



DATE: December 6, 2017

**ISSUE SUMMARY: Approval of 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – CATLYST Regional Competitiveness Strategy**

**FROM:** Mark Mathews, CRC Chairman

**IMPORTANCE:**

Federal regulations require ARC, as an Economic Development District, to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years, that brings together the public, private, non-profit and education sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies. A CEDS must be the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed with broad-based and diverse public and private sector participation, and must set forth the goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the region and clearly define the metrics of success. ARC has engaged hundreds of regional stakeholders, led by a steering committee of 65 leaders from across the region, to develop a new strategy, called the CATLYST Regional Competitiveness Strategy.

The 2017 CEDS, the CATLYST Regional Competitiveness Strategy, is structured as follows:

- A **Summary Background Analysis** that reviews metrics related to the region's evolving economy as well as qualitative information collected through public input, including interviews with 150 stakeholders, workshops with the 65-member Strategy Steering Committee, survey responses from over 2,000 area residents, and 4 two-hour community open houses in Gwinnett, Douglas and Clayton counties, and the City of Atlanta.
- A **SWOT Analysis**, reviewing the notable opportunities and challenges that the region's economic is facing now, and may expect in coming years based on regional and national trends.
- A **Strategic Action Plan** that serves as a five-year program of work to enhance metro Atlanta's regional 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.
- An **Evaluation Framework** that suggests the stakeholder(s) responsible for implementation, implementation timetables, potential funding sources, and performance metrics to evaluate CATLYST's progress and impact on the region's economy.

*Draft for approval by CRC on 11/9, and ARC on 12/6/17.*

The draft 2017 CATLYST Strategy was finalized by the Strategy Steering Committee on 11/1.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Adoption of the 2017 CEDS is recommended.

**RESOLUTION BY THE ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION  
TO APPROVE THE CATLYST REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY FOR  
SUBMISSION TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION AS THE 2017  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**WHEREAS**, since 1952 the Atlanta Regional Commission has developed and adopted regional plans for the Atlanta region; and

**WHEREAS**, The Region's Plan addresses the comprehensive needs for the ten-county area; and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and associated Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the eighteen county area, and

**WHEREAS**, ARC developed a regional unified plan and strategic vision for The Region's Plan and has sought comprehensive approaches to accommodate economic and population growth sustainably in the Atlanta region during the next 30 years; and

**WHEREAS**, ARC seeks to improve the region's quality of life, improve and maintain infrastructure, support job creation and economic progress for all areas of metro Atlanta;

**WHEREAS**, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce has designated ARC as the Economic Development District for the ten-county region;

**WHEREAS**, the EDA requires ARC as an Economic Development District to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) for the region every 5 years;

**WHEREAS**, during 2012, ARC completed the Regional Competitiveness Strategy;

**WHEREAS**, from 2014- 2017, ARC convened regional partners to implement the Regional Competitiveness Strategy, through a collaborative process that brought together multiple stakeholders in the public, private and non-profit sectors;

**WHEREAS**, ARC has convened a diverse group regional stakeholders from May through November 2017 to develop a new regional strategy to support the region's economic competitiveness for the next 5 years, called the CATLYST Regional Competitiveness Strategy;

**WHEREAS**, the final CATLYST Strategy supports the goals of The Region's Plan and meets the federal Economic Development Administration's requirements for a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs);

**WHEREAS**, the federal Economic Development Administration requires the Board to approve and submit the CEDs by end of calendar year 2017;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Commission supports the CATLYST Regional Competitiveness Strategy for submission to the Economic Development Administration to serve as the region's 2017 CEDs.