



CITY OF  
**FORESTPARK**

**CITY OF FOREST PARK  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 5:30 PM  
City Hall - Council Chambers

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[City Website](#)

Phone (404) 363.2454

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

745 Forest Parkway  
Forest Park, GA 30297

**Hector Gutierrez, Chairman**  
**Rhonda Wright, Vice Chairwoman**  
**Daniel Ray Allen, Member**  
**Felicia Davis, Member**  
**Lois Wright, Member**  
**Victoria Williams, Member**

**VIRTUAL MEETING NOTICE:** Meetings will be live-streamed and available on Forest Park's  
[YouTube Channel](#)

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:** Chairman Hector Gutierrez called the Development Authority meeting to order on March 25, 2026, at 5:42 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

Hector Gutierrez  
Rhonda Wright  
Daniel Ray Allen  
Lois Wright  
Victoria Williams

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Mayor Gwen Ellison  
Kirby Glaze, Esq., DA General Counsel  
Rochelle B. Dennis, Economic Development Director  
John Wiggins, Finance Director  
Dieuvalda Lamartiniere, Economic Development Staff Assistant

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:** Victoria Williams made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Rhonda Wright seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. **Approval of the February 25, 2026, Meeting minutes:** Daniel Ray Allen made a motion

to approve the February 25, 2026, Regular meeting minutes as submitted. Victoria Williams seconded the motion. Lois Wright made a motion to amend the minutes to reflect that she did receive one vote. Rhonda Wright seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Steve Bernard was invited to provide an update on the project at 4975 Lake Drive which the Development Authority sold to him for the construction of 8 homes in 2022. As of today, two homes have been partially constructed with no timeline for completion and no anticipated building date for the remaining homes. Legally, Mr. Bernard has met his legal obligation with the Development Authority.

Phase 1: Retaining Wall; Raise 7' Stormwater; Detention; Invested \$1.3M underground utilities; Groundwater

Phase 2: Vertical; 2 Houses Up (Model Homes); Outside Exterior; Hanging Sheetrock; Currently Refinancing project

Mr. Bernard accused the City of not being developer friendly, changing its permit timelines, not having appropriate zoning. He accused some members of the Development Authority of committing personal attacks.

Victoria Williams asked about his proposed boutique hotel on Main Street. He accused staff of forcing him to reduce the number of units at his hotel and housing units. Rochelle Dennis, Economic Development Director, explained that staff recommendations on reducing the number of units were not arbitrary but based on zoning, ingress / egress, and most importantly, life safety requirements, specifically emergency vehicle access.

Chairman Hector Gutierrez requested staff to coordinate a meeting with the Mayor, Economic Development, Planning & Community Development, Fire, and Public Works.

## **DIGITAL TOOLS: TABLET BASED MEETINGS:**

### **2. Discussion: Development Authority Implementation of Tablets in Meetings - Information Technology**

Rochelle Dennis, Economic Development Director, explained that in the coming months that agendas, packets, and supporting documents shared during the meeting will be distributed digitally via tablets instead of paper. Board members can view and reference materials in real-time.

The benefits are cost-savings, accessibility, real-time update, and searchable documents. A minimum of two printed table read copies will still be provided during the meeting. In the coming months, staff will coordinate functionality and a full roll out with the IT department.

## **LEGAL UPDATE:**

3. **4975 Lake Drive & 803 Main Street** – Attorney Kirby Glaze

**4975 Lake Drive:** In 2022 the Authority sought to exercise its right to purchase the property since the project had not commenced within the time allowed. Mr. Steve Bernard came before the Development Authority and asked for an extension, which was granted. An LDP was issued by the City, as there was at least one building permit. In addition, the contract provides that “with respect to such a failure of development to begin on the Real Property on or before the Commencement Deadline, Seller does not send the Recapture Notice to Purchaser on or before the first (1st) anniversary of the Commencement Deadline, then Seller’s right to demand reconveyance of the Property shall be waived and forever forfeited. If, with respect to a failure of development of the Project to be completed on or before the Project Completion Deadline, Seller does not send the Recapture Notice to Purchaser on or before the first (1st) anniversary of the Project Completion Deadline, then Seller’s right to demand reconveyance of the Real Property as a result of the failure of completion of the Project shall be Waived and forever forfeited.” The closing date was January 21, 2021. The Project Completion Date would have been thirty months after that or July 21, 2023. The first anniversary of the Project Completion Date would therefore have been July 21, 2024. After that time the right of the Authority to repurchase, the property was waived.

**803 Main Street:** The sale of this property closed on or about April 5, 2022. The Commencement Deadline was April 4, 2023, and the Completion Deadline would have been thirty months thereafter or November 4, 2025. The Authority is still within its right to assert its repurchase rights, however, the Authority would have to litigate the issue of whether or not that provision of the contract survived the closing.

The Authority cannot exercise its repurchase rights without tendering the purchase price of \$300,000.

4. **Board Terms Memo** – Attorney Kirby Glaze

The Resolution has been drafted and presented to City Attorney to present to Mayor & Council. If approved by Mayor and Council, Hector Gutierrez, Victoria Williams, Daniel Ray Allen, and Felicia Davis’ terms will expire January 31, 2028. Thereafter the term of office for these positions shall be for four years, expiring on January 31, 2032.

Lois Wright and Rhonda Wright’s terms will expire on January 31, 2030. Thereafter the term of office for these positions shall be for four years, expiring on January 31, 2034.

Appointment for Alvin Patton’s unexpired term shall expire as of January 31, 2028. Thereafter the term of office shall be for four years, expiring on January 31, 2032.

5. **PILOT Payment** – Attorney Kirby Glaze

At the request of Councilman Gutierrez, in his capacity as Chairman of the Development Authority, and with the approval of the City Attorney Danielle Matricardi, Attorney Glaze has spoken with the City’s Financial Advisor Ed Wall about the PILOT Payments to

determine what other transactions had been closed involving the property at Ft. Gillem since the Kroger transaction and terms of such.

Attorney Glaze provided the June 7, 2023, Memo entitle PILOT Payments, Kroger Transactions which details the agreement the URA was to pay to the Army a total of \$30 million. The Economic Development Agreement referenced in the memo “The City shall deposit all payments made to it by the Authority pursuant to Section 3.2 hereof into a separate segregated account, to be used solely to assist in the Redevelopment Corporation in paying Redevelopment Costs owed by, the Redevelopment Corporation, including, without limitation, paying amounts owed by the City pursuant to the Army Assistance Agreement and the Lender Assistance Agreement.” While it appears that the DA does have the obligation to pay over these funds to the City, Attorney Glaze believes such obligation is limited to the funds being used for paying Redevelopment Costs (as defined in the agreements). Since these funds are to be kept in a separate account it should not be difficult for the City to provide an account for all funds received and expended to date.

To date the City has received appx \$9.8 in PILOT payments; the Downtown Development Authority has received approximately \$1.7M; the Development Authority has received \$0. Had the Development Authority charged an administrative fee they would have received approximately \$5M in revenue from the PILOT payment.

Chairman Gutierrez asked staff to schedule a meeting with Mayor, City Manager, DA Chair, Economic Development Director, Attorney Glaze, Attorney Matricardi, and Finance to discuss a reasonable resolution.

## **FINANCE UPDATE**

### **6. 2026 Development Authority Finance Update – Finance**

John Wiggins, Finance Director for the City of Forest Park, shared that the new Development Authority bank account with the City is open. An initial deposit of \$8,177.89 has been made.

\$1,820 (848 Lease Payment)

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\$1,512.63 (Billboard Lease Payment)

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Daniel Ray Allen made a motion to cancel the services of Marshall Jones effective immediately. Lois Wright seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Rhonda Wright made a motion to close the Development Authority bank account and move funds into the City of Forest Park. The motion was seconded by Daniel Ray Allen. The motion unanimously passed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

7. **Clayton County Housing Authority Presentation- Mandala Jones, Chief Executive Officer** - Economic Development

Mandala Jones, Chief Executive Officer of the Clayton County Housing Authority (CCHA), gave a presentation providing an overview of CCHA's role and operations. The presentation included information on the Authority's mission, programs, and services, highlighting how CCHA supports housing initiatives and community development within Clayton County.

- Established in 1982; serves as a conduit issuer for tax-exempt bonds to finance affordable housing.
- Facilitates housing redevelopment and rehabilitation, including grants for emergency repairs and accessibility improvements.
- Governed by a five-member board and led by an Executive Director with professional staff.
- Supports neighborhood stability, property values, and local economic development through housing programs and property management.
- April 1 rebranding to Develop Clayton

## **OLD BUSINESS**

7. **2026 Development Authority Board Retreat** - Economic Development

Rochelle Dennis informed the Board about plans for a one-day Strategic Retreat. Staff proposed Wednesday, June 24, 2026, as the retreat date, noting it coincides with a regular Development Authority board meeting day. Board members will be asked to indicate their availability via a poll to ensure the selected date accommodates the majority. The retreat will focus on strategic discussions and planning for the future of the Development Authority.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

8. **Economic Development Updates** - Economic Development

Economic Development Director, Rochelle B. Dennis delivered the update.

- The new Main Street District banners are coming. The spring banners are complete and currently being picked up. You should see new banners going up in the next few weeks.
- Taste of Forest Park will be held on Friday, April 3, in partnership with Food Truck Friday from 5-8pm at Bill Lee Park will feature food samples, a recipe exchange and much more
- Thank you to everyone who supported the Groundbreaking of the Grapevine. Construction is actively moving and we look forward to a late Fall completion
- Welcome Shoe Trend to our Forest Park small business Family
- The Office of Economic Development hosted its first Economic Development Roundtable specifically for the Brokers, Developers, and Investors community. It was a hit and allowed for listening and information sharing with our developer community
- Our next Forest Park Business Association is on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and will feature Mr.

Jennell K. Taylor with the Small Business Administration to talk all about how to Start, Sustain, and Scale your business in Forest Park

- Murder in Music City, filmed right here in Forest Park, made its film premier on Lifetime on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is available on streaming platforms
- Our newest luxury housing development will be unveiled on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Please join us at 10am at 5051 Cherry Street as we celebrate a new chapter in community growth
- Join us on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 11am for At Work Personnel's Ribbon Cutting at 530 Forest Parkway
- Film Forest Park has become a popular film location with our music community. In recent months we have hosted Pusha T and 21 Savage for music video shoots
- GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing) Spring Retreat April 14-16 will be held in Tifton, GA. Rochelle Dennis (Economic Development) SaVaughn Irons Kumassah (Planning & Community Development) and 4 members of the Housing Committee will be attending.
- Staff continue to work collaboratively on our City Plaza Blight Playbook and a rollout strategy on how to address and encourage commercial plaza owners to address light in our commercial corridors
- Through coordinated efforts, staff are working on a streamlined public facing reporting tool on public and private projects. This will provide a project name, property address, a link to rendering or concept plan (if available) and a status update.
- Chair Gutierrez asked about Witty's Seafood. Staff is familiar with Witty's Seafood. They are currently open. Staff have been in conversation with them for months; however, staff are waiting on the owner to provide potential dates for her ribbon cutting.
- Chair Gutierrez asked for an update on Georgia Utility Contractors Association (GUCA). Director Dennis shared that staff are waiting on their plan submission. Staff have had multiple meetings and conversations. There is no action on the staff currently until GUCA submits their plans.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

(When an Executive Session is required, one will be called for the following issues: Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate) OCGA is §50-14-1 (A) (2)

**ADJOURNMENT:** Victoria Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m. Rhonda Wright seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 404-366-4720.