

Executive Director's Report August 2025

Economic Development

Active Projects

Lamar Building

Potential investors in town August 12 for tour and meeting with DDA.

They will finalize agreements in October/press conference.

Anticipated construction start date of January 2026.

Working with Cal Wray on possible new market tax credits.

Ramada on Broad Street

Hotel has closed and new owner Breakwater Development has started construction drawings. Financing has been secured.

176 Rooms with meeting space, ballroom space and full service restaurant. Hanks Seafood to consult.

Developer has the ground lease for 3000 SF of retail across the street and outdoor seating space.

Financial Impact Study has been completed by Georgia Power.

"Happy Hour" meeting scheduled with city this Monday, Augusta 25th.

Developer has met with Commissioners Jordan Johnson and Francine Scott and Mayor Johnson.

Curtis Baptist Church Site-Framework

Conference call August 18 with Phillip Smith.

Closing on property has been extended until Q2 2026.

Designing the entire site (7.2 acres) instead of two phases.

Multiple lenders are interested.

Church is still looking for property to relocate to.

Embassy Suites 1140 Broad Street

Demolition permit has expired and project needs to go to HPC again for approval.

Meeting June 9th with mayor, Commissioner Johnson, HPC, Erick Montgomery to discuss the possible use of the site as temporary additional parking during TIA Construction.

City meeting held meeting July 25th with Chief Woods.

Amar Patel has submitted request to HPC for a September presentation and approval.

Other:

A net gain of 27 new businesses have opened to date in 2025 and 2 expansions.

Breakfast restaurant concept/Austin TX is interested . Have submitted possible sites.

Firethorn-SSBCI Loan.

Film Studio/Choice Skinner-SSBCI Loan

Brunch House-looking at other possible sites.

Site Selector/Paine College. Meeting held 7/31.
Marion Building-applying for housing credits in October.
Bradley's Barbeque-SSBCI loan approved.

Façade Grants

Bradley's Barbeque- has submitted an application for board approval once completed.

Accelerate Augusta Microenterprise Center 600 Broad Street Phase 1

Building construction is completed within the original scope of work under budget.
New roof, tree removal (drainage) and landscaping have been completed as an addendum with \$200,000 from the city and \$275,000 SPLOST 8 commitment from the DDA.
Exterior signage is the only item yet to be completed. (\$25,000).
Shaun Andrews has been selected as the new executive director.
Website design is underway.
Bylaws and slate of board members were approved May 15.
Strategic Plan framework has been approved by the board.
Tentative ribbon cutting has been scheduled September 12th at 10 am.

Design

Outdoor Adventure Center

Funding sources have been identified and contracts have been execute with the city.
Waiting on approval from the Corps of Engineers in the next 30 days.
Anticipated start date is October with a completion date of Spring 2026.

Carl Vinson Downtown Visioning & Design

Presentation for Destination Augusta May 21.
Meeting with Commissioner Johnson and City Administrator on May 22. Ready to move forward on building registry and revolving loan fund. Working on powerpoint presentation to present to commission.

Broad Street TIA Project

We submitted a letter of support signed by the DDA, Augusta Metro Chamber and Destination Augusta requesting the commission to enforce 2 hour parking during TIA construction.
Public Meeting held May 21 at Fatman's was well-attended.
James Brown Linear Park construction has started. One lane of traffic is open on both sides of the street and there has been NO problem with access to lower Broad.
Broad Street construction to begin in late October starting at 13th street.

Jones Street Alley Improvements

Meeting with Nathan Vick on May 21 to discuss next steps with HPC.
All parties have signed off on concept drawings and construction documents are underway.

Soofa Kiosks

We are having issues with vandalism we are trying to resolve.

Chronic Vacancy/Blight Initiative

Meeting with City Administrators Office April 23.

The overall concept was well -received.

- 3-prong approach:
- Building Registry
- Revolving Loan Fund. (meeting with Stacey Tallent May 29 to establish parameters).
- Empty Building Tax.

We are working on other funding mechanisms and preparing a power point presentation to present to the commission.

Mothballing Ordinance

Urbex trend.

Lamar, Embassy Suites site, Ramada challenges.

Meetings with Sherriff's office May 30 and August 11 to discuss a possible solution.

Looking at a model similar to site maintenance in place with the city.

Will bring back to the board for approval.

Other:

2026 Budget request submitted to the city.

Budget hearing is scheduled September 12 at 2 pm.

Performance measures are now required. We submitted net gain new businesses, net gain job creation, private investment, public investment and new housing units.

Budget shortfall of \$69,000.

DDA offices are the holding area for curfew violators on Friday and Saturday nights for parents to pick up offenders.

Organization

Chamber Board meeting	May 27
Means Report	June 5
YPA Entrepreneurs Panel	June 10
Black Chamber of Commerce	June 26
SPLOST Presentation to City	July 8
Interview Augusta Magazine	July 25
Dr. Russell Keen Cabinet	August 7
Wheelhouse from Macon	August 8
Georgia Trend Interview	August Edition
Legal Session Presentation	August 8
Hockey Press Conference	August 20, 2025