
20	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-75 at I-285 (North)	102	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-75 at I-85
27	TN	Nashville, TN	I-24 at I-440 (North)	105	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-75 at I-675
31	LA	Baton Rouge, LA	I-10 at I-110	106	FL	Jacksonville, FL	I-10 at I-95
34	TN	Nashville, TN	I-40 at I-65 (East)	117	TN	Chattanooga, TN	I-75 at I-24
42	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-20 at I-285 (West)	124	AL	Birmingham, AL	I-65 at I-459
58	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-20 at I-285 (East)	126	NC	Charlotte, NC	I-77 at I-485 (South)
67	AL	Birmingham, AL	I-65 at I-20	130	NC	Charlotte, NC	I-77 near Lake Norman
79	GA	Atlanta, GA	I-20 at I-75/I-85	133	SC	Columbia, SC	I-26 at I-126
81	TN	Nashville, TN	I-65 at I-24	135	LA	New Orleans, LA	I-10 at I-610 (West)
82	TN	Memphis, TN	I-40 at I-240 (East)	137	FL	Miami, FL	I-95 at I-195
83	SC	Charleston, SC	I-26 at I-526	144	TN	Memphis, TN	I-55 at I-240
93	FL	Tampa, FL	I-4 at I-275	145	LA	Shreveport, LA	I-49 at I-20

Source: ATRI/FHWA

Percent of Commuters with 45+ Minute Commute to Work

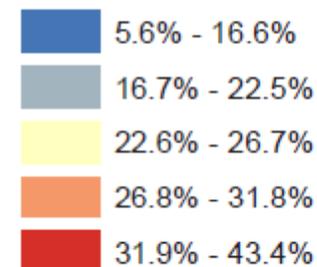


Top 10 Employment Centers

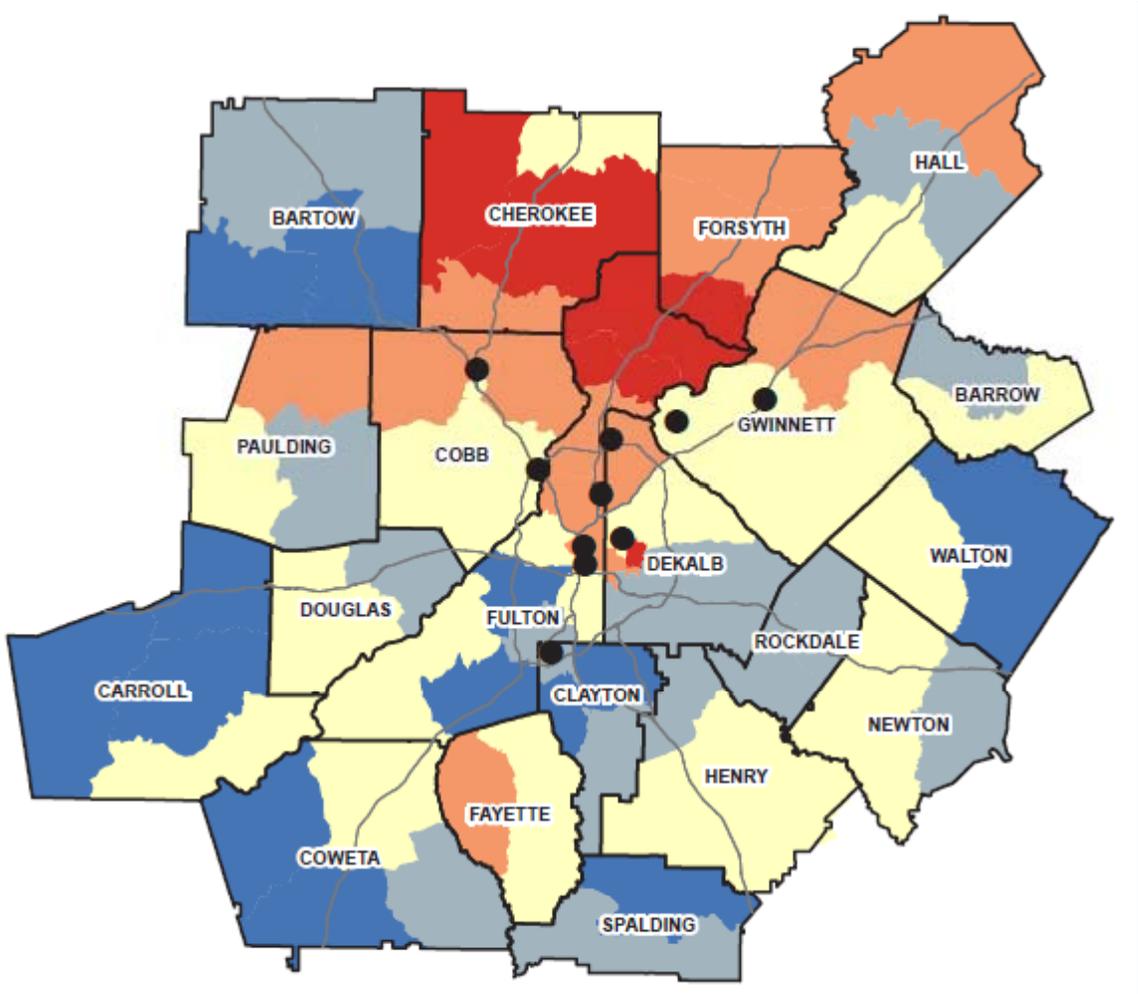
● Top 10 Employment Centers

Superdistrict

45+ min commute



Percent of Workers Who Work from Home



Top 10 Employment Centers

● Top 10 Employment Centers

Superdistrict

Work at home

- 1.5% - 2.6%
- 2.7% - 3.8%
- 3.9% - 5.7%
- 5.8% - 8.5%
- 8.6% - 11.3%

For Additional Information...

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/info-center/arc-newsletters/regional-snapshots>

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Regional Snapshots

Regional Snapshot is a monthly publication that compiles the latest data to explore important regional issues.

Employment Centers Drive Commuter Patterns

Travel patterns in the Atlanta region are influenced, in large part, by the spatial relationship between where people live and where they work. This Regional Snapshot, using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's "OnTheMap" program, explores this relationship further by focusing on workers coming into and out of the region's 10 major employment centers. It finds that major employment centers generally lack housing options, which necessitates workers commuting in for work. That relationship doesn't always hold, however.

This Snapshot also looks at the directions and the counties from which workers are most likely to commute to each of the 10 major employment centers.

THIS MONTH'S REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

Direction	Percentage
NORTHWEST	10%
NORTH	20%
NORTHEAST	20%

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