

### *ATLANTA'S DIVERSITY ADVANTAGE*

Corporate America is placing a renewed emphasis on racial diversity, and Atlanta is capitalizing on that trend. This push is reflected in efforts to attract more minority talent, as well as through increased philanthropic support for historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Atlanta is the birthplace of the civil rights movement, home to some of the nation's most renowned HBCUs, and has a diverse and talented labor pool. In addition to HBCUs, Georgia State University is one of the national leaders in graduating Black students with bachelor's degrees. Georgia Tech and Kennesaw State rank in the top 10 nationally in the number of bachelor's degrees in engineering awarded to Black students, which is a powerful draw for technology companies. Some recent announcements that highlight the city's appeal to corporations seeking to support racial equity and diversity are discussed below:

- ❖ Microsoft recently leased 523,000 square feet in Atlantic Station and is also planning a massive campus on the city's west side. The company has pledged to double the number of Black managers and senior employees by 2025, and the talent pool in Atlanta will help the company achieve this goal. Microsoft plans to invest in the community by providing affordable housing and amenities to Westside neighborhoods that have been neglected.
- ❖ Airbnb is opening a technical and engineering hub in Atlanta. According to the company, a primary reason Atlanta was chosen for the hub was the city's strong educational infrastructure supporting communities of color.
- ❖ According to BlackRock's global head of talent acquisition, the company views "diversity as a business imperative." When BlackRock announced plans to open an innovation hub in Atlanta that will create up to 1,000 jobs, the company cited the city's demographics and available talent as an important factor.
- ❖ Apple and Southern Company recently formed a partnership, each contributing \$25 million to the Propel Center, a new digital learning center for students of Atlanta's HBCUs.
- ❖ Bank of America is partnering with The Black Economic Alliance Foundation and providing a \$10 million grant to help educate aspiring entrepreneurs at Atlanta's HBCUs. The Center for Black Entrepreneurship will be located at Atlanta University Center.
- ❖ IBM is investing \$100 million in an initiative with HBCUs (including Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse College) that is designed to develop talent for future employment in technology fields.
- ❖ Morgan Stanley established its HBCU Scholars program with a \$4 million donation to both Morehouse and Spelman, and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott gave \$20 million to Morehouse for student scholarships. The CEO of Netflix and his wife donated \$40 million to both Morehouse and Spelman for scholarships.
- ❖ In February 2021, Morris Brown announced it would partner with Hilton Worldwide Holdings on a development in its campus. The project will include a 150-key Tapestry Collection by Hilton, three restaurants, and education space. According to the CEO of CGI Merchant Group, which is developing the project: "This is not just a commercial investment. We will be working with Hilton to support curriculum development and to provide guest lecturers."

## APARTMENT MARKET RESILIENCY

The intown Atlanta apartment market has proven resilient during the pandemic and recession. Occupancy has held steady at 95.6%, while rents declined only 2.5% over the past 12 months, which is impressive given the wave of deliveries and the economic downturn. However, metro Atlanta has outperformed the urban core, recording a 2.1% rent increase over the same period, according to RealPage. The intown pipeline has tapered off since peaking in 2016, largely due to developers shifting their focus to the suburbs and the difficulty underwriting new developments. The market should strengthen over the next year as the economy improves and companies like Microsoft and Google move into Midtown.

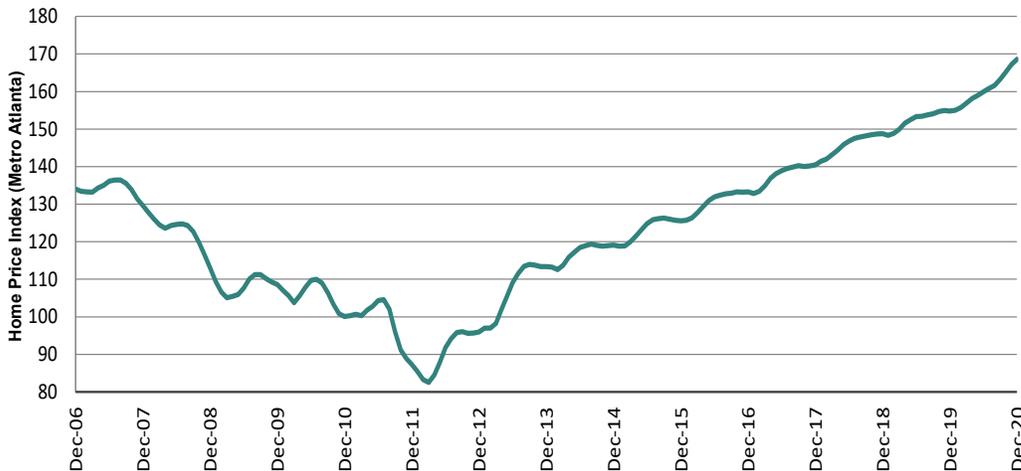
### APARTMENT PIPELINE TRENDS - INTOWN ATLANTA



Note: The existing inventory (blue bar in the graph above) represents the number of market-rate apartment units built in intown Atlanta since 2000.

For more information on the intown Atlanta apartment market, [click here](#).

## SOARING HOME PRICES



Metro Atlanta's housing market continues to roar along. The pandemic initially caused consumers to pause major decisions like purchasing a home. However, the shift in preferences of buyers seeking more space to accommodate for remote working/learning has caused a housing boom that started last summer. Many resale listings are receiving multiple offers and selling before they officially hit the market, while new home construction activity is nearing levels not seen since 2007. The S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Index rose 9.8% over the last 12 months, more than double the increase over the prior year.

Sources: S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller Home Price Index

Note: The S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Index is calculated monthly using a three-month moving average.

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