



**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Special Called Board Meeting
MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026 - 1:00 PM
736 PARK NORTH BOULEVARD, SUITE 120 ♦ CLARKSTON, GEORGIA 30021
(404) 296-6489 ♦ WWW.CLARKSTONGA.GOV**

Due to inclement weather conditions, the City of Clarkston will be closing all administrative offices January 26, 2026 to ensure the safety of staff and the public. As a result, the Downtown Development Authority meeting will be held virtually rather than in person. The meeting will proceed at its originally scheduled time. Access information for the virtual meeting below:

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/21987486862056?p=z2nx84LI9FoDIHpevb>

Meeting ID: 219 874 868 620 56

Passcode: yC2F2tc2

Note: The Board of Directors may go into Closed/Executive Session to deliberate any item on this agenda as authorized by the Georgia Open Meetings Act, Georgia Government Code Chapter O.C.G.A. S 50-14-1.

- I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. APPROVAL OF THE 1/26/2026, AGENDA**
- IV. APPROVAL OF THE 1/12/2026, MEETING MINUTES**
 - a) 1/12/2026 Meeting Minutes
- V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Any member of the public may address the Board during the time allotted for public comment. Each attendee will be allowed 3 minutes for comments at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. The public comment period will be limited to 40 minutes, and it is not a time for dialogue. If your public comment contains a series of questions, please submit those to the Planning & Economic Development Director in writing. This will facilitate follow-up by the council or staff. The DDA desires to allow an opportunity for public comment; however, the business of the DDA must proceed in an orderly, timely manner.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a) Review, discussion, and adoption of the mission statement, vision statement, and report for Clarkston Downtown Development Authority. — Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research
 - 1. Legal counsel comments on proposed Mission and Vision Statement - Update
 - 2. Final proposed Mission and Vision Statement

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Discussion and Action on Renewal of Legal Services Contract for DDA Legal Counsel
- b) Discussion and Action of the Phase 2 Strategic Planning Services Proposal Contract. — Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research
 - 1. Phase 2 Strategic Planning Services Proposed Contract
- c) Proposed Change to February 9, 2026 DDA Meeting Date

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES OF A REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLARKSTON, GEORGIA
HELD IN PERSON AND BY TELECONFERENCE, ZOOM AUDIO/VIDEO
IN SAID CITY ON MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026

On Monday, January 12, 2026 at 10:00 AM, the Downtown Development Authority of Clarkston, Georgia met in a Regular Board Meeting in-person and by teleconference, Zoom Audio/Video in said City. The following City staff were present: Richard Edwards (Planning and Economic Development Director) and Jacob Bouie (Economic Development Coordinator).

NOTE: Items appearing in these minutes are in the order they were discussed, not necessarily in the order they appeared on the agenda.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Director Beverly Burks called the meeting to order at 10:14a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The following board members were present: Vice Chairperson Rezwan Ahmad, Director Beverly Burks, Secretary Adria Marshall, Director Akber Lassi, and Director Michele Maserjian.

III. APPROVAL OF THE 01/12/2026, AGENDA

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 01/12/2026 meeting agenda. Motion seconded by Director Akber L. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE 09/08/2025, MEETING MINUTES

a) 09/08/2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 09/08/2025 meeting minutes with the removal of the first paragraph . Motion seconded by Michele M. The aye votes were:5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any member of the public may address the Board during the time allotted for public comment. Each attendee will be allowed 3 minutes for comments at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. The public comment period will be limited to 40 minutes, and it is not a time for dialogue. If your public comment contains a series of questions, please submit those to the Planning & Economic Development Director in writing. This will facilitate follow-up by the council or staff. The DDA desires

to allow an opportunity for public comment; however, the business of the DDA must proceed in an orderly, timely manner.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

- a) Review, discussion, and consideration of action on the draft Phase 2 Strategic Planning Services Proposal. — Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research

Grace Barret and Leigh Hopkins presented the draft Phase 2 Strategic Planning Services Proposal from the Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research.

Motion made by Director Beverly B. approve the scope of work for Phase 2 Strategic Planning Services Proposal. Motion seconded by Vice Chairperson Rezwan A. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a) **Strategic Visioning for Clarkston Downtown Development Authority**
- b) Review, discussion, and adoption of the mission statement, vision statement, and report for Clarkston Downtown Development Authority. — Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to defer the review, discussion, and adoption of the mission statement, visions statement, and report for the Clarkston Downtown Development Authority. Motion seconded by Secretary Adria M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Election of officers

Adria M. nominated Rezwan A. for Chairperson. The nomination passed unanimously. Michele M. nominated Adria M. for Vice Chairperson. The nomination passed unanimously.

Adria M. nominated Michele M. for Secretary. The nomination passed unanimously.

Adria M. nominated Michele M. for Treasurer. The nomination passed unanimously.

- b) Review and Acceptance of Board Member Resignation Letters
- c) Review and Adoption of the 2026 DDA Meeting Schedule

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 2026 DDA Meeting Schedule with the following changes: April 6, 2026, updated to April 13, 2026, July 6, 2026 updated to July 13, 2026 and for all regular schedule meetings to be held at 1:00pm . Motion seconded by Michele M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made at 11:16 a.m by Director Beverly B. to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Adria M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.



Final Vision Statement

Clarkston: Where Global Cultures Build Local Success

To build a vibrant, inclusive city where diverse businesses thrive through inclusive development, cultural celebration, and sustainable investment.

Final Mission Statement

The Clarkston DDA is dedicated to building a vibrant, connected downtown by celebrating the city's cultural fabric through dynamic experiences, enhanced public spaces, and promoting partnerships, civic engagement, and regional collaboration.

ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CLARKSTON, GEORGIA (“Client”) agrees to engage **R. KYLE WILLIAMS** and the law firm of **WILLIAMS TEUSINK, LLC** (collectively, “**Williams Teusink**”) to serve as General Counsel for Client and for such other related matters as directed by Client (collectively, the “**Representation**”) pursuant to the terms of this Engagement Agreement (the “**Agreement**”). This Agreement shall automatically expire as of December 31, 2026, subject to any renewal and extension agreed upon by and between Client and Williams Teusink.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **Representation.** In consideration of Client’s agreements as set forth herein, Williams Teusink agrees to perform legal services which, in the exercise of its professional judgment, it deems necessary and appropriate to advance Client’s interests in the Representation, including exercising primary responsibility for the Representation, day-to-day management, advising, counseling, negotiating, investigating, researching, and handling of the Representation to its final resolution. Williams Teusink agrees to zealously represent Client within the bounds of advocacy and professional ethics; Client acknowledges that this does not include being unprofessional or uncivil towards opposing parties or their counsel.
2. **Initial Retainer; Hourly Rates for Attorneys and Paralegals; Costs and Expenses.** Williams Teusink waives the requirement for an initial retainer deposit as a condition precedent for Williams Teusink to commence work in regard to the Representation. Williams Teusink reserves the right to require a retainer deposit in the event that Client fails to timely pay any and all charges and invoices of Williams Teusink billed to Client.

Williams Teusink will charge and invoice Client at the following hourly rates for all legal work performed pursuant to the Representation at the reduced hourly rate of Two Hundred Eighty-Five and 00/100 Dollars (\$285.00) per hour for attorneys and paralegals and law clerks at the reduced hourly rate of Ninety-Five and 00/100 Dollars (\$95.00) per hour. R. Kyle Williams will be primarily responsible for the Representation and may be assisted from time-to-time by the partners, associates, paralegals, and law clerks of Williams Teusink.

Williams Teusink will bill and invoice Client monthly for attorney and paralegal services performed and for expenses incurred. Hourly services are billed in tenth-of-an-hour increments. All time spent by Williams Teusink in the course of the Representation is subject to billing. This includes, but is not limited to, all telephone calls; e-mail communications; meetings; inter-firm conferences; legal research; depositions and deposition preparation; interviewing witnesses; court appearances and preparation for those appearances; drafting of briefs, letters, and pleadings; and travel time for depositions, court appearances, or other out of the office meetings.

In lieu of itemizing charges for administrative expenses such as copies, facsimiles, notarization, local and long-distance phone calls, and legal research, Williams Teusink charges a monthly administrative fee of Thirty-Five and 00/100 Dollars (\$35.00).

With the exception of the foregoing administrative expenses, Williams Teusink reserves the right to charge and bill Client for all expenses incurred in the course of the Representation, including, but not limited to, filing fees, service fees, transcription fees, court reporter costs, investigation expenses, courier fees, postage, copies in excess of five hundred (500) or other documentary processing services, mileage at the IRS Standard Business Travel rate per mile, extensive legal research, and Accurant location reports at Thirty-Five and 00/100 Dollars (\$35.00) per report. Williams Teusink reserves the right to request Client to pay in advance out-of-pocket expenses to be incurred.

3. **Invoices and Account Statements.** Williams Teusink will provide Client with a periodic statement of time billed and expenses incurred by email at the address listed below, or at such other email address requested by Client. It is Client's obligation to timely pay the amounts indicated on each statement. Williams Teusink reserves the right to terminate this Agreement and withdraw from the Representation in the event Client fail to pay the amounts invoiced. Any questions regarding any invoice amount must be made in writing within fifteen (15) days upon receipt of the applicable statement, and failure to do so will constitute a waiver of the right to challenge the propriety of and/or the charges made for legal services and expenses itemized on that invoice. A late charge of ten (10%) percent and interest of eighteen (18%) percent per annum may be imposed upon any amount not paid within thirty (30) days of the invoice date.
4. **Conflicts.** At this time, Williams Teusink is not aware of and does not anticipate any material conflict between the Representation and any other party or client of Williams Teusink. If, in the future, there appears to be a conflict or potential conflict that makes it impossible for Williams Teusink to continue representation, Williams Teusink will, upon notice to Client, cease all professional activities in this matter unless there is informed consent by all parties that Williams Teusink may continue to represent one or more of the impacted parties. If such a conflict arises, all professional fees earned at that time and all reimbursable expenses that have accrued will be due and payable to Williams Teusink.
5. **Confidentiality.** Any discussions between and among Client and Williams Teusink are confidential and protected by the attorney-client privilege. In order to protect that privilege, from this point forward, Client agrees not to discuss any aspect of this representation and provision of legal services with any third party without first obtaining the express consent of Williams Teusink.
6. **Other Acknowledgments.** Client acknowledges that Williams Teusink has not made any promise, representation, or guarantee with respect to the disposition of any phase of the matters subject to this Agreement. Any such expressions relative to the potential disposition of the matter referenced above are only opinions and aspirational goals of Williams Teusink.

Client agrees to fully cooperate with Williams Teusink as to all matters, including, but not limited to communication and providing immediate notice of any change of address, phone number, employment, and circumstances. Client further agrees to fully disclose to Williams Teusink all facts necessary to ensure effective and complete representation and provision of legal services. Williams Teusink agrees that Client shall have the sole power to approve any settlement, and Client agree not to privately negotiate, settle without the advice and aid of Williams Teusink, and/or compromise any claims.

Williams Teusink reserves the right upon notice to Client to withdraw from the Representation if Client in the course of the Representation: (a) fail to communicate or cooperate with Williams Teusink; (b) refuse or fail to follow the advice of Williams Teusink; (c) direct Williams Teusink to undertake any unreasonable, unproductive, or harmful act in regard to the Representation; (d) operate in bad faith; (e) are unreasonable

or undertake any action that is adverse to the Representation; (f) fail to comply with the terms of this Agreement; and/or (g) for any other reason specified by Section 1.16(b) of the Georgia Rules of Professional Conduct. Client agrees, at the outset and throughout the Representation, to promptly provide Williams Teusink accurate and complete information regarding the Representation, including all files and documents related thereto.

Client agree that the Representation will be considered closed upon the earlier of: (1) Williams Teusink sending a billing statement identified as a “final” statement; (2) Williams Teusink’s express statement that the matter is closed or concluded; or, (3) Williams Teusink’s ceasing to perform further services for Client on this matter, as evidenced by the absence of our sending any billing statements, for a period of three (3) consecutive months. Client may terminate the Representation at any time for any or no reason upon effective notice to Williams Teusink. In the event of the termination, conclusion, or close of the Representation, all fees and expense incurred through such date will be due and payable.

If Client request Client’s file, Client will be required to pay for the time to turn over said file and other information to Client or substitute counsel. If the Representation involves litigation, Client will be required to pay for the time and costs associated with seeking judicial permission to withdraw if necessary. Client agrees to execute such necessary documents as will permit Williams Teusink to withdraw from the Representation.

Client agrees that if Client fail to comply with the terms of this Agreement, including the obligations to timely pay bills and invoices, then Williams Teusink shall have a lien on the subject matter of the Representation, all papers, documents, or monies in the hands of Williams Teusink and any judgment, settlement, or resolution of said Representation for the fee and all costs and expenses incident thereto. Any party with interest in said property may be notified of Williams Teusink’s lien.

Williams Teusink uses third-party cloud-based computing services and programs for storage of client information and management of client files. Client acknowledges and consent to the use of such third-party services and programs. Client understands and agrees that Williams Teusink reserves the right to destroy files and/or delete electronic files without further notification at the time the Representation is closed or concluded and in compliance with Georgia Bar Ethics Rules.

This Agreement contains the entire understanding and agreement between Client and Williams Teusink with respect to the matter referenced above and supersedes all prior and contemporaneous agreements and understandings in connection therewith and cannot be modified except by agreement of the firm in writing. This Agreement may be executed in counterparts and executed counterparts may be exchanged by electronic delivery.

This Agreement and any claim, controversy, or dispute arising under or related to the Agreement will be governed by the laws of the State of Georgia without regard to any conflict of law principles. Any and all disputes shall be resolved by the State Court of DeKalb County, Georgia. Client hereby agrees and consents to jurisdiction and venue in the State Court of DeKalb County, Georgia.

Should Client seek to change or augment the nature or scope of the Representation or Williams Teusink’s provision of legal services, then Williams Teusink reserves the right to require a new agreement with Client,

which may include additional cost and expense for Client. This Agreement constitutes an offer to provide legal service on the terms set forth herein.

By executing this Agreement, Client acknowledge and accept the Terms and Conditions set forth herein.

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF
CLARKSTON, GEORGIA:**

WILLIAMS TEUSINK, LLC:

Rezwan Ahmad, Chair

R. Kyle Williams, Responsible Partner

736 Park North Boulevard
Suite 120
Clarkston, Georgia 30021

The Sycamore Building
312 Sycamore Street
Decatur, Georgia 30030
Tel: (404) 373-9590

Email for Billing Purposes:

Email: kwilliamsteusink.com

jbouie@cityofclarkston.com
redwards@cityofclarkston.com

Georgia Tech Research Corporation

Fixed Price Enterprise Innovation Institute Service Agreement Program Engagement # 222

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THIS AGREEMENT is made by and between GEORGIA TECH RESEARCH CORPORATION, a Georgia corporation, having principal offices at the Research Administration Building, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia, 30332-0420 ("GTRC") and City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority, a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Georgia, having an office and place of business at:

736 Park N Blvd Suite 120
Clarkston, Georgia 30021 ("You")

Section 1. Term and Scope of Work.

1.1 GTRC will perform the Services, described in **Exhibit A** (which is incorporated in this Agreement by reference), on **02/01/2026** ("Effective Date") and will continue until **08/31/2026**. The Services will be performed by Staff Members (employees, independent contractors, subcontractors, consultants and student assistants) of the Georgia Institute of Technology ("GIT"), a unit of the University System of Georgia.

Section 2. Payment Fixed Price Amount

2.1 You agree to pay GTRC, **\$ 12,558.00**, **twelve thousand five hundred fifty-eight dollars**, "Fixed Price Amount" for the agreed upon Services.

2.2 GTRC will submit its invoices to you and payment in full is due to GTRC within fifteen (15) days of receipt of invoice. If payment is not received within thirty (30) days, you will be subject to a late payment penalty of 1 1/2% per month or fraction thereof until payment is received by GTRC. You will make payments to:

Georgia Tech Research Corporation,
P. O. Box 100117,
Atlanta, Georgia 30384.

2.3 GTRC may choose to discontinue performance of the Services if you fail to pay any GTRC invoice within the time specified in Paragraph 2.2.

Section 3. Reports.

3.1 GTRC will provide you a final report summarizing the results of the Services as well as other reports as specified in Exhibit A.

Section 4. Publicity.

4.1 Each of us agrees not to authorize or commission the publication of any promotional materials containing any reference to GTRC or GIT without prior written approval from them. GTRC and GIT may, however, include your name in published listings of research sponsors. The provisions of this Section are not intended to preclude you from stating that GIT performed evaluations for you and publishing the evaluation data that GIT delivered to you. The provisions of this Section will survive any termination of this Agreement.

Section 5. Intellectual Property.

5.1 The Parties do not anticipate that any intellectual property will result from the work contemplated under this Agreement as described in Exhibit A. Should any intellectual property be generated during the course of the services the following terms shall apply:

- a. You will receive title to any data or test results generated. Title to all other intellectual property including, without limitation, any inventions and discoveries conceived or first reduced to practice, all computer software, works, and material developed in the course of performance of the Services, whether or not protectable by patent, trade secret or copyright will reside in GTRC.
- b. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement to the contrary, GTRC reserves an irrevocable, nonexclusive, royalty-free, nontransferable license to make and use the intellectual property assigned hereunder for educational and research and development activities practiced by GTRC and GIT.

Section 6. Publication.

6.1 GTRC and GIT may catalog and place reports of the Services in the GIT Library, and they may issue publications based on the Services and use any result not proprietary to you in their research and education programs. GTRC will give you an opportunity to review any report or publication, will not include any of your proprietary information in the report, and will upon your request withhold publication for up to one year.

Section 7. Indemnify.

7.1 To the extent allowed by law, you agree to indemnify and hold harmless GTRC, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and their employees, officers, board members and agents from and against all claims, demands, causes of action, suits, liabilities, damages, costs, fees, expenses or losses arising out of or resulting from your breach of any provision under this Agreement and from any and all use by you or your customers of the results of such research and/or intellectual property.

Section 8. Disclaimer.

8.1 GTRC AND GIT DISCLAIM ANY AND ALL WARRANTIES BOTH EXPRESS AND IMPLIED WITH RESPECT TO THE SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED HEREUNDER AND ANY DELIVERABLES RESULTING THEREFROM, INCLUDING THEIR CONDITION, CONFORMITY TO ANY REPRESENTATION OR DESCRIPTION, THE EXISTENCE OF ANY LATENT OR PATENT DEFECTS THEREIN, AND THEIR MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR USE OR PURPOSE. YOU ARE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE DELIVERABLES AND/OR ADVICE RENDERED HEREUNDER SUIT YOUR NEEDS AND FOR ANY RESULTS OBTAINED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE USE OF ANY SUCH ADVICE AND/OR DELIVERABLES.

Section 9. Limitation of Liability.

9.1 The cumulative liability of GTRC to you for all claims, demands or actions arising out of or relating to this Agreement, the services to be performed hereunder and any deliverables resulting therefrom, will not exceed the total amount paid to GTRC hereunder during the twelve (12) months immediately preceding such claim, demand or action. Without limiting the foregoing, in no event will GTRC be liable for any business expense, machine downtime, loss of profits, and incidental, special, exemplary or consequential damages, or any claims or demands brought against you or your customers even if GTRC has been advised of the possibility of such claims or demands. The foregoing limitations of liability are intended to survive any termination of this Agreement and will apply without regard to any other provision of this Agreement which may have been breached or have been proven ineffective.

Georgia Tech Research Corporation
Fixed Price
Enterprise Innovation Institute
Service Agreement
Program Engagement # 222

Section 10. Termination.

10.1 Either of us may terminate this Agreement for any reason with thirty (30) days written notice to the other. You will pay GTRC any costs which have accrued or been encumbered up to the actual date of termination under this Section and you will not be relieved of the obligation to pay those costs because of a termination under this Section.

Section 11. Miscellaneous.

11.1 All notices and other communication given under this Agreement will be effective five (5) days following deposit in the United States mail, postage prepaid and addressed to the parties at their respective addresses set forth below unless by a previous notice a different person or address has been designated.

To: GTRC for administrative matters:

Office of Industry Engagement
Industry Collaborations
Georgia Institute of Technology
926 Dalney St N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30332-0415
Attn: Tara Barker

To: City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority for administrative matters:

Rezwan Shareef Ahmad
735 Park North Boulevard Suite 120
Clarkston, Georgia 30021
rezwanshareef@gmail.com

To GTRC for technical matters:

Georgia Tech Research Corporation
Enterprise Innovation Institute
Georgia Institute of Technology
75 Fifth Street, N.W., Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30308
Attn: Grace Barrett

To: City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority for technical matters:

Jacob Bouie
735 Park North Boulevard
Clarkston, Georgia 30021
jbouie@cityofclarkston.com

11.2 We are and will remain independent contractors and nothing herein will be construed to create a partnership, agency or joint venture between us. Each of us will be responsible for wages, hours and conditions of employment of our respective personnel during the term of, and under, this Agreement.

11.3 This Agreement will be governed by the laws of the State of Georgia.

11.4 No waiver by either of us of any breach of any provision hereof will constitute a waiver of any other breach of that provision or of any other provision hereof.

11.5 This Agreement sets forth the entire agreement and understanding between us as to the Services and merges all prior discussions between us; and neither of us will be bound by any conditions, definitions, warranties, understandings or representations with respect to the Services other than as expressly provided herein. This Agreement may not be modified or altered except by a written document executed by authorized officers of both of us. No provision contained in any standard form document issued by you, including but not limited to any purchase order or confirmation order, will be applicable, even if signed by both of us, unless we also execute a separate document expressly modifying this agreement to include such provisions as set forth above.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Agreement has been duly executed by our duly authorized officers on the day and year set forth below.

GEORGIA TECH RESEARCH CORPORATION

City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority

By: _____

By: _____

Date: _____

Typed Name: _____

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Georgia Tech Research Corporation

Fixed Price
Enterprise Innovation Institute
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Exhibit A - Service Explanation

Company: City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority
Mailing Address: 736 Park N Blvd Suite 120
Clarkston, Georgia 30021

Program Engagement
Contact: Rezwan Shareef Ahmad
Job Title: Chairperson
Telephone:
Email: rezwanshareef@gmail.com
Contract Value: \$ 12,558.00

The Enterprise Innovation Institute will perform the following:

Service Title: City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority Strategic Planning Services
Scope of Service: Introduction

The Center for Economic Development Research (CEDR) within the Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI2) at Georgia Tech is pleased to present this proposal to the City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority for Phase 2 Economic Development Strategic Planning Services. This proposal request was initiated by the City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and is intended to provide a general overview of the tasks involved. Georgia Tech has provided assistance to support economic development efforts in Georgia for decades, including research, facilitation, technical, and management expertise. As a designated EDA University Center, EI2 provides these services via its headquarters in Atlanta and a network of regional offices located throughout Georgia. The CEDR team has extensive experience developing comprehensive strategic assessments and economic development plans for communities across the state. This includes gathering extensive input from stakeholders, performing detailed analysis of community demographics and various data patterns, reviewing the economic and political landscape, economic development organizational structures, and facilitating multi-level leadership networks on a regional basis. Below is the proposed approach for the project, along with biographical information for each member of the project team, a timeline, and a budget.

Work Plan

As a public university, Georgia Tech strongly believes that inclusivity in planning and economic development efforts extends as broad a reach as possible, and brings consensus to communities as they work together, particularly during times of ebb and flow. As the foundation in any strategic planning effort, the visioning process must be intentional with committed partners at the table in order to bring the most benefit to the community. Georgia Tech uses two guiding principles throughout the planning process. The first principle is that in-depth research is used to gain the greatest understanding possible of the challenges and opportunities facing the local community. The second principle is that stakeholders are engaged throughout the entire process, and that a broad range of perspectives are needed to adequately assess the community's opportunities and

challenges, and ultimately the DDA's vision and priorities for their organizational future. All work completed by the Center for Economic Development Research is subject to open records requests.

TASK 1. PROJECT UPDATE MEETINGS

TASK 1.1. PROJECT KICKOFF

This process will begin with a kickoff meeting that will review the Strategic Visioning process with the DDA, review the necessary documents for Task 2, discuss any additional stakeholders required in the process, and establish desired dates for the monthly update meeting and the DDA Priority Setting meeting.

TASK 1.2 MONTHLY UPDATE MEETINGS

During the planning process, CEDR proposes to meet once a month with city staff and other stakeholders as needed to provide project updates. These meetings will help ensure the efficient exchange of information, meeting scheduling, coordination of stakeholder interviews, and other logistical support that may be needed during this process.

TASK 2. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

TASK 2.1. DDA SURVEY REVIEW

CEDR will review results from the local business survey issued by the DDA earlier this year. Results from the survey will help inform DDA priorities and interview guide preparation, included in Task 2.2.

TASK 2.2. SWOT ANALYSIS

Interviews provide important insights during the planning process. The purpose of stakeholder interviews is to better understand Clarkston's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to its future development potential. By collecting the perceptions of community and business leaders and those who are best aware of their industry's business climate and needs, Clarkston will be able to generate a deeper understanding of how those who conduct business in the city perceive its role locally and regionally and identify any areas for improvement. CEDR proposes to conduct one-on-one, confidential interviews with the DDA Board Members and other key community stakeholders from both the City of Clarkston and from the surrounding area. CEDR will develop the interview guide and obtain consensus on the list of interviewees with the city's point of contact. CEDR staff will work with the city's point of contact to arrange for the scheduling of interviews.

TASK 2.3 DDA PRIORITIES SETTING

After Task 2.1 and 2.2 are completed, CEDR will review the results with the Clarkston DDA Board as part of a priorities-setting meeting. This meeting will build off the work completed in Phase One and will focus on establishing DDA priorities, as well as detailed goals and objectives.

TASK 2.4 CITY COUNCIL AND DDA MEETING FACILITATION

Once the Clarkston DDA has draft priorities, goals, and objectives, CEDR will facilitate a meeting between the DDA Board and City Council to review work to date and ensure alignment on goals and priorities.

TASK 3. ANALYSIS

TASK 3.1. REVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

As a first step in understanding the existing economic development climate in Clarkston and Dekalb County, CEDR proposes a review of the economic and political climate for doing business in the area, as well as the potential for future growth including commercial, residential, and tourism development opportunities. In terms of economic development service and support, the CEDR team will review the current organizational

structure of economic development services provided in the region and outline any strategic steps that may be needed to best fund the city's efforts and help to prepare for future growth opportunities. The CEDR team will also conduct a downtown building inventory, tracking occupancy and vacancies, and retail gap analysis to help inform future growth and investment in the downtown, including highest and best use opportunities.

TASK 3.2. RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

CEDR will partner with the DDA to conduct a comprehensive study of the retail market in the downtown area. This task aims to provide valuable insights into the current state of the retail market, identify key trends and challenges, and provide recommendations and best practice examples for future commercial development. CEDR will include both primary and secondary research methods including surveys and discussions with local businesses, analysis of publicly available data, and market reports to gain a broader understanding of the retail industry trends and challenges specific to downtown Clarkston. The retail market analysis will contain the top tapestry segments that clearly identify the variety of consumer profiles most likely to spend in the market area.

TASK 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX

TASK 4.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX

To help encourage redevelopment and job creation. CEDR will work with the DDA to explore potential local economic development tools and incentives and develop guidelines for local implementation. The task will be broken into three major areas: (1) Review of incentive policies, application processes, and fees for incentives in comparable communities, (2) Synthesis and comparison of findings to include policy examples from other municipalities, (3) Development of incentive recommendations that work best for Clarkston.

TASK 5. FIVE-YEAR WORK PLAN

TASK 5.1. FIVE-YEAR WORK PLAN

At the conclusion of tasks 1-4, the DDA will have validated data on which to base its goals. CEDR will work with the DDA to tie the market data into actionable items to incorporate into a five-year plan of work. CEDR will also identify potential public and private funding sources that could be leveraged to support the program of work.

TASK 6. FINAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION

TASK 6.1. DRAFT REPORT

Tasks 1-5 will be integrated into a draft report for city staff and the DDA for review. The client, and their partners will have two weeks from draft report delivery to provide requested edits and other comments.

TASK 6.2 FINAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION

CEDR will deliver a final report to the City of Clarkston DDA 2-3 weeks after final edits are received, dependent on the level of edits requested.

The final project report will be presented to the Clarkston Mayor & City Council once final edits and changes are made to the draft report. This will allow open discussion about plan findings and allow for public questions and comments at an open meeting. Citizen support for new initiatives will be important, and ensuring their concerns are addressed will be necessary for the formal adoption of any recommendations.

Dates of Service: 02/01/2026 to 08/31/2026
Program Engagement
Manager: Grace Barrett

Payment Schedule: Autoinvoiced and split evenly over total contract months

For questions, contact:

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