



Main Street Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 23, 2026, 9 a.m.

Historic City Hall

117 Jesse Jewell Parkway, Gainesville, GA 30501

Board Members Present: *Pamela Williams-Lime, Jill Ledford, Lila Westmoreland, Aimee Hoecker, Andrew Elliott, Abigail Guzman*

Board Members Absent: *Connie Rock, Claude Tatro*

City Staff Present: *Karen Diaz, Nicole Parham, Robyn Lynch, Maggie Bishop*

Other Main Street Members Present: *Moe Lyons, Becca Riser, Bud Welchel, Nick Hoecker*

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Pamela, at 9:04 a.m.

A motion was made by Abigail to approve the January minutes as presented; the motion was seconded by Lila and approved unanimously.

Nicole welcomed everyone and led a quick round of introductions. Robyn introduced Maggie Bishop, the newly hired Tourism Communications Specialist. The team was excited to have her on board to manage the tourism social media accounts and the exploregainesville.org website, among other responsibilities. Nicole also introduced Aimee Hoecker as the newest Main Street Advisory Board member. Aimee and her husband, Nick, own and operate Downtown Drafts on the Square and have been tremendous advocates for the downtown community.

Nicole shared an update regarding temporary signage permit regulations for Main Street members. In 2021, Main Street operated a stand-alone permit that the City allowed the organization to use for approving promotional signage for downtown businesses. Due to the form being incorrectly used by other citizens, limited use by Main Street members, and an effort to streamline record keeping, the decision was made for all citywide temporary signage permits to be processed through Accela, the Citizen Access Portal on gainesville.org.

Nicole also shared a copy of the updated Facade Grant application, noting the changes approved by the board at the previous meeting to increase the matching grant amount to up to \$5,000.

Nicole then transitioned to discussing upcoming annual events. Robyn asked when the NCAA banners would be installed downtown. Nicole shared the banner calendar, and Karen also contacted John Miller, Downtown Maintenance Manager, to confirm the schedule.

Karen shared information about other upcoming annual events, including Blue Sky Concerts, First Fridays, and the NCAA Women's Rowing Championships taking place May 27–30, along with the "Rhythm and Row" concerts scheduled for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday on the square from 6–8 p.m. as part of the community engagement programming for the event. Robyn also shared that volunteers are still needed, especially for Wednesday, May 27, to serve as the "hype squad" welcoming athletes and their families during their first entrance into Olympic Park.

Nicole reminded everyone that the new Downtown "Park GVL" street parking initiative was currently in its grace period and would become fully active on May 4, the Monday following First Friday. Lila shared that she used the system for the first time and found it to be a great experience and easy to use. Abigail also noted that, for the first time, there were actually parking spaces available for customers to utilize, which was a wonderful change. It was also mentioned that the new digital "parking spaces available" sign on the parking deck was a great addition.

Nicole also shared that it was Spring flower planting day on the square and that the Hall County Master Gardeners were handling the design and planting of the large ground flower pots as well as the hanging flower baskets for the season. The Downtown Maintenance Team assists with hanging the baskets and watering them year-round. She encouraged everyone to give the team a high-five when they see them for the work they do every day to keep downtown looking beautiful.

Nicole opened the floor for new business and invited everyone to share events and happenings taking place at their respective businesses throughout downtown.

The Arts Council shared information about the inaugural Battle of the Bands at the Smithgall Arts Center and the upcoming May 2 Preston Cooper concert, which kicks off their summer series. Downtown Drafts will host an Adult Prom featuring a 90s theme on May 16. Bradford Street will be closed to through traffic for the event. Amy and Nick shared that they are working on plans to host karaoke on the square in late summer and are excited to finalize the details and bring the event to fruition.

Abigail shared information about Mahjong Mondays at Centro GVL Eatery, noting that they have been a big hit with the community. Centro is also hosting Cinco de Mayo celebrations and Plant Bingo as featured May events. Lila shared that the Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Hall class would be working on an interior mural at the Habitat for Humanity building at 808 Main Street this Saturday. She also noted that a Spring Pop-Up event would take place Friday and Saturday, May 1 and 2, featuring a large thrifting opportunity with finds from estate sales.

Andrew asked about updates regarding Lakeshore Mall. Abigail shared that there has been ongoing back-and-forth with the developers regarding their TAD application, so while the project is still planned, additional details are being worked out. He also asked about the Greenway extension, and Abigail confirmed that the Athens Street corridor is expected to break ground soon.

Andrew also shared that his permits are in place and that he is working with the Department of Health regarding walk-in cooler issues for his new location at 755 Main Street. He expressed

excitement about opening The Inked Pig BBQ closer to the retail activity in the Midland district. He also asked a question regarding tree removal near the building, and Nicole shared that she would follow up with him about the matter.

Additional new business included updates that Don Quixote, located in the former Yellow Fin space at 120 Bradford Street, had received its Certificate of Occupancy and is expected to open within the next month or so. The business will be a Spanish tapas-style restaurant and bar featuring live music and event space. Additionally, Char Stk added its sidewalk café this week, and it was noted that it looks great.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 a.m.