

Regional Development Plan (RDP)



ONE
great
REGION

Growing Together for 2050

METRO ATL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

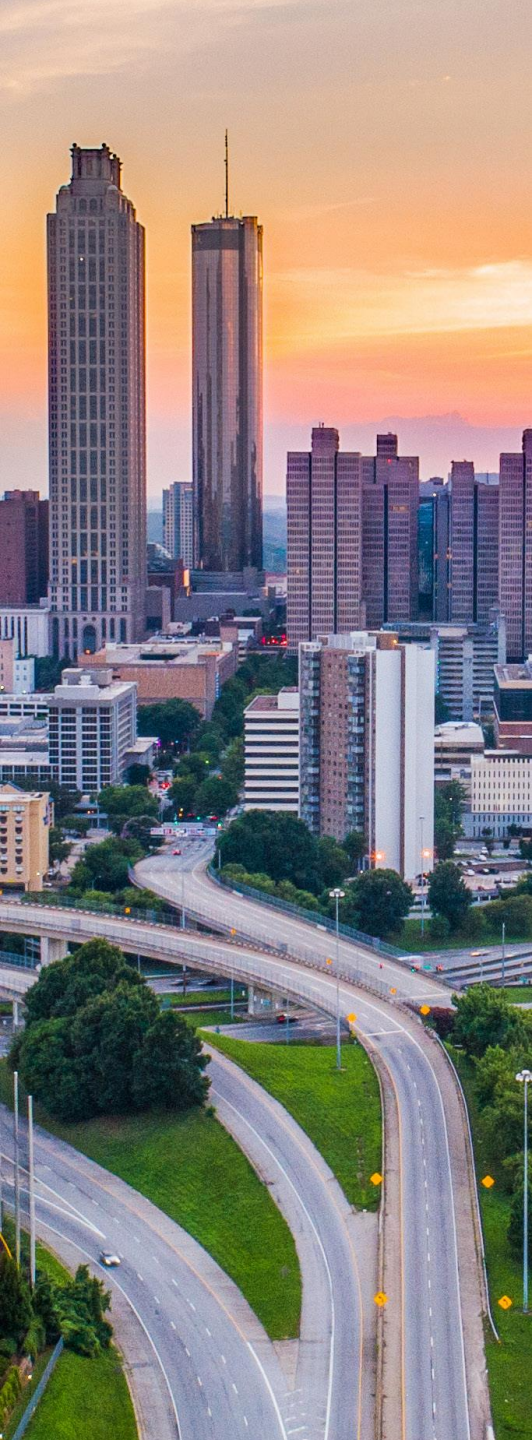
Board Approval to Transmit to DCA
ARC Board Meeting | May 2026



GROWING TOGETHER

METRO ATL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ARC Atlanta Regional Commission



Vision

ONE **great** REGION

Mission

Foster thriving communities for all within the Atlanta region through collaborative, data-informed planning and investments.

Goals



Healthy, safe, livable communities in the Atlanta Metro area.



Strategic investments in people, infrastructure, mobility, and preserving natural resources.



Regional services delivered with **operational excellence** and **efficiency**.



Diverse stakeholders engage and take a regional approach to solve local issues.



A competitive economy that is inclusive, innovative, and resilient.

Values

Excellence – A commitment to doing our best and going above and beyond in every facet of our work allowing for innovative practices and actions to be created while ensuring our agency’s and our colleague’s success.

Integrity – In our conduct, communication, and collaboration with each other and the region’s residents, we will act with consistency, honesty, transparency, fairness and accountability within and across each of our responsibilities and functions.

Equity – We represent a belief that there are some things which people should have, that there are basic needs that should be fulfilled, that burdens and rewards should not be spread too divergently across the community, and that policy should be directed with impartiality, fairness and justice towards these ends.

How the 2026 RDP advances the 2021 cycle



First plan built on One Great Region

Fully aligned with ARC's current strategic vision, adopted after our 2021 plan.



Fully revised UGPM

All 8 area types updated with 11 county planning departments via the Lucc process. Input from 45+ local govts.



Deepest RDP engagement historically

1000+ web inputs; 5 Board engagements; 11 county outreach sessions; working with CBOs, surveys.



Five plans synthesized into one

CEDS, MTP, WRMP, Climate Action Plan, and Live Beyond Expectations — unified into one policy framework.



Climate & environment elevated

Tree canopy, greenspace, and climate action are core plan goals for the first time.



Economic mobility as a driving priority

Atlanta ranks last among 50 metros for mobility. This plan makes closing that gap a named priority.

Public Hearing and Board approval to transmit the 2026 RDP to DCA

The Request

- Open and Close Public Hearing
- Approve transmittal of the 2026 Regional Development Plan to DCA for formal review
- DCA review period: approximately 45 days
- Final Board adoption scheduled: August 2026
- Annual implementation reports required after adoption

What the Plan Contains

- Ch. 1 Introduction — Vision & Purpose
- Ch. 2 Community Engagement
- Ch. 3 Regional Growth Vision
- Ch. 4 Regional Goals & Policies
- Ch. 5 5-Year Work Program

The Region Spoke. We Listened.

4,000+

Residents surveyed, Metro Atlanta Speaks

125+

Elected officials at Regional Assembly

11

County outreach sessions with planning staff and community members

4

ARC Board touchpoints, 2025–2026

1,000+

Unique visits to project website

Four Themes Emerged

Residents across all 11 counties identified the same challenges

Engagement included: county and municipal forums, two regional convenings, the Metro Atlanta Speaks public survey, an online project portal, the Advisory Committees, and a formal public hearing per DCA requirements.



Housing & Stability

Affordable homes near opportunity. Anti-displacement. Housing options for all ages.



Connectivity & Mobility

Transit expansion, pedestrian safety, and first/last mile access to jobs.



Economic Mobility

Career pathways. Youth opportunity. Investment in underserved communities.



Community Assets

Protecting downtowns, parks, trails, cultural institutions, and rural character.

Strengths to Build On, Challenges to Address

▲ REGIONAL ASSETS



Global Economic Engine

15+ Fortune 500 HQs; world's busiest airport; \$168B in planned transportation investment



A Richly Diverse Region

Most racially and ethnically diverse metro in the Southeast; a genuine competitive advantage



Urban Reinvestment Momentum

130+ LCI plans; Atlanta BeltLine; TOD around MARTA stations — all accelerating



Natural & Water Resources

Rich landscape and tree canopy; six river basin headwaters; robust regional water planning framework

▼ KEY CHALLENGES



Housing Affordability Crisis

45% of renters cost-burdened; median home price over \$400K; several barriers to supply and preservation



Transportation Access Gap

Only 2 of 11 counties served by heavy rail; half of workers commute across county lines; bike-ped infrastructure and safety remains a concerns



Disparate Economic Outcomes

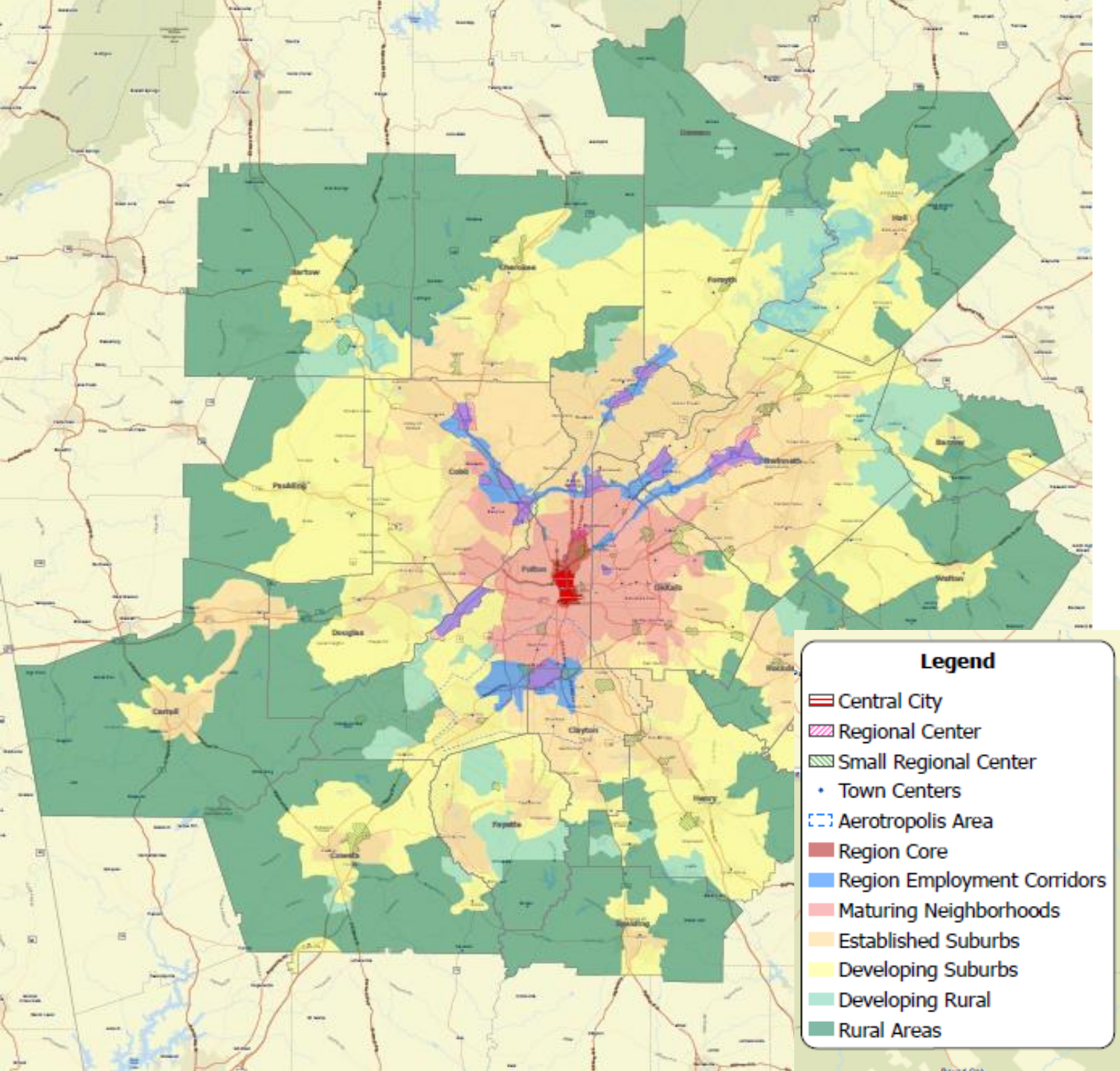
187K youth in poverty; bottom-ranked metro for economic mobility; spatial mismatch between workers and jobs



Development Pressure & Energy Demand

Rapid suburban expansion threatening tree canopy; data centers driving rising water and energy demands

The 2026 Unified Growth Policy Map



- Input received from all 11 counties
- 255 total comments received
- ARC staff working with local governments to address changes
- To serve as input for the MTP update

Seven Plan Elements with Goals and Policies



Economy & Workforce

Top global metro for prosperity and talent. Economic mobility as agency priority. Innovation hubs in every county.



Water Resources

Protect Chattahoochee headwaters. Conservation programs. Manage growing data center water demands.



Transportation & Mobility

Multimodal and transit expansion. Technology-enabled mobility and autonomous vehicle readiness.



Housing & Community

Regional Housing Strategy. creating local goals and strategies, addressing homelessness.



Land Use & Development

UGPM-guided growth. Compact centers. Creation of vibrant downtown, transit nodes, and employment corridors.



Environment & Natural Sys.

Urban tree canopy protection. Parks and greenspace access. Resilience to heat, flooding, and drought.




Regional Resilience

Close the 25-year life expectancy gap across ZIP codes. Economic mobility as a regional imperative with a focus on building resilient communities.

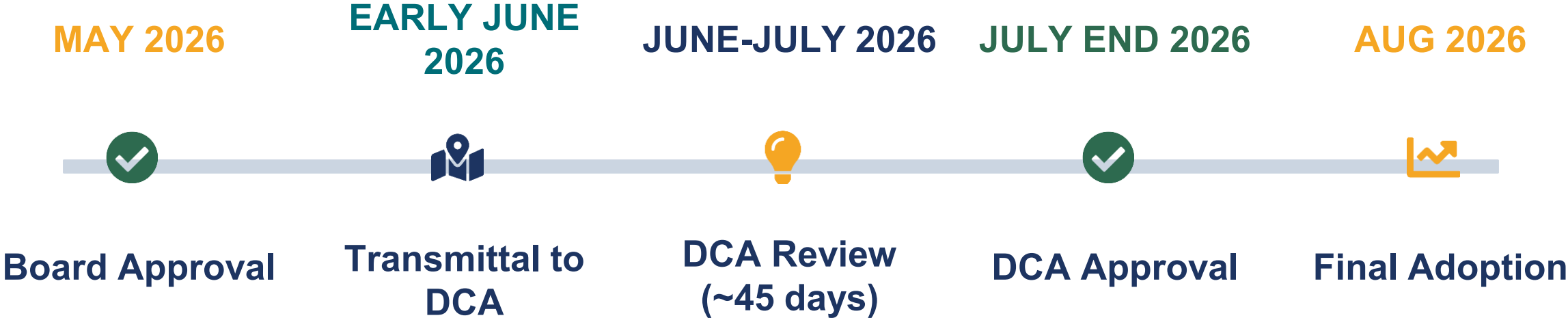
What ARC Will Do: 2026–2030

Key actions organized by ARC's Strategic Framework goals

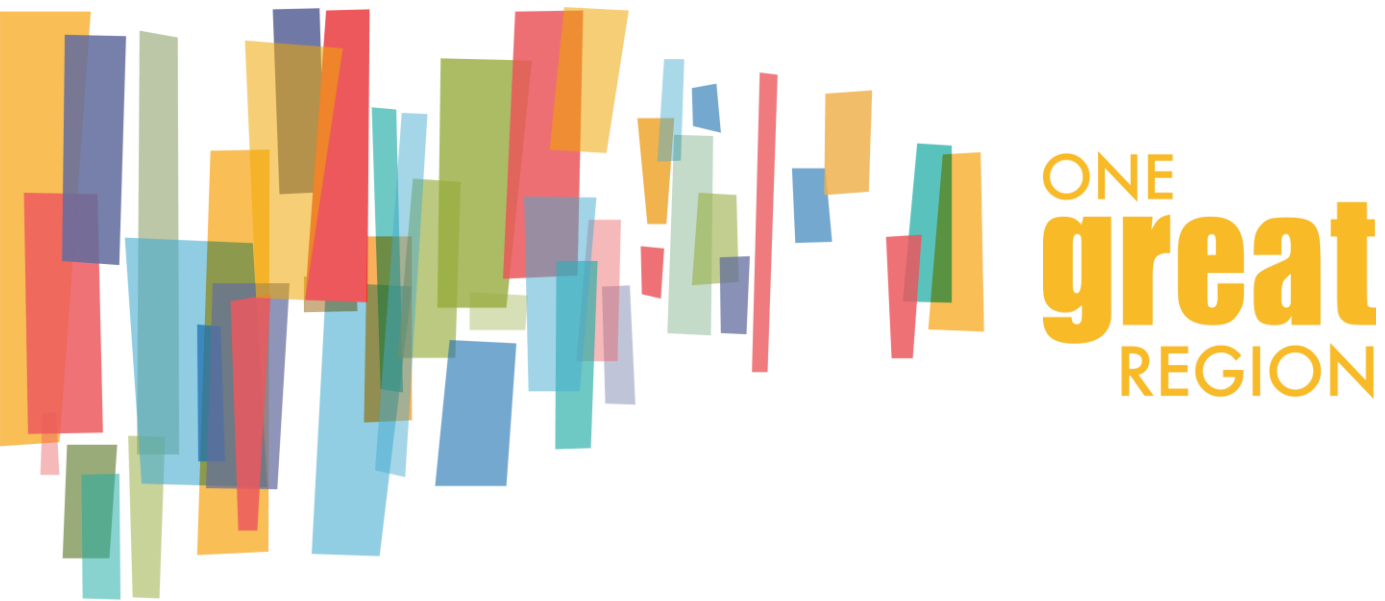
 Livable Communities	 Strategic Investments	 Stakeholder Engagement	 Competitive Economy	 Operational Excellence
Regional Housing Strategy adoption (2026)	MTP Update (adopt 2028)	Regional Assembly (annual)	CEDS Update 2026–2027	2027–2031 Strategic Plan
Regional Housing Strategy Implementation	TIP Updates and Amendments	2030 Census Coordination	Building Georgia Initiative	AI Data Readiness
Regional Homelessness Strategy	Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTP)	Metro ATL Speaks (annual)	Economic Mobility Strategy	Federal Policy Monitoring
LCI Grants and CDAP Technical Assistance	Chattahoochee RiverLands	ConnectATL Summit (bi-annual)	Wetropolis Area investments	IT Disaster Recovery

What Happens After Today

Board approval to transmit to DCA for review and final adoption by ARC Board in August



After adoption: annual implementation reports to DCA documenting Five-Year Work Program progress and local government compliance — required by DCA Ch. 110-12-6.



MOTION: Approve transmittal of the 2026 Regional Development Plan to DCA

atlantaregional.org/regional-development-plan
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