

For Immediate Release

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### **Fulton Industrial Boulevard Business District Meets Rising Pandemic Demands**

(Atlanta) As the pandemic reshapes the global economy, many providers of high-demand goods and services are relying on a key metro-Atlanta commerce hub while adapting their business strategies to the new reality of Covid.

Changes in consumer habits, logistics demand and production capabilities have heightened the importance of the Fulton Industrial Boulevard District – an established industrial corridor considered one of the largest in the Eastern United States. The commercial corridor, with more than 50 million square feet of industrial space, employs more than 28,000 essential workers in the manufacturing, warehousing and logistics industries.

The Boulevard Community Improvement District (CID) has been adapting to growth challenges in the business corridor for more than a decade. The CID is a self-taxing organization that funds infrastructure improvements, beautification efforts, and economic development with a membership of nearly all area commercial properties.

CID Executive Director Gil Prado said while news about the initial COVID-19 spread caused many retail and office businesses to temporarily close for quarantine, many Fulton Industrial District businesses were experiencing record demand.

Fulton Industrial is home to a robust food production and storage cluster, including Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Frito Lays, Quaker Oats, Publix Bakery, Americold, United Natural Foods and many others. Warehousing and logistics companies such as Knight Transportation, Penske, Ryder and UPS are also located in the district.

“Early one morning in April, while most Georgians worked remotely under stay-at-home orders and the state’s emergency declaration, we were dealing with unprecedented truck traffic and parking issues at the District, with some businesses reporting 250 percent increase in truck traffic during that same period”, Prado said. “Our proximity to a 5-million-person metro area makes Fulton Industrial an ideal location for production, storage and distribution.”

Truck traffic is one of the CID’s priorities. Right now, consultants are in the early stages of completing a freight cluster plan study supported in part by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The goal is to identify transportation issues and solutions such as technology upgrades, safety, access improvements and truck parking.

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Beyond the freight study, the CID has already invested more than \$8 million into revitalization while also securing an additional \$8 million in public funding for a comprehensive revitalization strategy focused on public safety, landscaping and beautification, transportation infrastructure improvement and economic development.

CID Board Chairman David Seem said that as the organization observes its 10-year anniversary, the District has become a hotbed for investment, redevelopment and expansion, particularly as COVID-19 remains a serious concern for all sectors.

“We are an overnight success that has been 10 years in the making,” said Seem, who also serves as Chief Financial Officer of Miller Zell, a retail design and implementation firm in the District. “When the CID started, some areas of the District had a 50-percent vacancy rate; now we have record-low vacancies. Most of our vacant lands are either currently in development or slated for a future project.”

One property owner making substantial investment in the business community is Dallas-based Crow Holdings Industrial, which is in the process of developing five e-commerce warehouses within the Fulton Industrial District.

John Bateman, Managing Director - Southeast for Crow Holdings Industrial, is a member of the Boulevard CID’s Board of Directors.

“The Fulton Industrial Boulevard District has unrivaled logistical assets with its proximity to the Atlanta CBD and Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, access to major transportation arteries, and growing and diverse labor pool,” Bateman said. “This genuinely is one of the more uniquely positioned areas of opportunity within the region. As an added advantage, our corporate community benefits from the investments made by the Boulevard CID, providing the necessary project planning and foresight this corridor requires for continued economic viability.”

Prior to the start of 2020, third-party analysis of the Fulton Industrial Boulevard District showed the area accounts for an estimated annual payroll of \$2.4 billion and economic impact of more than \$18.8 billion on the metro-Atlanta economy.

“Even 10 years ago we knew that this is a business community worth protecting and worthy of investment to reach greater success,” Seem added. “Our proximity to metro Atlanta makes us a great asset, and we are well positioned to continue provided essential products to the metro Atlanta community during and post Covid.”

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