



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

2025 STATE OF THE COUNTY

CHAIRMAN HARRY JOHNSTON



THRIVING CHEROKEE COUNTY

THE GREATEST PLACE IN THE WORLD TO LIVE!



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE



LOCATION



QUALITY OF
LIFE



SCHOOLS &
SERVICES



LOW TAXES



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

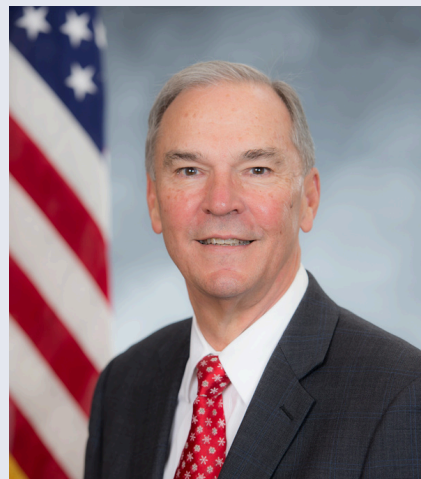
OUR CHALLENGES





TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

LEADERSHIP



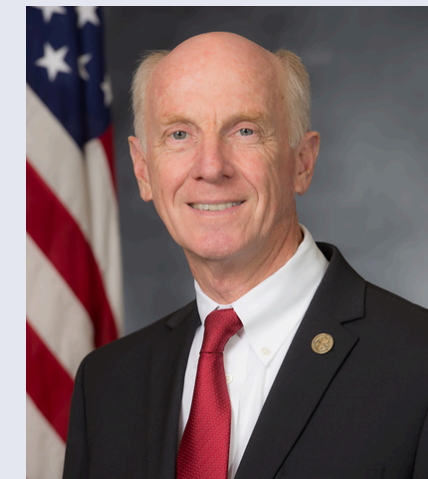
Harry Johnston
Chairman



Steve West
District 1



Richard Weatherby
District 2



Benny Carter
District 3



Corey Ragsdale
District 4



Geoff Morton
County Manager

THRIVING CITIES



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

CANTON

- Historic County Seat & Mill Town
- Revitalized Downtown
- Growing Suburbs
- Affordable Housing



WOODSTOCK

- Booming, Vibrant Downtown
- Arts
- Younger Population



HOLLY SPRINGS

- Building New Downtown around Historic Center



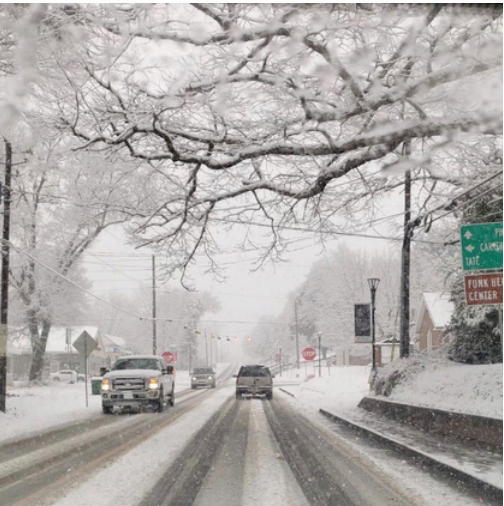
BALL GROUND

- Small and Mighty
- Growing Fast
- Bustling Downtown



WALESKA

- Beautiful Country Crossroads Town
- Home to Reinhardt University



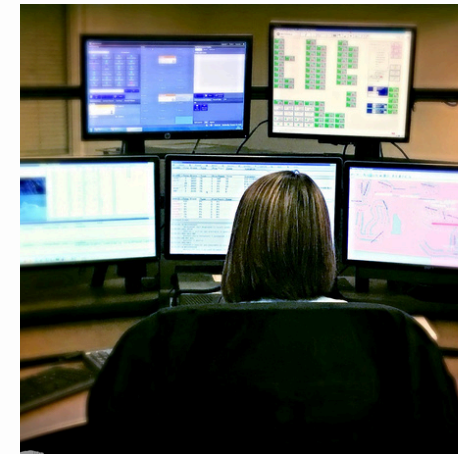
GROWTH BOUNDARY AGREEMENT UNIQUE IN GEORGIA

EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



SHERIFF'S OFFICE

- Advanced International Accreditation with Excellence Top 1/10 of 1%
- Crime rate among the lowest in the region



9-1-1

- 2024 Call Center of the Year in GA
- Fully staffed, wait list for applications
- Residents' first connection to life-saving assistance



FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Professional Buildout Complete
- Volunteer to fully staffed and internationally accredited in 25 years
- ISO 2



MARSHAL'S OFFICE

- CALEA accredited
- Truck Compliance Unit
- K-9 Education Program to prevent dog bites and animal neglect



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Emergency Operations Center serves as the hub during critical incidents
- 200+ activation & support hours in 2024
- Highly trained personnel



**LONG SWAMP CREEK
RECREATION AREA**

RECYCLING CENTER EXPANSION



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COMMUNITY SERVICES

RECYCLING

- Increased recycling capacity at Blalock Road and Hobgood Park
- 300+ avg. vehicles per day
- Now accepts electronics

SENIOR SERVICES

- 51,000+ meals for homebound seniors
- Active Adult group - 350+ Members

RECREATION & PARKS

- 4,300+ park acreage
- 39 Parks & Facilities
- Trails Master Plan
- New Natural Resources Division
- 5,700+ children served through school break and summer camps

OTHER SERVICES



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Top 10% in the state for SAT and ACT Scores
- Career Pathways student graduation at 99% | Graduation rate at 93%
- Highest student participation in AP classes and highest pass rates in CCSD history

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Reinhardt University - 4-year liberal arts university
 - 42 undergraduate programs and 6 graduate programs
- Chattahoochee Technical College
 - Two Cherokee County campuses and more than 50 programs of study

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Respected as one of the best teams in Georgia
- President & CEO named one of Georgia Top 500 Influential Leaders
- Over \$45 million in capital investments and 430 new jobs in 2024

WATER MANAGEMENT

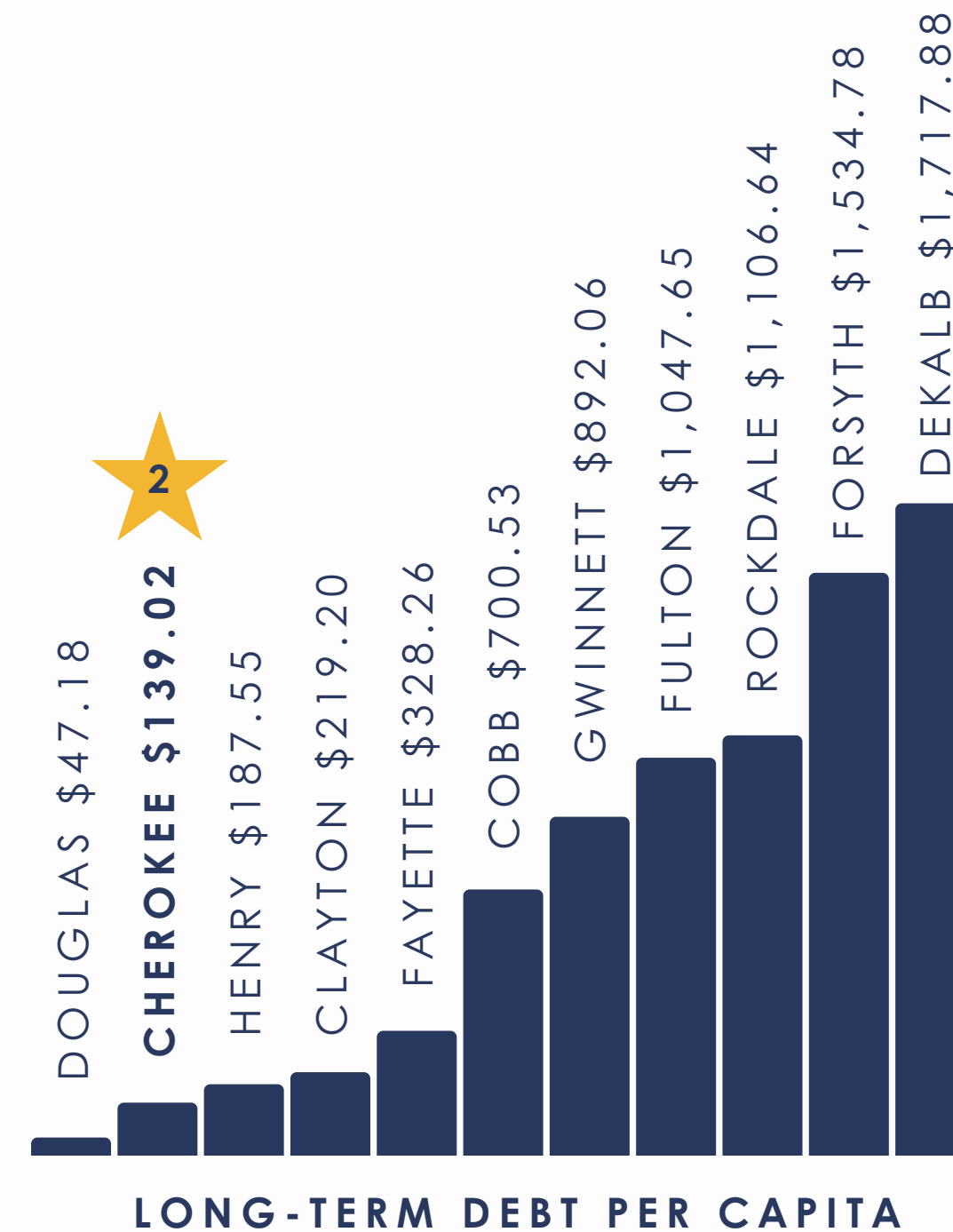
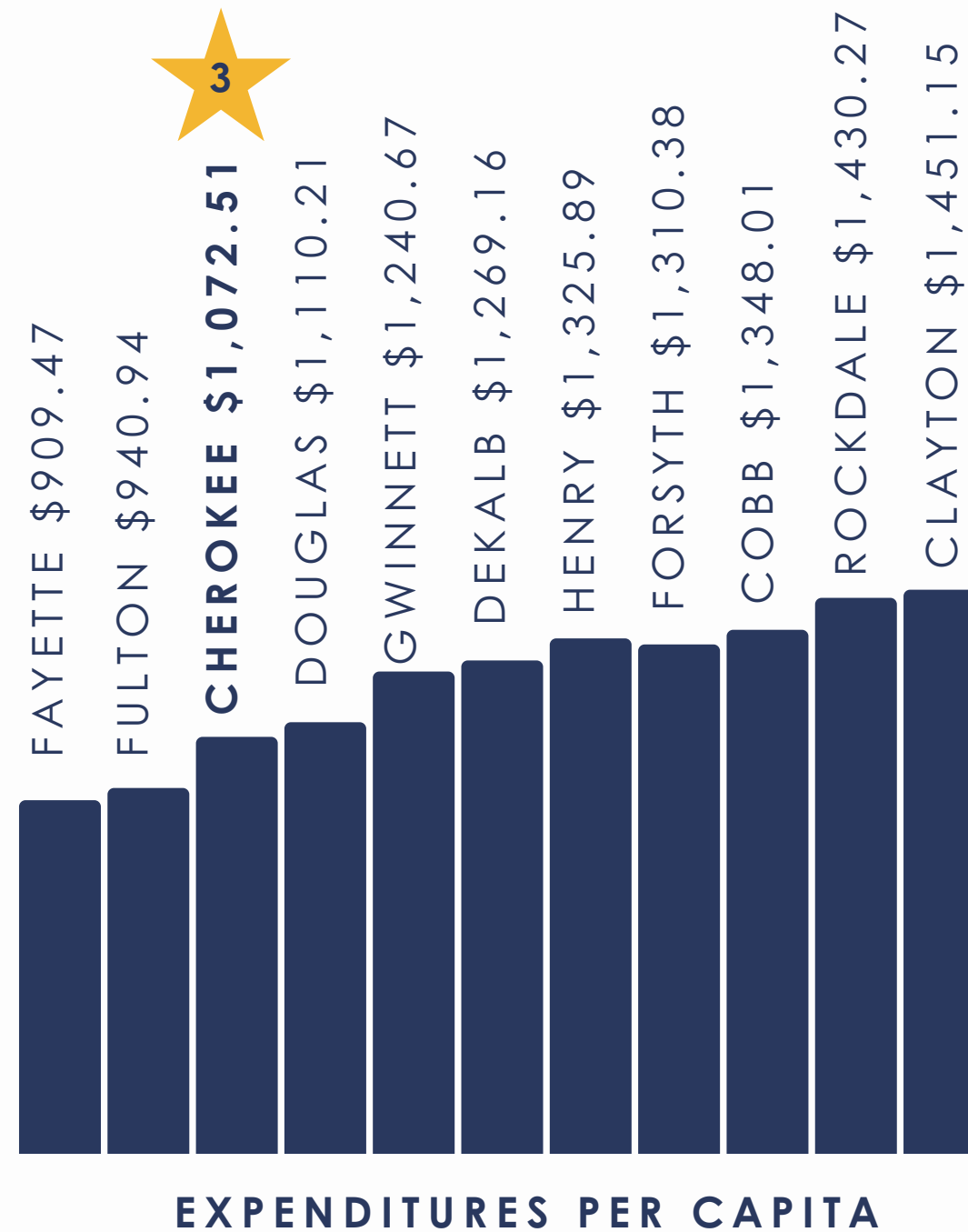
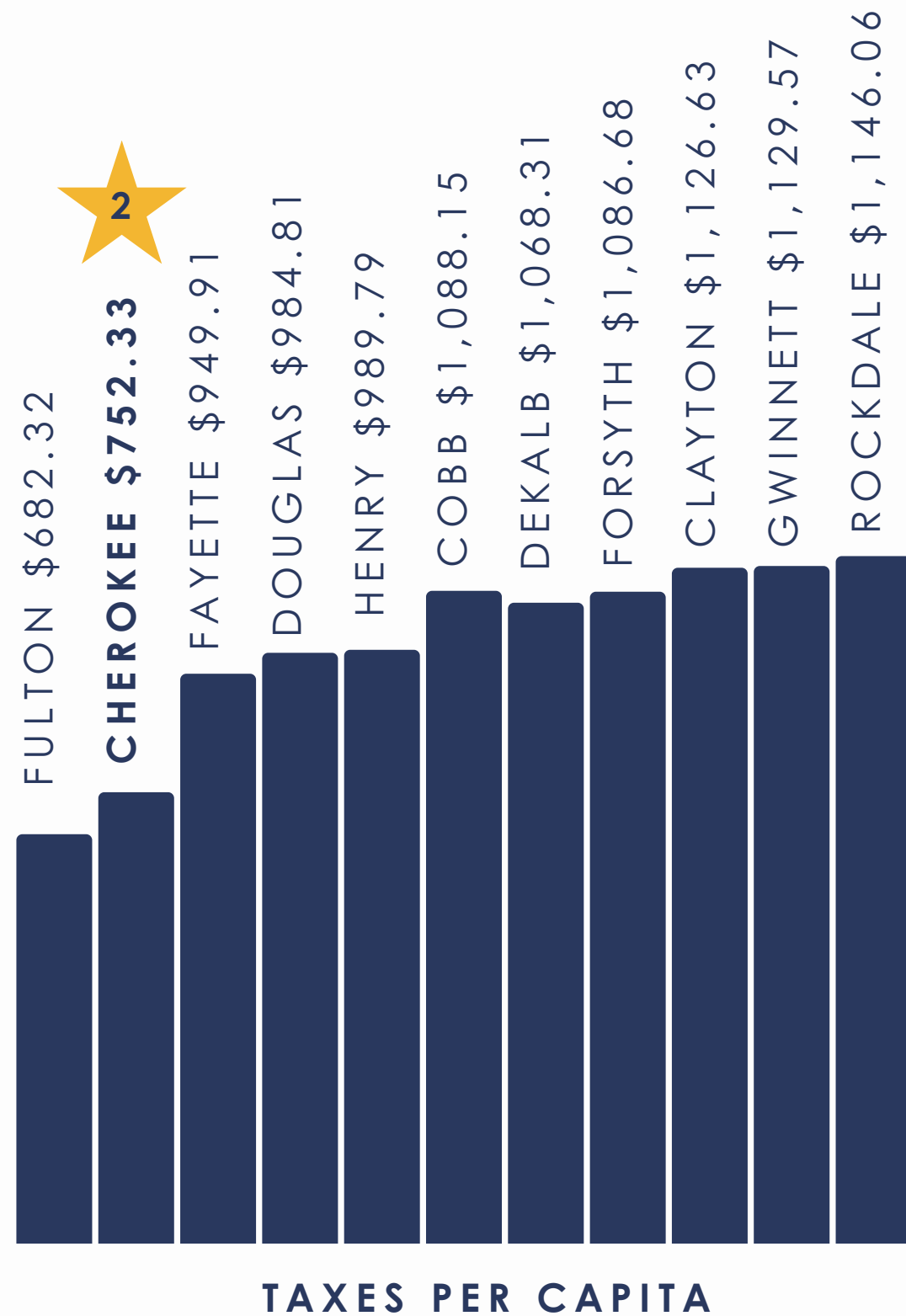
- Current Average Daily Demand: 21.176 MGD
- Current Treatment Capacity: 38 MGD
- Permitted Withdrawal Capacity: 40.5 MGD

WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

- Current Average Daily Demand: 7.5 MGD
- Current Treatment Capacity: 18.75 MGD
- Permitted Withdrawal Capacity: 42.35 MGD

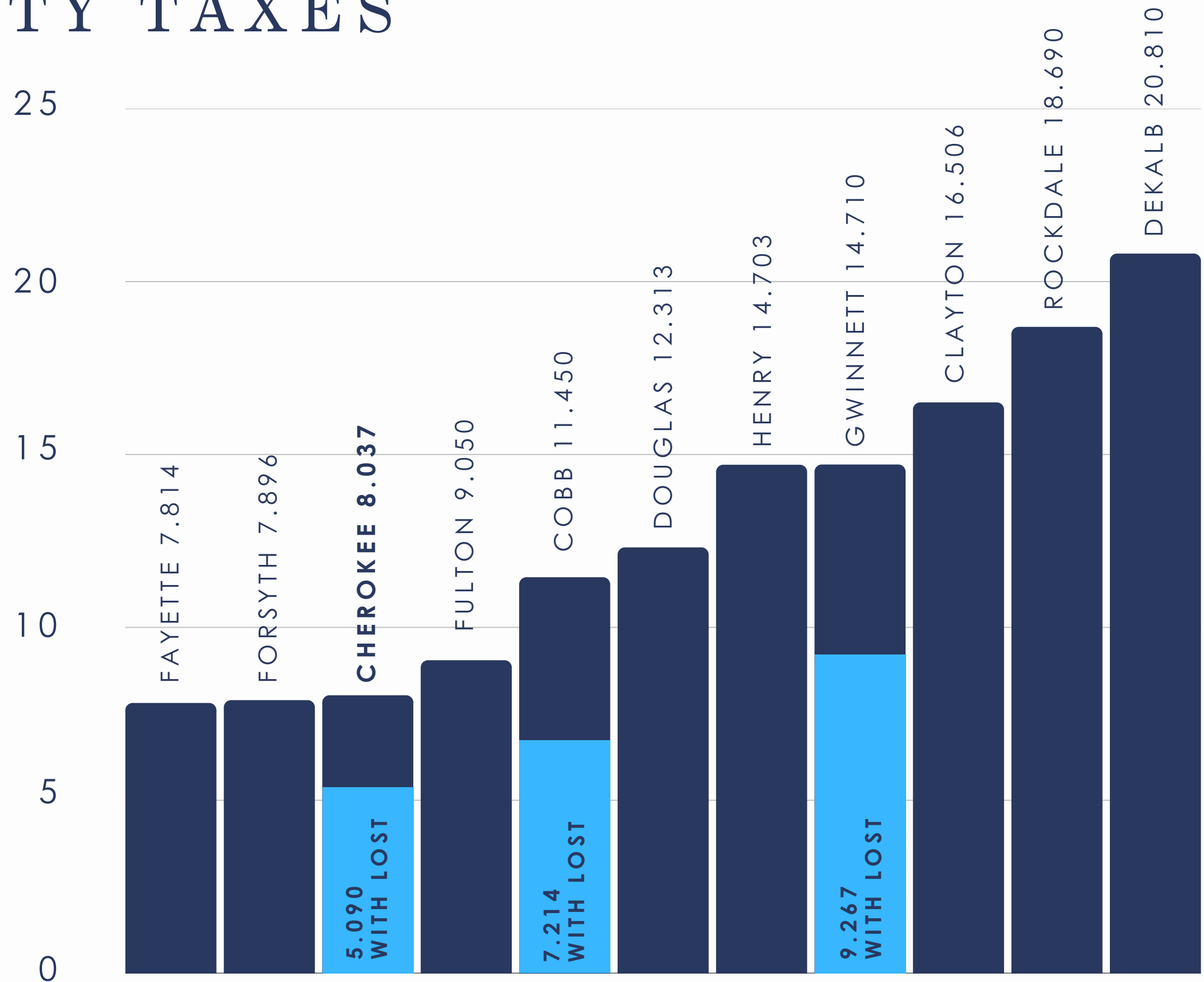


LOW TAXES



Douglas County most recent audited data (2021)
Henry and Rockdale Counties most recent audited data (2022)

PROPERTY TAXES



11 ARC COUNTIES | TOTAL BOC-CONTROLLED PROPERTY TAX (2023)



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

Through Navigating Challenges



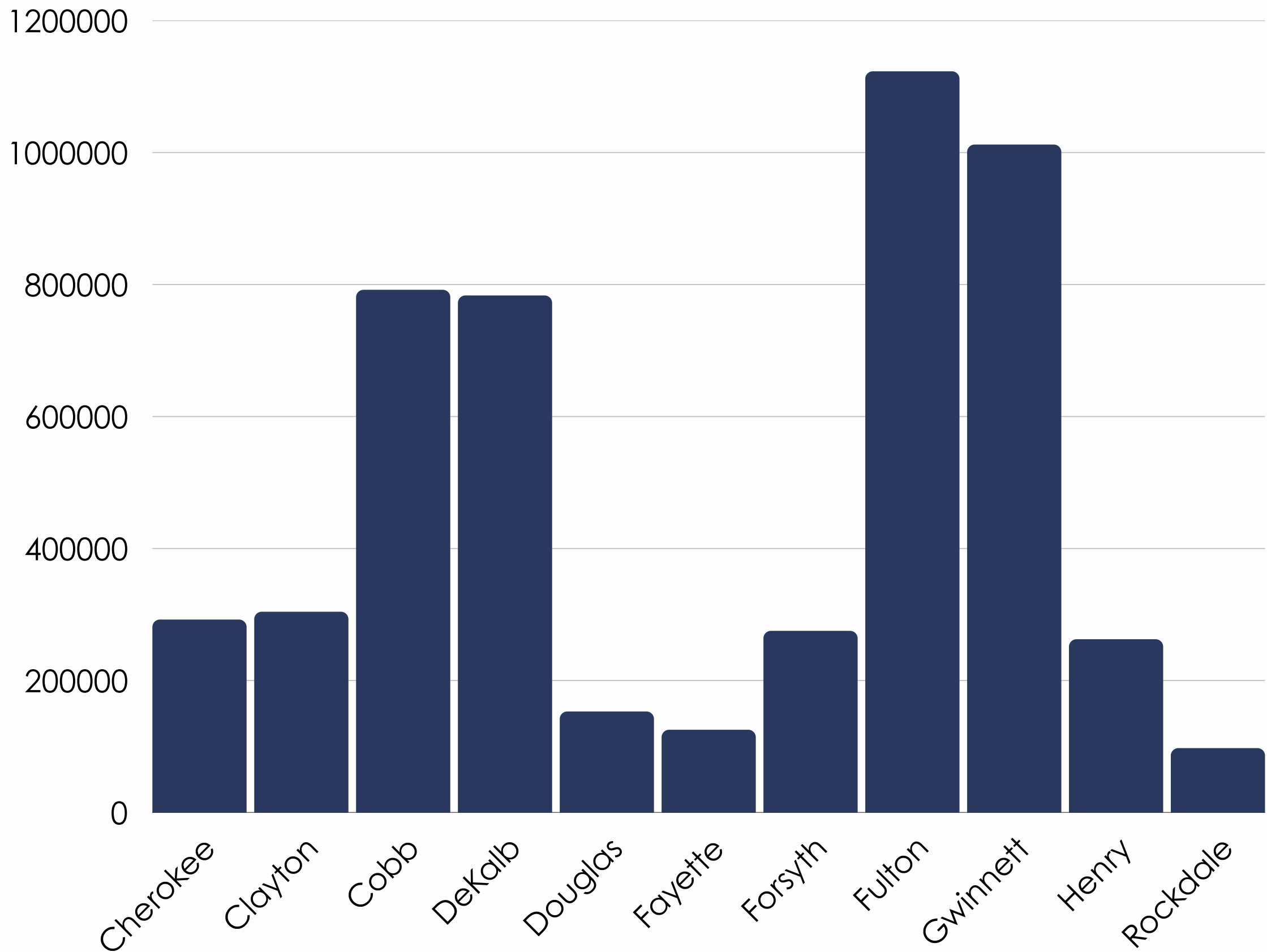
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By Strategizing Growth

2024 ARC POPULATION ESTIMATES



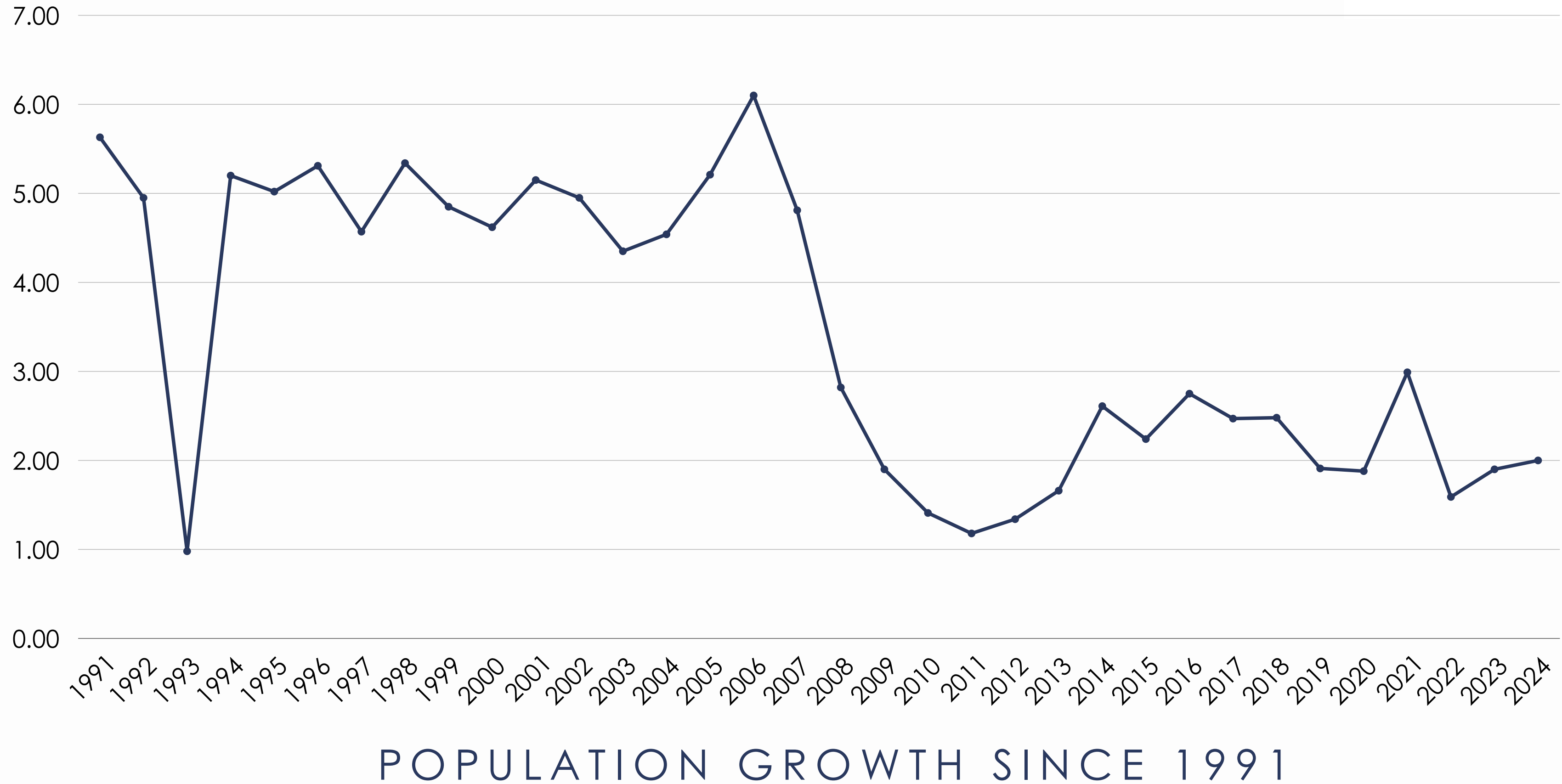
TOGETHER, WE THRIVE



GROWTH HISTORY



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

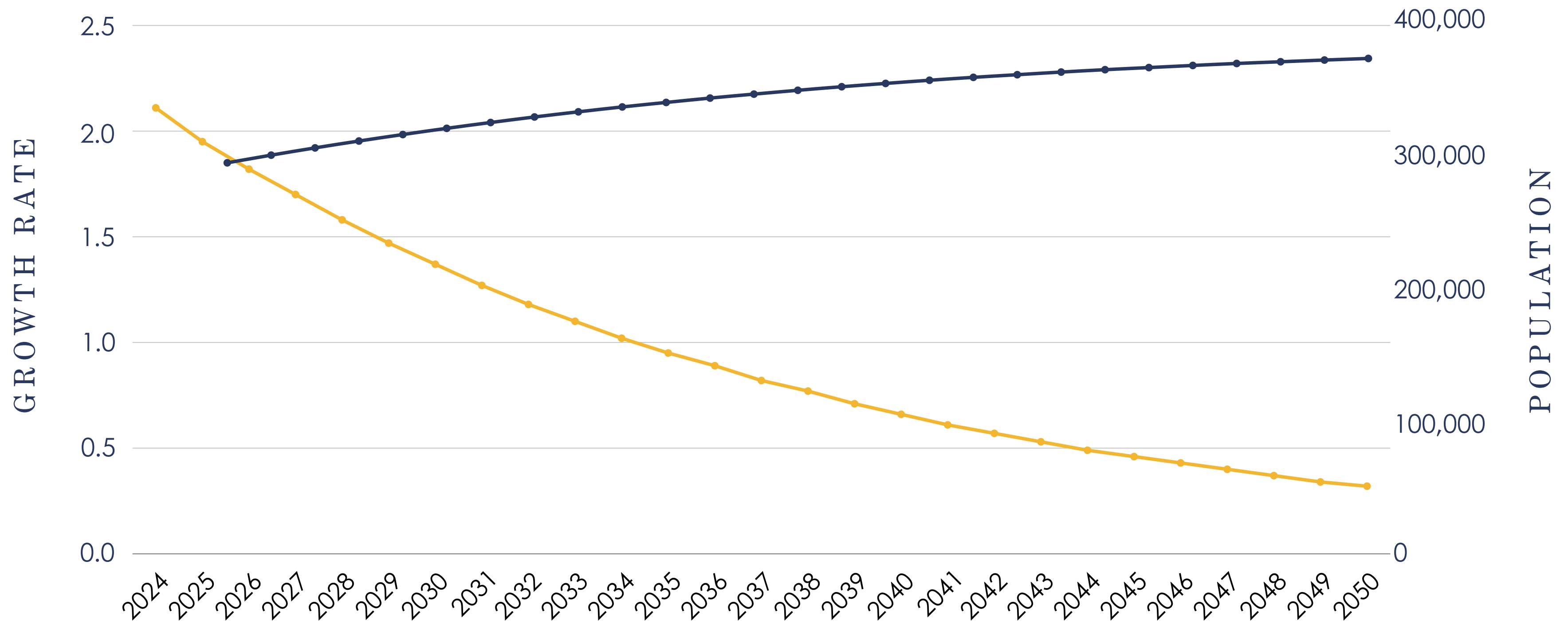


25-YEAR GROWTH PROJECTION



POPULATION

GROWTH RATE



GROWTH MANAGEMENT - WHAT IF?



- ✓ County & Cities agree to Targets
- ✓ Growth Weighted toward Cities
- ✓ Averaged over Multiple Years & Adjusted Periodically
- ✓ New Approvals up to 43% Lower if all Entitled Units Built

Year 1
1,400 Homes in Cities
1,050 in Unincorporated
2,450 Total

5% Decline Per Year
Moving Forward

Year 10
900 Homes in Cities
650 in Unincorporated
1,550 Total

Year 25
400 in Cities
300 in Unincorporated
700 Total



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

BY FOCUSING ON ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

ROADS



ANNUAL ROAD IMPROVEMENT BUDGET NEEDED

AVG. FOR CTP PROJECTS	\$27.5 MILLION
REPAVING ON 25-YEAR CYCLE	\$9.1 MILLION
IN-HOUSE PROJECTS (PUBLIC WORKS)	\$6.2 MILLION
ENGINEERING AND CONTRACT MGMT.	\$1 MILLION
TOTAL BUDGET NEED:	\$43.8 MILLION

APPROXIMATE ANNUAL ROAD IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

SPLOST (50% OF RECEIPTS)	\$18 MILLION
ARC (INCL. RESURFACING GRANTS)	\$4.7 MILLION
LMIG	\$2.4 MILLION
GDOT, SRTA	\$2.2 MILLION
OTHER GRANTS	\$800,000
APPROX. ANNUAL FUNDING AVAILABLE	\$28.1 MILLION

APPROXIMATE
ANNUAL
SHORTFALL

**\$15.7
MILLION**

ROADS



POSSIBLE SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL ROAD FUNDING

1% HOST

\$64 MILLION PER YEAR

75% to property tax reduction (100% of County M&O for homeowners)

25% to capital projects/roads

\$16 Million (County share = \$12 Million)

70% ROAD IMPROVEMENT FUNDING GAP + SIGNIFICANT PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

0.5% TSPLOST

\$32 MILLION PER YEAR

Roads/Transportation Only

\$24 Million (County Share)

Net additional tax. No property tax relief.

CLOSE CURRENT GAP AND ALLOW \$8 MILLION PER YEAR FOR PROJECTS NOT IN CTP



TOGETHER, WE THRIVE

By Identifying Solutions to Affordable Housing

HOUSING



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- National Crisis as Housing Costs Outstrip Overall Inflation
- Cherokee's Slow-Growth Policies Aggravate it
- 40% of County's Residents are Housing-Burdened
- Causes Homelessness; Prevents Recovery
- Includes Good People We Need
- Economic & Political Problem



HOUSING - WHO CAN AFFORD WHAT?



Percent of \$100K Cherokee Average Median Income				
	<35%	36%-60%	61%-80%	81%-100%
Percent of Cherokee Population	17%	13%	10%	
Monthly Housing Budget (30%)	\$875	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500
Home Purchase Limit	N/A	N/A	\$306,000	\$385,000
Example	Retiree SSI	Starting Teacher	Avg. Teacher	
	Nurse Assistant	Starting Deputy/FF	Avg. Deputy/FF	
	Restaurant Server	Avg. Nurse	Sr. Skilled Worker	
	Retail Clerk	Jr. Skilled Worker		
	Entry Mfg. Worker			
	Young Worker			

HOUSING - WHAT IF?

MORE UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION



Cities and County Agree to:

- ✓ 17% - Subsidized Apartments Starting under \$875/mo.
- ✓ 13% - Moderately Priced Rental Units Starting Under \$1500/mo.
- ✓ 10% - Entry Level Owner-Occupied (low \$300's)
- ✓ Different Mix for County & Each City to Achieve Overall Balance
- ✓ Incorporate into Comp Plans to give Weight in Zoning
- ✓ Continue to Underserve Demand
- ✓ Affordable Units in Appropriate Places



LET'S KEEP CHEROKEE THRIVING!



Together, We Can Maintain:

Great Services

Low Taxes

Great Quality of Life



Together, We Can Address:

Growth Management

Road Infrastructure

Affordable Housing



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