



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Regular Board Meeting MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2026 - 1:00 PM
736 PARK NORTH BOULEVARD, SUITE 120 ♦ CLARKSTON, GEORGIA 30021
(404) 296-6489 ♦ WWW.CLARKSTONGA.GOV

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 8/10/2026, AGENDA

IV. APPROVAL OF THE 7/13/2026, MEETING MINUTES

- a) July 13, 2026 Downtown Development Authority 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) Discussion: DDA Quick Wins Project — Quarterly Business Meet & Greet
- b) Discussion: DDA Quick Wins Project - Placemaking project(s) for 2026-2027
- c) Discussion: DDA Business Outreach Framework

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Downtown Strategic Assessment Schedule Update

- b)** No Cost Extension Contract
- c)** Green way Trail Tour Invitation — August 28th, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.
- d)** Discussion of the Economic Development and Redevelopment Section of the DRAFT Clarkston 2046 Comprehensive Plan Update
- e)** Proposed 2027 Budget for DDA — Funds needed for 2027 operating expenses including: Legal, Outreach costs, Placemaking project(s), etc.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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, JULY 13, 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

Secretary/Treasurer Michele Maserjian called the meeting to order at 1:15 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

The following Board members were present: Secretary/Treasurer Michele Maserjian, Director Akber Lassi, Director Sydney Jakes, and Director Dean Moore.

The following Board members were absent: Vice Chairperson Adria Marshall, Director Ganaro Makor, and Chairperson Rezwan Amad.

The following staff member was present: Jacob Bouie, Economic Development Coordinator.

III. APPROVAL OF THE 7/13/2026, AGENDA

Motion made by Director Dean Moore to approve the July 13, 2026 Regular Meeting Agenda.

The motion was seconded by Director Sydney Jakes.

The aye votes were: 4, with the nay votes: 0.

Motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE 6/8/2026, MEETING MINUTES

a) 6/8/2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Director Dean Moore to approve the June 8, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes.

The motion was seconded by Director Sydney Jakes.

The aye votes were: 4, 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.

There were no public comments.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

a) DDA Strategic Priority Results Summary

Jacob Bouie presented the DDA Strategic Priority Results Summary prepared by Georgia Tech. Mr. Bouie reviewed the four focus areas identified in the summary: Relationship Building, Small Business Support, Placemaking, and Housing.

Directors offered comments and questions regarding the focus areas. Mr. Bouie noted that Director feedback would be provided to Georgia Tech for the next phase of the strategic planning process.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a) DDA Training Opportunities Discussion

The Board discussed two DDA training opportunities.

The first training opportunity is the Basic DDA Training offered by UGA. The in-person training is scheduled to be held in Macon, Georgia, with a registration cost of \$279. A September 2026 class and a December 2026 virtual class are available.

The second training opportunity is offered by Georgia Tech CEDR. This training is free, virtual, and is a two-hour supplemental class offered in September and November 2026.

Mr. Bouie stated that he will send the training links to the Directors. Mr. Bouie noted that new DDA Directors are required to complete DDA Basic Training within their first year, and DDA Directors are required to complete a two-hour supplemental course after the first year. Mr. Bouie stated that he will continue to look for additional DDA Basic Training opportunities.

1. UGA - Development Authority Basic Training
2. Georgia Tech CEDR - Board Boost Development Authority Training

b) DDA Quick Wins Project(s) Discussion — Placemaking Ideas

The Board continued discussion regarding potential DDA quick-win projects and placemaking ideas.

Director Dean Moore recommended that the DDA review some of the projects presented and determine which projects may be appropriate to pursue, as well as the best locations for those projects. Mr. Bouie stated that he would present the ideas to Georgia Tech for a more strategic approach.

The Board discussed active windows and vacant window displays. Discussion included code officers reviewing whether active windows meet City ordinance requirements and concerns related to windows covered with blinds, drapes, storage shelves, or similar materials and financial support from the city.

c) DDA Quick Wins Project(s) Discussion — Quarterly Business Meet & Greet

Motion made by Director Dean Moore to table the discussion to the next DDA meeting in August.

The motion was seconded by Director Sydney Jakes.

The aye votes were: 4, with the nay votes: 0.

Motion passed.

d) Discussion: DDA Business Outreach Framework

Motion made by Director Dean Moore to table the discussion to the next DDA meeting in August.

The motion was seconded by Director Sydney Jakes.

The aye votes were: 4, with the nay votes: 0.

Motion passed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

a) Discussion: Availability for Joint Work Session with City Council and Georgia Tech 7/21 or 7/23

The Board discussed a potential joint work session with City Council, Urban Pulse, and Georgia Tech. Mr. Bouie noted that Urban Pulse is the economic development firm working with the City.

The work session was discussed for Thursday, July 23, 2026, at either 6:00 P.M. or 6:30 P.M. Mr. Bouie stated that he would confirm the time.

b) Discussion and Review of the DDA Regular Meeting Schedule

The Board discussed the DDA Regular Meeting Schedule. It was noted that Chairperson Rezwan Amad requested feedback on whether the current meeting schedule works for all Directors.

The Board generally agreed to consider moving the regular meeting schedule to the first Monday of the month at 6:00 P.M. The Board agreed to vote on the meeting schedule at the August meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Director Dean Moore to adjourn the meeting at 2:53 P.M.

The motion was seconded by Director Sydney Jakes.

The aye votes were: 4, with the nay votes: 0.

Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 2:53 P.M.

DDA Quarterly Business Meet & Greet

BUSINESS EDUCATION

What is the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)?

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.

The purpose of the DDA is to stimulate and sustain economic development in Clarkston 's core economic districts.

The DDA is most effective when used for its financing and project administration abilities which focus on *unusual endeavors*.

DDA revitalization and redevelopment projects would include:

- Planning for long-range improvements
- Finance projects by loan, grant, lease, or borrowing,
- Execute development agreements,
- Acquire/lease/sell property
- Issue revenue bonds and notes
- Local tax abatements via Community improvement districts CIDs and
- Business Improvement Districts (BID) where applicable.

How does the DDA encourage and support businesses?

We promote the City of Clarkston as an exciting place to live, work, and shop by holding downtown events to drive foot traffic. Some examples are the annual Holiday Tree Lighting festival, Trunk and Treat festival, Juneteenth festival, summer farmers market, and the Fall back-to-school give away . These events also support and encourage community pride.

How does the DDA sustain and improve the appearance of downtown?

Streetscaping, public art, signage, and general design enhancements to ensure our downtown feels vibrant and welcoming.

How can my Business support the DDA?

Sponsorships with the DDA to promote your business at DDA events such as:

Wellness Walk: Host monthly "wellness walks" featuring health-related businesses (chiropractors, pharmacies, smoothie shops, fitness facilities, etc) to encourage public space engagement while highlighting local businesses.

Bike Month (May): Partner with other cities along the Path during National Bike Month.

Programming could include bike repair clinics, beginner bike rides for children, or a weekend event with vendors.

ENGAGEMENT BOARD(S)

Would you support small-scale, high-impact grants?

Beautiful Building Grant of \$1,000 in reimbursable funds to help downtown property owners and tenants make exterior improvements that boost curb appeal.

Bright Lights Grant of \$1,000 in reimbursable funds to help downtown property owners and tenants make exterior improvements which increase public safety such as lighting and security camera by your storefront, parking lot, alleyway.

Which economic activity would you support? [place dot next to item you like]

- Rent assistance or "pop-up" subsidies for first-time retailers
- Impact fee or permit fee reductions for downtown adaptive reuse
- Convert a corner of downtown into a food truck or vendor court with shared seating and simple amenities like lights and trash bins
- Offer co-working or shared studio space in an under-used building for remote workers, artists, and small businesses
- Make one project specifically about inclusion and welcome - multilanguage signage, a community welcome board, or events hosted by under-represented groups
- Pilot a "retail incubator" space with short, low-cost leases for new entrepreneurs to try out businesses in small stalls.

How would you like the DDA to stimulate and increase foot traffic? [place dot next to item you like]

- Fill empty storefront windows with rotating displays from local artists, school projects
- Host pop-up shops or short-term holiday markets in vacant retail spaces
- Turn vacant lots into temporary gathering spots with picnic tables, string lights and planter
- Pull out movable chairs, benches, and a couple of cafe tables to create a casual hangout space near a coffee shop or bakery, or restaurant
- Run a "pop-up gallery walk" where multiple small retailers (such as a strip center) all display local art on the same evening.

DDA Business Outreach Framework

Building Direct Relationships with Clarkston Businesses

Prepared for Board Discussion | Discussion Only

Agenda Item	Review and Discussion of DDA Business Outreach Framework and Potential Fall Pilot Event
Purpose	To help the Board discuss how the DDA can more personally and effectively reach Clarkston business owners, build relationships, and gather feedback before developing specific programs or workshops.
Action Requested	Discussion and Board direction. No formal action is required unless the Board wishes to provide direction on next steps.
Primary Question	How should the DDA show up, invite, listen, and follow up with Clarkston businesses in a way that is realistic for Board members and staff?

Background and Purpose

At the June 8, 2026 DDA meeting, the Board discussed business outreach as a potential quick-win project(s). The discussion included helping businesses understand the role of the DDA, creating opportunities for business feedback, and exploring a possible business gathering. This attachment is intended to support a continued Board discussion, with a specific focus on Clarkston's business environment and how DDA members can help reach business owners directly.

This is not a final business outreach plan. It is a discussion framework to help the Board determine what kind of outreach is realistic, personal, and useful for Clarkston businesses.

Clarkston Business Outreach Considerations

Clarkston's business community includes a wide range of small businesses, restaurants, retailers, service providers, property owners, entrepreneurs, and corridor-based businesses. Many of these businesses may not regularly engage with City communications through email, website updates, online forms, or digital announcements.

Based on prior outreach experience, digital communication alone has not always been the most effective method for reaching local businesses in Clarkston. Emails, online forms, and social media may still be useful support tools; however, relying too heavily on digital outreach may limit participation and can place additional follow up and tracking responsibilities on staff.

For that reason, the DDA may wish to consider a more direct, relationship-based approach that includes in person engagement, personal invitations, corridor based outreach, and Board member participation. The goal is not simply to host an event, but to make the DDA more visible, accessible, and connected to the local business community.

Proposed Clarkston Business Outreach Model

The DDA may consider a simple outreach model built around four actions:

- 1. Show Up:** DDA members and staff attend or host small gatherings where businesses already are, rather than relying only on digital communication. This may include corridor-based meetings, after-hours gatherings, or informal business visits.
- 2. Invite Personally:** Board members may assist by personally inviting business owners, property owners, and business contacts to attend outreach events or provide feedback. Personal invitations may be more effective than general email announcements.
- 3. Listen First:** The first phase of outreach should focus on hearing from businesses, not presenting a finalized program. The DDA can ask businesses what they need, what challenges they are experiencing, and how communication can improve. This can be in a form of an engaging activity.
- 4. Follow Up Clearly:** After outreach activities, the DDA should summarize what was heard, identify common themes, and determine what next steps are realistic. Businesses should understand that their feedback was received and considered.

Potential Fall Pilot Event

The Board may consider a fall pilot event as one tool within a broader relationship building approach. The event should be informal, business facing, and focused on conversation. It does not need to operate as a formal presentation or workshop.

Possible format	After hours business gathering or small corridor based listening session.
Possible first location	A local business location previously discussed by the Board, such as Brockett Pub, with the option to rotate future gatherings to other corridors or locations.
Possible audience	Business owners, property owners, and corridor stakeholders. The Board may decide whether the first event should focus on one corridor or be open to all Clarkston businesses.
Possible purpose	Introduce the DDA, listen to business needs, identify common themes, and determine future outreach or workshop topics.
Possible partners	Partner organizations may be invited after the Board determines the event purpose. The first event could also remain informal and DDA led.

Role of DDA Board Members

If the goal is relationship building, Board member participation will be important. A personal outreach model should not depend solely on staff sending emails, tracking responses, and following up digitally. The Board may discuss how members can support outreach in manageable ways.

- Identify businesses or property owners with whom Board members already have relationships.
- Personally invite business owners to attend the pilot event or provide feedback.
- Attend the pilot event and participate in informal conversations with businesses.
- Help determine which corridors or business clusters should be prioritized first.
- Support follow-up by reviewing common themes and helping identify realistic next steps.

Simple Feedback Approach

Feedback collection should be simple and not overly administrative. The DDA may use a short paper form, QR code, conversation card, or verbal discussion prompts. The goal is to identify common themes, not create a burdensome data collection process.

1. What is one challenge your business is currently facing?
2. What type of support or information would be most helpful to your business?
3. What is the best way for the DDA or City to communicate with you?
4. Would you attend future business gatherings or workshops?
5. What topics would you like the DDA to explore in the future?
6. Are there specific concerns in your corridor or business area that the DDA should understand?

Potential Future Topics Based on Business Feedback

Depending on what businesses share, future DDA discussions or partner workshops could focus on:

- Business networking and merchant connections
- Access to capital or small business resources
- Marketing and promotion opportunities
- Permitting, zoning, and code navigation (Staff led)
- Safety, lighting, cleanliness, and corridor appearance
- Facade, signage, or property improvement concepts
- Workforce needs and talent connections
- Business retention and expansion support

Board Discussion Questions

1. Which Clarkston business corridors or business clusters should the DDA focus on first?
2. Should the first outreach event focus on one corridor or be open to all Downtown Designated Clarkston businesses?
3. Would a small after hours gathering be more effective than a formal meeting?
4. How can DDA Board members help invite businesses without placing the full outreach burden on staff?
5. What businesses or property owners does each Board member already have a relationship with?
6. What information should businesses receive about the DDA?
7. What is the simplest way to collect feedback from businesses?
8. What follow-up should businesses expect after the first outreach activity?

Desired Direction from the Board

Staff is seeking Board feedback on whether to continue developing a Clarkston-specific business outreach approach focused on direct engagement and personal relationship building. If the Board wishes to proceed, staff can return with a more detailed pilot event outline, including proposed audience, location, invitation strategy, materials, feedback tool, partner involvement, and estimated costs.

Reference Resources

This framework is informed by downtown revitalization and business outreach concepts from [Georgia Main Street Community Transformation Strategies Workbook](#), [Smart Growth America – Making Neighborhoods Great Together](#), and the DDA's June 8, 2026 Board discussion. These resources are background references only.



The City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority

Downtown Strategic Assessment Schedule Update

- September 4th - Latest date to send draft report to City of Clarkston
- September 7th - DDA receives report to review and have questions for September 14th meeting
- September 14th - CEDR attends DDA Board meeting to go over major takeaways, recommendations, and next steps.
- September 28th - Final draft to Clarkston

MODIFICATION NUMBER 1
TO
RESEARCH PROJECT AGREEMENT NO. GR00036262/AWD-007958
DATE: August 3, 2026

WHEREAS, an agreement having been made and entered into on between the **GEORGIA TECH RESEARCH CORPORATION**, referred to as “**GTRC**,” and **City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority**, relating to Research Project Number **GR00036262** and providing among other things for work to be performed by **GTRC** for **City of Clarkston Downtown Development Authority**, and

WHEREAS, it is now desired by both parties that additional work of a similar nature be performed, that the term of the agreement be extended, for this purpose,

NOW, THEREFORE, it is mutually agreed as follows:

1. The term of the Agreement set forth in Section 1.1 is hereby extended through **October 31, 2026**.

Except as modified herein, the terms and conditions of the aforesaid Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this modification to the Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized officers the day and year first above written.

GEORGIA TECH RESEARCH CORPORATION:

By: _____

Typed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

By: _____

Typed Name: Rezwan Shareef Ahmad

Title: Chairperson

Date: _____

By: _____

Typed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

<i>Economic Development and Redevelopment</i>		Years					Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status	Source
ID	Project Name/Description	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030					
ED.01	Web content improvements: Promote and highlight activities such as pool, LCI implementation, trail amenity, Active Living Plan, etc.	X					\$15,000	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway	Previous Comp Plan
ED.02	Prepare budget and prioritization for wayfinding plan of action and implement strategic wayfinding signage	X	X				Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin.	Underway	Previous Comp Plan
ED.03	Develop and promote cultural and tourism activities that promote the unique qualities of Clarkston's local food system	X	X				Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin./Private	Underway	Agriculture Plan
ED.04	Expand workforce development opportunities focused on local food and agriculture	X	X				Staff Time	General Fund	City Admin./Private	Underway	Agriculture Plan
ED.05	Support Small Businesses	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	N/A	Community Development	New	Previous Comp Plan, Greenway Plan (A.7)