

# CLARKSTON CONNECTION

JULY 2025

## DID YOU KNOW?

*July is designated as Muslim Heritage Month in the City of Clarkston.*

## SUMMER EDITION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- City Hall Move
- Conversation with the City Manager
- Housing Summit Recap
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**02**

*A New Home for Government Services Brings Expanded Access, Improved Efficiency, and Space to Grow*



The City of Clarkston is entering a new chapter in municipal service with the relocation of its administrative offices, municipal court, and police headquarters to a new, 27,510-square-foot facility located at **736 Park North Boulevard, Suite 120, Clarkston, GA 30021**.

Beginning July 7, 2025, the new building will be open to the public, providing improved access, modern infrastructure, and a more unified approach to service delivery.

The relocation, unanimously supported by Mayor Beverly H. Burks and the Clarkston City Council, consolidates key city services currently housed at multiple locations, including City Hall at **3921 Church Street** and City Hall Annex at **1055 Rowland Street**. This move reflects the city's ongoing commitment to operational efficiency, public safety, and the long-term needs of its growing workforce.

"This is a strategic investment in the City of Clarkston's future," said Mayor Beverly H. Burks. "It reflects our commitment to building a local government that meets the needs of our residents today while preparing for the growth and opportunities of tomorrow. With this move, we're creating a more connected, efficient, and welcoming space for everyone who lives, works, and visits our city."

The new headquarters features expanded office space to support current staff and future recruitment, upgraded security for municipal operations and court services, and dedicated areas for community engagement and collaboration. Enhanced infrastructure and updated technology will allow for more responsive, streamlined interactions between residents and city departments.

City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton emphasized the importance of this move in shaping Clarkston's future. "This facility is designed with our growing



staff in mind, offering a dynamic environment that promotes collaboration, innovation, and a strong sense of community. We are moving forward together to build a brighter future for our city.”

As city operations transition to the new facility throughout this month, officials are working to ensure a seamless shift with minimal disruption to public services. Throughout the month of July, all scheduled court proceedings and public meetings will continue to be held at the current City Hall, located at **3921 Church Street**.

To learn more about the move and ongoing updates, visit [www.clarkstonga.gov](http://www.clarkstonga.gov).

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## **90 Days In: A Conversation with City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton**

*Reflecting on her First Three Months, Clarkston’s New City Manager Shares Her Vision, Values, and Commitment to Community-Driven Progress*



The City of Clarkston is entering a new phase of leadership under City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton. With her first 90 days now behind her, Miller-Thornton reflects on her early experiences, priorities, and the vision she brings to the role. Her leadership has already left a meaningful impression, marked by collaboration, transparency, and a deep commitment to both operational excellence and community connection.

From the beginning, Miller-Thornton sensed something special about Clarkston. She described her initial impressions as grounded in acceptance and promise. Residents, staff, and community partners welcomed her with optimism and a genuine eagerness for consistent, strategic leadership.

“What stood out right away was the potential,” she said. “The city already has well-established departments that are equipped to meet the needs of our community. That is not something many small cities can say.”



Her first few months have been full of analysis, engagement, and action. Miller-Thornton approached her role with purpose, starting with one-on-one meetings with department heads and council members, a review of city planning documents, and a deep dive into the city’s operational systems.

Key moments in her first 90 days include hosting a strategic staff and council retreat, supporting the successful execution of Clarkston’s first Housing Summit in partnership with the Atlanta Regional Commission, and leading the relocation of City Hall operations to 736 Park North Boulevard.

Throughout this process, her top priorities have been to evaluate the city’s financial standing following turnover in the finance department and to assess the organizational culture. Her goal is to create an environment where policies and procedures reflect both accountability and collaboration.





[Read the Full Story Here!](#)



## **Honoring Muslim Heritage Month in Clarkston**

This July, the City of Clarkston recognizes Muslim Heritage Month as a time to honor the rich traditions, values, and contributions of Muslim communities both locally and globally.

Clarkston is home to a diverse and deeply connected population, and our Muslim residents play an important role in shaping the heart of our city. Their leadership, entrepreneurship, cultural practices, and community service reflect the spirit of unity and resilience that defines Clarkston.

As we observe Muslim Heritage Month, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering a city where every culture and faith is respected, celebrated, and supported. We encourage all residents to take this moment to learn from one another, build meaningful connections, and uplift the voices and stories that continue to enrich our shared experience.

Together, we continue building a community grounded in respect, inclusion, and understanding.

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## **Clarkston Adopts 2025 Millage Rate After Public Review**

*Following Three Public Hearings and a Financial Presentation by City Leadership, the New Rate of 15.80 Mills Will Support Essential Services and City Operations*



On June 26, 2025, the Clarkston City Council adopted the 2025 millage rate, setting it at 15.80 mills. The decision followed a series of three public hearings and was based on an initial presentation from the City Manager and Finance Department. This presentation reflected a thorough review of the city's financial outlook and property tax collection rates.

The approved ordinance establishes real property ad valorem tax assessments for the upcoming year, along with applicable reductions and exemptions. The millage rate provides the foundation for continued investment in essential city services, including public safety, infrastructure, sanitation, and community initiatives.

We extend our sincere thanks to the residents who participated in the process. Your feedback and engagement helped shape this important decision and continue to guide the city in serving the best interests of the Clarkston community.

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## **A Full House: Community Voices Drive Conversation at Clarkston's Inaugural Housing Summit**

*Residents, City Staff, and Regional Leaders Gather to Explore Housing Solutions and Shape a More Inclusive Path Forward*





The City of Clarkston proudly hosted its inaugural Housing Summit on May 22, 2025, in partnership with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). Held at the Clarkston Community Center, the event drew a strong turnout of residents, city leaders, and regional experts for a candid and collaborative conversation about the city's housing landscape.

As a 2025 recipient of ARC's Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP), Clarkston received technical support to convene this important summit, which focused on identifying housing challenges and co-creating actionable solutions. The evening featured data presentations from ARC staff and updates from city officials on current housing initiatives. It facilitated discussions that encouraged residents to share concerns, ideas, and aspirations for Clarkston's housing future.





Attendees of all ages participated in the dialogue, reflecting the diversity and shared investment of the Clarkston community. The engagement and energy in the room demonstrated a collective commitment to ensuring affordability, accessibility, and sustainability for all who call Clarkston home.

“This selection affirms our commitment to inclusive community engagement and forward-thinking housing strategies,” said Mayor Beverly H. Burks. “We are grateful to ARC for this partnership and excited to empower our residents to shape Clarkston’s future through direct input and participation in the Housing Summit. By centering community voices in this process, we are taking an important step toward meeting the evolving needs of our residents.”

The City of Clarkston extends its sincere thanks to the Atlanta Regional Commission, community members, and all partners who contributed to the success of the Housing Summit. The insights shared during this event will serve as a valuable foundation as the City explores new strategies, partnerships, and planning tools to support housing that meets the needs of both current and future residents.





[Check out the Presentation Here!](#)

## **Juneteenth in Clarkston: A Celebration of Freedom, Community, and Culture**

*Residents Gather For a Day of Reflection, Music, and Unity in the Heart of the City*



The City of Clarkston commemorated 160 years of emancipation with the 2025 Juneteenth Festival, bringing residents, families, and friends together for a day



filled with joy, remembrance, and connection. Held on Downtown Market Street, the festival honored the legacy of Juneteenth while celebrating the culture and resilience of the Clarkston community.

From the opening welcome to the final song, the atmosphere was filled with celebration. DJ iLL kept the momentum going throughout the day with music that energized the crowd and tied each moment together. Live entertainment featured gospel rapper Carlos Porter, soulful vocalist Morgan Lett, and the smooth sounds of saxophonist Jai. Audiences were also treated to a powerful dance performance by Clarkston First Baptist Church and an energetic community line dance led by Kim Armstrong.



Food vendors filled the street with the aroma of flavorful dishes and refreshing



treats, while families enjoyed a dedicated kids' corner filled with fun activities. Local businesses, artists, and resource organizations offered a wide range of products and services, including handmade goods, health services, traditional attire, and community support.

Mayor Beverly H. Burks, members of the city council, and city staff spent the day with residents, reflecting the unity and pride that define the Clarkston community. Their leadership and support played a key role in making the event a success.



"This year's event was amazing," shared the owners of Classy Catering ATL. "We were happy to be back and look forward to upcoming events. We also



appreciate the efforts of our City of Clarkston leaders and, most of all, our happy customers. Happy Juneteenth!"

We extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who made this event special, from our performers and vendors to the residents who came out to celebrate. Together, we continue to honor our history while working toward a future grounded in inclusion, equity, and shared progress.



## **Featured Vendors at the 2025 Juneteenth Festival**

*Be sure to check out and continue supporting the amazing local vendors who showed up and showed out at our Juneteenth Festival.*

### **Food Vendors**

- Park Lounge 10
- Kona Ice of Tucker
- Classy Catering ATL Inc
- Ali Teas
- El's Cuisine
- Fruity Ice & Sweet Treats

### **Retail and Resource Vendors**

- Mazar Naz Traditional Drapes and Clothing
  - Women Watch Afrika
  - Afra Bloom Women's Wear
  - DeKalb County Medical Examiner's Office
  - LATN Language Solutions
  - MAP Wireless
  - Amani Women Center
  - Injury 2 Wellness
  - Narrow Path Cycles
  - Live Oak Financial Center
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# July is National Park and Recreation Month!



July is Park and Recreation Month in the City of Clarkston, a time to celebrate the spaces, places, and programs that bring our community together. Under the leadership of Parks and Recreation Director Michael Duncan, we invite all residents to explore the many opportunities for relaxation, recreation, and connection right here in our city. Whether you're making a splash, taking your dog for a walk, enjoying a peaceful stroll through the Friendship Forest Nature Reserve, playing a game of tennis at Milam Park, or hosting a gathering at one of our rentable pavilions, there's truly something for everyone to enjoy this summer.

At the heart of our Parks and Recreation mission is a commitment to enhancing the well-being of every resident. We take pride in offering affordable facilities, engaging programs, and safe, welcoming environments that promote healthy lifestyles, encourage social connection, and strengthen the fabric of our diverse community. This month, we invite you to get outside, get active, and make the most of all Clarkston has to offer. Together, we're building a stronger, healthier, and more connected city one park visit at a time.

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## Clarkston Launches New Online Parks and Recreation Reservations System

The City of Clarkston is excited to announce the launch of CivicRec, our new online reservation system for all Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.



Whether you're looking to reserve a pavilion, secure a pool pass for your family, rent the Women's Club, or host an event at the Milam Park Pool, this is your one-stop site for bookings and facility access.

We're making it easier than ever for residents and guests to enjoy all that Clarkston's parks have to offer.

[Click Here To Get Started!](#)

Gear Up for School with Free Supplies, Food, and Fun!

CITY OF CLARKSTON  
where possibilities grow

**BACK TO SCHOOL**  
GIVEAWAY

 **SAT. JULY 26**  
**10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

 **MILAM PARK**  
**3867 NORMAN ROAD**

**FREE ENTRY**   
Don't miss out on a day of FUN!  
Supplies will be available on a  
first-come, first-served basis!

## Get Ready for the School Year at Clarkston's Annual Back-to-School Giveaway

Join us on Saturday, July 26, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Milam Park (3867 Norman Road) for a fun-filled day featuring free school supplies, food, prizes, and more while supplies last.

This annual event is open to all and designed to help students start the school year prepared and confident. Supplies will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, so be sure to arrive early and enjoy the festivities.

For more information, including volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, please contact [rburdette@cityofclarkston.com](mailto:rburdette@cityofclarkston.com).

We look forward to seeing you there!



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## Vehicle Safety Starts With You: A Message from Clarkston Police Department

The Clarkston Police Department reminds all residents and visitors to take simple but effective steps to prevent vehicle break-ins. Criminals often act on opportunity, so do not give them one. Always remove valuables, lock your doors, take firearms with you, and choose well-lit, visible parking areas. If you see something suspicious, report it immediately to the Clarkston Police Department or call 911 in an emergency.

Help us keep Clarkston safe by staying alert and securing your belongings.



# PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

*Help Prevent Vehicle Break-Ins with These Safety Tips*

## **Remove Valuables:**

Never leave items like phones, laptops, wallets, or firearms in your vehicle, especially not in plain view.

## **Lock Every Time:**

Always lock your car doors and close all windows, even if you're just stepping away for a moment.

## **Take Firearms With You:**

Do not leave guns in unoccupied vehicles, even if hidden in the glovebox, under the seat, or in the trunk.

## **Park Smart:**

Choose well-lit, visible areas when parking, and avoid isolated spots when possible.

## **Stay Alert, Report Suspicious Activity:**

If you see something unusual, report it to the Clarkston Police Department or dial 911 in case of emergencies.



@clarkstonpolice |



@clarkstonpolice



POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

## **Clarkston's National Night Out Returns August 5**

Save the date for an evening of community, connection, and fun. National Night Out will take place on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at

Milam Park.

Residents are invited to enjoy free food, public safety information, and family-friendly activities. Come out and meet the officers who serve our community and help us strengthen the bonds that keep Clarkston safe and united!



CLARKSTON, GEORGIA

# CROSSFIT

## >>> LIMINAL >>>

### June Business of the Month: CrossFit Liminal

*Redefining Fitness Through Equity, Grit, and Grace*

**Contributor:** Jacob Bouie, Economic Development Coordinator





On the edge of Clarkston, just off the hum of I-285, sits a gym that doesn't look—or feel—like your typical fitness space. There are weights, yes. There are workouts, sweat, and early mornings. But there's also something more: laughter, high fives, community potlucks, and stories of transformation that reach far beyond physical fitness.

This is CrossFit Liminal, a nonprofit gym founded by Nick Johnson in 2020, born not out of business ambition but a deeper desire to create a space where strength was accessible to everyone, no matter their background, income, or starting point.

The idea first took shape in a garage. Nick had been experimenting with a different kind of gym model—one rooted in community, equity, and care. He wanted to see if a place like Clarkston, known for its vibrant diversity and global roots, would respond to something less traditional and more human-centered. “Spoiler alert: it did,” Nick says with a grin.



Then the pandemic hit. That garage gym became a temporary home for a handful of committed members. But the mission didn't stop—it just got stronger.

By 2022, CrossFit Liminal had grown into a real space, a physical home tucked into a corner of the city where people from all walks of life could show up and discover what they were capable of. At the time of opening, they had 25 members. Today, that number is around 125. But for the Liminal team, the growth isn't just measured in numbers—it's in stories, relationships, and quiet victories.

[Read the Full Story!](#)



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](mailto:Jbouie@cityofclarkston.com).

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## Empowering Youth Through Local Government

*Clarkston Welcomes DeKalb Interns for a Summer of Service, Learning, and Community Impact*



This summer, the City of Clarkston welcomed five interns through the DeKalb Youth Employment Program. Over several weeks, these young leaders shadowed various city departments, gaining firsthand experience in public service, civic engagement, and municipal operations.

In addition to learning the inner workings of local government, the interns collaborated on a capstone project designed to support youth and enhance community development. Their proposal focused on addressing youth displacement through a potential grant-funded initiative that would provide



targeted resources, including job training, housing referrals, and mentorship opportunities.



The interns include **Caleb Johnson** (Miller Grove High School), **Nathan Mulatub** (Decatur High School), **Sadia Safi** (Clarkston High School), **Chayse Syann Gayle** (Redan High School), and **Terrell Clay** (Redan High School). They presented their project during a Clarkston City Council meeting, showcasing their professionalism and commitment to the future of the community.

Their work reflected a thoughtful understanding of the challenges young people face and a shared vision for building a stronger and more supportive Clarkston.

The City of Clarkston is proud to support programs that invest in youth development and future leaders. We thank our interns for their meaningful contributions to our city.



## Employee Spotlight: Honoring Excellence in Public Service

Each month, the City of Clarkston takes pride in recognizing staff members who go above and beyond in service to our community. Please join us in celebrating our Employees of the Month:

- **March 2025: Officer Craig Earle II** – A dedicated member of our Police Department, Officer Earle consistently demonstrates professionalism, integrity, and a deep commitment to public safety.
- **April 2025: June Davis** – As an Administrative Assistant, Ms. Davis is the steady force behind the scenes, bringing care, efficiency, and positivity to every task.
- **May 2025: Shennetha Smith** – With a firm yet compassionate approach, Ms. Smith ensures our Code Enforcement division remains fair, consistent, and responsive to community needs.
- **June 2025: Retonjah Burdette** – As Communications Director, Ms. Burdette brings vision, creativity, and clarity to the City's messaging, helping keep residents informed, engaged, and connected.

We are grateful for their contributions and proud to have each of them on Team Clarkston.



Have an event coming up in Clarkston? We want to hear about it! Community organizations and residents are invited to submit upcoming events to [rburdette@cityofclarkston.com](mailto:rburdette@cityofclarkston.com) for a chance to be featured in the next issue of our city newsletter. Let's spread the word and celebrate what's happening in our community!

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### **New City Hall Opens to the Public**

**Date:** July 7, 2025

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.

**Location:** 736 Park North Boulevard, Suite 120, Clarkston, GA 30021

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### **DeKalb County Job Fair 2025**

**Date:** July 10, 2025

**Time:** 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Location:** (Georgia Piedmont Technical College) 495 N. Indian Creek Dr., Clarkston, GA 30021



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**DDA Open House**

**Date:** July 14, 2025

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

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

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**Downtown Development Authority Meeting**

**Date:** July 14, 2025

**Time:** 10 a.m.

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

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**Special Called Meeting**

**Date:** July 14, 2025

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

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

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**Planning and Zoning Meeting**

**Date:** July 15, 2025

**Time:** 7 p.m.

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

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**Historic Preservation Meeting**

**Date:** July 17, 2025

**Time:** 3 p.m.

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

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**Back to School Drive**

**Date:** July 26, 2025

**Time:** 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Location:** (Milam Park) 3867 Norman Road, Clarkston, GA 30021

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**City Council Work Session**

**Date:** July 29, 2025

**Time:** 7 p.m.

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

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**National Night Out**

**Date:** August 5, 2025

**Time:** 6 p.m.

**Location:** (Milam Park) 3867 Norman Road, Clarkston, GA 30021

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**Please note that event and meeting dates and locations are subject to change. 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 [@CityofClarkston on YouTube](#) 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.

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**Clarkston Police (Non-Emergency):**

404-292-9465

For non-urgent police assistance and community inquiries.

**City Hall Administration:**

404-296-6489 (*Press 5 for a direct connection*)

Administrative support and general inquiries.

**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 | 736 Park North Boulevard, Suite 120 | Clarkston, GA 30021 US

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