

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLARKSTON, GEORGIA

HELD IN PERSON AND BY TELECONFERENCE, ZOOM AUDIO/VIDEO

IN SAID CITY ON MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2026

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

Chairperson Rezwan Ahmad called the meeting order at 1:13 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The following board members were present: Chairperson Rezwan Ahmad, Vice Chairperson Adria Marshall, Director Beverly Burks, Director Akber Lassi, Secretary/Treasurer Michele Maserijan, and Director Ganaro Makor. The following City of Clarkston staff were present: Richard Edwards, Planning and Economic Development Director, and Jacob Bouie, Economic Development Coordinator. The following legal representative was present: Attorney Kyle Williams.

III. APPROVAL OF THE 3/9/2026, AGENDA

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 3/9/2026 meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Adria M. The aye votes were: 6, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE 1/26/2026, MEETING MINUTES

- a) January 26, 2026 Downtown Development Authority Special Called Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 1/26/2026 special called meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Director Akber L. The aye votes were: 6, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

V. APPROVAL OF THE 2/17/2026, MEETING MINUTES

- a) February 17, 2026 Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 2/17/2026 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Director Akber L. The aye votes were: 6, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

VI. 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.

No public comments were made.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

a) City of Clarkston DDA Strategic Plan Kickoff Presentation

The following Georgia Tech representatives presented the Clarkston DDA Kickoff Strategic Meeting session: Emily Lasser, Grace Barrett, Betsy McGriff and Alexandra Rodriguez Dalmau.

The presentation included an overview of programs which connect community partners to Georgia Tech resources to support community development, project planning, funding strategies, and faculty led research.

Staff outlined that the Phase 2 effort will include an analysis of existing conditions, including review of previous plans, alignment with ongoing planning efforts within the City, and a comprehensive downtown building inventory evaluating vacancy, occupancy, and current use. Data sources such as CoStar and Placer will be utilized to support analysis of downtown and the Brockett corridor.

Discussion included interest in understanding business displacement trends, including rising lease costs and business closures. The team will also evaluate the City's current economic development toolbox and provide recommendations for incentives aligned with DDA priorities.

A five year work plan will be developed, including potential funding sources. A final presentation is anticipated in June or July, following DDA priority discussions in May.

Business Survey findings from October 2026 were reviewed, including concerns related to safety, communication, and business support. Discussion included opportunities for coordinated events, partnerships, and strategies to better unify downtown businesses.

Next steps include stakeholder engagement, external interviews, and a SWOT analysis to inform priority setting. Findings will be presented to the DDA at the May 2026 meeting.

1. Introductions — DDA, City Staff, Georgia Tech

2. Review Scope of the Strategic Plan & Timeline — Stakeholder Engagement, Analysis, Economic Development Toolbox
3. Review DDA Survey Results & Goals Discussion — Major takeaways, DDA Thoughts, Plan Opportunities
4. Sites to Visit & Events to Know About — Share any must see locations, Major focus areas, Identify any existing community events
5. Stakeholders to Interview (City of Clarkston) — Share an update on stakeholders selected to interview
6. Next Steps — DDA Priority meeting, Stakeholder interviews, Existing conditions analysis, DDA priority meeting prep.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

a) DDA Logo Revisions

1. Clarkston Downtown Development Authority Logo Iterations

Vice Chairperson Adria M. presented revised logo concepts prepared by Sydney Mufuka based on prior Board feedback.

Motion made by Secretary/Treasurer Michele M. to adopt Logo Option 1 with revisions to font size, to be presented to City Council at the April meeting. Motion seconded by Vice Chairperson Adria M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Director Beverly B. was absent for the vote. Motion passed.

b) DDA Recruitment Status/Update

Staff reported that a previously identified applicant did not meet eligibility requirements. Two new applicants will be presented to City Council at the April 2026 meeting, followed by formal consideration on the May 2026 consent agenda.

c) Discussion - Retreat Planning

The Board discussed strategies for business outreach and engagement. Following discussion, the Board determined that a formal retreat was not necessary. The preferred approach is direct, in person outreach and relationship building with local businesses.

Additional discussion highlighted ongoing challenges in engaging business owners and a lack of connectivity among businesses. Staff noted that outreach efforts are currently limited and that future coordination and strategy development may be needed.

d) Security Cameras Update: Status of ARPA funded equipment

Staff reported that a request was made to the Police Department regarding ARPA funded security cameras; however, due to staff turnover, no response has been received. Staff will follow up with the City Manager and provide an update at the next meeting.

- e) Safety Update — Request for Clarkston Police Department Crime report (January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025)

Staff reported that a request has been submitted to the Police Department for the 2025 crime report. The report is pending and will be provided at a future meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made at 2:42 p.m. by Secretary/Treasurer Michele M. to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Director Ganaro M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Director Beverly B. was absent for the vote. Motion passed.