

where possibilities grow



City of Clarkston Hosts 8th Annual Trunk or Treat Celebration on Market Street



The 8th Annual Trunk or Treat Festival in Clarkston was a truly special night for our community, with families and children filling Downtown Market Street with laughter and excitement. It was heartwarming to see kids of all ages enjoying the festivities, whether they were darting between game trucks, getting their faces painted, or posing with friends and family in the photo booth.



The stilt walker captivated attendees, young and old, towering above the crowd and bringing an extra touch of magic and wonder to the evening. Creative trunks decorated with fall scarecrows, pumpkin patches, and carnival themes brought the spirit of the season to life. Top prizes were awarded to the most outstanding trunks and costumes, showcasing the fun and imagination that went into each design.

We owe a huge thank you to our city staff, volunteers, and community partners, whose hard work made the evening unforgettable. Seeing so many families come together in celebration reminds us of what makes Clarkston such a vibrant community. We're already looking forward to next year's Trunk or Treat for more family fun!



Empowering Survivors and Building Community Awareness



In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the City of Clarkston dedicated October to amplifying awareness and standing in solidarity with survivors. The month kicked off with the annual tradition of lighting city buildings in pink and purple.

Throughout the month, city leaders and staff came together in a shared mission to educate, empower, and support those impacted by these critical issues. Through a series of meaningful events, Clarkston reaffirmed its commitment to fostering a safe and compassionate community for all.





City leaders and staff showed their support by gathering for group photos in shades of pink and purple. By wearing these colors, we demonstrated unity and raised awareness for Breast Cancer and Domestic Violence Awareness Month. These group photos captured the dedication of our team to advocate for survivors and encouraged community-wide engagement.



Domestic Violence Awareness Training

On Thursday, October 17, Clarkston observed Purple Thursday with Domestic Violence Awareness training for all city employees, as mandated by the City Council and outlined in a city proclamation. Facilitated by our staff social

worker, Candice Almond, the session provided critical education on recognizing warning signs, understanding available resources, and supporting survivors.

This training reinforced Clarkston's commitment to protecting survivors and equipping our team with the tools needed to support those in need, underscoring the importance of empathy and awareness in addressing domestic and gender-based violence.



Survivor Summit at Clarkston Community Center

The inaugural Survivor Summit took place on Saturday, October 19, at the Clarkston Community Center. Co-hosted by Mayor Beverly H. Burks, a breast cancer survivor, and Vice Mayor Debra Johnson, an advocate for domestic violence survivors, the event brought together community leaders, survivors, and advocates. Attendees shared powerful stories of resilience, raised awareness about both breast cancer and domestic violence, and connected with valuable support resources. This first summit provided an essential platform for education and community healing, marking a meaningful new tradition in the City of Clarkston.

"This summit is a reminder that we are never alone in our battles," said Mayor Burks. "As a breast cancer survivor myself, I know the importance of early detection, self-care, and the unwavering support of our community. Together, we can uplift one another and make a difference."

Read the Press Release Here.



Lunch and Learn on Breast Cancer Awareness

This week, Clarkston staff joined a special edition of the Lunch and Learn series, an ongoing program that combines lunch with an educational session on topics relevant to personal and community well-being. This session focused on Breast Cancer Awareness, with Mayor Beverly H. Burks as the featured guest speaker, leading an open and insightful discussion on early detection, available support resources, and her own journey as a breast cancer survivor. Staff had the opportunity to ask questions and deepen their understanding of breast cancer, underscoring the importance of awareness and proactive health measures within our community.



A Compassionate Voice: Vice Mayor Debra Johnson's Message on Domestic Violence Awareness

Domestic violence awareness is deeply personal to me because, in 2019, I lost my only sister to domestic violence by her boyfriend of 10 years. I was there—present, active, and forever impacted by the trauma of witnessing her suffering. Through this experience, I realized how difficult it can be for those trapped in abusive relationships to recognize the signs of abuse or communicate what they're going through. Many remain silent, emotionally torn between the pain

and their love for the person causing that pain. This is why raising awareness is so critical—to give a voice to those who feel voiceless, to help them recognize the danger they are in, and to let them know they are not alone.

This acronym emphasizes my commitment to being a reliable, compassionate resource for anyone in need.

- A Available: I am here for you, ready to listen and offer support when you need it most.
- **W Willing**: I am willing to stand by your side, no matter how difficult the journey.
- A Active: I will take an active role in helping you find the resources and support you need.
- **R Respectful**: I will respect your experiences and emotions, offering empathy without judgment.
- **E Empathetic**: I will approach your situation with care and understanding, knowing how complex it can be.
- **N Nonjudgmental**: I will offer a safe space where you won't be judged for your circumstances or decisions.
- **E Encouraging**: I will encourage you to take steps that are best for your safety and well-being.
- **S Supportive**: I will provide the support you need, whether it's emotional, informational, or practical help.
- **S Safe**: I will be a safe presence, someone you can trust to have your back as you navigate through this.

If you or someone you know needs help, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE) or visit thehotline.org for confidential support.



Exciting News for Clarkston's Milam Park!

The City of Clarkston has been awarded a \$100,000 matching grant from the Atlanta United Community Fund (AUCF) and the Local Initiatives Support

Corporation (LISC) as part of the GA 100 Initiative. This grant will go towards enhancing Milam Park's multipurpose field, with a focus on creating safe, accessible spaces for local youth to enjoy the sport of soccer. The city will match the grant dollar-for-dollar, bringing a total of \$200,000 to this exciting development.

"These upgrades are an incredible step toward providing more opportunities for our diverse community to come together in recreation and play," said Clarkston Parks and Recreation Manager Michael Duncan. "Investing in accessible, high-quality spaces like this helps build a strong foundation for an active and engaged community."

Stay tuned for more updates on this project and how it will bring new energy and activity to our beloved Milam Park. To learn more about the GA 100 Initiative Grant, visit here.

Celebrating Community Through Art: A Conversation with Shannon Willow



In this issue, we're exploring the inspiration behind Clarkston's newest art installation, *Heart of Mother Earth*, created by artist Shannon Willow. Leading up to the big reveal at Trailside Green Park, our community came together for

a planting day, transforming the area into a thriving pollinator meadow—a living symbol of our commitment to nature and unity. This project was made possible through the Mediator Foundation's Radical Unity program grant, which supports public art that fosters connection and civic engagement in local communities.

We sat down with Shannon to discuss her journey, her love for Clarkston, and the values deeply rooted in this project.

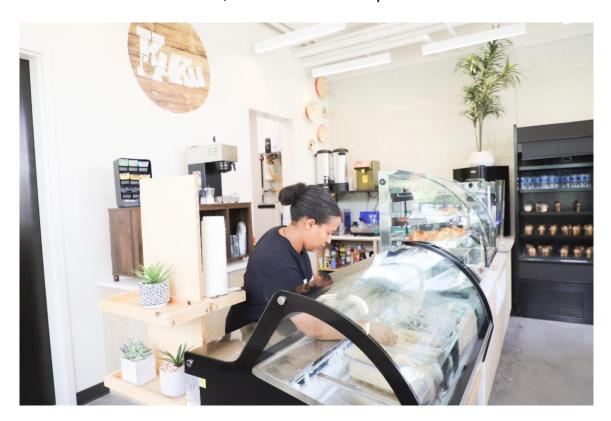
Are you curious about how public art can inspire and connect our diverse community? Dive into this special Q&A— then come visit Trailside Green Park at Church Street and Northern Ave to experience it for yourself!



October Business of the Month: Kuku Ethiopian Coffee

Local Coffee Shop Brews Culture and Community

Contributor: Jacob Bouie, Economic Development Coordinator



Discover how Bethlehem Bidiglen's passion for coffee and culture has brought a thriving new addition to Clarkston's growing business landscape. Join us in celebrating Kuku Ethiopian Coffee, where Ethiopian and French traditions create a unique space for connection. Visit them at Clarkston Market, 980 Rowland Street, Clarkston, GA 30021.

Read the full story here:







Help us celebrate outstanding local businesses! The Clarkston Business of the Month recognizes businesses within the city that stand out for their contributions, services, and generosity. Know a business that deserves the spotlight? Nominate them here.

For more details, contact Jacob Bouie, Economic Development Coordinator, at Jbouie@cityofclarkston.com.

City of Clarkston Bids Farewell to Dan Defnall, Finance Director

Celebrating Nine Years of Dedication, Leadership, and Lasting Impact

This month, we bid farewell to Dan Defnall, our dedicated Finance Director, who retired after nine years of remarkable service. Dan's commitment went far beyond the numbers; he played a pivotal role in both operations and building strong community relationships, all while championing Clarkston's growth as a city. His contributions have left a lasting impact, helping to make our community stronger and more connected. We thank Dan for his incredible

service and wish him all the best in his retirement!



CLARKSTON STORY WALK®

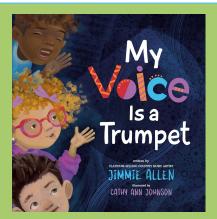
AT FRIENDSHIP FOREST

4380 EAST PONCE DE LEON AVE. CLARKSTON, GA 30021



New StoryWalk® Book at Friendship Forest!

This fall, take a stroll through Friendship Forest and enjoy the latest StoryWalk® installation! Clarkston's nature preserve offers a perfect setting for families and young readers to explore nature, stay active, and dive into a story—all in one outing. The stroller-friendly path makes it easy for everyone to join, and it's an ideal spot for children to experience the beauty of fall while discovering the joy of reading in the great outdoors. Grab your loved ones and head to Friendship Forest for a memorable community experience!



Book Feature: My Voice Is a Trumpet

Author: Jimmie Allen

My Voice Is a Trumpet by rising country star Jimmie Allen is a beautiful reminder of the power in every voice, no matter how big or small. This lyrical story celebrates the courage to speak up for what you believe in, encouraging young readers to use their voices with confidence and kindness to make a difference. Perfect for today's conversations on social justice, this book empowers children to know that their voices matter and can help change the world.

The Clarkston Police Department wishes you and your family a safe, happy, and peaceful holiday season. Remember to stay vigilant and share these tips with friends, family, and neighbors.

Clarkston Police Department Presents

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

With the holiday season approaching, the Clarkston Police Department wishes you a safe and joyful time! Here are some key tips to help protect you, your family, and your belongings during the festivities.



On the Road:

- Avoid driving alone at night. Park in well-lit areas and as close as you can to your destination.
- Lock doors, close windows, set alarms, and keep valuables out of sight to deter theft.
- Have your keys ready when approaching your vehicle, and keep a firm hold on bags.



While Shopping:

- If shopping at night, go with a friend, avoid carrying large amounts of cash, and keep wallets and keys in front pockets.
- Be mindful of your surroundings, especially in crowded areas, and be wary of strangers approaching you.
- Avoid carrying too many packages to maintain visibility and mobility.



Out with Children:

- Teach kids to stay close and alert you if anyone approaches them.
- Don't leave children alone in vehicles or send them unaccompanied to restrooms.
- Make sure children know your contact information in case you get separated.



At Home:

- To avoid attracting attention, keep holiday gifts out of sight from windows. When decorating, be sure to keep doors and passageways clear for safety.
- · Check for ID when receiving unexpected deliveries.
- If approached for donations, contribute only to recognized charities.
- To avoid package theft this season, use secure delivery options like lock boxes or hold packages at a post office. Enable delivery alerts and ask a neighbor to pick up items if you're not home.

City of Clarkston Awarded Georgia Municipal Association Life and Health Insurance Fund's Health Wellness Grant

The City of Clarkston is honored to be named a 2024 recipient of a \$3,000 Health Wellness Grant from the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). This grant will support our commitment to a healthier workplace and prioritize the well-being of City employees.

These grants are awarded to municipalities statewide that participate in GMA's Life and Health Insurance Fund through the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit Services (GMEBS) program. They empower cities to support employee wellness through effective, impactful programs.

GMA's Health Wellness Program has helped cities across Georgia improve the well-being and quality of life for employees. Proven benefits include:

- Increased employee morale
- Enhanced workplace culture
- Reduced medical claims
- Cost savings and efficient fund utilization

We are proud to designate Dr. Dwight L. Baker, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management, as Clarkston's Health Wellness Champion. Dr. Baker will lead our program and work closely with GMA to ensure our health and wellness initiatives are tailored to our workforce's unique needs.

"It's an honor to receive this grant, and we are eager to bring impactful wellness resources to our team. Our goal is to create an environment where everyone feels supported and encouraged in their wellness journeys. Through our partnership with GMA, we are committed to developing programs that help our employees thrive both professionally and personally," said Dr. Baker.

Please join us in celebrating this exciting step toward a healthier, happier workplace! Stay tuned for updates on our wellness initiatives and activities designed to support our team's health and wellness goals.



We are proud to honor the dedication and hard work of team members who have reached significant milestones with the City of Clarkston! Each anniversary represents a commitment to serving our community and advancing our vision of a place "where possibilities grow." Your dedication is valued and appreciated, whether it's one year or many. Thank you for all you do to make Clarkston a great place to live, work, and grow.

November Employee Anniversaries:

LaStacia Evans Martin Position: Accountant

Anniversary Date: November 2

Years Served: 9 years

Yolanda McGee

Position: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer

Anniversary Date: November 13

Years Served: 1 year

Willie Baines

Position: Heavy Equipment Operator **Anniversary Date:** November 16

Years Served: 9 years

Councilwoman Yterenickia Bell Anniversary Date: November 19

Years Served: 9 years

Tomika Mitchell Position: City Clerk

Anniversary Date: November 22

Years Served: 3 years



Join our team and explore fulfilling career opportunities with the City of Clarkston! We're looking for dedicated individuals to help us serve and uplift our community. Check out our current job openings here and see where your skills can shine!

Positions Available:

- Public Works Director/City Engineer
- Police Officer
- Permit Technician

For additional information, contact **Dr. Dwight L. Baker**, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management, at **dbaker**@cityofclarkston.com.

Official Statement from Mayor Beverly H. Burks

Clarkston Mayor Addresses Maintenance Concerns at Local Apartments

Dear Clarkston Residents:

As your Mayor, I must ensure that every resident of Clarkston has a safe and decent place to call home. It has come to my attention that some residents might be experiencing maintenance issues within their rental properties that are not being addressed promptly or satisfactorily.

You need to know your rights as a tenant and the responsibilities of your landlords. If you

encounter any problems with your apartment, such as plumbing, heating, or structural issues, I urge you to report these to your apartment management in writing. Keeping a written record of all communications can be crucial should further action be needed.

Should your management fail to address your concerns within a reasonable timeframe, I encourage you to contact the City of Clarkston's Code Enforcement Division. They are here to ensure that all properties comply with health and safety standards required by law. You can reach them at: https://www.clarkstonga.gov/report-concern.

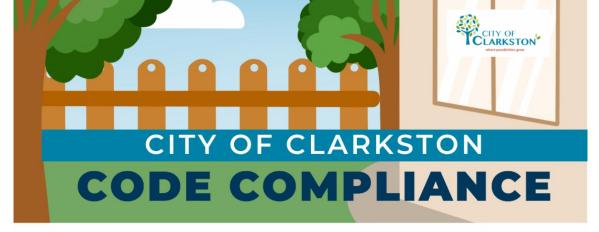
Furthermore, I want to make you aware that the City of Clarkston currently provides access to pro bono legal assistance for residents who are facing housing issues. You have the right to seek legal guidance, and we are here to support you in understanding and exercising these rights.

The City of Clarkston is committed to your well-being and to ensuring that every resident receives the respect and care they deserve. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the City of Clarkston at 404-296-6489.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Regards,

Beverly H. Burks Mayor



Clarkston's Code Compliance Department enforces city codes and ordinances to maintain the quality and safety of our community. Our team addresses a range of issues that impact public health, safety, and neighborhood aesthetics, helping Clarkston stay a place where possibilities grow.

COMMON CODE VIOLATIONS

- **Property Maintenance:** Unkempt yards, overgrown grass, unsafe structures, and uncontained trash or debris.
- Illegal Dumping: Disposing of waste on vacant lots or public areas.
- Abandoned or Inoperable Vehicles: Cars left on public streets or private property that are not operational.
- **Zoning Violations:** Unauthorized home businesses or construction without permits.
- **Signage Issues:** Signs that do not comply with city standards, including illegal or improperly placed signs.

HOW TO REPORT CONCERNS

- If you notice a potential violation in your neighborhood, you can easily report it online. Visit <u>www.clarkstonga.gov/report-concern</u> to submit a report. Our team will investigate and take appropriate action.
- For more information or questions, call us at 404-296-6489.



Shennetha Smith

Code Compliance Officer ssmith@cityofclarkston.com



Darion Hammonds

Code Compliance Officer dhammonds@cityofclarkston.com

City of Clarkston - Code Compliance

City of Clarkston Code Compliance is here to help you!Help us keep Clarkston safe and welcoming by reporting potential code violations in your neighborhood. Submitting a report is easy! Simply visit www.clarkstonga.gov/report-concern to submit a report, and our team will promptly review and address the concern.

For further assistance, reach out to our Code Compliance Officers:

- Shennetha Smith: <u>ssmith@cityofclarkston.com</u>
- Darion Hammonds: dhammonds@cityofclarkston.com





LEGAL ASSISTANCE

FOR CITY OF CLARKSTON TENANTS

Are you a City of Clarkston resident facing unsafe or uninhabitable housing conditions? The City of Clarkston has partnered with DeKalb Pro Bono to offer free legal services to low-income tenants facing a variety of housing issues.

GET HELP WITH:

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

UNLAWFUL EVICTIONS

UNRETURNED DEPOSITS

SEE IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE:

(470) 386-9979

9

www.dekalbprobono.org



Scan here with your phone's camera

Are you a resident facing unsafe or uninhabitable housing conditions?

The City of Clarkston has partnered with DeKalb Pro Bono to offer free legal services to low-income tenants facing a variety of housing issues.

Call 470-386-9979 or visit www.dekalbprobono.org to learn more.

Waste Collection Holiday Schedule



Fall Cleanup Made Easy: Free Leaf and Yard Waste Pickup Fridays in Clarkston



This November and December, the City of Clarkston's Public Works Department is offering free yard waste collection for residents! Mark your calendars for **every Friday** from **November 8** to **December 6**, with the exception of **November 29** due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Here's what you need to know for smooth collection:

Yard Waste Guidelines

- Bagged Grass and Leaves: Place in bags or containers clearly labeled "Yard Waste."
- Branches/Limbs: Must be under 4 feet long and 4 inches in diameter. Bundle with rope or string (each bundle no more than 40 lbs).

Items Not Accepted

Tree trunks, stumps, whole trees, logs, dirt, and rocks.

For questions, contact Marcus Seaton, Assistant Public Works Director, at mseaton@cityofclarkston.com. Let's keep Clarkston beautiful together—one yard at a time!



11th Annual Tell Me a Story Festival

Date: November 2, 2024

Time: 11 a.m.

Location: (Clarkston Community Center) 3701 College Avenue Clarkston, GA

30021

Experience the 11th Annual "Tell Me a Story!" Festival, a celebration of community and learning with captivating performances, storytelling by Chetter Galloway and Gwendolyn Napier, a Youth Around the World parade, free books, literacy resources, delicious international food, and free henna art—don't miss it!

Election Day

All City of Clarkston offices will close early at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 5 for Election Day. Let your voice be heard for our community and in the presidential election. For more information on voting locations and resources, visit www.dekalbvotes.com.

2nd Public Hearing and Adoption of Proposed FY 2025 Budget at City

Council Meeting

Date: November 7, 2024

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: (Clarkston City Hall) 3921 Church Street, Clarkston, GA 30021

(Click here to view the proposed FY 2025 Budget)

Grand Opening of Narrow Path Cycles

Date: November 9, 2024

Time: 10 a.m.

Location: (Clarkston Market) 980 Rowland Street, Suite 5100, Clarkston, GA

30021

Join us in welcoming Narrow Path Cycles to Clarkston with a scenic group ride to Stone Mountain Park and a free cookout, complete with delicious food, raffle prizes, and a chance to win a new bike—come support this new local business and connect with the cycling community!

Veterans Day

The City of Clarkston offices will be closed on November 11 for Veterans Day. We honor and express our gratitude to the brave men and women who have served in the armed forces for our freedoms. Regular business hours will resume the following day.

Downtown Development Authority Meeting

Date: November 12, 2024

Time: 10 a.m.

Location: (Clarkston City Hall) 3921 Church Street, Clarkston, GA 30021

Together for Tomorrow Youth Safety Summit

Date: November 14, 2024

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: (Clarkston Community Center) 3701 College Avenue Clarkston, GA

30021

Join us for the Together for Tomorrow Summit, a powerful gathering focused on building a safer, stronger Clarkston for all generations! Connect with neighbors, city leaders, youth advocates, and community members as we explore ideas and resources to keep our community thriving. Don't miss this chance to help shape Clarkston's future—your voice and the voices of our youth matter!

Planning and Zoning Meeting

Date: November 19, 2024

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: (Clarkston City Hall) 3921 Church Street, Clarkston, GA 30021

Community Development and Civic Innovation SAC Meeting

Date: November 20, 2024

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: (City Hall Annex) 1055 Rowland Street, Clarkston, GA 30021

Council Work Session

Date: November 26, 2024

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: (Clarkston City Hall) 3921 Church Street, Clarkston, GA 30021

Public Safety and Legal Committee Meeting

Date: November 27, 2024

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: (Clarkston Woman's Club) 3913 Church Street, Clarkston, GA

30021

Office Closure for Thanksgiving Holiday

The City of Clarkston offices will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, November 28, and the following Friday, November 29. We wish everyone a safe and joyful Thanksgiving and look forward to serving you when we reopen Monday.

Holiday Tree Lighting and Festival

Date: December 6, 2024

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: (Clarkston Woman's Club) 3913 Church Street, Clarkston, GA

30021

Kick off the holiday season at Clarkston's Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Festival! Join us for a festive evening featuring appearances by Mr. and Mrs. Claus, delicious treats, and holiday cheer. The evening will conclude with a spectacular fireworks display, courtesy of our Public Works team! Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to celebrate the spirit of the season in our community. We can't wait to see you there!

Please remember that event dates may change, so for the latest updates, be sure to check our city website and social media channels.

If you can't join us in person, we've made it easy for you to stay engaged—subscribe to <u>@CityofClarkston onYouTube</u> to watch council meetings and work sessions live from anywhere.

You can find meeting agendas and important updates here, keeping you connected with the decisions and events that shape our community.



Clarkston Police (Non-Emergency):

404-292-9465

For non-urgent police assistance and community inquiries.

City Hall Annex (Administration):

404-296-6489

Administrative support and general inquiries.

City Hall (Municipal Court Services):

404-292-9465

For municipal court-related questions and services.

Public Works:

404-296-6489 (Ext. 416)

Handles maintenance requests, city infrastructure, and public space services.

Police Records:

404-292-9465 (Ext. 423)

Access police reports and records.

Court Records:

404-292-9465 (Ext. 420)

Request court documents and record information.

Communications Department:

404-834-2211

For media inquiries, public information, and community updates.

Economic Development:

470-292-9569

Resources for business support, development, and economic initiatives.

Planning and Zoning:

404-296-6489

For zoning regulations, permits, and land use inquiries.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion:

404-754-6960

Contact for initiatives, support, and information on diversity and inclusion efforts.

For all life-threatening situations and urgent emergencies, dial 911 immediately. This number connects you directly to emergency services, including police, fire, and medical assistance, and should only be used in cases where immediate response is needed.









nextdoor

City of Clarkston | 1055 Rowland Street | Clarkston, GA 30021 US

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