



METRO ATLANTA · FEBRUARY 2026

The Market Decoder

What the Data Actually Means
for Buyers & Sellers Right Now

A guide by Kristen Johnson Real Estate

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WHY THIS GUIDE EXISTS

The Numbers Don't Speak for Themselves

Every month, the Atlanta REALTORS® Association releases a market brief packed with data — median prices, closed sales, months of supply, and more. Most people glance at the headline number and move on, not sure what any of it actually means for their situation.

This guide changes that. I'm going to walk you through the key metrics from the February 2026 Metro Atlanta market report, tell you what each one signals, and break down what it means specifically for buyers and sellers right now.

One important note before we dive in: Metro Atlanta is not one market — it is dozens of micro-markets. The 11-county FMLS averages can mask enormous variation between neighborhoods. A home in Decatur and a home in Douglasville are operating under very different conditions, even if they share the same county average. I'll call this out throughout.

WHAT'S INSIDE

1. The Key Metrics Explained
2. What This Means If You're Buying
3. What This Means If You're Selling
4. The Metro Atlanta Context — Why Averages Mislead
5. Where Are You Right Now?

SECTION ONE

The Key Metrics, Plain and Simple

Here is what the February 2026 data shows for the 11-county FMLS area — Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Paulding, and Rockdale:

\$416K	\$526K	3,582	3.8 mo
Median Sale Price	Avg Sale Price	Closed Sales	Months of Supply
+3.0% YoY	+2.5% YoY	+30.5% YoY	+5.6% YoY

Months of Supply — 3.8 Months

This is the most important number in the report. Months of supply tells you how long it would take to sell every current listing at the current pace of sales. Below 4 months is a seller's market. Four to 6 is balanced. Above 6 is a buyer's market. At 3.8 months, Atlanta sits right at the edge of balanced — more breathing room for buyers than two years ago, but still competitive in desirable neighborhoods.

Median vs. Average Sale Price — \$416K vs. \$526K

The \$110K gap between these two numbers matters. Median means half of homes sold above \$416K and half below. The average gets pulled upward by luxury sales. If you're buying or selling in the \$300K–\$600K range, the median is the more meaningful benchmark for your strategy.

Closed Sales — Up 30.5% Year Over Year

Transaction volume is back. A 30% jump in closed sales means buyers are active and deals are getting done. For sellers, this is a real pool of motivated buyers. For buyers, it means competition exists — be ready to move when the right home appears.

New Listings — Up 30.2% Year Over Year

More inventory is entering the market. This is what has shifted the landscape most for buyers. More choices mean less pressure to rush — but well-priced, well-presented homes are still moving quickly.

What This Means If You're Buying

The short version: you have more options than you did a year ago, and slightly more negotiating room — but the best homes are still moving fast.

1. You have more breathing room — don't mistake it for a soft market.

Inventory is up 30% year over year. More to choose from doesn't mean you can lowball well-priced homes in strong neighborhoods. Cobb, North Fulton, East Cobb, and Beltline-adjacent areas are still seeing multiple offers on move-in ready properties.

2. The median is \$416K. Know what that means for your search.

Half of Metro Atlanta homes closed below \$416K in February. Under \$350K is the most active price band. Above \$500K, you have more inventory, more time to decide, and more room to negotiate on price or concessions.

3. Interest rates are the real variable. Don't wait for perfect.

Buyers waiting for rates to drop have been waiting two years. The better strategy: buy at the right price for your life and budget, then refinance when rates improve. You cannot time the market. You can control when you act.

4. Down payment assistance is available — don't assume you don't qualify.

Georgia Dream, the Atlanta Affordable Homeownership Program, and lender-specific programs are active. Many buyers leave money on the table because they never ask. If you haven't owned a home in three years, there may be help available.

5. Get pre-approved before you fall in love with a house.

Pre-approval is not a formality — it's a competitive requirement. Sellers will not take your offer seriously without it, and it protects you from pursuing something outside your real budget.

Bottom line for buyers: The window is open. More inventory, motivated sellers, a market no longer purely in sellers' favor. But well-priced homes in good condition are still moving. Be ready when the right one appears.

What This Means If You're Selling

The market has shifted. You can still get a strong price — but the approach that worked two years ago will not work today.

1. Pricing is everything right now.

With inventory up 30%, buyers have options. An overpriced listing used to sit a few weeks before a price drop. Today it can sit months — and the longer it sits, the more buyers assume something is wrong with it. Price right on day one, based on closed comps from the last 60 to 90 days. Not what your neighbor got in 2022.

2. Presentation is a competitive necessity, not an option.

If your home looks dated online, buyers will scroll past it. Professional photography, a clean and decluttered space, and at minimum virtual staging are non-negotiable. First impressions happen on a phone screen before anyone walks through your door.

3. Buyers are scrutinizing condition.

Deferred maintenance used to get negotiated around. Today, inspection findings are deal-killers or leverage for price reductions. Handle known issues before you list, or price them in accurately. A \$400 repair should not become a \$4,000 negotiating point after you're under contract.

4. Days on market are up. This is normal, not a crisis.

Average days on market have increased from the 2021-2022 pace. A well-priced, well-presented home can still move in under 30 days. If yours isn't, something needs to change — price, condition, or marketing. Don't wait 90 days to have that conversation.

5. Seller concessions are back.

Rate buydowns, closing cost contributions, and home warranties are being requested more frequently. These are tools, not signs of weakness. A \$5,000 concession that closes a deal is better than a \$15,000 price reduction after your listing goes stale.

Bottom line for sellers: The buyers are there — 30% more closed sales proves it. What has changed is that they have choices now. Make sure your home is the obvious answer. Price it right. Present it well. Market it aggressively.

SECTION FOUR

Why Metro Atlanta Averages Can Mislead You

The 11-county FMLS area covers over 4,000 square miles, from Milton in the north to Fayetteville in the south. Saying 'the Atlanta market' is like saying 'the weather in Georgia' — technically accurate, practically useless.

Intown Atlanta — Edgewood, Kirkwood, Inman Park, Grant Park, O4W, Decatur

These neighborhoods remain high-demand. Walkability, Beltline access, and lifestyle draw continue to hold prices up. Homes in the \$400K–\$700K range can still see multiple offers when priced correctly and presented well. Days on market run below the county average.

North Fulton — Alpharetta, Milton, Roswell

School districts drive consistent demand here. North Fulton is one of the most competitive sub-markets in Metro Atlanta. Inventory has risen, but buyer demand in the \$500K–\$900K range stays strong. Above \$900K, expect longer timelines and more negotiating room.

Southwest Atlanta and Inner Suburbs — East Point, Mableton, Smyrna, Douglasville

Best value in the market. Buyers priced out of intown neighborhoods are actively shopping here. Investment buyer activity is high. Sellers benefit from motivated buyers with fewer options at accessible price points.

East Metro — Lithonia, Stone Mountain, Gwinnett (Buford, Loganville, Lilburn)

Gwinnett is one of the most active counties in the region. School district quality and relative affordability versus North Fulton are driving sustained demand. Buford in particular is seeing strong activity. Days on market can run below the FMLS average when pricing is sharp.

Zillow and out-of-town agents frequently misrepresent commute times, neighborhood character, and price dynamics across Metro Atlanta. Areas that look close on a map can be 45+ minutes apart in traffic. Kristen Johnson Real Estate has worked across this market for nearly a decade — and that local knowledge directly affects what you pay, what you get, and how fast it happens.



LET'S TALK

Where Are You Right Now?

Data tells you what the market is doing.
A conversation tells you what it means for you.

Whether you're figuring out the right time to buy, thinking about listing a home you've been sitting on, or just trying to understand whether this market works in your favor — I'm here to walk through it with you. No pressure. No pitch. Just a real conversation.

Schedule a free consultation

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Kristen Johnson Real Estate

Come as you are, come on home.

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