



SCHAR SCHOOL OF POLICY
AND GOVERNMENT
George Mason University



Washington Area Economy: Performance and Outlook

Presentation to:
WACEL

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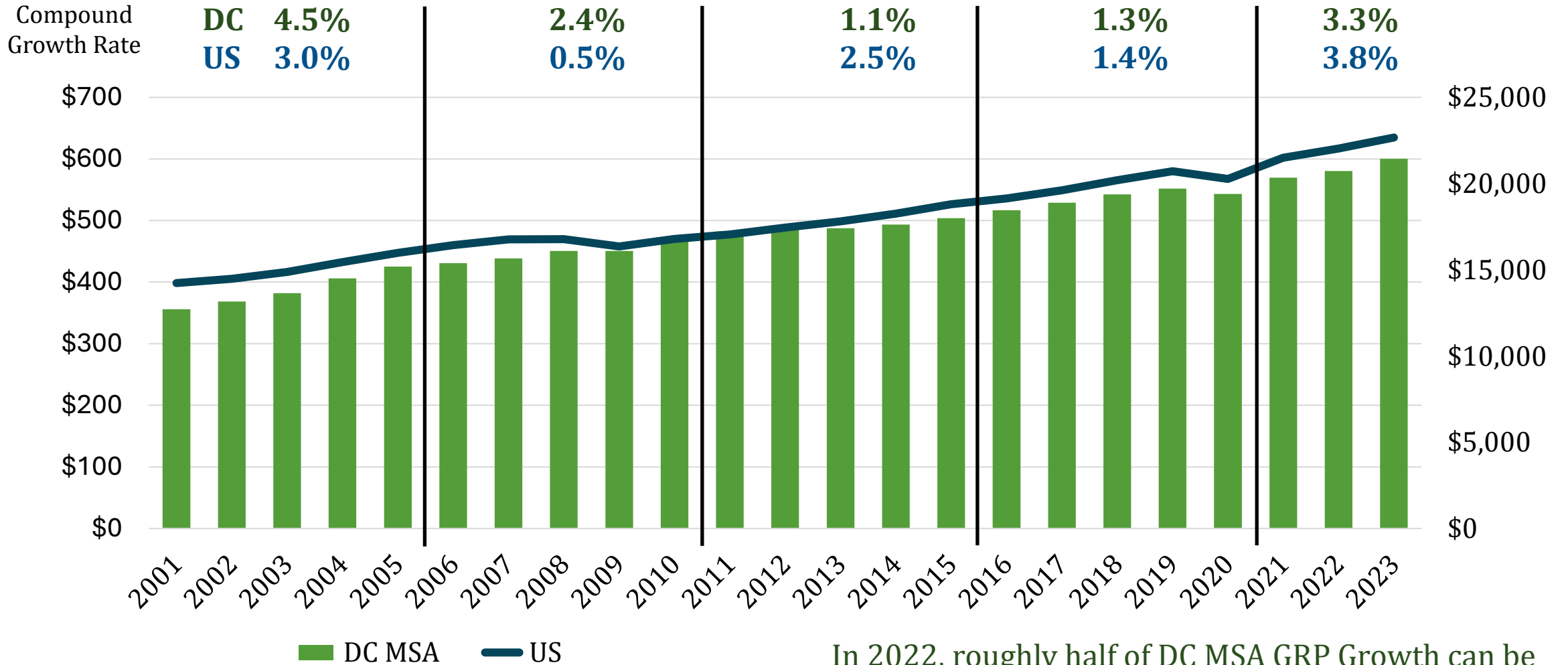
April 29, 2026





GDP: U.S. & DC Metro

2001 - 2023 (Billions, \$2017)



In 2022, roughly half of DC MSA GRP Growth can be attributed to data centers built that year in Loudoun

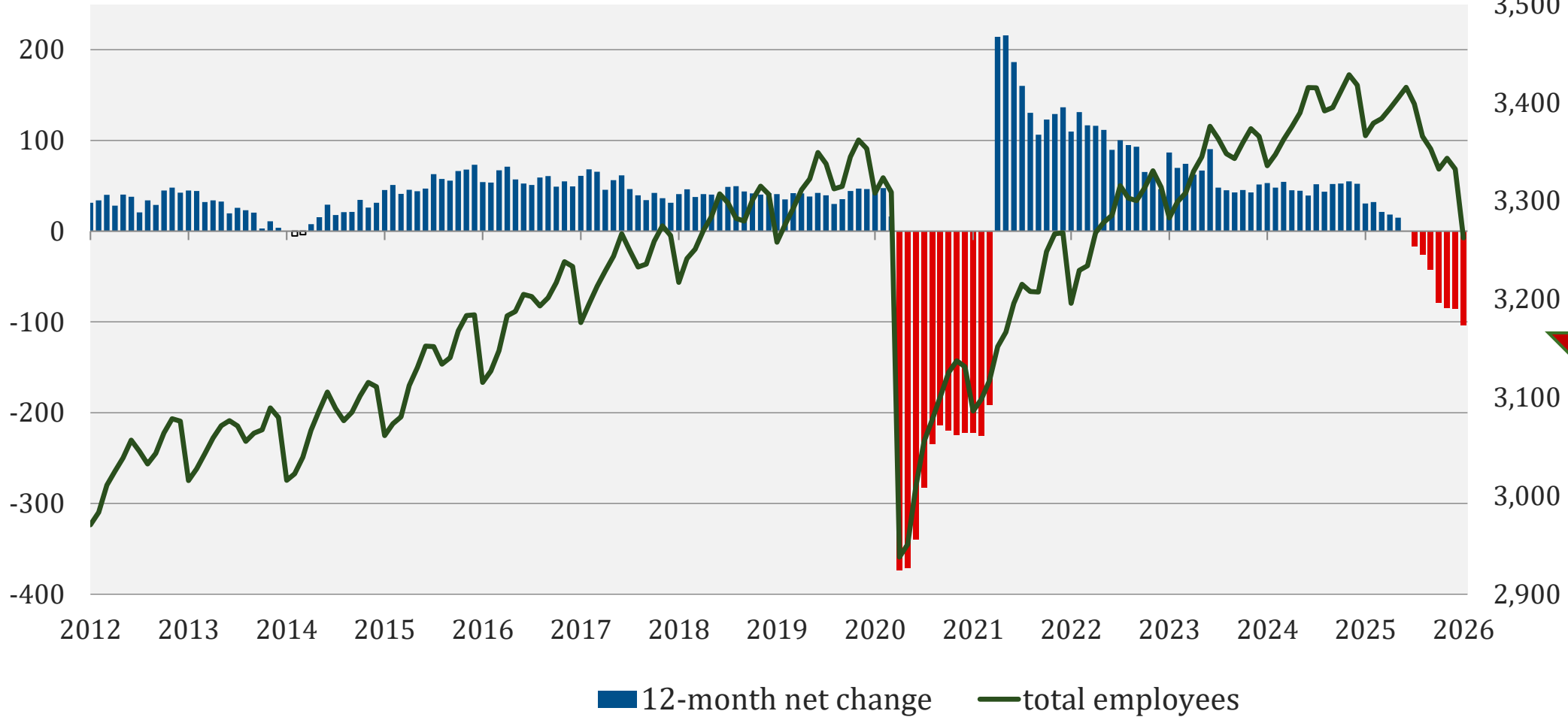


Annual Job Change Washington MSA (2012-2026)



thousands

thousands



Jan 25
-
Jan 26

-103.9k

Jan 2026
Total: 3.3M



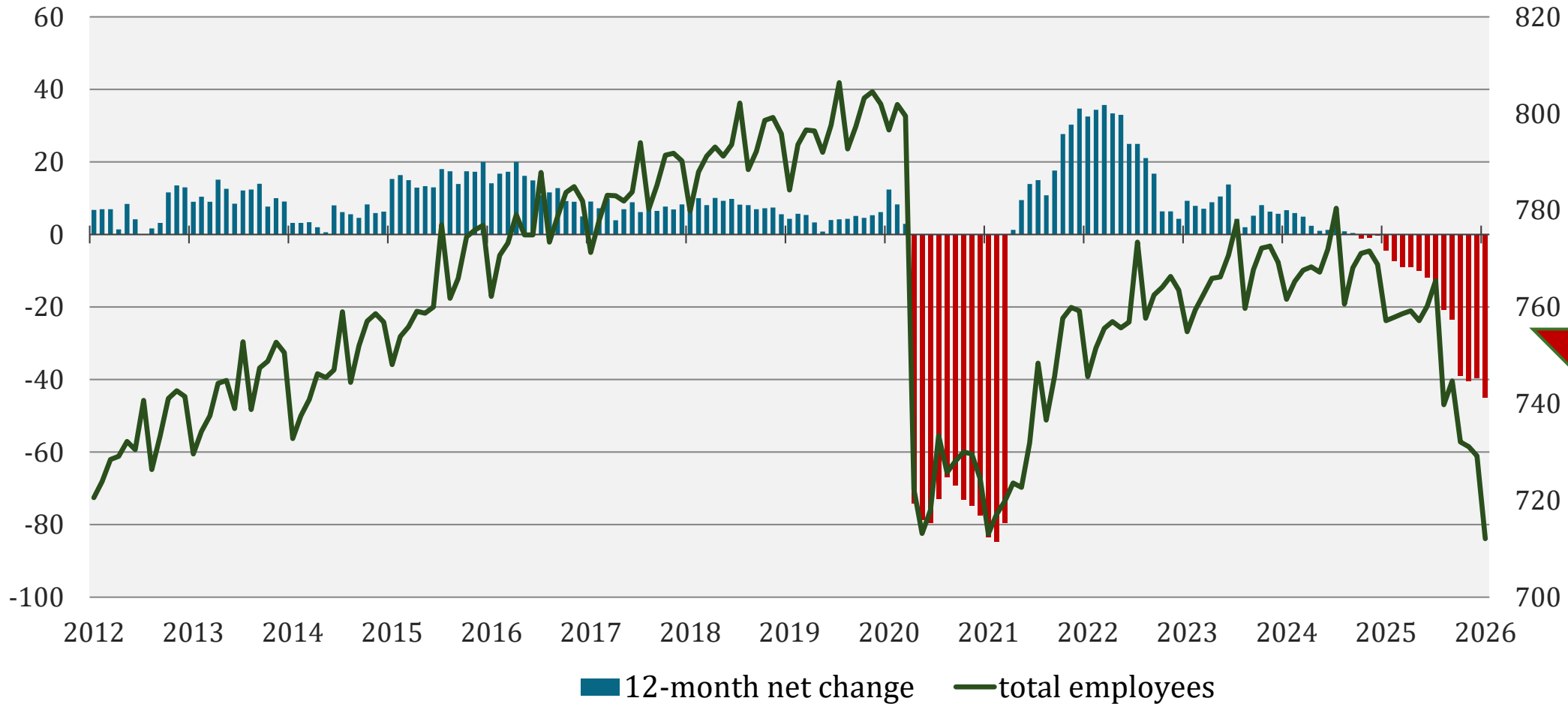
Annual Job Change

District of Columbia (2012-2026)



thousands

thousands



Jan 25
-
Jan 26
-45.1 k

Jan 2026
Total: 712k

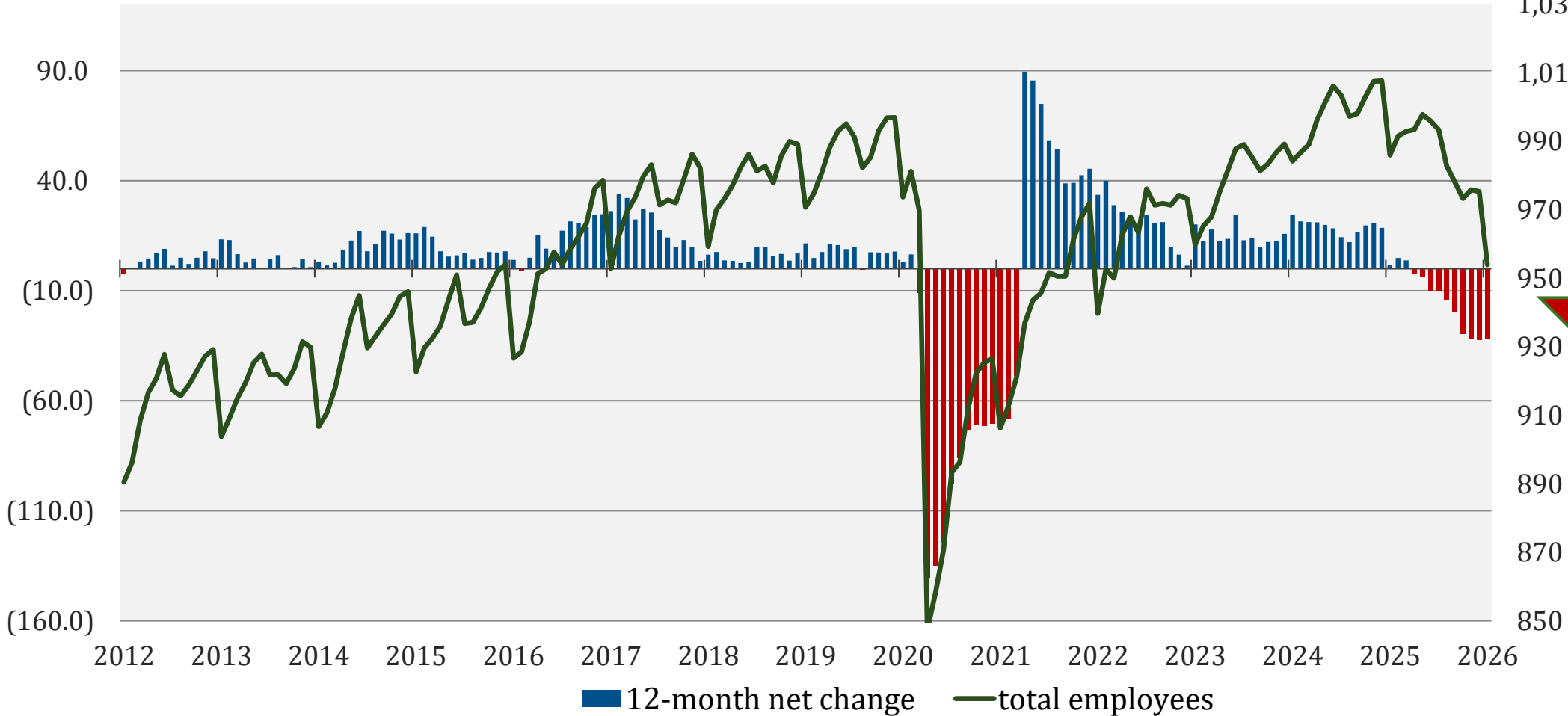


Annual Job Change Suburban Maryland (2012-2026)



thousands

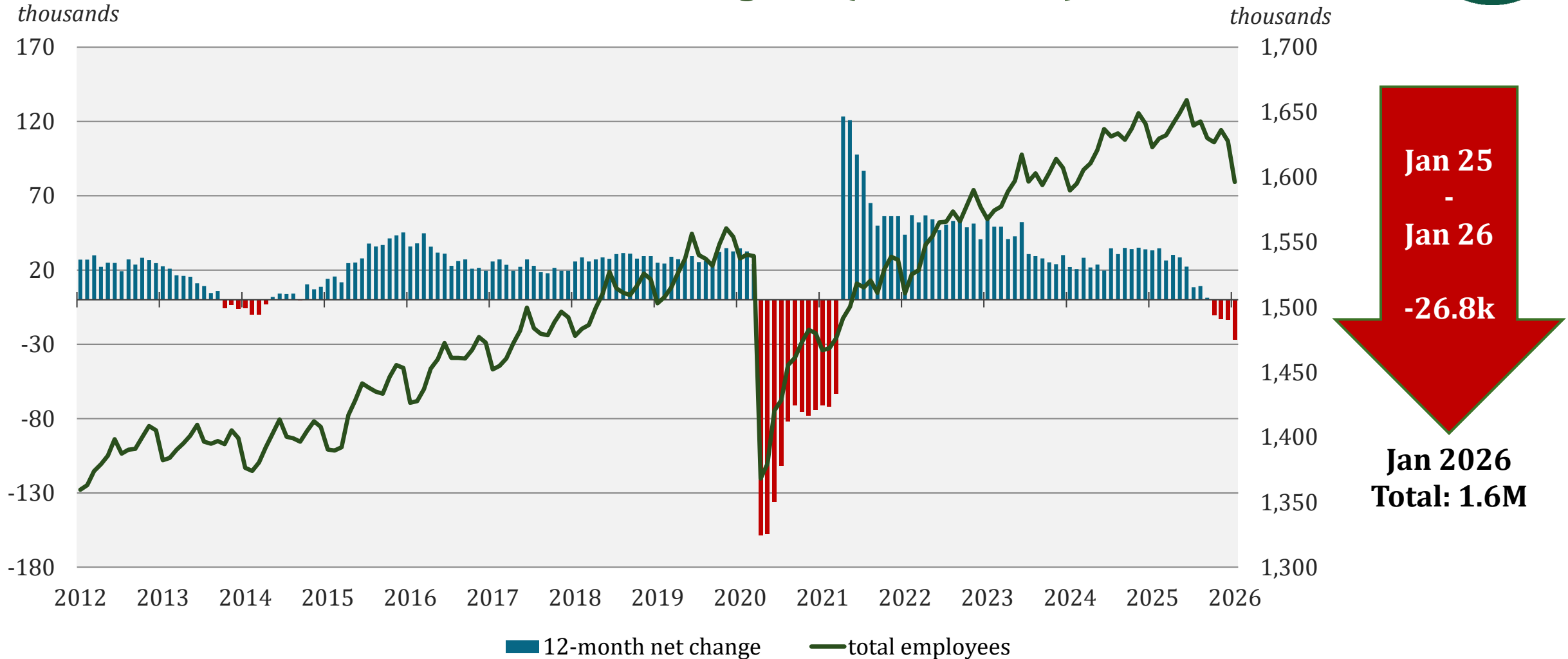
thousands



Jan 25
-
Jan 26
-32k
Jan 2026
Total: 954k

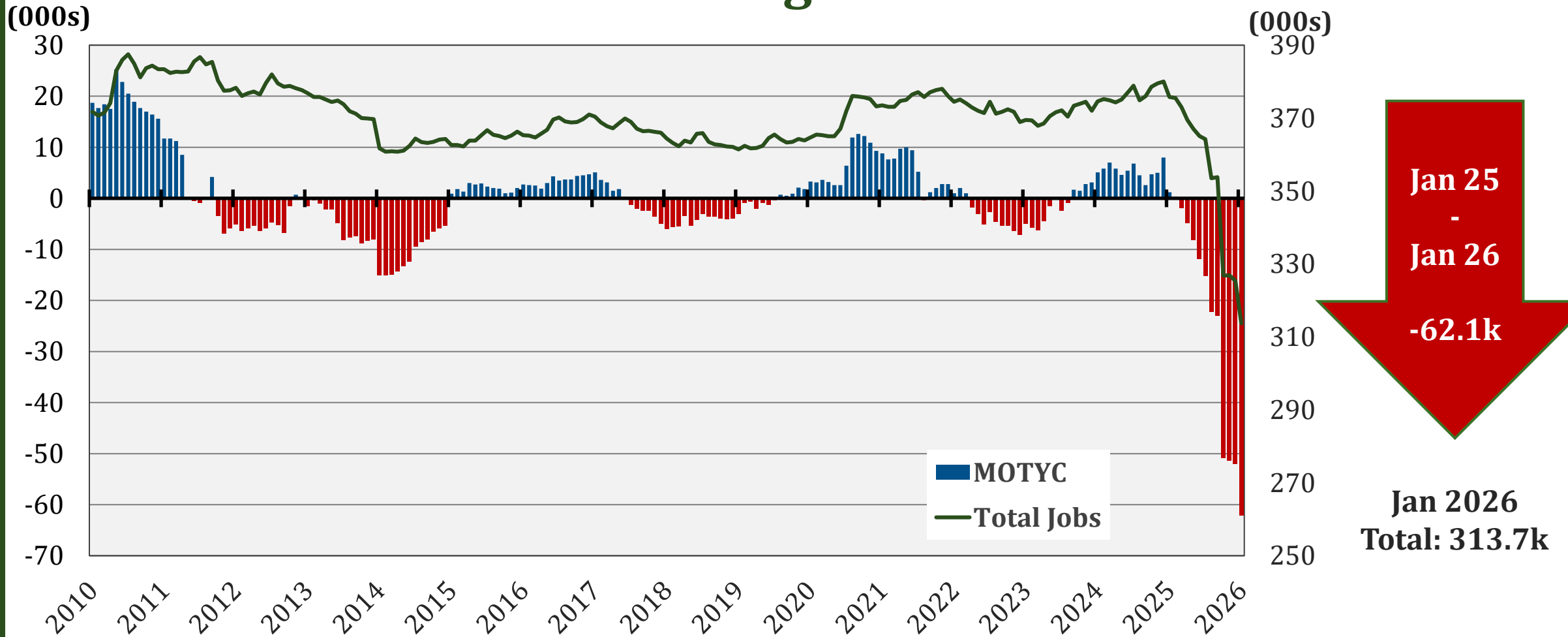


Annual Job Change Northern Virginia (2012-2026)



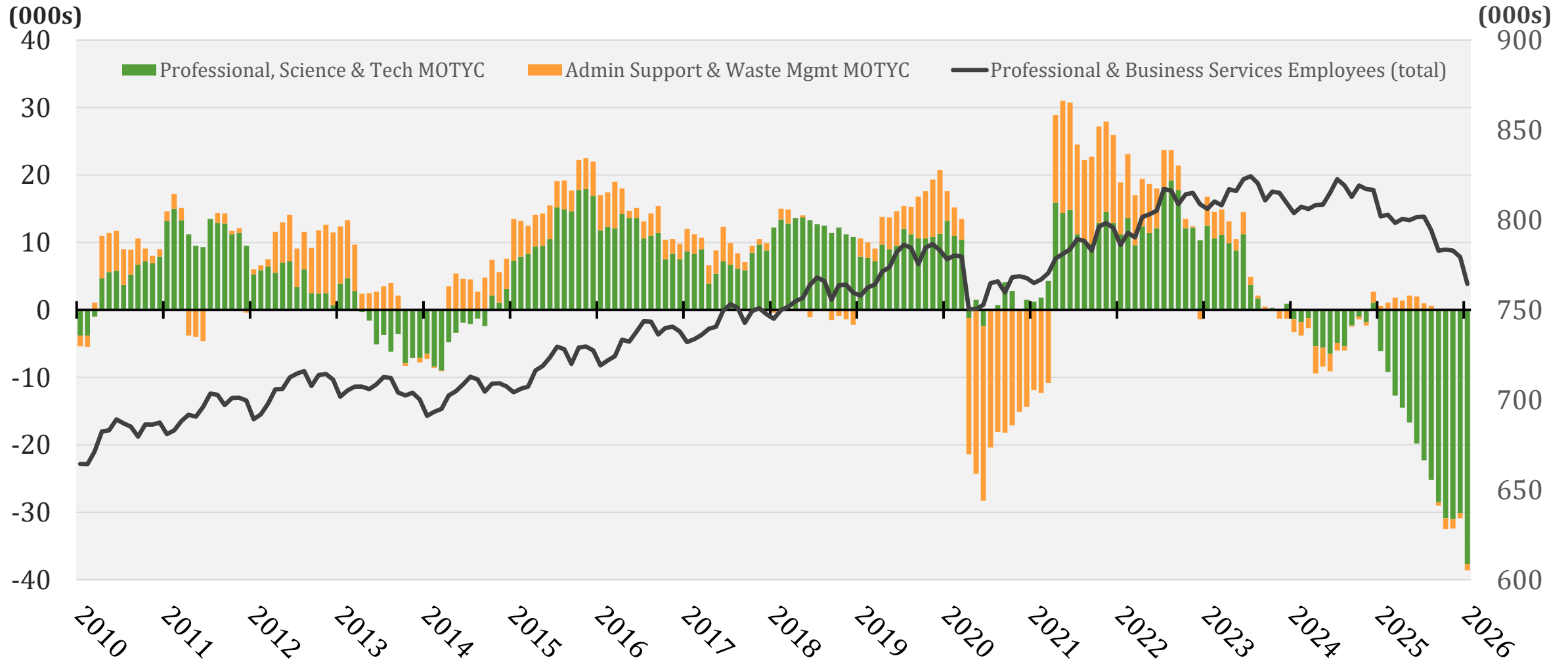


Federal Government Washington MSA





Professional & Business Services Washington MSA



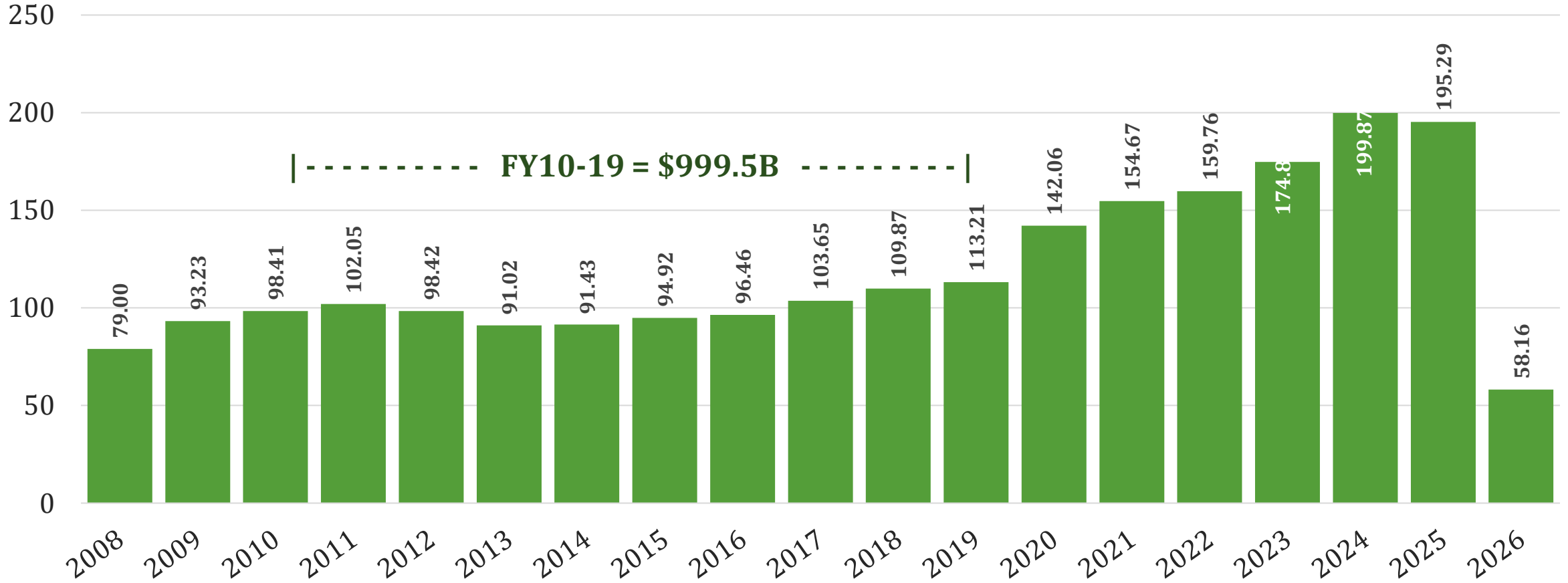


Federal Procurement Spending in the Washington MSA

Fiscal Years 2008-2026

\$ Billions

Most Recent Year is Running Total





Job Change by Sector Washington MSA

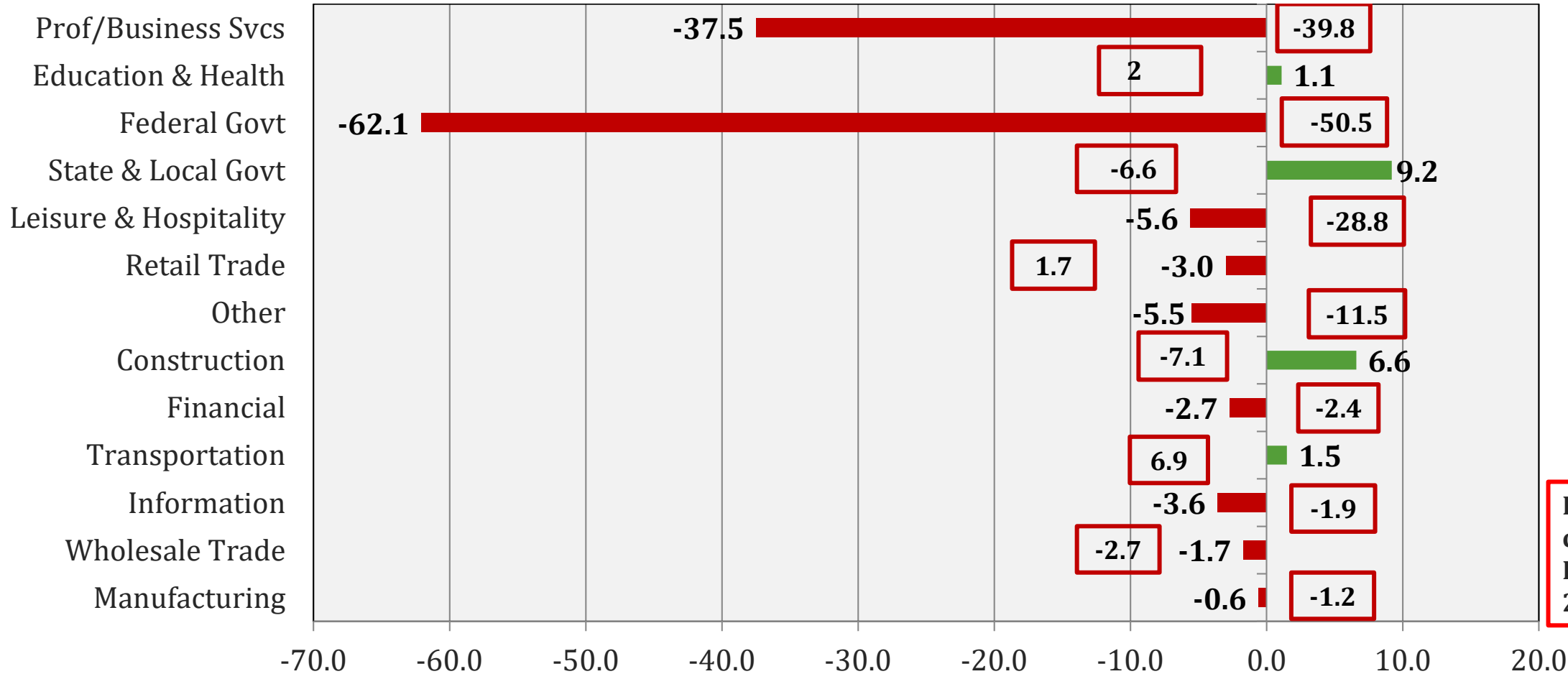
Jan 2025 - Jan 2026



(000s)

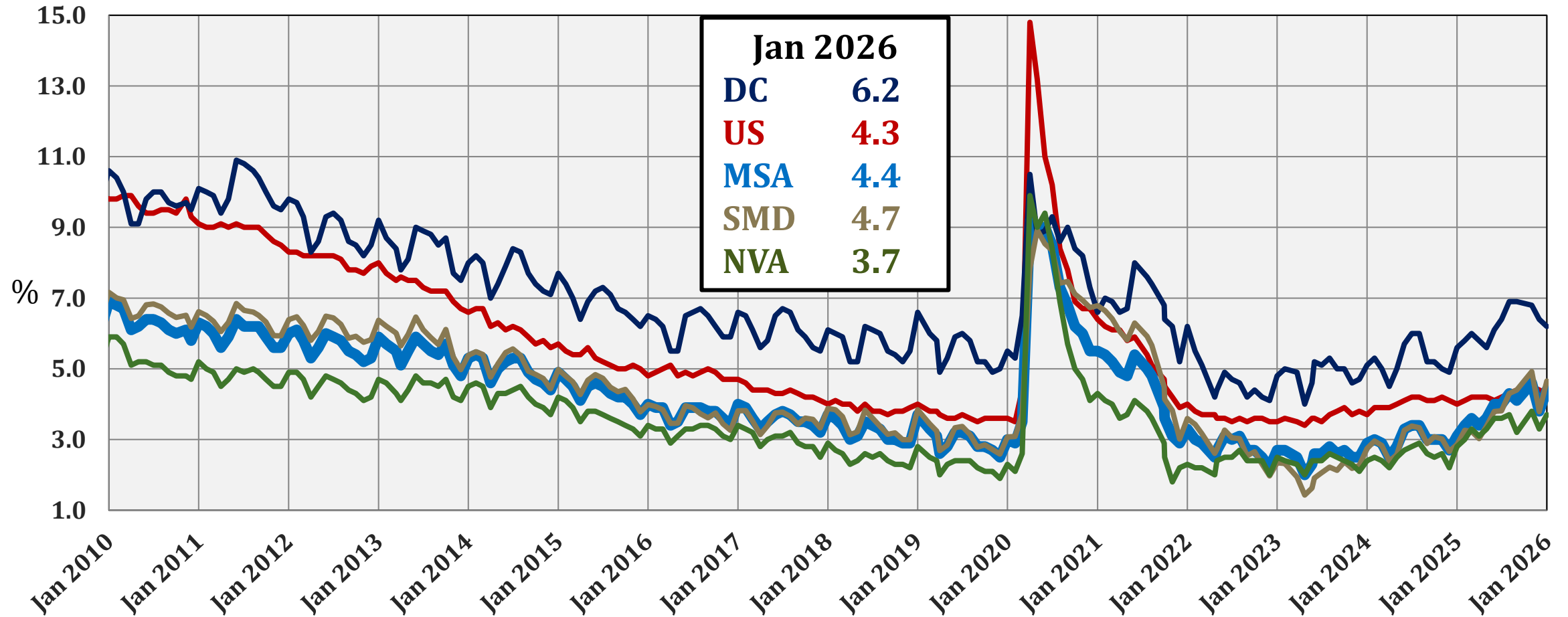
(Ranked by Size in 2024)

Total = -104k



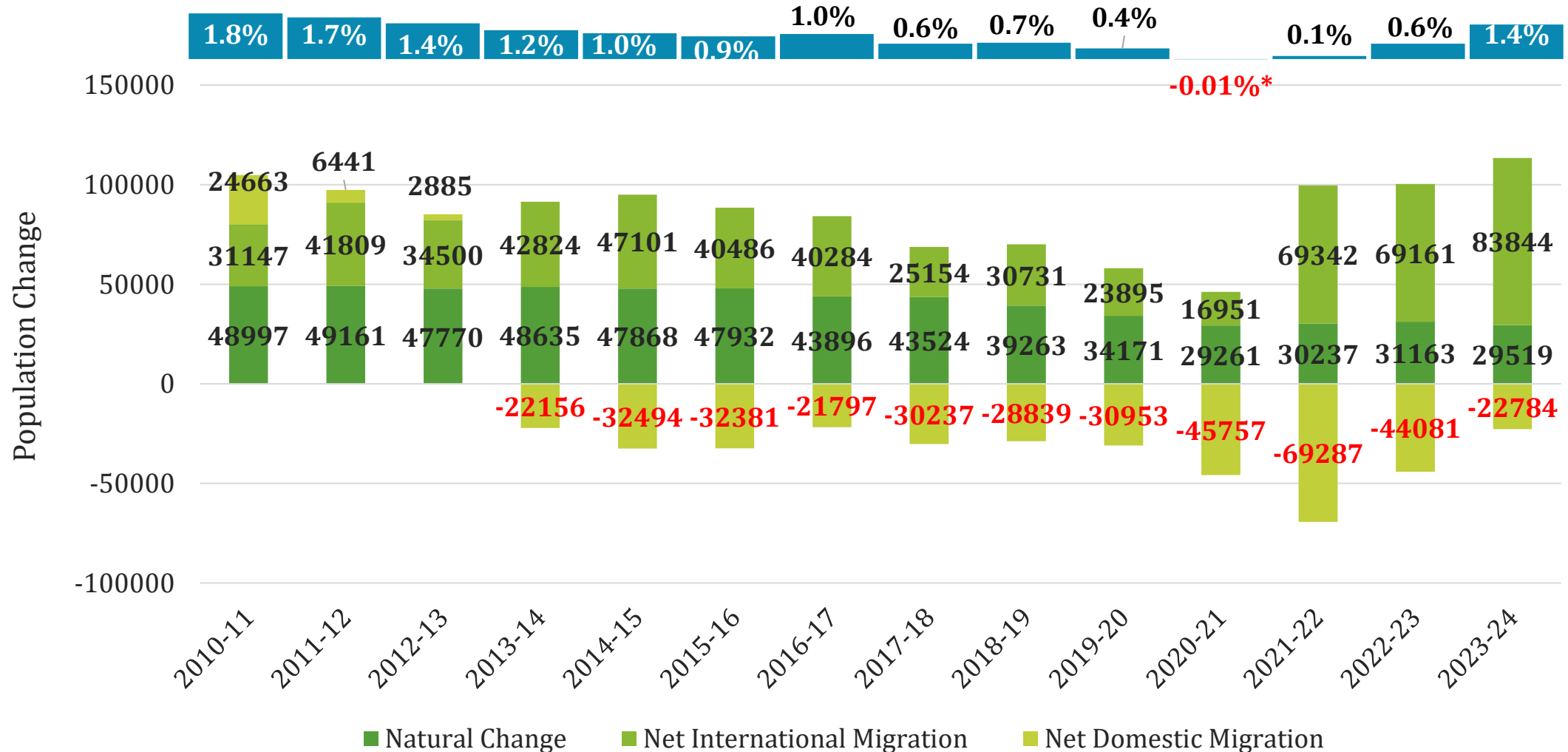
Employment
change since
February
2020

Unemployment Rates in the WMSA By Sub-State Area



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (Region - Not Seasonally Adjusted, US - Seasonally Adjusted)

Elements of Population Change Washington MSA



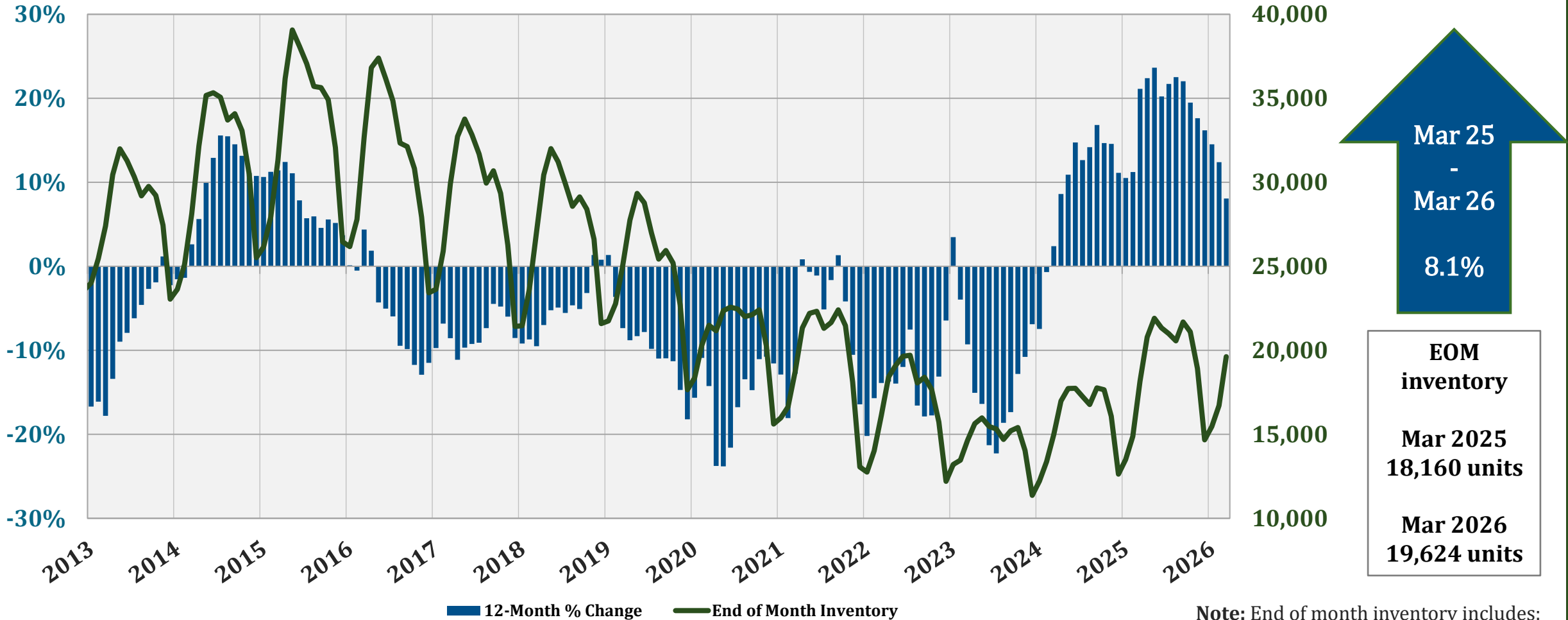
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program . *PEP Vintage 2020 used for 2020 population estimate.



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Inventories of Existing Homes

Washington MSA MOTYC (2013-2026)



Mar 25
-
Mar 26

8.1%

EOM inventory

Mar 2025
18,160 units

Mar 2026
19,624 units

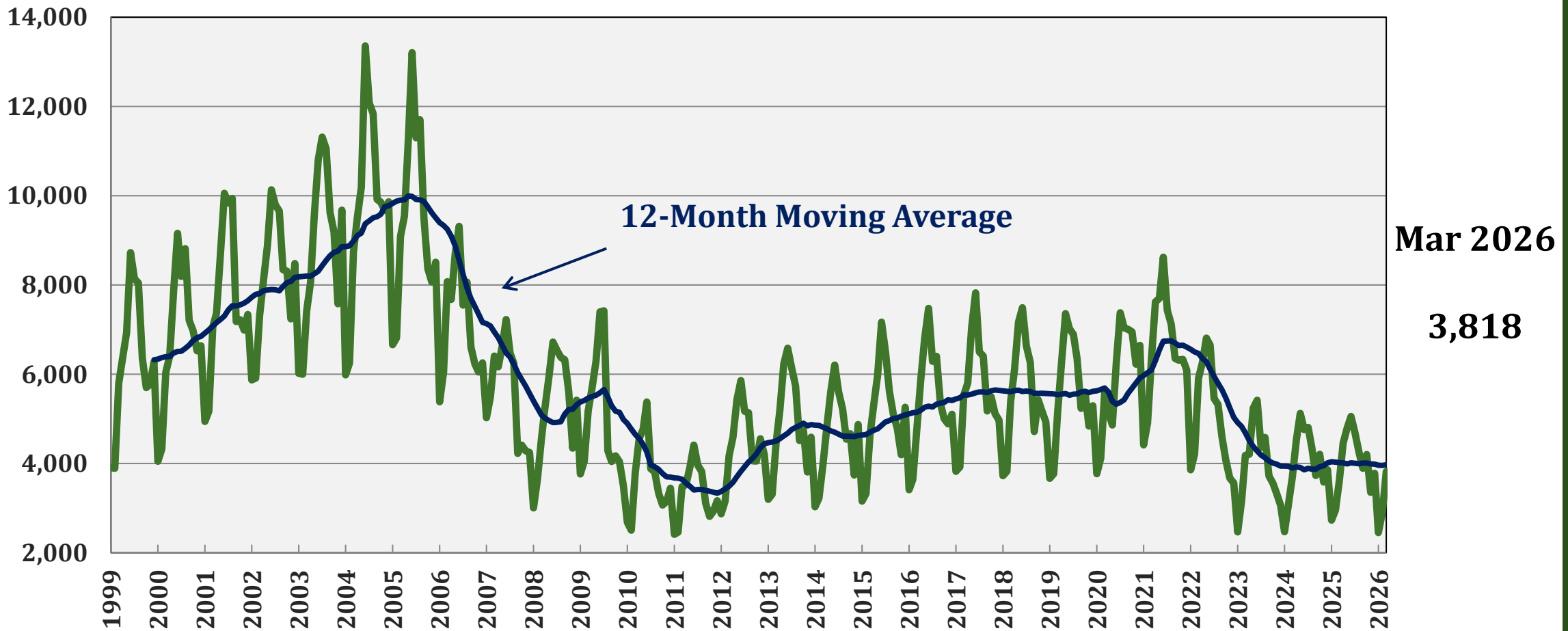
Note: End of month inventory includes:
(1) All Pending Listings and (2) Active Listings.



Existing Home Sales

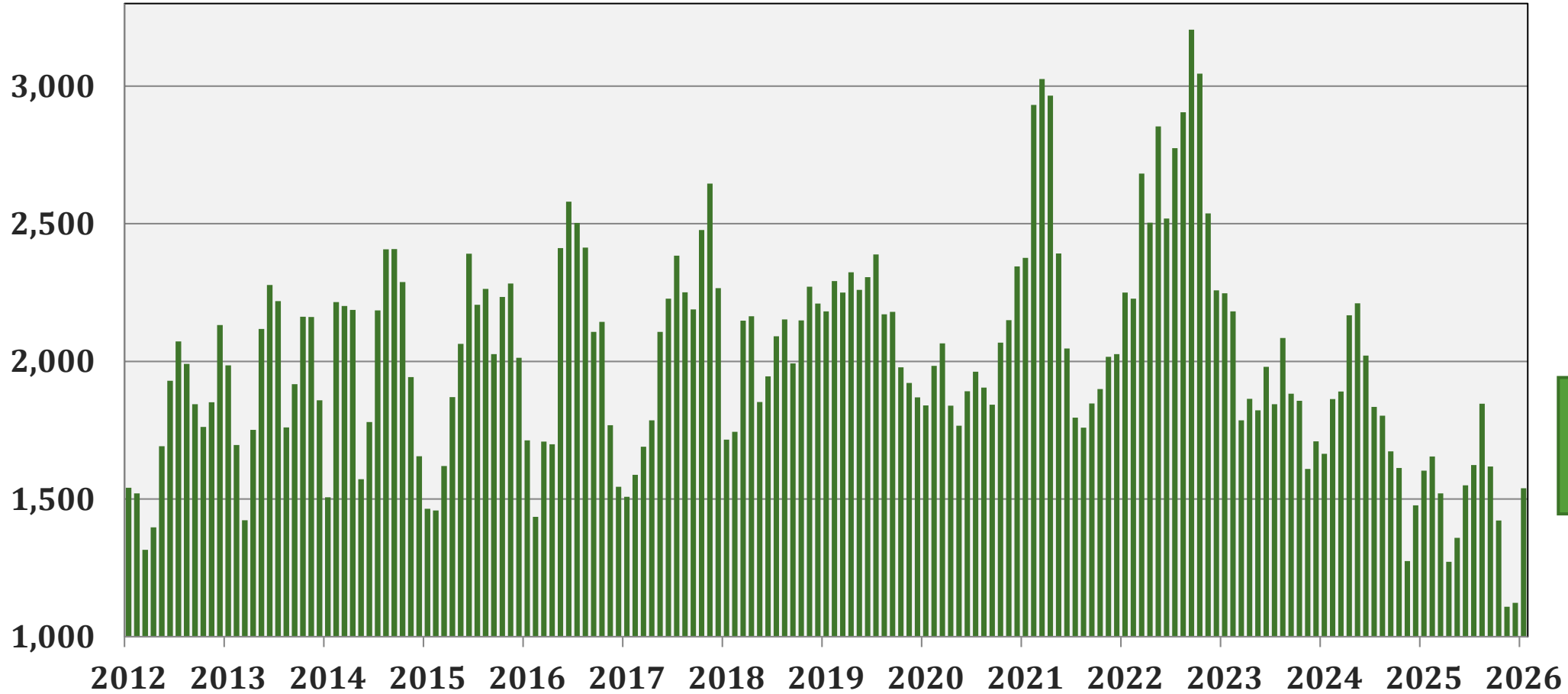
Washington MSA (DC Metro Region)

1999 - 2026



Washington MSA Building Permits

2012-2026, Three-Month Moving Average

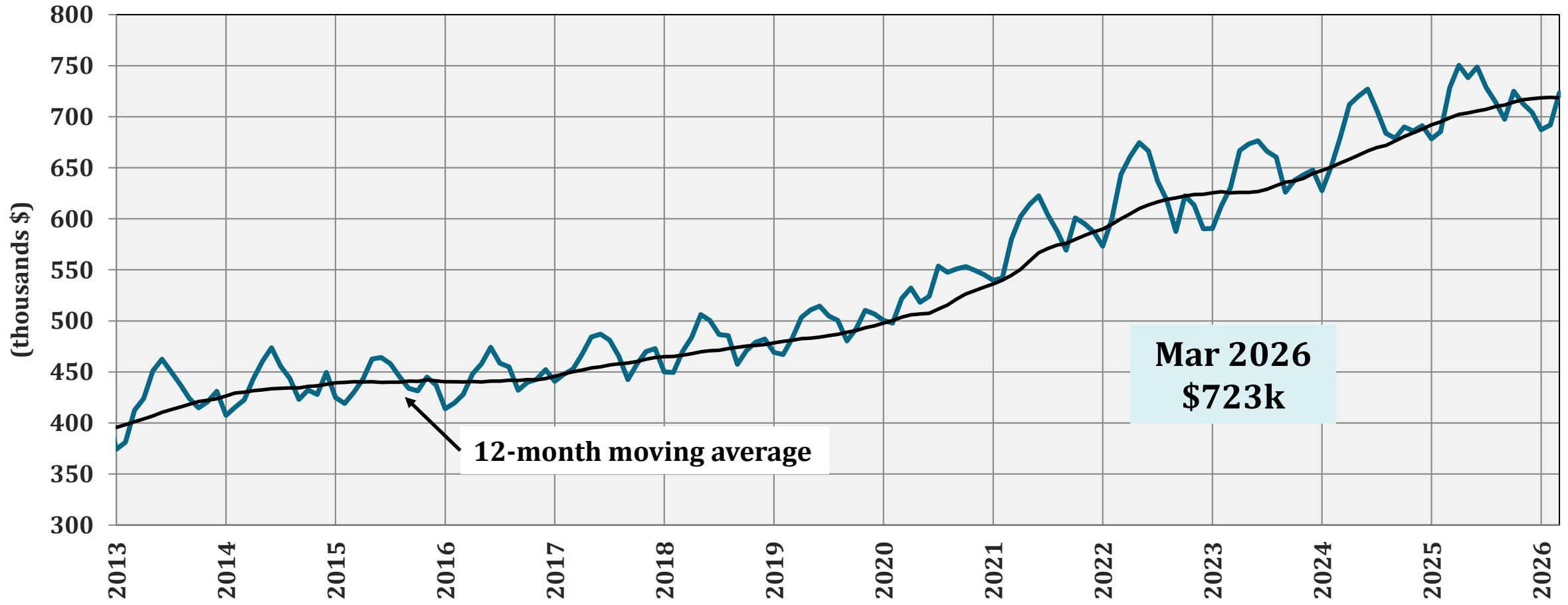


Jan 2026
2313
permits
issued

1540
3 mo avg



Average Home Sales Price Washington MSA



D.C. Metro Outlook

- **Jobs: +/-**
 - Federal employment may rise
 - Federal spending support defense, security, AI contracting
 - Offset by spillover effects of 2025 job losses (household, contractor spending)
- **Known Unknowns**
 - Retaining displaced workers
 - Nat'l Guard impact on tourism
 - Relocation of agencies
 - Timing of industry pivot
 - Data center fights



Economic Development Basics

- All three elements (legs) are needed for balanced ED strategy
- Important Site Selection Factors
 - Availability and cost of skilled labor usually most important
 - Availability/costs of electric power rising
 - Business taxes
 - Ease of navigating local bureaucracy
 - Other infrastructure
 - Quality of life





Area Development 2025 Metro Rankings



Metro Area/Division	Rank Among Largest	Overall Rank	Prime Workforce Rank	Economic Strength Rank
Las Vegas-Henderson-North Las Vegas, NV MSA	1	54	352	32
Indianapolis-Carmel-Greenwood, IN MSA	2	99	216	120
Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall, FL Metro Div	3	103	599	21
Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin, TN MSA	4	245	332	258
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray Beach, FL Metro Div	5	264	769	74
New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ Metro Div	6	269	802	63
Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach-Sunrise, FL Metro Div	7	294	727	117
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX MSA	8	307	320	355
Fort Worth-Arlington-Grapevine, TX Metro Div	9	310	698	148
Arlington-Alexandria-Reston, VA-WV Metro Div	33	747	844	530
Washington, DC-MD Metro Div	50	888	833	845

Path to Competitiveness

- Real Estate
 - Adapting to changes in the utilization of the existing built environment
 - Addressing housing affordability
 - Faster, more clear processes
- Transportation:
 - Demand cost effectiveness in public transport
 - Finish what is started
- Public-Private Partnerships
 - Rebuilding built environment
 - **Services: Childcare**
- Economic Development
 - Entrepreneurial support
 - Regional!
 - Business led
 - Embrace tech change
 - Human originality
 - Demand accountability

Thank You

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