



# Metro Atlanta Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy

Executive Summary

December 6, 2017

# About CATLYST

In May 2017, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) initiated a regional competitiveness strategy to improve regional competitiveness and collaboration throughout Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties. ARC selected Avalanche Consulting, a national economic development consultancy, to facilitate the strategy's preparation. The strategy also serves as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in accordance with the U.S. Economic Development Administration's requirements. The 2017 CATLYST Regional Competitiveness Strategy (CATLYST) follows a five-year CEDS conducted in 2012.

CATLYST will serve as a guide for policies, programs, and investments that ensure the region's continued economic dynamism. CATLYST is designed to provide information, tools, and specific actions to ARC, partner organizations, local economic development and community development practitioners, elected leaders, and private businesses. CATLYST has two chapters:

## **Chapter 1: Summary Background and SWOT Analysis**

The first chapter of CATLYST includes a SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) summary. The SWOT summary is based on an evaluation of metro Atlanta's current competitive position that examines a broad array of metrics related to the region's evolving economy and demographics. In addition to quantitative analysis, the chapter includes qualitative information collected through a series of focus groups and interviews that included more than **150 stakeholders, five 2-hour workshops with a 65-member regional Strategy Committee, an online survey of more than 2,000 area residents, and four 2-hour community open houses in Gwinnett, Douglas, and Clayton Counties and the City of Atlanta.**

## **Chapter 2: Strategic Action Plan and Evaluation Framework**

CATLYST's second chapter includes a five-year program of work to enhance metro Atlanta's economy, resiliency, and quality of life for all residents. The recommended actions build on findings from the SWOT analysis and incorporate activities from current regional efforts that support the vision and goals of CATLYST. This chapter also suggests the stakeholder(s) responsible for implementation, timetables, potential funding sources, and performance metrics to evaluate CATLYST's progress and impact on the region's economy.

CATLYST also complements previous planning efforts such as The Atlanta Region's Plan. Competitive, regional economic development will require world-class infrastructure, healthy livable communities, and a competitive economy

# Project Partners

CATLYST was developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission in partnership with hundreds of local residents, public organizations, nonprofits, and private businesses.

## **Atlanta Regional Commission**

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county Atlanta region. Since 1947, ARC and its predecessor agencies have helped focus the region's leadership, attention, and resources on critical issues. The agency serves as a regional convener, bringing diverse stakeholders to the table to address the most important issues facing metro Atlanta. ARC also offers leadership development programs to residents who want to make a difference in the Atlanta region. ARC's member governments are Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale counties, and the city of Atlanta.

## **Metro Atlanta Residents & Businesses**

Development of the CATLYST Strategy involved face-to-face discussions with business leaders, representatives of philanthropic organizations, economic development and community development professionals, and other civic champions. Additionally, 2,083 residents completed an online survey as part of the strategic planning process.

## **Avalanche Consulting**

Avalanche Consulting is the nation's premier economic development strategist. The firm is deeply driven to make a positive impact and seek clients who are equally inspired to energize their economies. Since it was established in 2005, Avalanche Consulting has provided research, strategic planning, and marketing assistance to more than 200 communities throughout the U.S.

# Strategy Committee Members

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) staff and board sincerely thank the members of CATLYST's Strategy Committee for helping inform and guide the development of this strategic plan. This group of leaders was critical in ensuring that CATLYST reflects a broad diversity of perspectives from across the entire 10-county Atlanta region.

Mike Alexander – *Director, Center for Livable Communities, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Kim Anderson – *Former CEO, Families First*

Chris Appleton – *Co-Founder and Executive Director, Wonderroot*

Kerry Armstrong – *Chair, ARC Board; Managing Director – Development Partner, Pope & Land Real Estate*

Kali Boatright – *President & CEO, Douglas County Chamber of Commerce*

Bill Bolling – *Chairman, Foodwell Alliance*

Jennifer Bonnett – *General Manager, Advanced Technology Development Center*

Frank Brown – *CEO, Communities in Schools of Atlanta*

Chris Burke – *Director Community Relations, Office of Government and Community Relations, Georgia Tech*

Taifa Butler – *Executive Director, Georgia Budget & Policy Institute*

Mike Carnathan – *Manager, Research and Analytics, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Stephen Causby – *Manager, Community Partnerships, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Susan Chana – *Director, Center for Strategic Relations, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Nelson Chu – *Managing Director, Kinetic Ventures*

Ann Cramer – *Senior Consultant, Coxé Curry & Assoc.*

Christina Cummings – *Economic Development Project Manager, City of Atlanta*

Jim Durrett – *Executive Director, Buckhead CID*

James Franklin – *CEO, TechBridge*

David Gill – *President & CEO, Henry County Chamber of Commerce*

Ray Gilley – *President, Decide Dekalb Development Authority*

Todd Greene – *Vice President, Community and Economic Development, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta*

Ben Hames – *Deputy Commissioner, Workforce, Georgia Department of Economic Development*

David Hartnett – *Chief Economic Development Officer, Metro Atlanta Chamber*

Cinda Herndon-King – *Director, Atlanta CareerRise*

Doug Hooker – *Executive Director, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Tim Hynes – *President, Clayton State University*

Sally Jamara – *Executive Practice Leader, Traversa Consulting*

Marty Jones – *Executive Director, Conyers Rockdale Economic Development Council*

Anne Kaiser – *Vice President, Community and Economic Development, Georgia Power; CATLYST Co-Chair*

Sarah Kirsch – *Executive Director, ULI Atlanta*

Eloisa Klementich – *President and CEO, Invest Atlanta*

Becky Kurtz – *Manager, Aging and Independence Services, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Shelley Lamar – *Executive Director, Aerotropolis Atlanta Alliance*

Rob Lebeau – *Manager, Workforce Development, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Craig Lesser – *Managing Partner, Pendleton Consulting*

Andy Macke – *Regional Vice President, Comcast*

Rohit Malhotra – *Executive Director & Founder, Center for Civic Innovation*

Misti Martin – *President, Cherokee Office of Economic Development*

Nick Masino – *Senior Vice President, Economic Development, Partnership Gwinnett*

Sharon Mason – *COO, Cobb Chamber*

Brooks Mathis – *Executive Director, Cobb EDGE*

Russell McMurry – *Commissioner, Georgia Department of Transportation*

Amol Naik – *Director of Special Projects, MailChimp; CATLYST Co-Chair*

Al Nash – *Executive Director, Development Authority of Fulton County*

John O'Callaghan – *President & CEO, Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership*

John Orr – *Manager, Transportation Access, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Keith Parker – *CEO, Goodwill Industries of North GA; Former General Manager/CEO, MARTA*

Alicia Philipp – *President, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta*

Courtney Pogue – *Director of Economic Development, Clayton County*

Chetan Prakash – *Consultant*

Chris Pumphrey – *Executive Director, Douglas Development Authority*

Rodney Sampson – *Partner, Inclusion + Equity, TechSquare Labs*

Meaghan Shannon-Vlkovic – *Vice President, Enterprise Community Partners*

Sam Shenbaga – *Manager, Community Development, Atlanta Regional Commission*

Jennifer Sherer – *Vice President, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Metro Atlanta Chamber*

Doug Shipman, *President & CEO, Woodruff Arts Center*

Neil Shorthouse – *Founder, Communities in Schools*

Gregg Simon – *Vice President, Economic Development, Metro Atlanta Chamber*

Nathaniel Smith – *CEO & Founder, Partnership for Southern Equity*

Detrick Stanford – *COO, Clayton County Commission*

Reid Stewart – *Director, InProp USA*

Bentina Terry – *Senior Vice President, Metro Atlanta Region, Georgia Power*

Tene Traylor – *Fund Advisor, The Kendeda Fund*

Carlotta Ungaro – *President & CEO, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce*

Bethany Usry – *Vice President, Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce*

Stephen Vault – *Vice President, Business Development and Strategic Planning, Wellstar*

Larry Williams – *President, Technology Association of Georgia*

Janelle Williams – *Senior Associate, Family Economic Success, Annie E. Casey Foundation*

Joan Young – *President & CEO, Fayette County Development Authority*

Ken Zeff – *Executive Director, Learn4Life Metro Atlanta*



# CATLYST Planning Process

The CATLYST planning process began in June 2017 with an in-depth evaluation of the region's economy and its performance relative to state, U.S., and peer regions. The data analysis was coupled with insights from more than 2,200 stakeholders to form a SWOT evaluation. Both the analysis and SWOT are available in CATLYST's first chapter, the *Summary Background and SWOT*.

Through the research, CATLYST's framework – its vision, goals, and priorities – began to evolve. Additional feedback from the Strategy Committee and others helped to finalize the framework and fill in project ideas that will fuel CATLYST's implementation. This chapter, the *Strategic Action Plan*, is the final phase of the planning process. Following its approval, it will be time for the region to take collaborative action.

The six-month CATLYST planning process was designed to be inclusive and transparent every step of the way. Stakeholder input was highly encouraged. CATLYST communication outreach efforts included traditional and social media, an information portal located on ARC's website, open houses, online questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, and Strategy Committee workshops.

## CATLYST Timeline



# Stakeholder Engagement

The process of developing a regional strategy is as important as the final product, and broad stakeholder input is critical to success. From day one of CATLYST, the consulting team offered residents multiple avenues for engaging in the planning process.

## CATLYST Website

Throughout the planning process, the CATLYST information portal ([www.atlantaregional.org/catlyst](http://www.atlantaregional.org/catlyst)) served as a primary tool for sharing information about the strategy and receiving feedback from residents of the region. The portal housed the CATLYST community survey, a questionnaire for people unable to attend an open house in person, and an open-ended questionnaire inviting residents to offer ideas to the consulting team at any time in the process. Links to CATLYST Strategy Committee presentations and final reports are also available on the website.

4

Public Open Houses

2,200

CATLYST survey  
responses

150

interview & focus group  
participants

487.5

hours  
contributed by Strategy  
Committee members



# Stakeholder Engagement, continued

## **CATLYST Community Survey**

Between June and August 2017, residents were invited to participate in the CATLYST community survey. ARC, Strategy Committee members, and other partners distributed the survey to their networks. In total, the survey received 2,083 responses. (Survey results are available in Chapter 1 of this strategy.)

## **Interviews and Focus Groups**

During the course of the process, the consulting team conducted 25 one-to-one interviews with regional leaders and facilitated 10 focus groups that included more than 100 participants.

## **Open Houses and Online Open House Questionnaire**

Between August and October 2017, ARC and the consulting team hosted open houses in Clayton, Douglas, and Gwinnett Counties and in the City of Atlanta at the Center for Civic Innovation. The open houses invited the public to provide input on CATLYST's early strategic framework. More than 125 people attended open houses and an additional 17 participated in an online open house questionnaire.



# Stakeholder Engagement, continued

## Strategy Committee

A 65-member Strategy Committee comprising civic, community, and business leaders from across the 10-county region guided the creation of CATLYST. The Strategy Committee participated in five two-hour workshops with the consulting team. Early on, the committee provided input on CATLYST's focus and priorities. As CATLYST progressed, the committee helped to shape the strategy's framework, specific initiatives, and capacity for implementation.

## Open-Ended Questionnaire

To encourage engagement after the conclusion of the community survey, an open-ended questionnaire was available on the CATLYST website. 56 people shared feedback through the questionnaire.

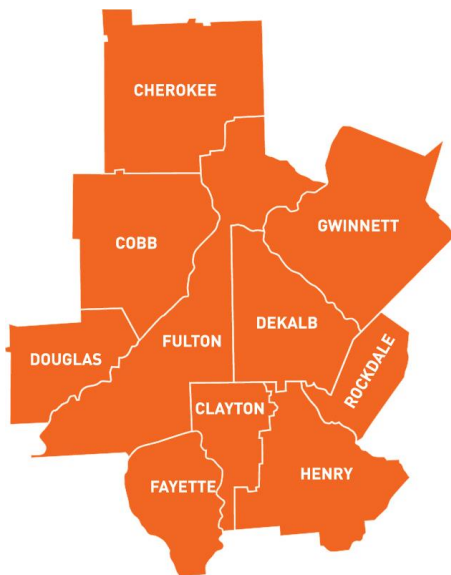




# Regional Drivers

Chapter 1, *Summary Background and SWOT*, provides an in-depth evaluation of the 10-county region's economy, strengths, and challenges. The report includes a benchmark analysis comparing metro Atlanta's performance against several competitor regions, including Dallas-Ft. Worth, Charlotte, Nashville, and Washington, D.C. The analysis helped shape this strategy's framework, goals and priorities. The following findings particularly influenced CATLYST's strategic direction:

- Employers and economic developers across the region are concerned about talent availability and recognize that in-migration of workers is not strong enough to fuel business growth. Strengthening the region's existing workforce through improving education, aligning curricula with business needs, and re-engaging marginalized residents emerged as CATLYST's top priority.
- After suffering job losses and a housing collapse between 2007-2012, metro Atlanta's economy is growing faster than the U.S. average.
- Metro Atlanta is very entrepreneurial. The region has a higher percentage of self-employed workers and micro-businesses than any examined benchmark region. Academic R&D expenditures and venture capital funding per capita also compare favorably.
- Between 2010-2015, median household incomes grew at a pace on-par or greater than many benchmark regions. However, income disparities between the highest and lowest wage earners are greater than in other regions. Further, middle class workers' wages have barely budged in the last five years.
- The region suffers tremendous disparities among racial and ethnic groups. In 2015, 25.7% of metro Atlanta Hispanics were living below the poverty level and 19.2% of African-American residents were living below the poverty level. This compares to 7.9% of White residents. On average, African-American median household incomes are 63.2% of White incomes, and Hispanic incomes are 59.4% of White incomes. The unemployment rate of African-American residents is more than twice that of White residents.
- The region's workforce is deeply interconnected. Nine of the 10 counties in the region have more than 60% of residents working outside of their home county.
- Affordability is an increasing concern for residents. 27.4% of homeowners spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs and 48.6% of renters spend more than 30% of income. To find affordable housing, many must move outside of job centers. While this offsets housing costs, it also adds to transportation-related expenses. Also, the heightened number of commuters exacerbates traffic congestion.
- The region's unemployment rate is below 5% and continues to fall. Yet, per capita talent migration into the region remains lower than pre-recession levels. In addition, the region's population is projected to age dramatically over the next two decades. Between 2015-2040, the population of 65+ year-olds will increase 153% (compared to less than 25% for 19-64 year-olds). In 2040, 20% of the region's population will be 65 or older.



10-County CATLYST Region

# Vision and Bedrock

## **Focus on the Individual: Why Everyone Matters**

Outcomes change when you put people in the center of a strategic plan. As CATLYST evolved, stakeholders continually emphasized the point that the region is only as strong as its residents, and individual needs such as affordability, mobility, and education are affecting the region's economic competitiveness. Therefore, it is imperative that the region approaches economic development through a holistic lens. Metro Atlanta's economy will become more energized when businesses have the talent they need and residents have the stability, connectedness, and preparedness they need to participate in the economy.

CATLYST is a strategy that strives to care for local people. **Empowering upward economic mobility for all is CATLYST's core goal.** Metro Atlanta's greatest asset is its people. To be a thriving global economy, all residents must have opportunities to improve their quality of life, reducing disparities, and ensuring that no one is left behind as the region grows.

## **Vision: A Region That Works for Everyone**

Metro Atlanta's vision is to be a region that works for all of its residents. This vision describes what all stakeholders should set their sights on, and the destination toward which all economic development goals and initiatives navigate.

## **Bedrock: Collaborative Leadership in a Culture of Trust**

The region's bedrock for success will be established around a **strong collaboration among leaders and unfaltering determination to foster a culture of trust.** The willingness to set aside differences for the greater good of the region is absolutely critical. Those regions of the world that are most successful in economic development are those in which all communities share a unified vision and work hand-in-hand to accomplish it.

The trust and collaboration established during the CATLYST planning process reinforces this bedrock. As this strategy is implemented, the inclusive and transparent spirit of CATLYST should continue. **Open, active communication and access to processes are key.** At times, this will entail having difficult conversations required to overcome divisions. Discourse is needed to ensure cohesiveness and trust in each other.

# CATLYST Pillars

CATLYST's four pillars are integral to supporting its core goal and vision. Each pillar is of equal importance in achieving balanced, stable economic development.

Pillars are crafted in terms of an individual resident's needs. For metro Atlanta to be a region that works for everyone, the region must collaborate on initiatives to ensure that every resident is healthy and housed, prepared and productive, engaged and employed, and connected and resilient.

## EMPLOYED & ENGAGED

**The goal of this pillar is that everyone can thrive in a robust global economy.** To have a vibrant regional economy requires metro Atlanta's leaders to proactively position the region as a global business destination, collaboratively investing in the infrastructure, workforce, quality of life, and other assets that help businesses thrive. It also entails providing ample avenues for all residents to create their own businesses and re-engage in the workforce if they have disengaged.

## PREPARED & PRODUCTIVE

**The goal of this pillar is that everyone is prepared to advance in a productive career and lifelong learning.** The region must continually invest in improving educational outcomes for all residents. Ensuring successful educational outcomes starts with early childhood programs and carries through K-12, training, higher education, and adult learning – equitably in every community, in every school in the region. Offering a seamless ladder of educational opportunities aligned with, and anticipating, the needs of business is one of the most important steps to achieving CATLYST's vision.

## HEALTHY & HOUSED

**The goal of this pillar is that everyone has options for a healthy lifestyle and quality, affordable housing.** Engaging residents in productive careers begins with ensuring that everyone has attainable opportunities to be healthy and have a home. Only after these immediate needs are met can residents effectively connect with their communities, pursue training and education, and seek jobs.

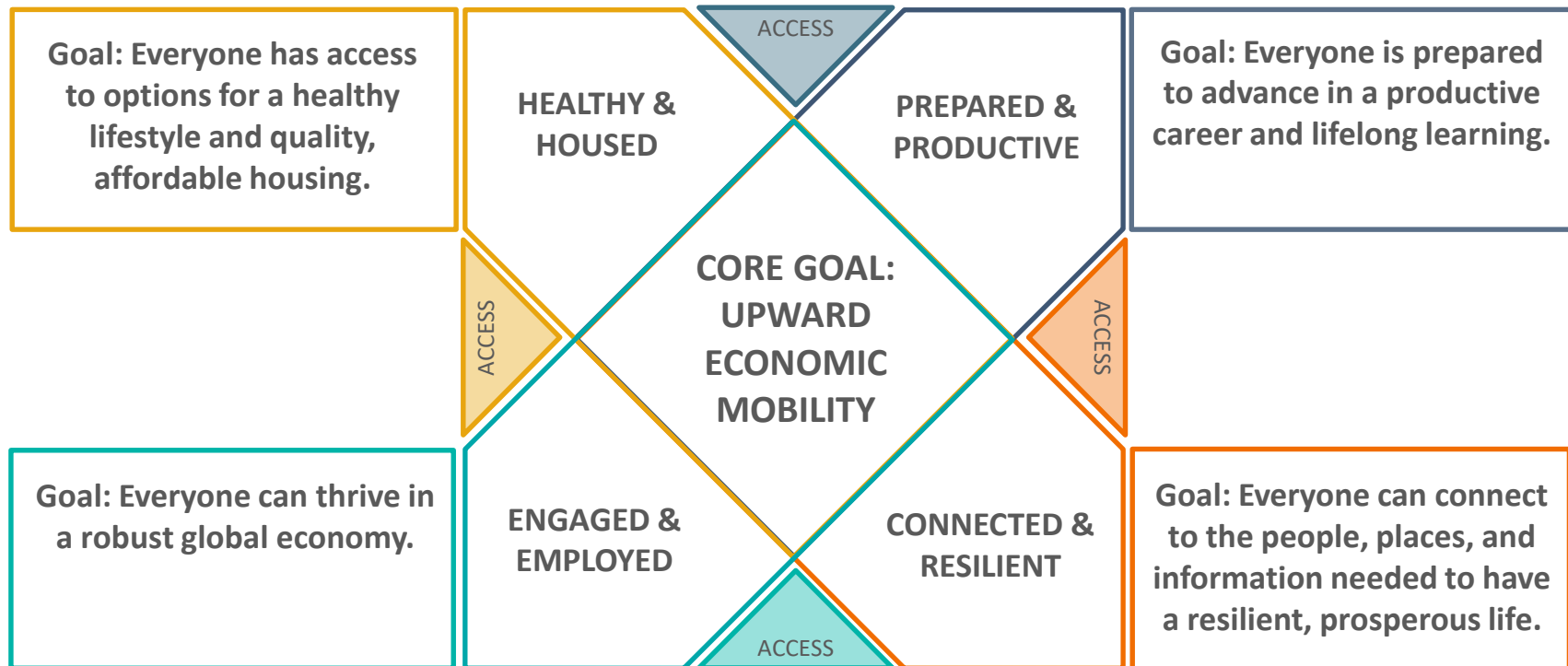
## CONNECTED & RESILIENT

**The goal of this pillar is that everyone can connect to the people, places, and information needed to have a resilient, prosperous life.** Being connected to the community whether physically via transit or civically through volunteerism, cultural activities, and political processes will improve the ability of residents to personally improve their quality of life.

# Complete CATLYST Framework



**VISION:**  
**A REGION THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE**



**BEDROCK:**  
**COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP, CULTURE OF TRUST**



# CATLYST Priorities

		ENGAGED & EMPLOYED		CONNECTED & RESILIENT
		HEALTHY & HOUSED	PREPARED & PRODUCTIVE	
ENGAGED & EMPLOYED	Expand the regional economic development marketing alliance's activities.			
	Further amplify and activate Aerotropolis Atlanta.			
	Promote and expand resources available for entrepreneurs and small businesses.			
	Establish an entrepreneurial platform dedicated to solving regional problems.			
	Expand programs that connect corporations and MWSBEs.			
PREPARED & PRODUCTIVE	Fully support Learn4Life and replicate similar cradle-to-career initiatives throughout metro Atlanta.			
	Raise awareness of viable STEAM career tracks among K-12 students and their parents.			
	Increase early childhood education funding and quality programming.			
	Continue to expand the region's involvement in HDCI, creating sector partnerships and programming.			
	Support the development of entrepreneurial thinking among the region's youth.			
	Increase businesses' engagement in schools across the region.			
	Address gaps in education, workforce development, and social support offerings across the region.			
	Establish a collective impact approach to re-engage disconnected workers across the region.			
HEALTHY & HOUSED	Facilitate a regional housing strategy.			
	Build the capacity of nonprofits and other organizations dedicated to housing.			
	Provide local governments with a toolkit to address poverty.			
	Expand resources to help communities improve healthy, safe lifestyles for their residents.			
	Update requirements of ARC's programs to reflect the spirit of the CATLYST Strategy.			
CONNECTED & RESILIENT	Study and take action on the inheritance of poverty and its negative impacts.			
	Establish an organization dedicated to advancing diverse leadership across the region.			
	In a comprehensive regional approach, protect and connect future green spaces.			
	Seek funding diversity for the LCI to support broader efforts.			
	Expand ARC's Regional Public Art Program and similar programs.			
	Increase area counties' participation in a regional transit network.			
	Host regional forums to ensure the region is prepared for autonomous vehicles and other disruptors.			

# Taking Action

To fully implement CATLYST, the region should adopt a formal structure for taking action and managing progress. Implementation will require a full-time director, leadership council, and volunteer project teams.

**Before implementation begins in full, finalize implementation governance, seek funding for and hire a CATLYST director, and formalize a process for selecting projects and formulating project plans.**

**CATLYST Director** – Successful CATLYST implementation will require a full-time director. The CATLYST director will be the point person for overseeing CATLYST implementation, working with stakeholders to coordinate projects and monitor progress. This person will serve as the facilitative leader of implementation, supporting simultaneous CATLYST projects, and assisting volunteers with crafting (and following through with) realistic project plans. The director may be housed in the ARC offices and report to the CATLYST Executive Committee.

**CATLYST Leadership Council**– Two volunteer co-chairs for each of the four CATLYST pillars should be identified before the strategy’s full implementation begins (pillar co-chairs). They will comprise the CATLYST Leadership Council alongside representatives from ARC’s Economic Development District (EDD) Board and other partners such as major CATLYST implementation funders and EDD. The council will be responsible for vetting project ideas, approving project plans, and monitoring implementation. The council could become a standing committee of ARC.

**Project Teams** – Project Teams are groups of volunteers who come together because of their interest in specific CATLYST projects. They may contribute their time and energy on a project basis and then disassemble when projects are complete (or reconvene for the project’s next steps). Data must inform the identification of projects and project plans. Volunteers involved in project teams must agree to base their activities on objective research. *(The following pages list the types of organizations that could potentially be involved in each CATLYST pillar’s projects. This is a sample list and in no way represents the only groups that may be involved.)*

**Atlanta Regional Commission** – ARC has key roles and commitments as a convener of topics around the quality of life in metro Atlanta. ARC houses many initiatives on topics that support CATLYST’s goals, such as transportation and mobility, natural resources, workforce development, and aging and health. Since the ARC Board serves as the Economic Development District’s (EDD) Board, there is an opportunity to elevate the visibility of CATLYST implementation by formalizing the Leadership Council’s meetings on ARC’s calendar, and with a reporting structure similar to existing Board committees. However, ARC does not yet have the in-house capacity to dedicate full-time support to executing this strategy. ARC should house the recommended CATLYST director. However, CATLYST’s success depends on broad regional involvement. *In no way is ARC responsible for implementing all projects.*

# Implementation: Months 1-18

## PRE-IMPLEMENTATION: MONTHS 1-6

Before the region begins full implementation of CATLYST, there are steps to take to be prepared organizationally. These “pre-implementation” steps should require approximately six months to complete and include:

- Select one initiating project for each CATLYST pillar. Identify project co-chairs.
- Establish the CATLYST Leadership Council.
- Work with project co-chairs to develop a simple project game plan for the next ~12 months. For example, what is the desired end result of this project? What specific steps will we take to achieve that result? What volunteers should be involved? What are our project milestones along the way?
- Formalize CATLYST governance structures and processes for vetting CATLYST projects.
- Roll out the final CATLYST strategy and kick off projects.
- Host community forums across the region to share CATLYST with all stakeholders.
- Seek funding for a full-time CATLYST director and finalize a job description.
- Begin a CATLYST director search.

## YEAR 1 PROJECTS: MONTHS 7-18

The following CATLYST projects are suggested for the first year of implementation. Please refer to Chapter 2 for a full description of each project and for projects recommended for years 2-5 of CATLYST.

The CATLYST Leadership Council and project co-chairs should select at least one project from each pillar to implement during the Year 2 timeframe. When creating their project plans, the project co-chairs may decide to divide these projects across multiple years (with distinct goals / deliverables delineated at the end of each year).

### Pillar: Engaged and Employed

- Convene a facilitated exercise among county economic development leaders to set the alliance’s goals for the next five years.
- Continue to work with neighboring development agencies to link into the Aerotropolis vision.
- Build on the Metro Export Plan.
- Continue to increase the quality and impact of Venture Atlanta.
- Establish a business accelerator(s) or incubator(s) for social impact firms that are committed to solving problems impacting metro Atlanta residents (e.g., access to healthy food, quality healthcare, social support, aging in place resources, quality education and training, and mobility options). Begin by leading a feasibility study to determine the best model for the accelerator(s).

# Implementation: Months 1-18, continued

## **Pillar: Prepared and Productive**

- Create a roadmap for the next five years of Learn4Life's activities.
- Complete the SMART mobile app that is currently in development by TechSquare Labs.
- Support the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS). Actively raise awareness of GEEARS among businesses across the region. (Continue into other years of implementation.)
- Work with organizations like the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education who, along with Neighborhood Nexus, recently completed a map that documents all STEM/STEAM certified schools in Georgia along with other out-of-school STEM/STEAM activities. (Continue into other years of implementation.)
- Continue establishing and launching the region's HDCI partnerships.

## **Pillar: Healthy & Housed**

- Create a regional housing strategy based on a collective impact model and data-driven approach.
- Inventory current nonprofits in the region whose mission is housing-related.
- Inventory communities in the region that are food, healthcare, and social support deserts. Form action teams in these communities to craft tactical plans to provide their residents with quality, culturally competent services.
- Assemble a team of ARC staff and board members to review LCI requirements through the lens of CATLYST's goals and priorities.

## **Pillar: Connected & Resilient**

- Establish a regional task force to study the causes of poverty and quantify the negative impact this has on the economy.
- Establish goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes, and develop strategies to advance upward mobility and mitigate unintended negative consequences. (Continue into Year 2 as needed.)
- Continue to promote and enhance the "Connecting with Parks" website.
- Continue to pursue a greater variety of funding sources for the LCI program so that LCI grants can include a more holistic breadth of activities. (Continue into future years as needed.)
- ConnectATL should become a regular event moving forward. In the future, ConnectATL could be held alongside other related events such as FUTURE CAR, which brings together private sector leaders from the worlds of autonomous driving electronics. Include a way for all counties in the region to play a meaningful role in the events. (This could become an annual event and relevant to Years 2-5.)



# Measuring Success: Are People Better Off?

The ultimate measure of CATLYST’s success is whether people living in the region are better off in the years ahead than they were before the CATLYST process began. Two primary “headline” metrics are proposed for each CATLYST pillar (listed below), along with a longer set of supporting metrics to help the region gauge progress. (Refer to Chapter 2 for a complete list of supporting metrics.) In addition, it is recommended that the CATLYST leadership council and director create an annual scorecard and community event that reports CATLYST metrics back to all regional stakeholders. This could be made available in an interactive, online format to maximize accessibility.

## ENGAGED & EMPLOYED

### HEADLINE METRICS

Labor Participation Rate

U.S. COMP RACE AGE COUNTY 5-YEAR

Poverty Rate

U.S. COMP RACE AGE COUNTY 5-YEAR

## PREPARED & PRODUCTIVE

### HEADLINE METRICS

Post-Secondary Educational Attainment  
(Associate Degree and Above)

U.S. COMP RACE COUNT 1-YEAR

Unemployment Rate

U.S. COMP RACE AGE COUNTY 1-YEAR

## HEALTHY & HOUSED

### HEADLINE METRICS

Percentage of Households Spending >30% on Housing

U.S. COMP RACE AGE COUNTY 1-YEAR

Chronic Disease Rates  
(% of Population with Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease)

U.S. COMP RACE AGE COUNTY 1-YEAR

## CONNECTED & RESILIENT

### HEADLINE METRICS

Mass Transit Ridership

U.S. COMP 5-YEAR

% of Residents Who Identify Transportation as the Biggest  
Problem Facing Metro Atlanta

COUNTY 5-YEAR