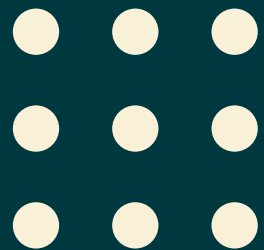




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# Gaston County Demographic and Economic Highlights

Denise Canada, NCACC Director of Research & Fiscal Policy

January 28, 2025

# TOPICS

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Demographics

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Economics & Workforce

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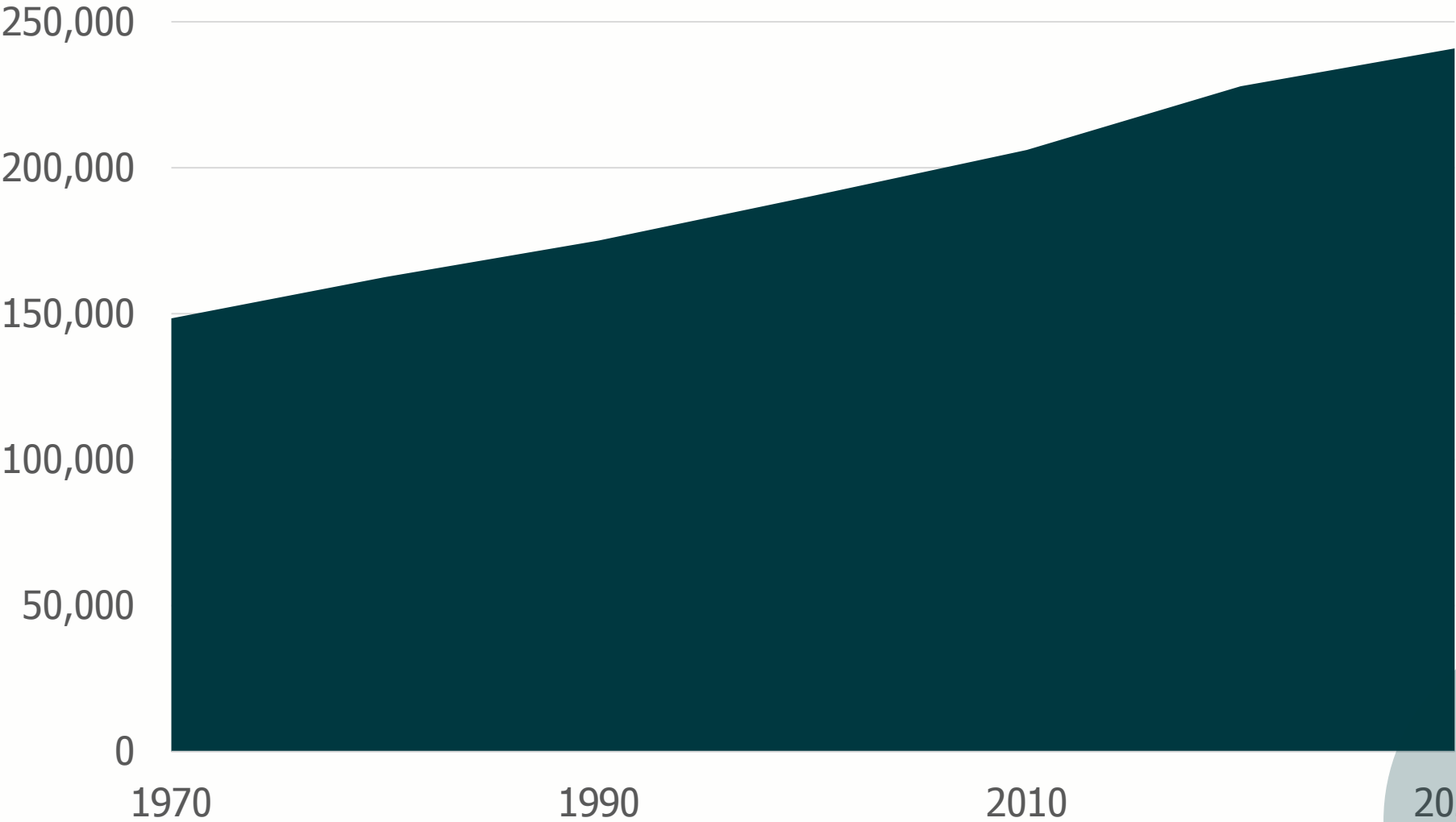
Sales Tax Trends



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County  
population has  
increased  
steadily over  
the past 50  
years.





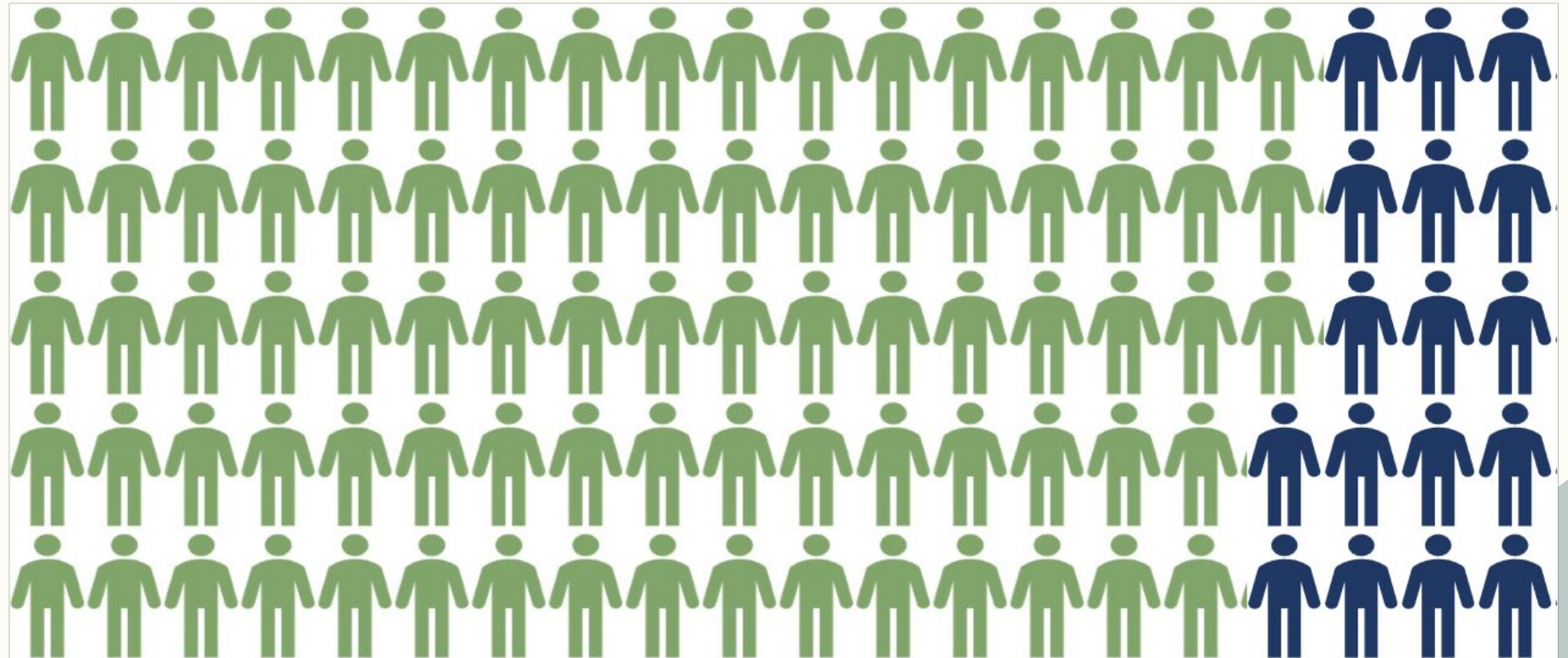
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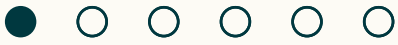
# Demographics



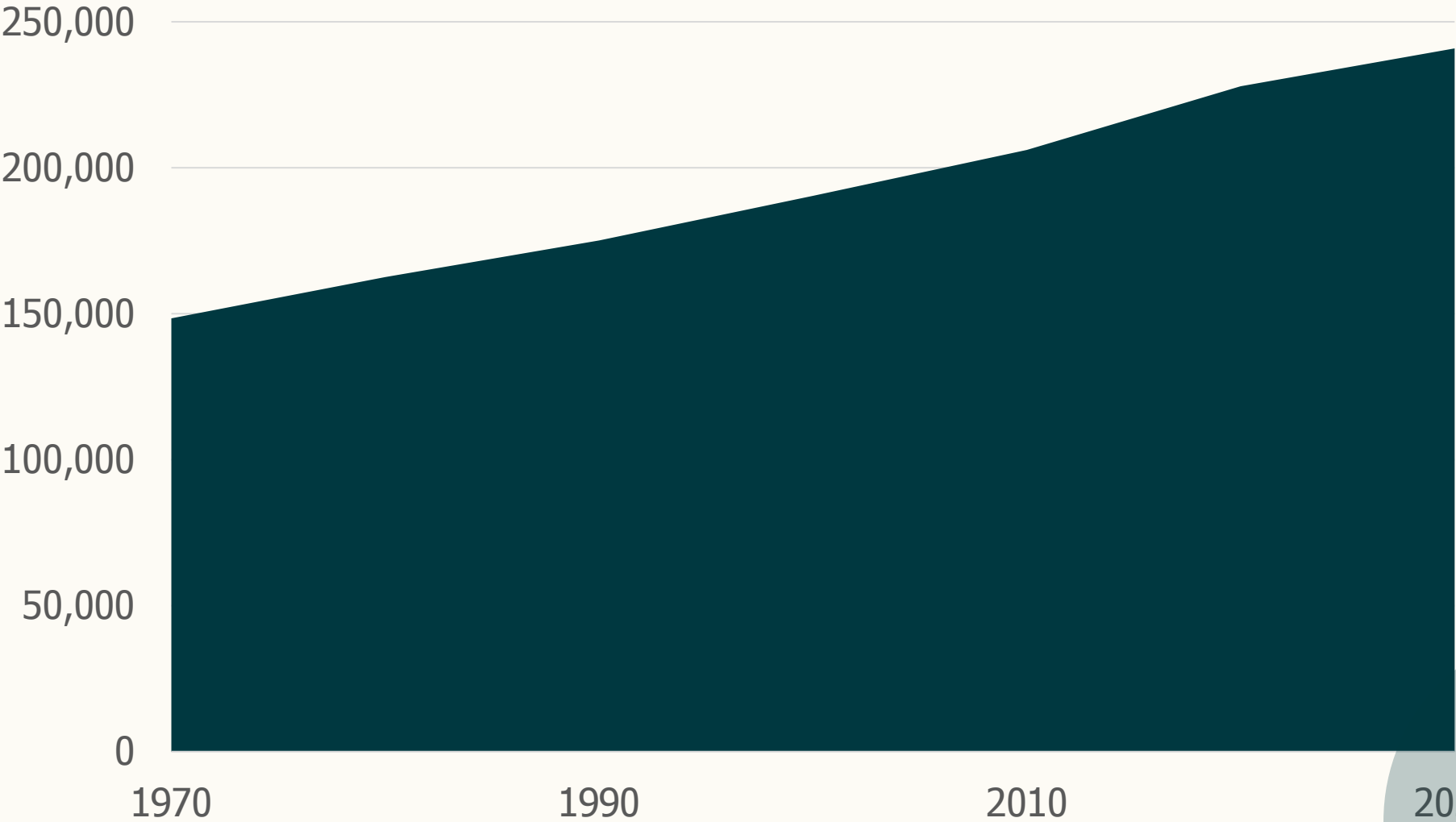
**92,400** new residents between 1970  
and 2023.

**83%**  
moved into  
municipal  
areas.



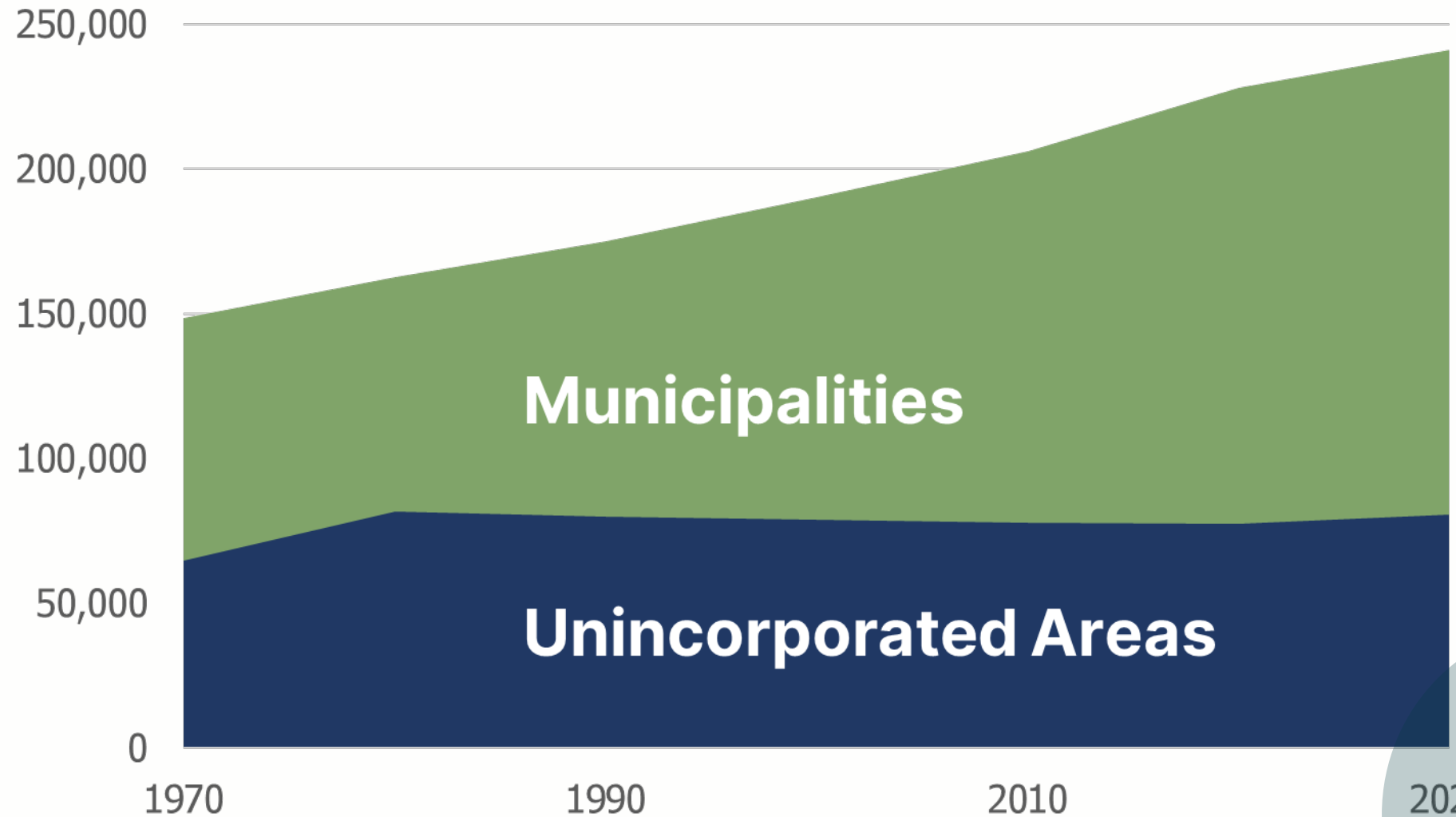


County  
population has  
increased  
steadily over  
the past 50  
years.





Virtually all  
growth has  
been in  
municipal  
areas.





Age  
100+

## Gaston County, 2025

90

80

70

60

50

40

30

20

10

0

Men

Women



Relatively solid base of young families



Largest groups of men are early 50s and late teens



Largest group of women is early 50s

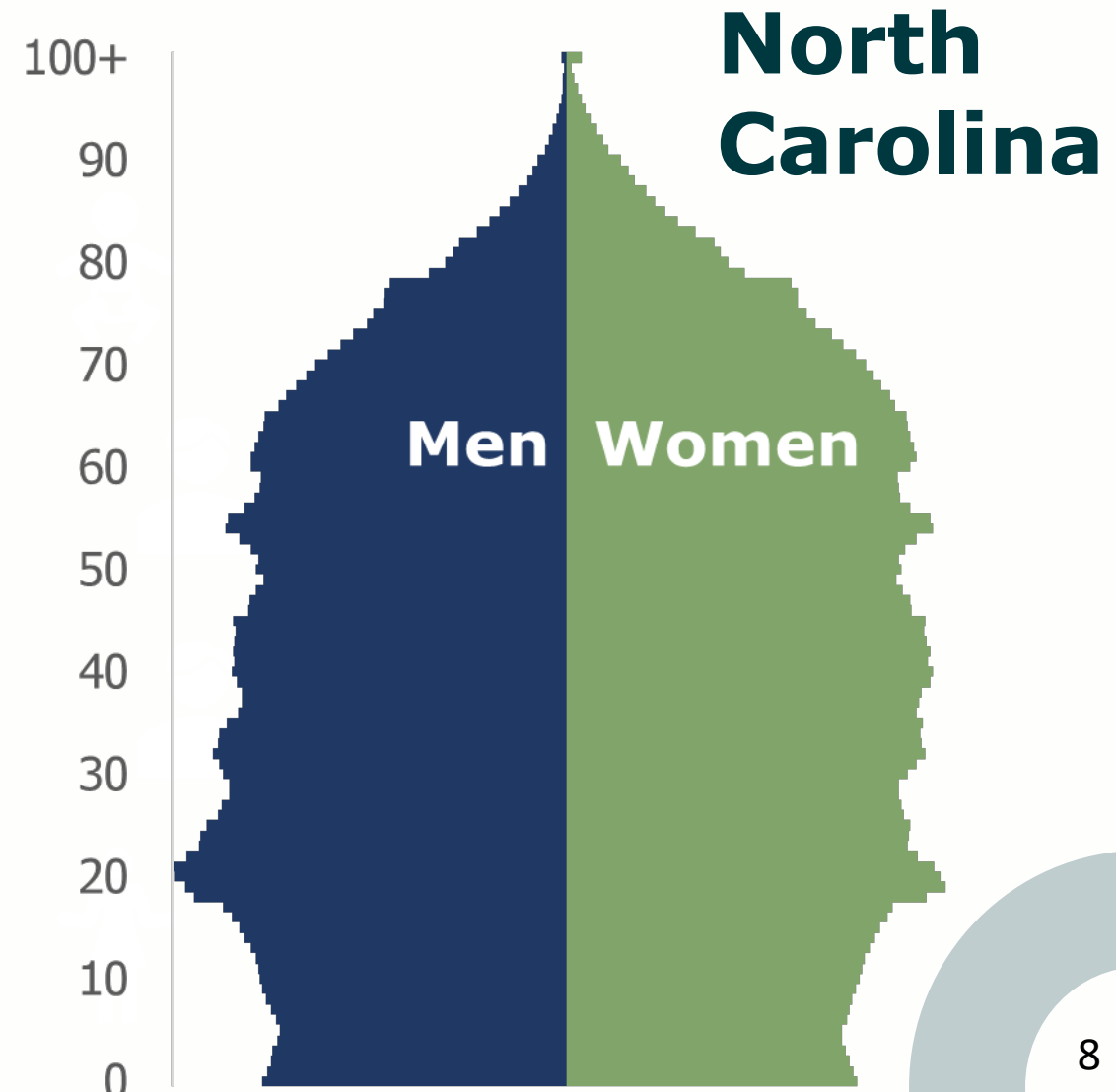
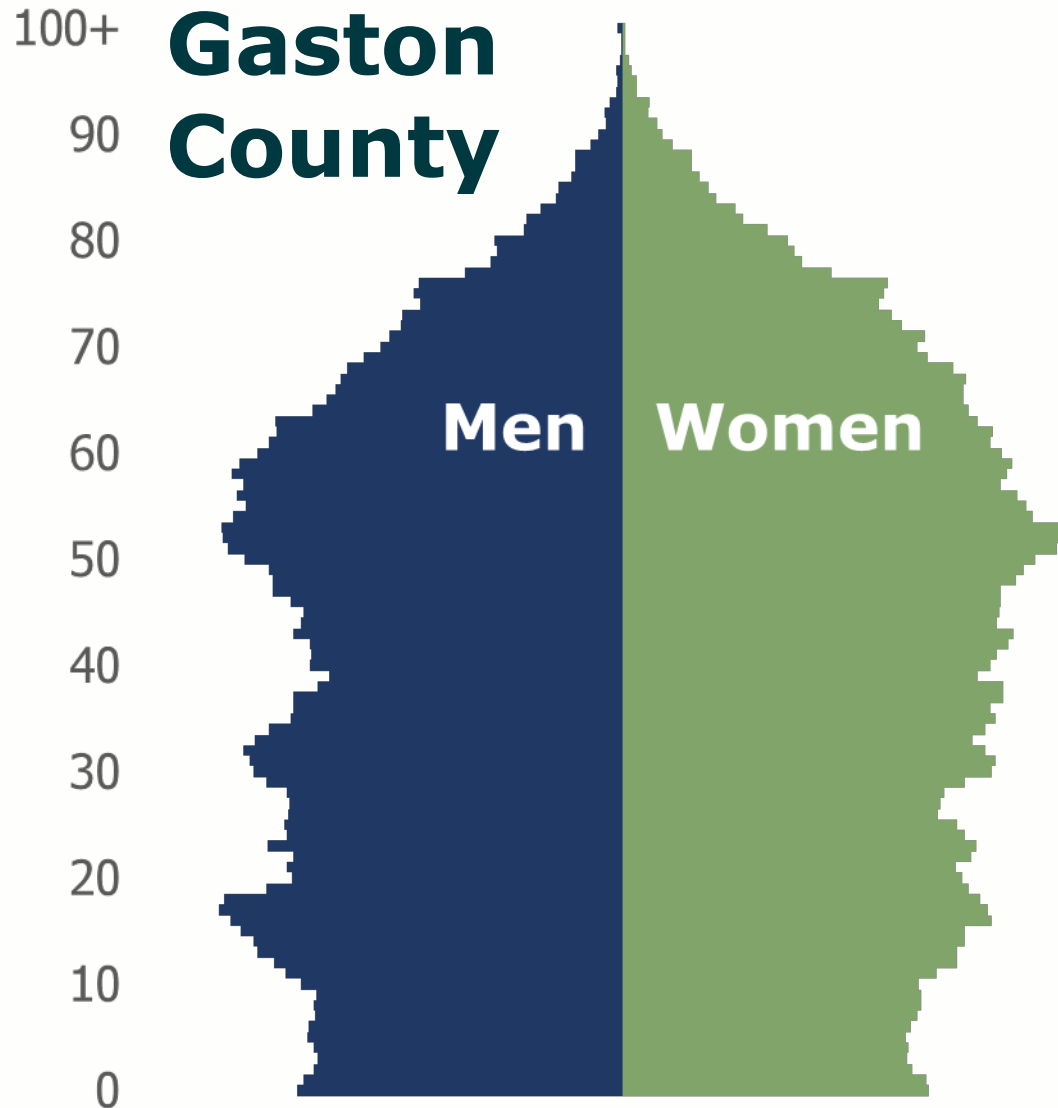


Large retirement age population



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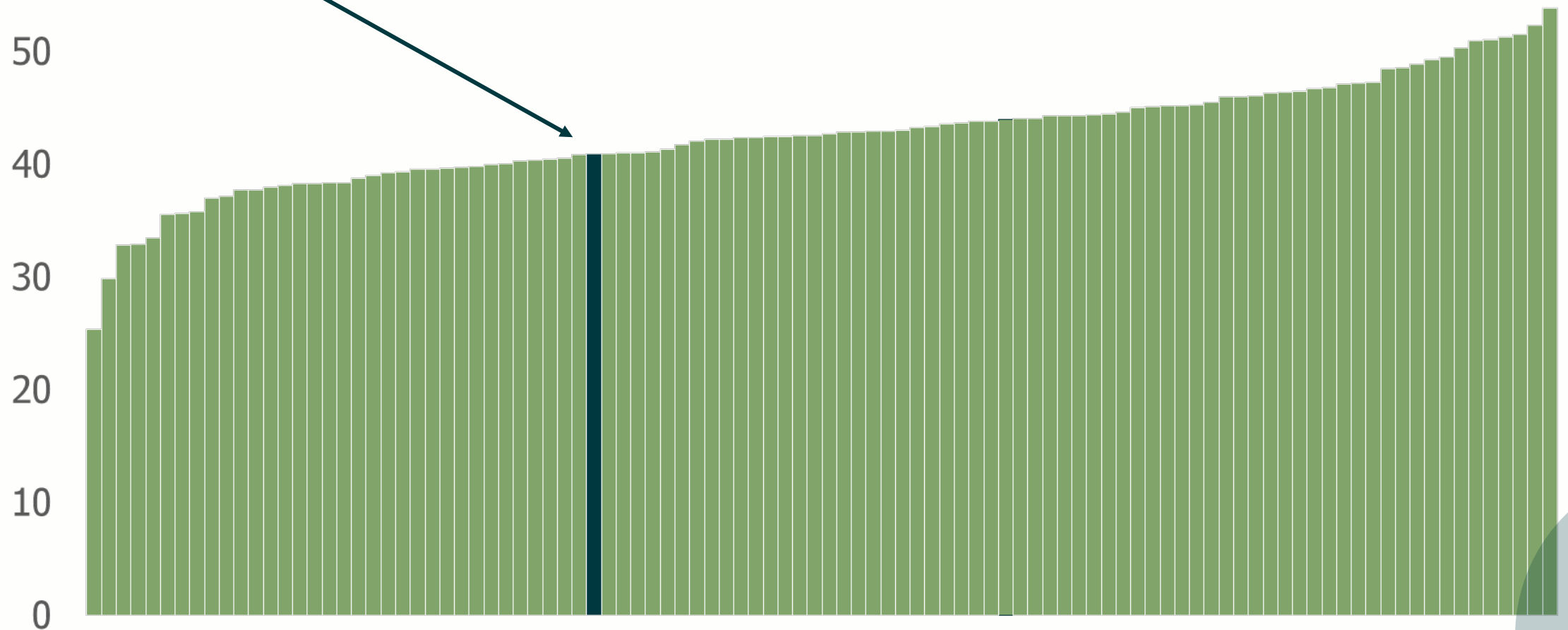
# Demographics





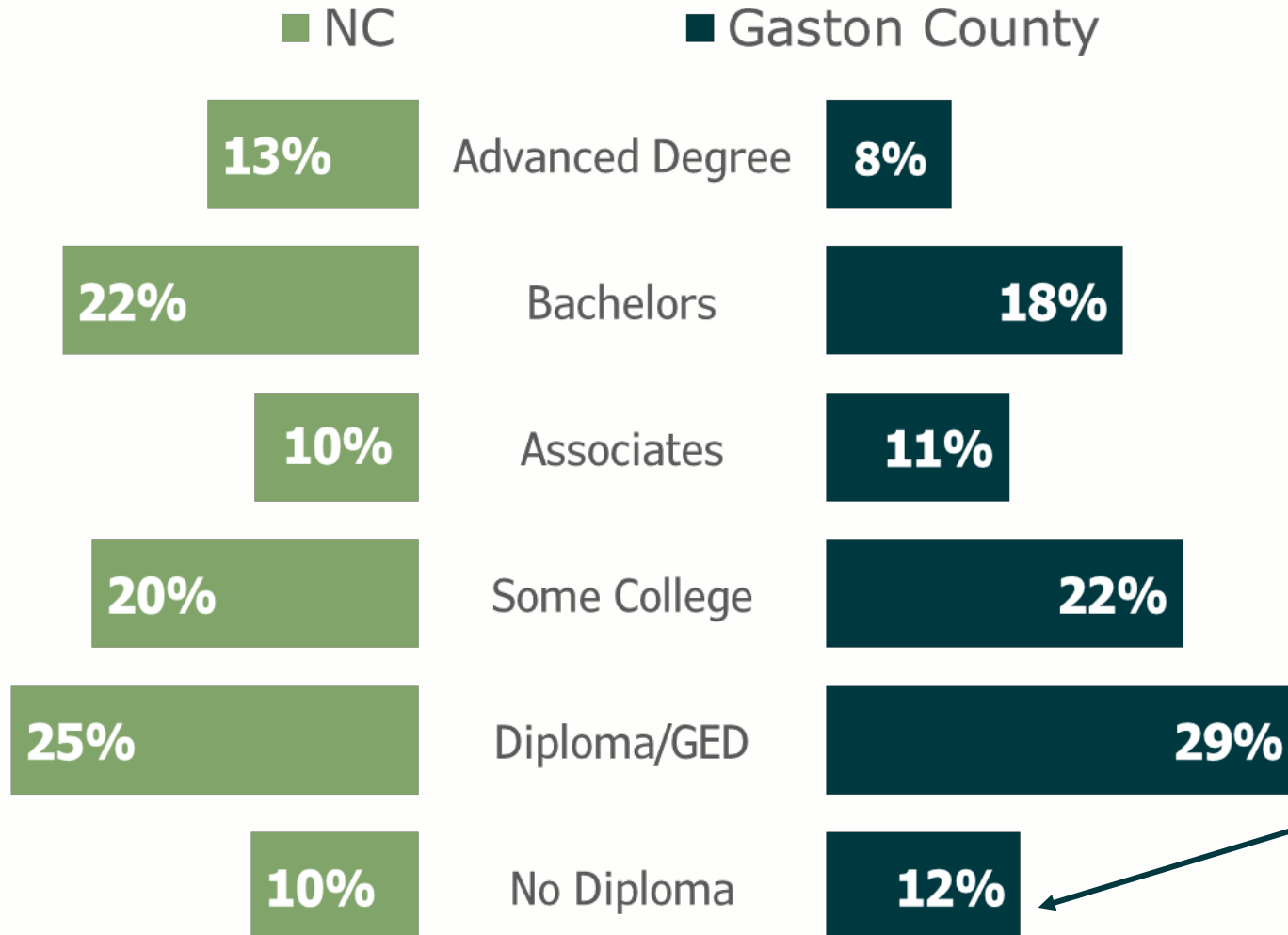


Gaston County's median age is 45.2 years.





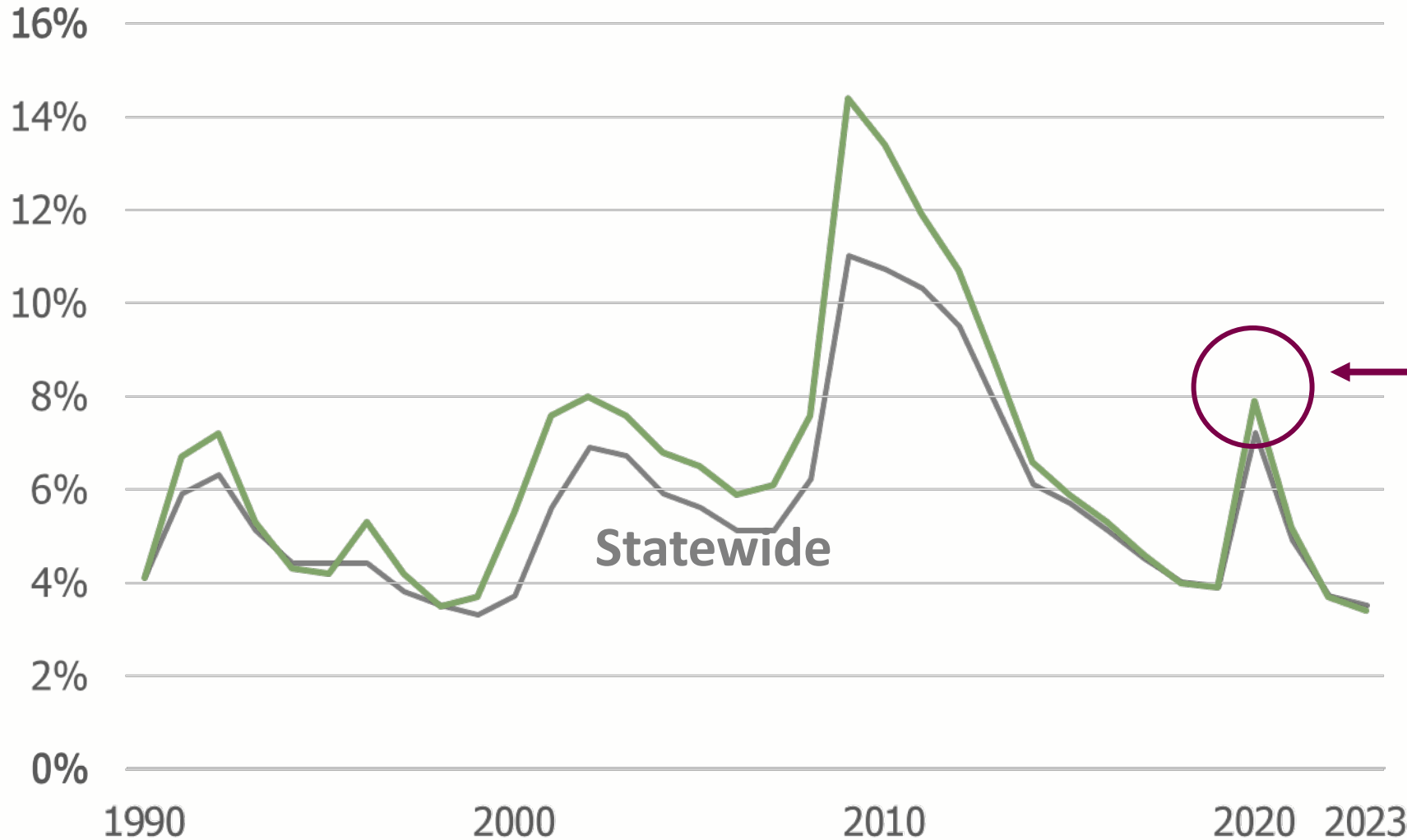
# Economics and Workforce



41% of  
county  
residents  
over age 25  
have a high  
school  
degree at  
most.



# Economics and Workforce



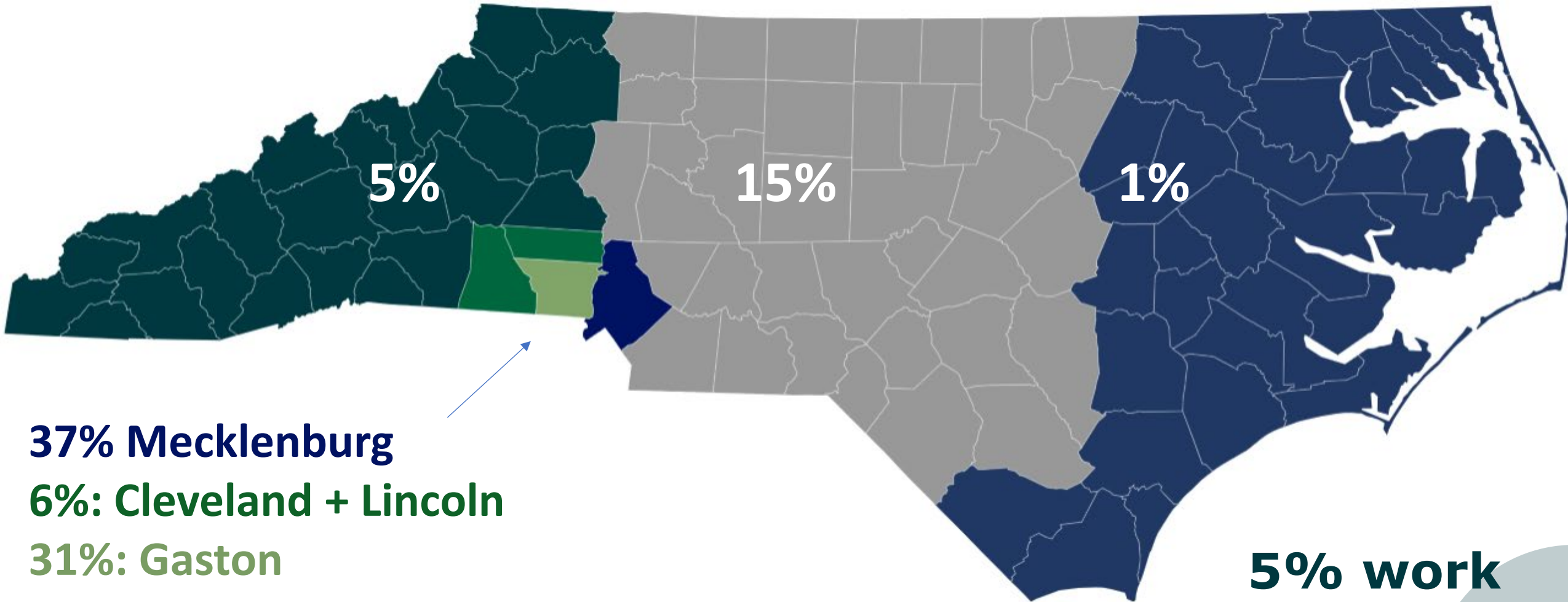
**Unemployment** has steadily declined since the height of the pandemic.

Historically, higher unemployment than North Carolina overall.



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# Where Residents Work



**37% Mecklenburg**

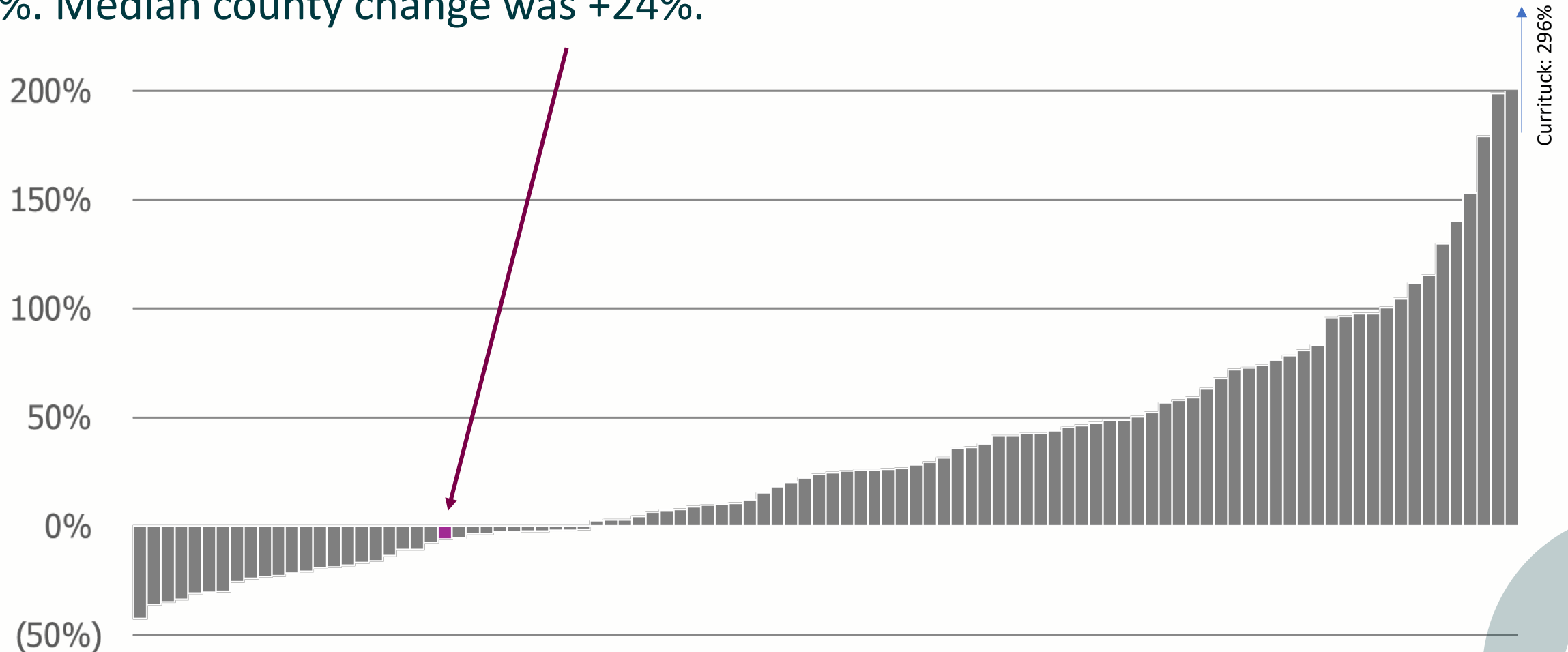
**6%: Cleveland + Lincoln**

**31%: Gaston**

**5% work  
out of state**



Between 1990 and 2023, Gaston County's private sector employment declined by 6%. Median county change was +24%.





# Economics and Workforce

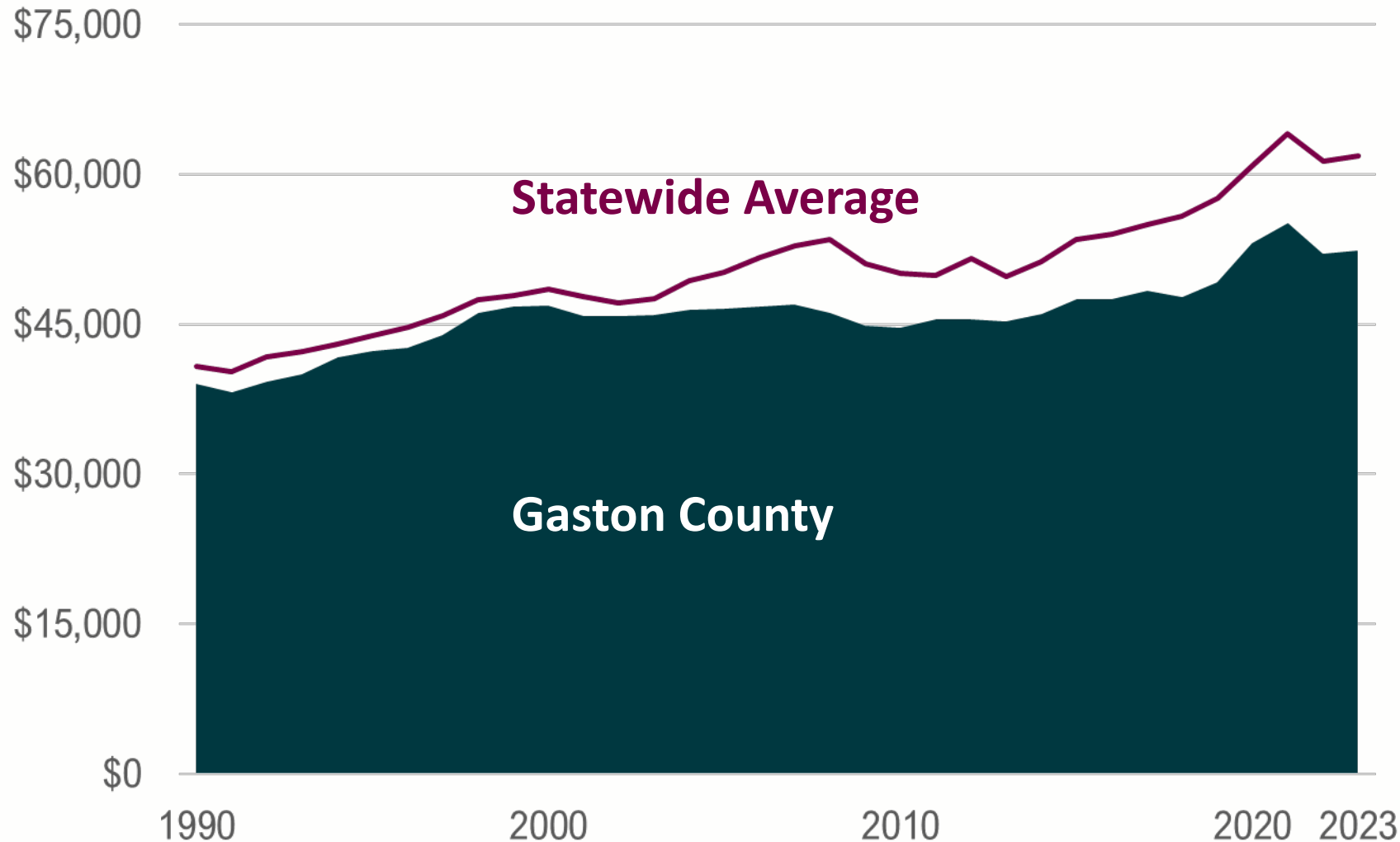


This graph shows only private sector employment.

Service sector jobs make up a greater share of jobs than in 1990; true in most of NC and US.



# Economics and Workforce



Per capita income is below the statewide average.

Gap between county and state is growing.

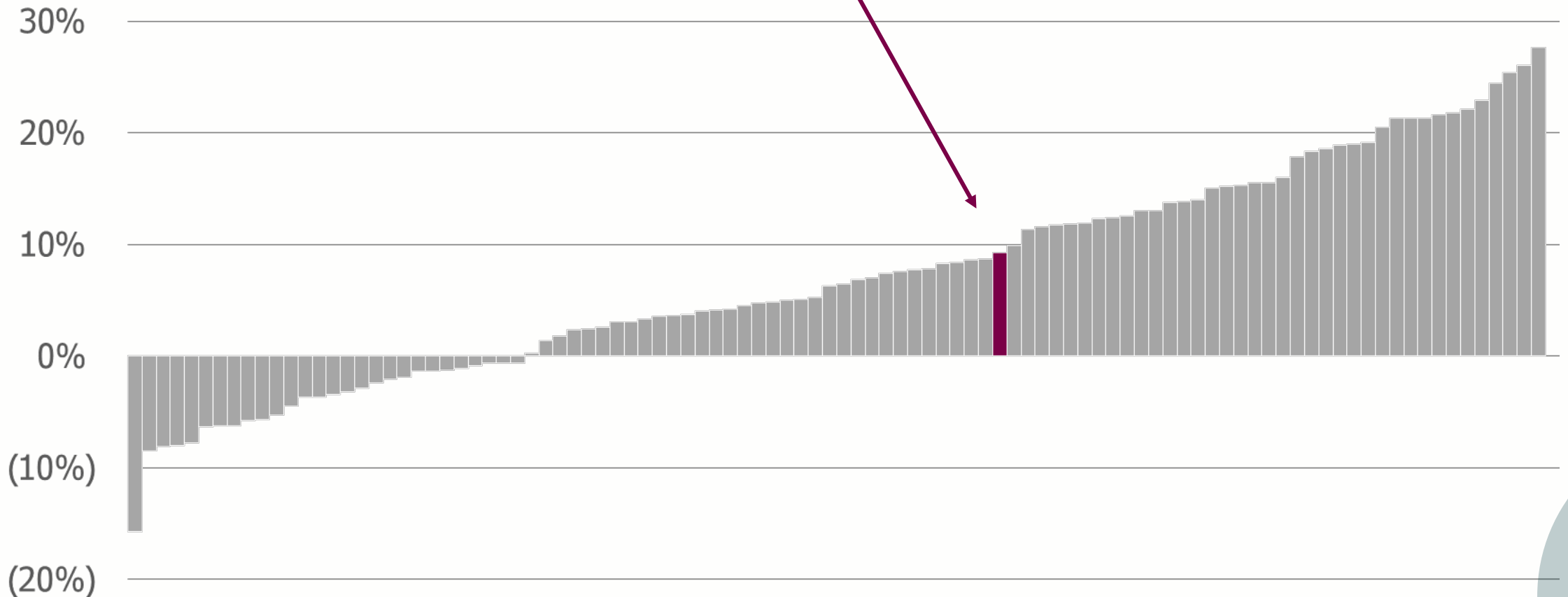
These data are adjusted for inflation.



# Economics and Workforce



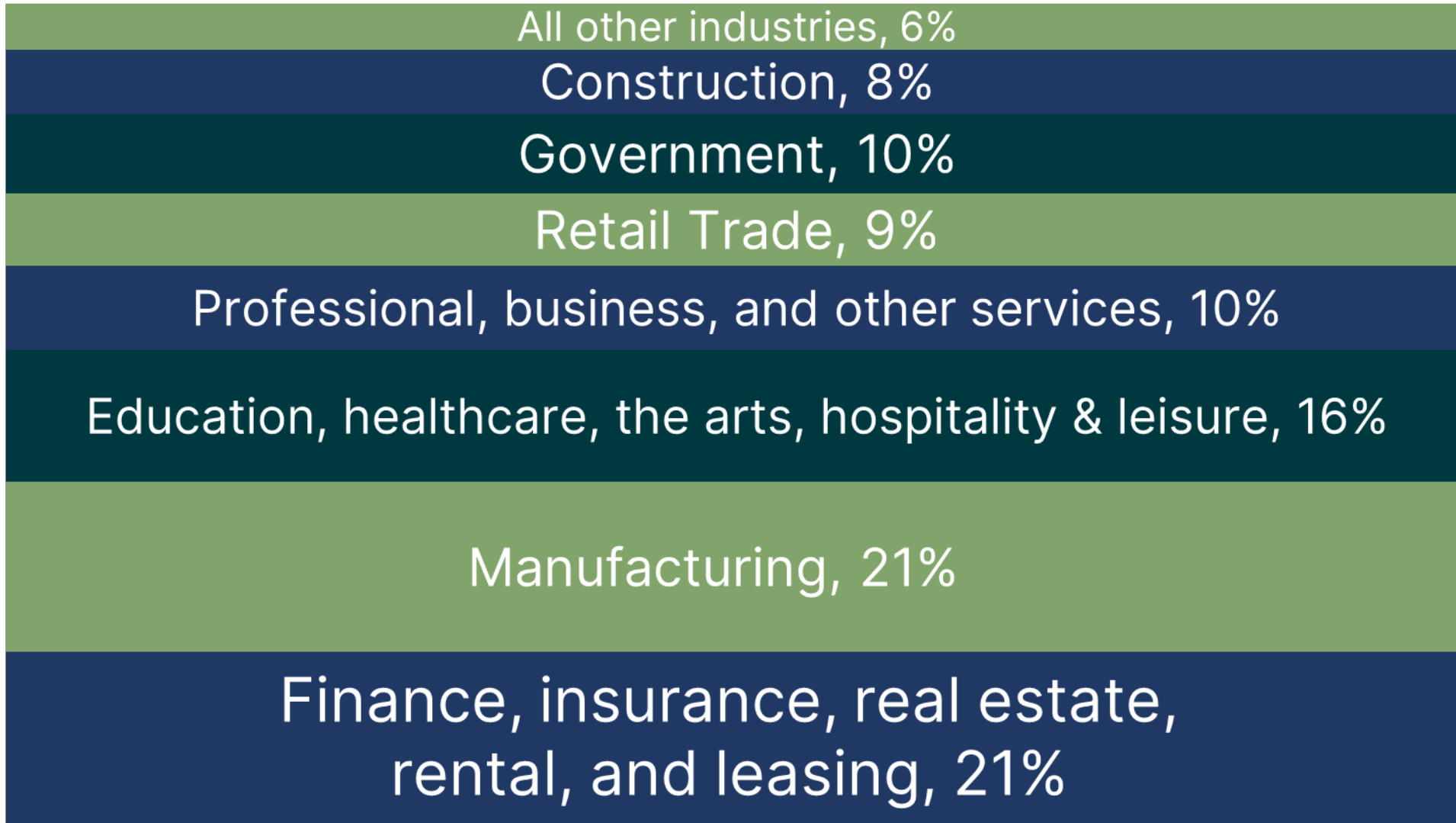
From 2018-2023, Gaston County's GDP increased by 9%. The median county change was +6%.







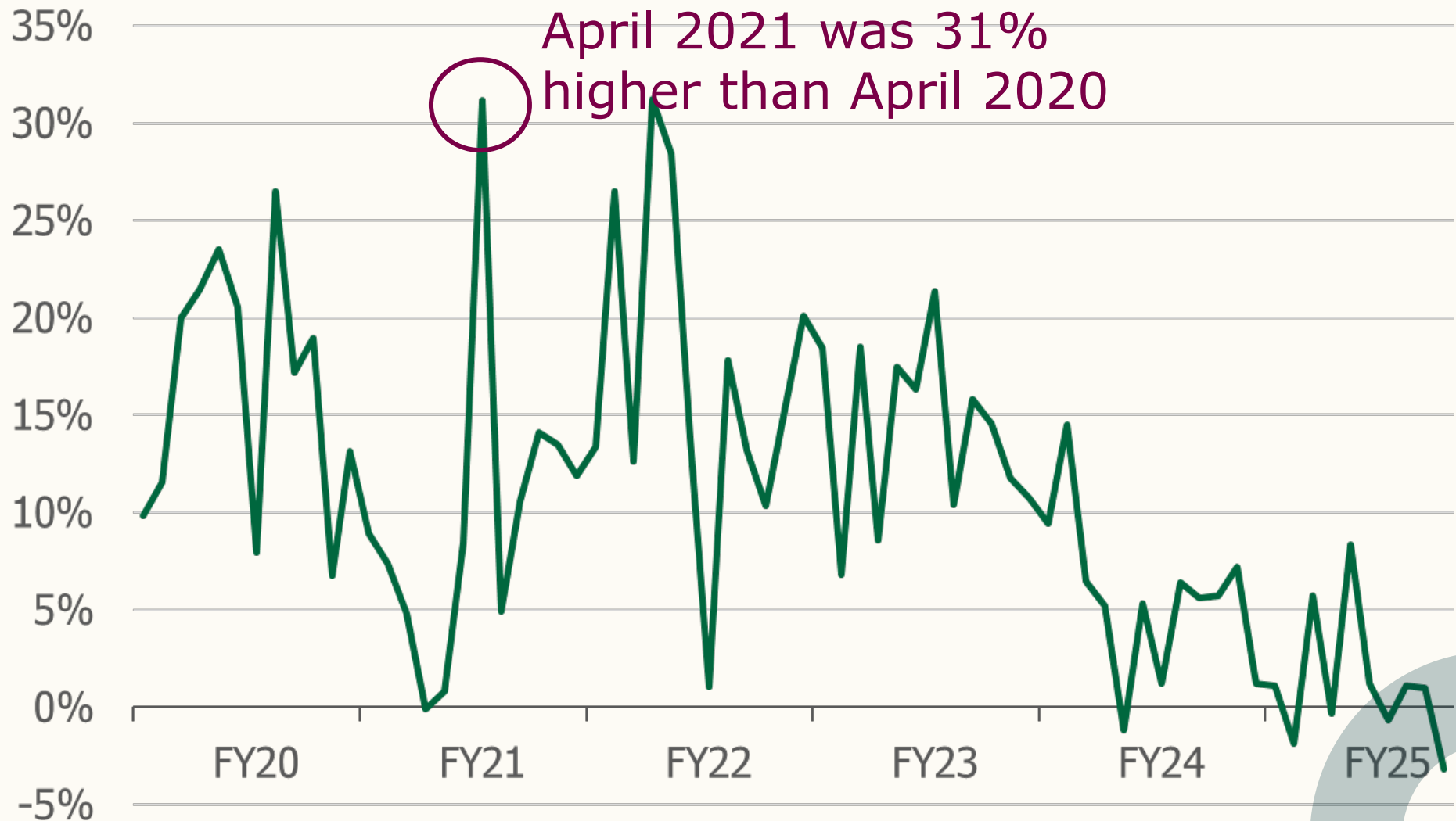
# Economics and Workforce



Impact of  
each job  
sector on  
the total  
Gross  
Domestic  
Product.

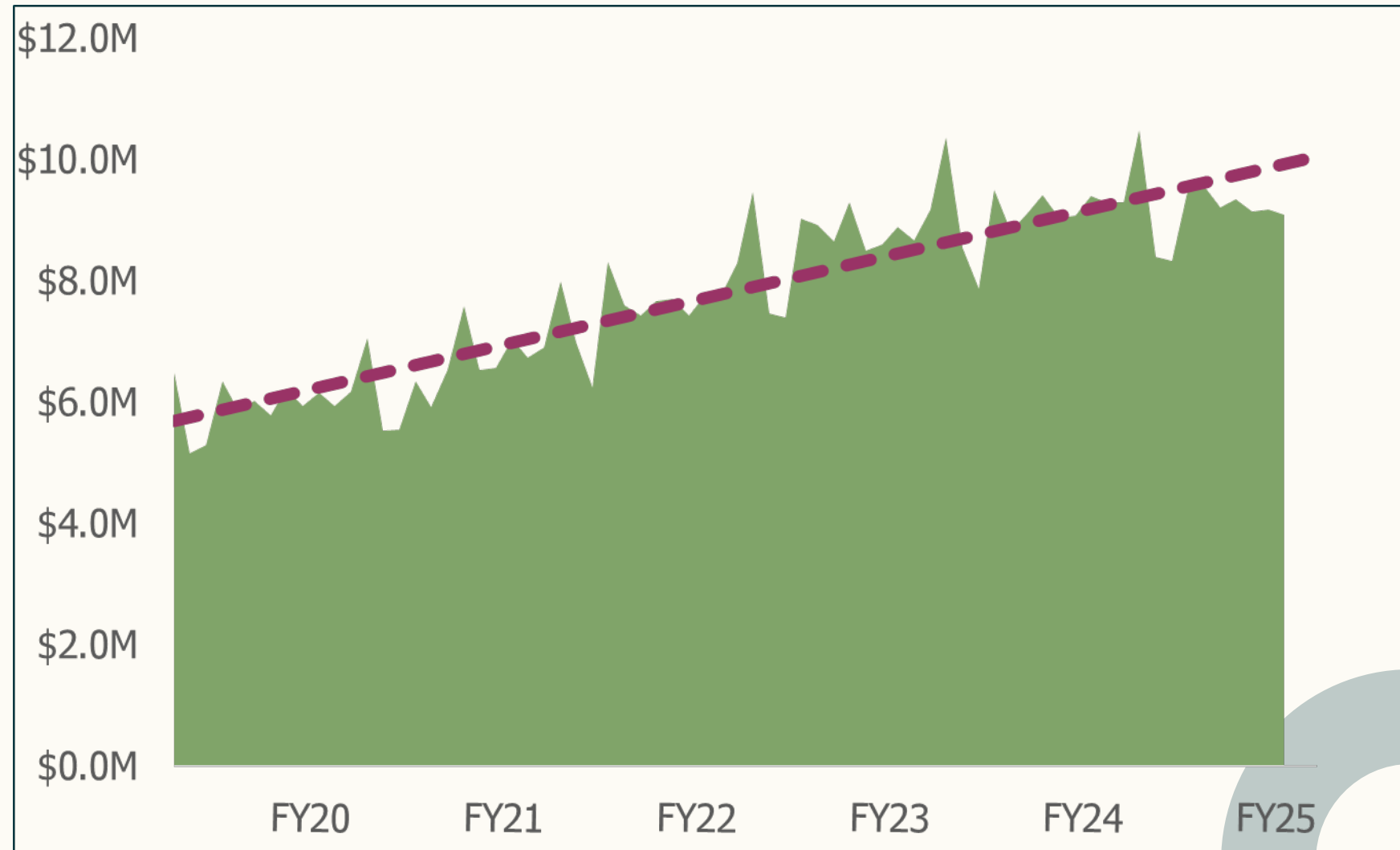


You're looking at how each month's sales tax collections compared to the same month of the prior year – Feb. 2021 versus Feb. 2020, for example.





Like most of the state, your collections have trended up from the pre-covid era.

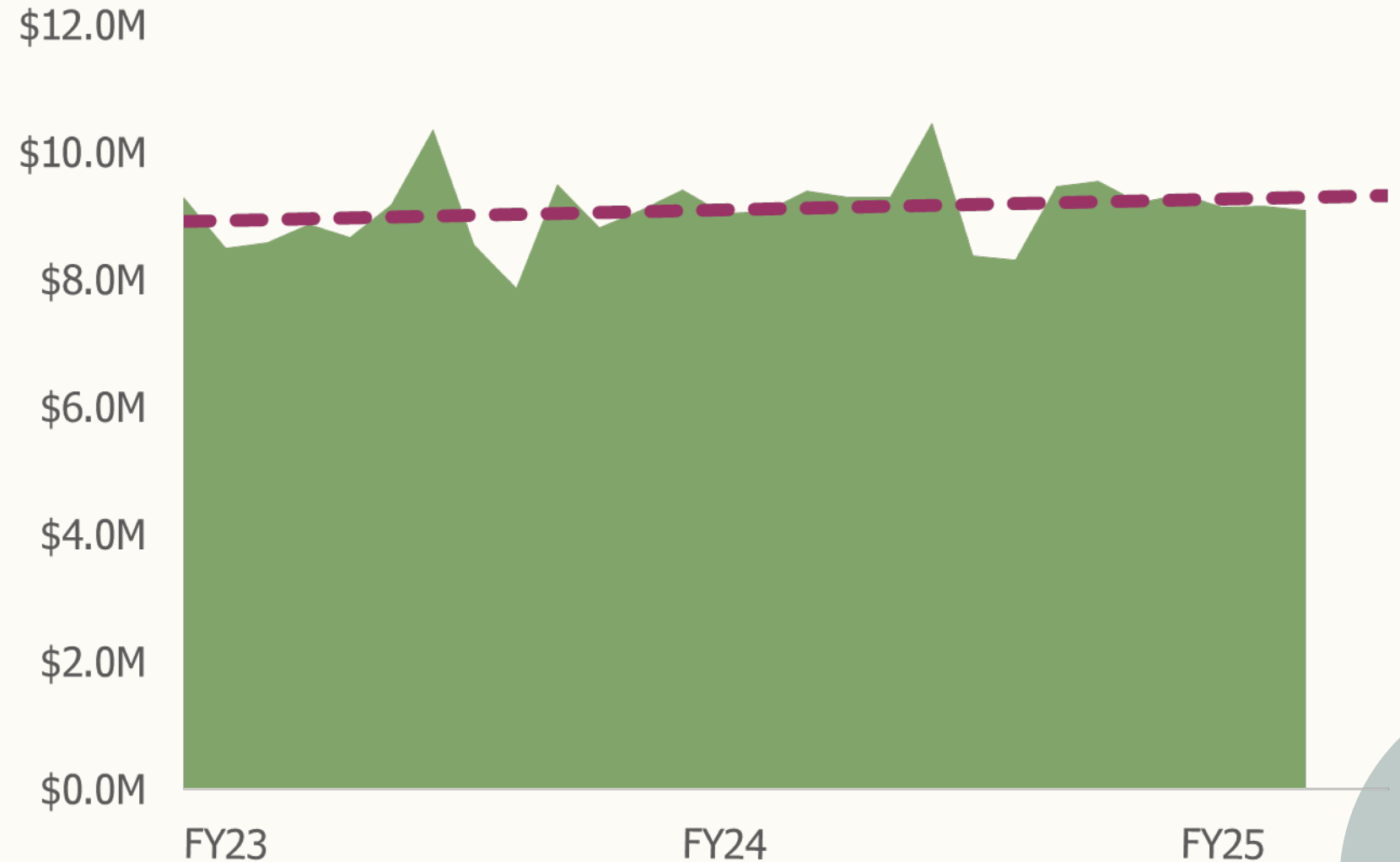




# Sales Taxes



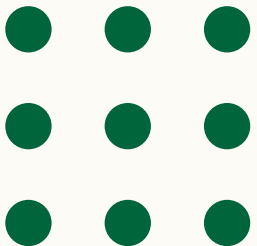
But, since FY 2022-23, the trend is almost flat. This isn't uncommon compared to other counties.





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Even if every county collected an identical amount of sales tax, no two counties would receive the same distribution.

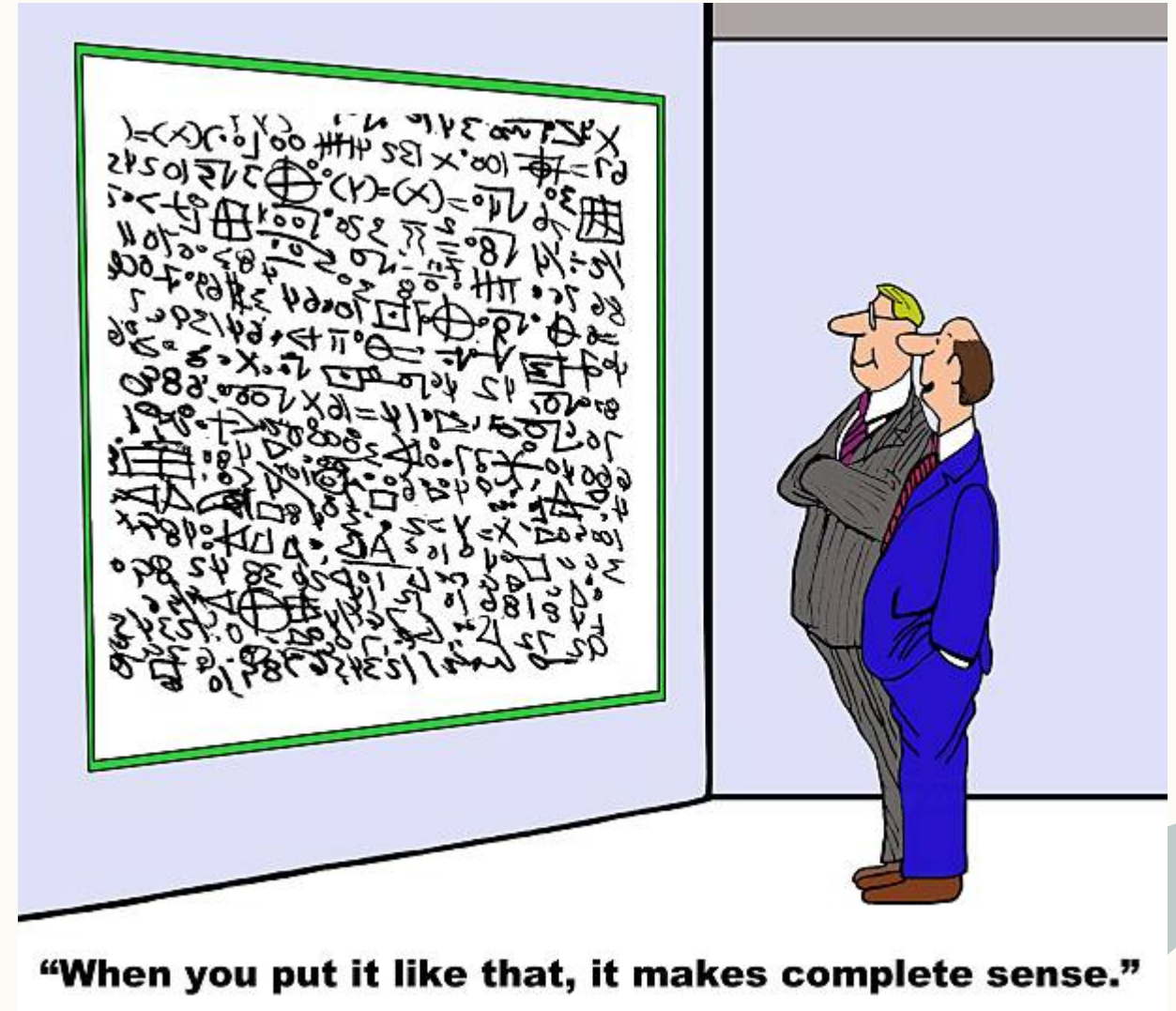




- The State's complicated formulas redistribute the first 2¢ of tax among the counties.

## Example: Oct. 2024 Collections

- Gaston County: \$7.24M in collections
- Onslow County: \$7.26M in collections
- **Difference: \$28,000**



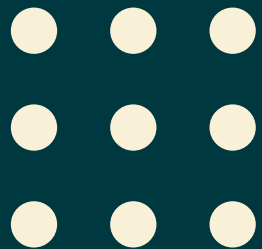


Distribution	Gaston	Onslow
Article 39 non-grocery	\$2,603,000	\$2,770,000
Article 40 non-grocery	\$1,926,000	\$1,724,000
Article 42 non-grocery	\$1,286,000	\$1,369,000
Grocery per capita	\$551,000	\$493,000
Grocery based on 1997-98 sales	\$603,000	\$303,000
2015 Redistribution	\$256,000	\$144,000
<u>Article 46 Quarter Cent</u>	<u>\$677,000</u>	<u>\$718,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,902,000</b>	<b>\$7,521,000</b>





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