
HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PHASE TWO



September, 2025



Center for Economic
Development Research

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2025

01 PROJECT STUDY AREA

02 COMMUNITY PROFILE

03 RECOMMENDATIONS

04 PLACES TO VISIT

05 APPENDIX

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Public Organizations

City of Valdosta

Lowndes County

Southern Georgia Regional Commission

Valdosta-Lowndes County Development Authority

Valdosta State University

Center for South Georgia Regional Impact, VSU

Moody Air Force Base

Valdosta-Lowndes County Land Bank Authority

Valdosta Public Housing Authority

South Georgia Regional Library

Wiregrass Georgia Technical College

Lowndes County Schools

Valdosta City Schools

Private Organizations

One Valdosta-Lowndes Foundation

Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce

Graeter Valdosta United Way

South Georgia Homebuilders Association

LAMP – Lowndes Associated Ministries to People

South Georgia Black Chambers of Commerce

Southside Recreation Center

Saint Timothy African Methodist Episcopal Church

Georgia Power Company

Colquitt EMC

SGMC Health

SEEDS Business Resource Center

DETAILED TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Acknowledgments | 3 |
| Project Study Area | 5 |
| Introduction | 6 |
| Project Background | 6 |
| Project Area | 7 |
| Community Profile | 9 |
| Previous Plan Overview | 10 |
| Community Profile | 12 |
| Recommendations | 23 |
| Continued community engagement | 24 |
| Recommendations and Case Studies | 25 |
| Places to Visit | 29 |
| Best Practices in Neighborhood Redevelopment | 30 |
| Appendix | 32 |

01

PROJECT STUDY AREA

INTRODUCTION

The Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI2) is Georgia Tech's chief business outreach and economic development organization. Since its inception in 1960, its core mission is to help business, industry, entrepreneurs, and economic developers across Georgia grow and remain competitive. EI2 continues Georgia Tech's sixty-year legacy of commitment to community economic development by providing research and technical assistance to support economic development efforts in communities in Georgia and around the world.

The Center for Economic Development Research (CEDR) is an applied economic development unit of EI2. CEDR assists local elected officials, economic developers, policy makers, and community and state leaders who seek innovative tools and methods to leverage their local advantage and improve quality of life for their residents by attracting, maintaining, and growing business and industry within their areas.

The expertise of the CEDR team is concentrated in the areas of strategic planning, organizational development, labor market and workforce analysis, facilitation, research, and economic and fiscal impact analyses. All faculty have a depth of experience performing applied research for the economic development community. When needed, staff can supplement their skills by calling on Georgia Tech academic faculty to assist in specific research projects. Through their research, CEDR helps clients understand the opportunities and challenges in fostering local and regional economic development.

Project Background

The Valdosta Housing Needs Assessment is comprised of two phases, including a data-driven assessment of community-wide demographics and housing needs (Phase 1) and a targeted small area redevelopment plan (Phase 2). During Phase 1 of the assessment, the CEDR team hosted a series of steering committee meetings to incorporate community perspectives and shape the report around the community's needs and expectations. During the second steering committee meeting, steering committee members were presented with six potential small areas that they could rank in order of highest to lowest priority for the Phase 2 small area plan. From this, the small area included in this report was selected based on existing conditions and steering committee input.

The small area plan includes a review of previous planning efforts in the area, demographic and housing data at the census tract level, existing conditions, and recommendations and case studies.

The Housing Needs Assessment will serve as a roadmap to guide public policy, inform funding and investment decisions, and support equitable, long-term development that reflects the values and aspirations of Valdosta and Lowndes County.

Project Area

Phase 2 focuses on the area located east of Ashley Street, south of the Vallotton Sports Complex, west of the rail lines, and north of E. Hill Street. There are 1,833 parcels within the 1.2-square-mile boundary.

The area is situated near Valdosta State University (VSU) and the South Georgia Medical Center (SGMC). The southwest corner includes part of downtown, and two recreation facilities exist within the boundary. The neighborhood also has access to the Azalea City Trail that connects Vallotton Park to the Craig Center, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1: Phase Two Study Area

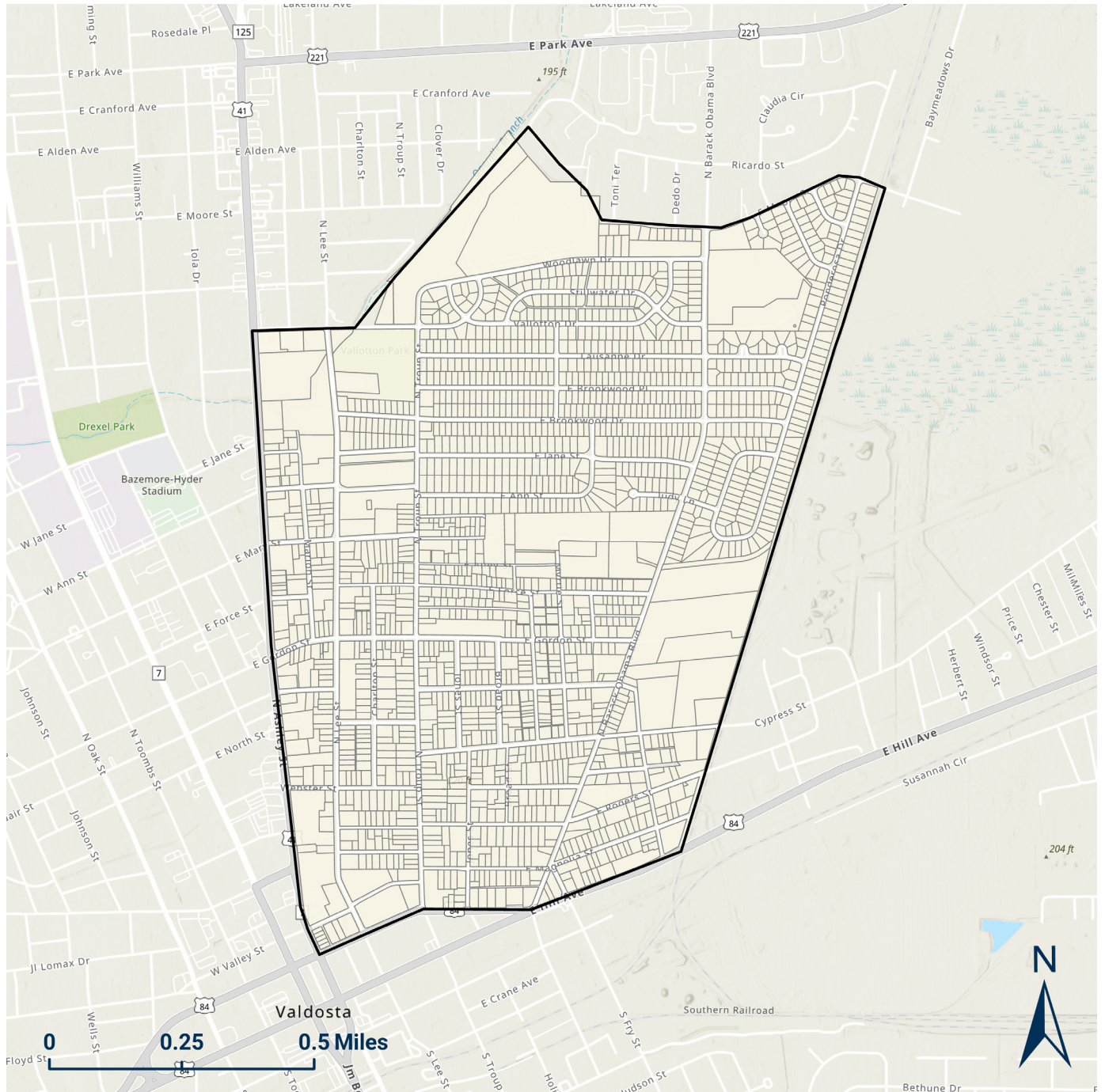
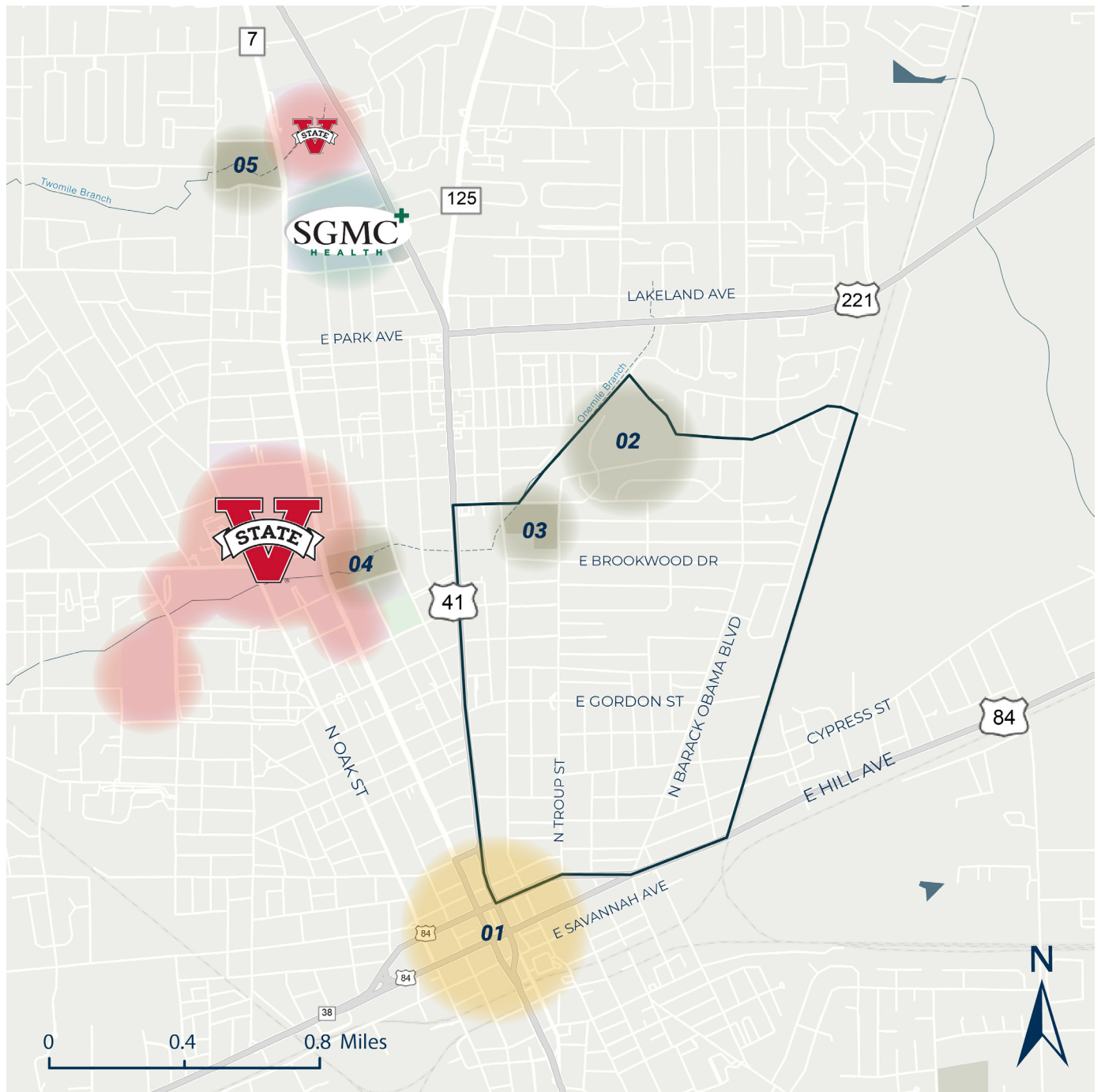


Figure 2: Community Amenities



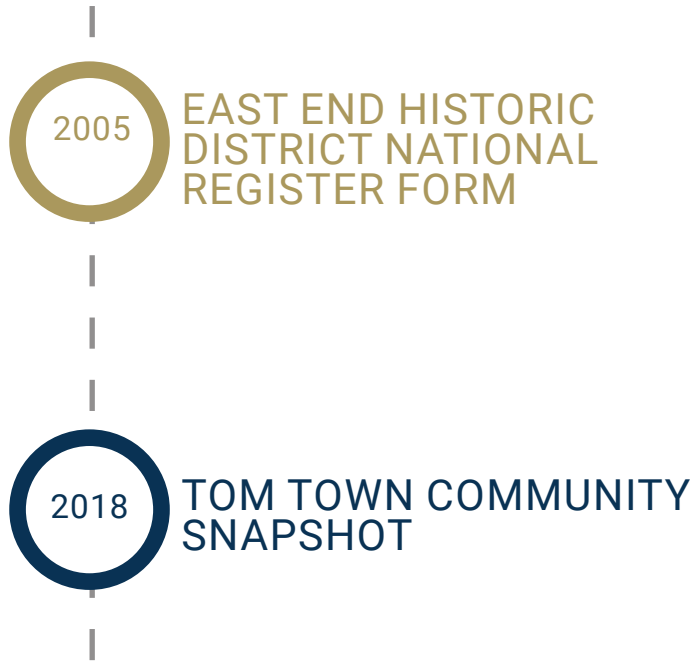
- 01** DOWNTOWN
- 02** VALLOTTON SPORTS COMPLEX
- 03** VALLOTTON PARK
- 04** DREXEL PARK
- 05** MCKEY PARK

02

COMMUNITY PROFILE

PREVIOUS PLAN OVERVIEW

Two previous plans completed within the study area boundary were reviewed to understand past planning efforts, community priorities, and housing-related strengths and challenges. These documents helped shape our understanding of the community and guided our approach to data collection, and recommendations.



2005

East End Historic District National Register Form

Plan Summary

The East End Historic District in Valdosta, Georgia, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005. The district is located northeast of downtown and roughly bounded by North Ashley and East Ann streets, East Hill Avenue, and the Georgia and Florida Railroad line. The district includes 470 contributing buildings, a contributing structure, and a contributing site, as well as Smith Park. The district also includes work by local architect Lloyd Greer and is defined by its Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style architecture.

The application itself detailed why the East End should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places through the National Park Service. The application included the district's historic and current functions, architectural style and physical appearance, areas and period of significance, and history and context. Receiving this designation allows qualified historic properties to receive preservation benefits and incentives to protect America's historic and archeological resources.

2018

Tom Town Community Snapshot

Plan Summary

The Tom Town Community Snapshot Report was created to provide residents and officials with current data and statistics for the neighborhood, as well as a framework for the revitalization of the historic community.

Tom Town has a rich history, dating back to 1882, when Tom Simmons, a former slave, and his wife, Ann, worked off the value of the land to purchase it from the owner, Mrs. Myddleton. Tom Town includes East Gordon Street and East Brookwood Drive from North Ashley Street to Jaycee Shack Road. The area is primarily residential with commercial use along the major corridors. The community also houses the Valdosta Housing Authority (VHA), which owns and operates multiple public housing facilities in the community.

The Tom Town Community includes the following community facilities:

- Tom's Corner Park
- Ora Lee West Community Center
- Valdosta Azalea City Trail

The report also details existing infrastructure conditions, the built environment, current state of housing, crime and safety, and types of businesses as well as mobility and access to businesses. By analyzing the key demographic data and existing conditions, the plan makes the following recommendations:

- Seek partnerships with local businesses
- Increase resident participation
- Participate in community projects and initiatives
- Incorporate public safety/neighborhood watch initiatives
- Create neighborhood strategies and plans
- Create a vision for the community
- Educate older residents on homeowner incentives

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Demographic data is included below to provide a snapshot of the current conditions of the study area, compared to Valdosta. This data provides an overview of population and housing trends and characteristics. Below are some highlights from the data:

- The median income is about \$15,000 lower in the study area than Valdosta (Table 1).
- The home ownership rate in the study area is lower (30%) than in Valdosta (37%).
- Households with an internet subscription is only 56% in the study area, compared to 77% in Valdosta.
- Gross rent is slightly lower in the study area, but the percentage of households spending more than 50% of their income on rent is higher than in Valdosta.
- Vacancy rates in the study area (13%) and Valdosta (12%) are very similar.

Figure 3: Racial Composition

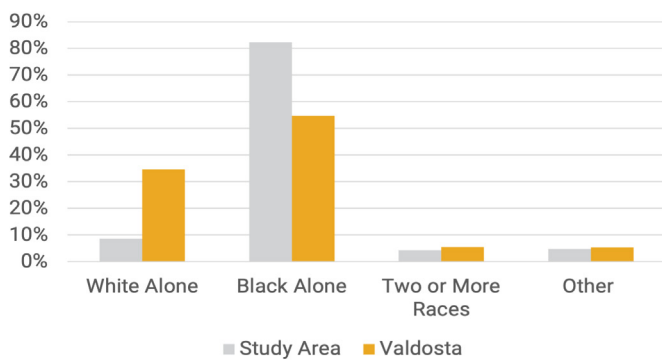


Figure 4: Population by Age

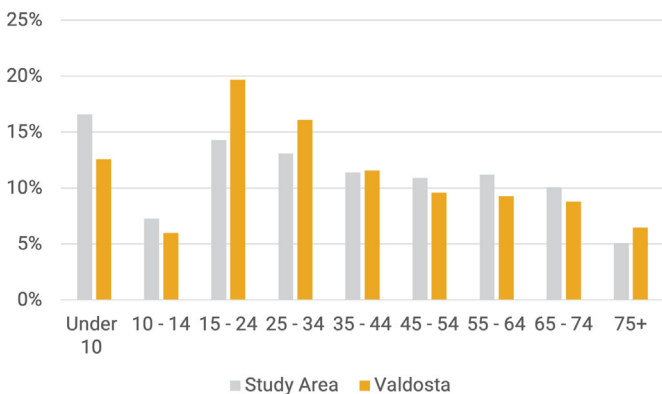
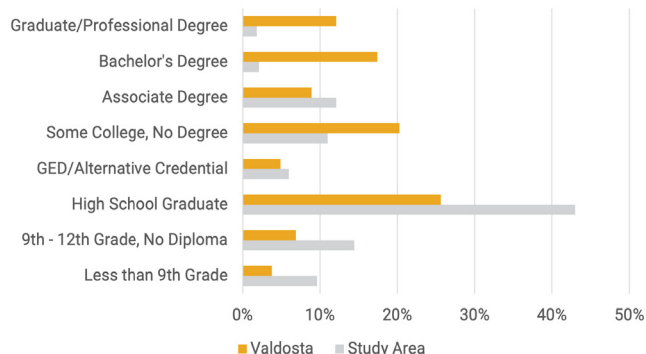


Figure 5: Educational Attainment



Source: American Community Survey, 2023

Table 1: Community Demographic Data

| Topic | Study Area | Valdosta |
|-------------------------|------------|----------|
| 2025 Population | 4,214 | 56,334 |
| 2025 Households | 1,645 | 22,605 |
| Average Household Size | 2.5 | 2.4 |
| Median Age | 32 | 34 |
| Median Household Income | \$30,418 | \$45,667 |
| Renter Occupied Units | 57% | 52% |
| Owner Occupied Units | 30% | 37% |

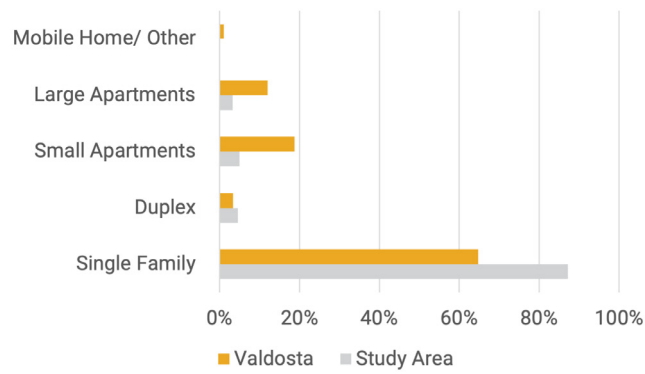
Source: ESRI Housing Profile, 2023

Table 2: Community Demographic Data

| Topic | Study Area | Valdosta |
|------------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Household Poverty | 33% | 25% |
| Households with Internet Access | 56% | 77% |
| Households without Internet Access | 40% | 16% |
| Cost Burdened Households | 26% | 26% |
| Extremely Cost Burdened Households | 28% | 23% |

Source: ESRI ACS Population Summary and Housing Summary, 2025

Figure 6: Residential Typology



- Figure 6 highlights that 5% of housing units in the study area are duplexes compared to 3% in Valdosta.
- There study area is predominantly single-family homes.
- In the study area, 62% of structures were built between 1960-1979 compared to 26% in Valdosta.
- There appears to be a slight uptick in new structures since 2020 in the study area.

Figure 7: Year Structure Built

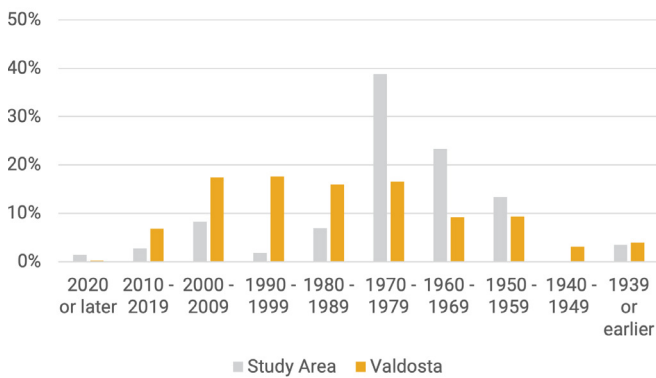
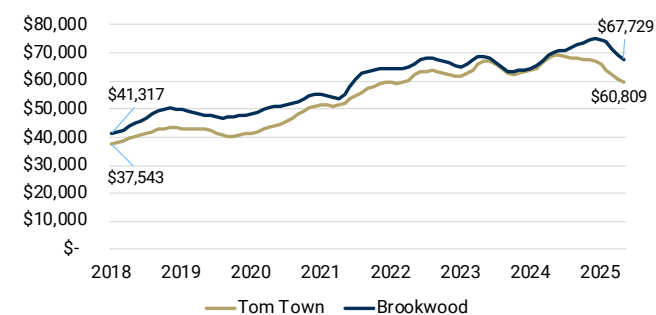


Figure 8: Study Area Income and Affordability



- In the study area, 54% of households spend more than 30% of their income on rent.
- The median household income in the study area is \$30,418, which is lower than the rest of the city, county, and state.
- The median gross rent in the study area is \$900, which is on par with the city's median gross rent.
- Based on the median household income of the study area, affordable rent (30% of median household income) is \$760, which is significantly lower than the current median rent.

Figure 9: Neighborhood Home Values



Recent Residential Sales

Figure 10 shows a sampling of recent residential sales in the study area. Prices range from \$40,000 to \$138,000. While these prices may be affordable to area residents, condition of the homes should also be considered, as many may require repairs that would exceed affordability. Homes in the price range shown should be considered for purchase by the land bank and rehabbed to provide affordable, quality homeownership options.

Figure 10: Recent Residential Sales



01
\$138,000
3 BED 2 BATH
1,310 SQ FT



02
\$76,000
2 BED 1 BATH
906 SQ FT



03
\$125,000
4 BED 2 BATH
1,500 SQ FT



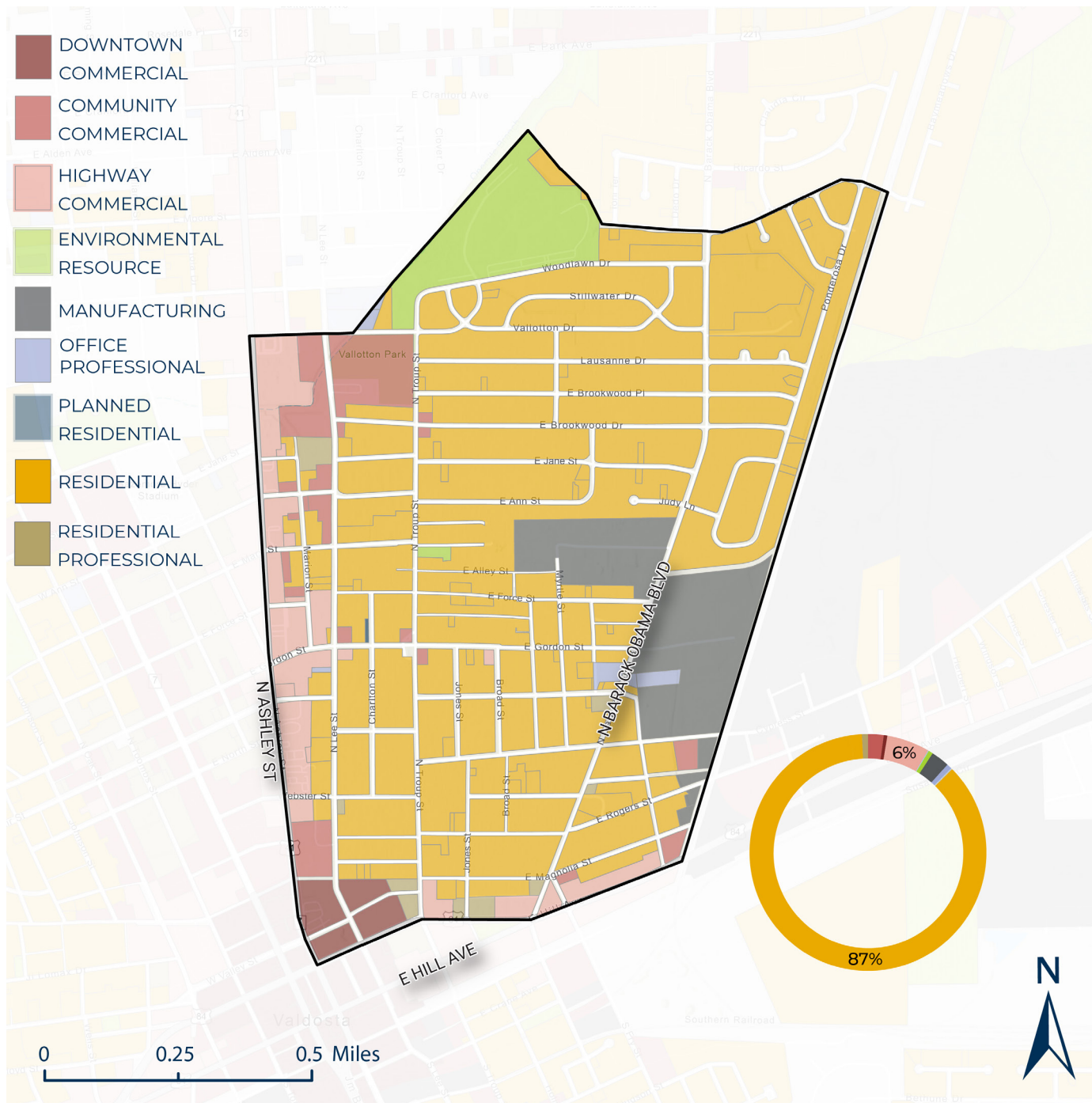
04
\$40,000
3 BED 2 BATH
1,310 SQ FT

Geography of Character

Zoning

Approximately 87% of the parcels are zoned residential, with 6% designated as highway commercial. Most residential parcels fall under the R-6S zoning category. According to the zoning code, “the purpose of this section is to provide single-family detached residential areas with minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet.” This category allows for accessory units for family members or garage apartments, given that the lot meets the requirements for additional units.

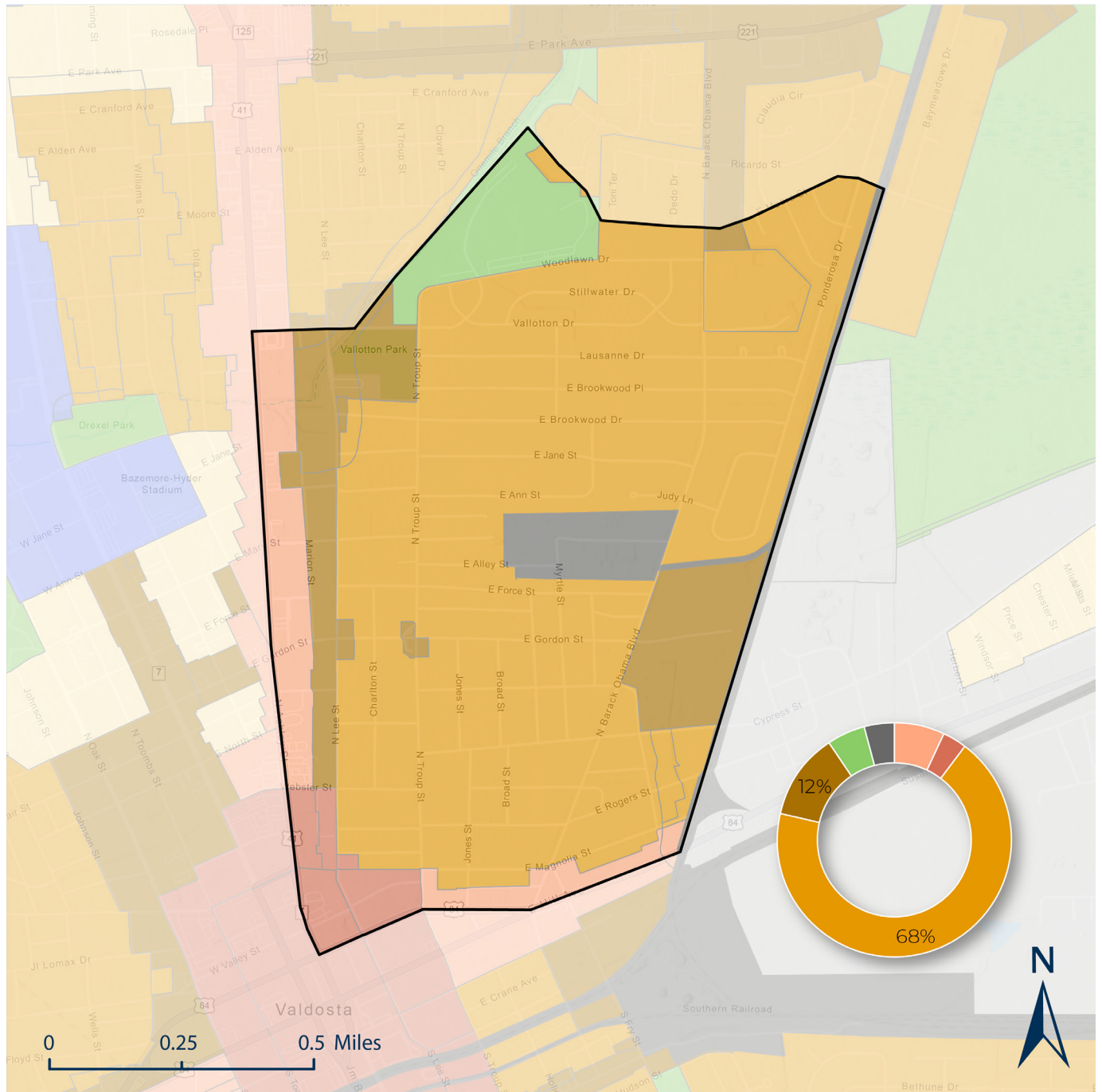
Figure 11: Study Area Zoning



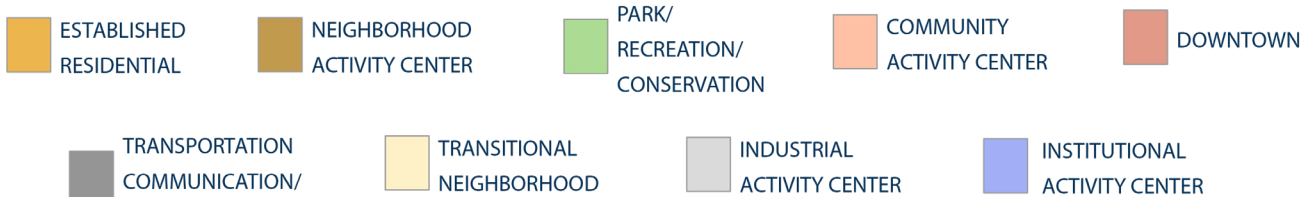
Character Areas

As show in Figure 12, most of the study area is considered established residential (68% parcels). There are two primary zones of neighborhood activity (12% parcels) along N Troup Street and at the old Crackin Good Bakery site. The community activity area spans the western edge along N Ashley Street.

Figure 12: Study Area Character Area Map



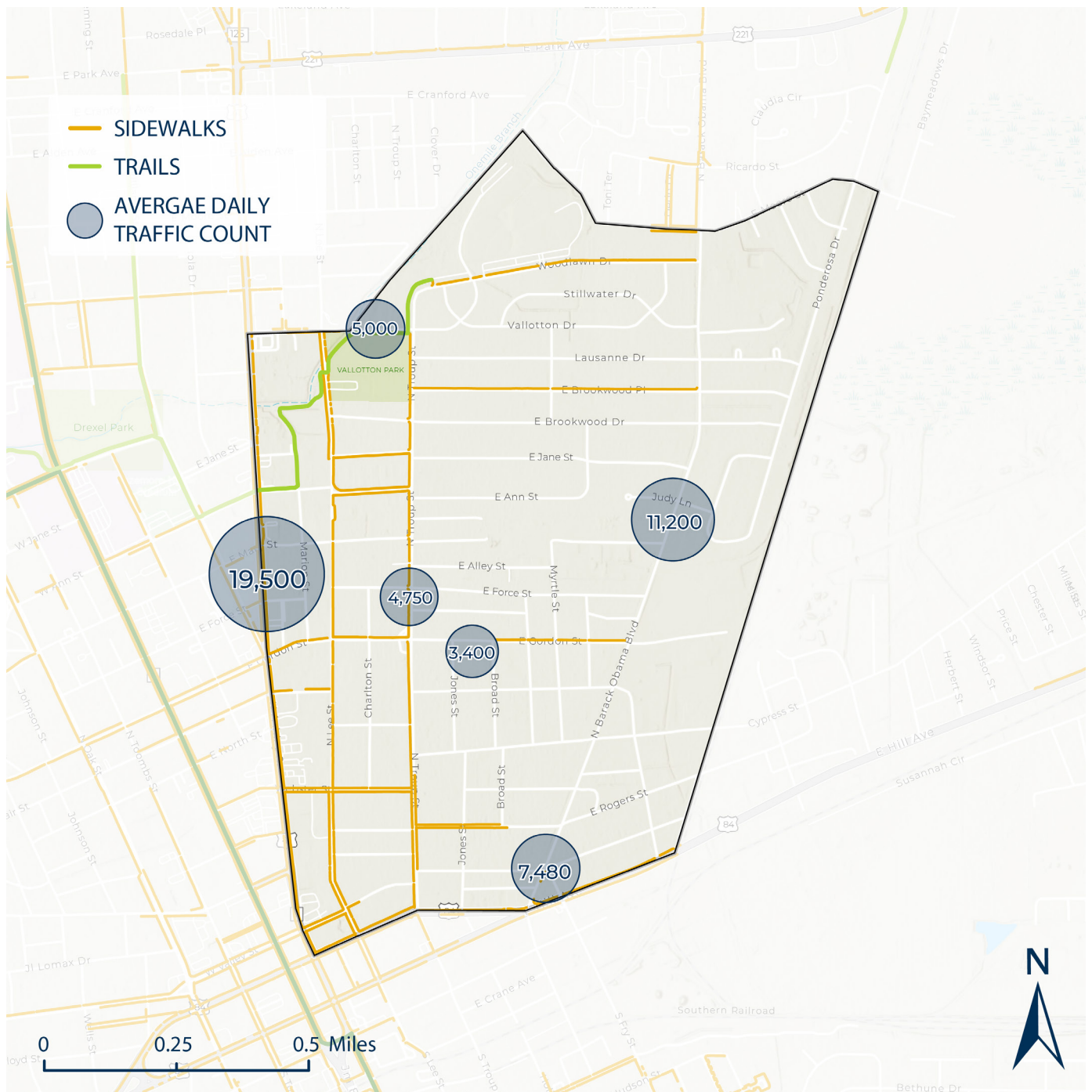
CHARACTER AREAS



Connectivity

The study area is fairly connected in terms of sidewalks, trails, and the road network. The Azalea City Trail, a major asset, connects the community to the well-utilized Vallotton Park. While sidewalk infrastructure exists primarily along commercial corridors, enhanced sidewalk infrastructure in the residential area would be beneficial for access and connectivity. Assessing sidewalk conditions should be included in a windshield survey of the area. The City is also currently working on Hill to Northside Drive sidewalk improvements. Georgia DOT is also working on roadway improvements to N Barack Obama Blvd.

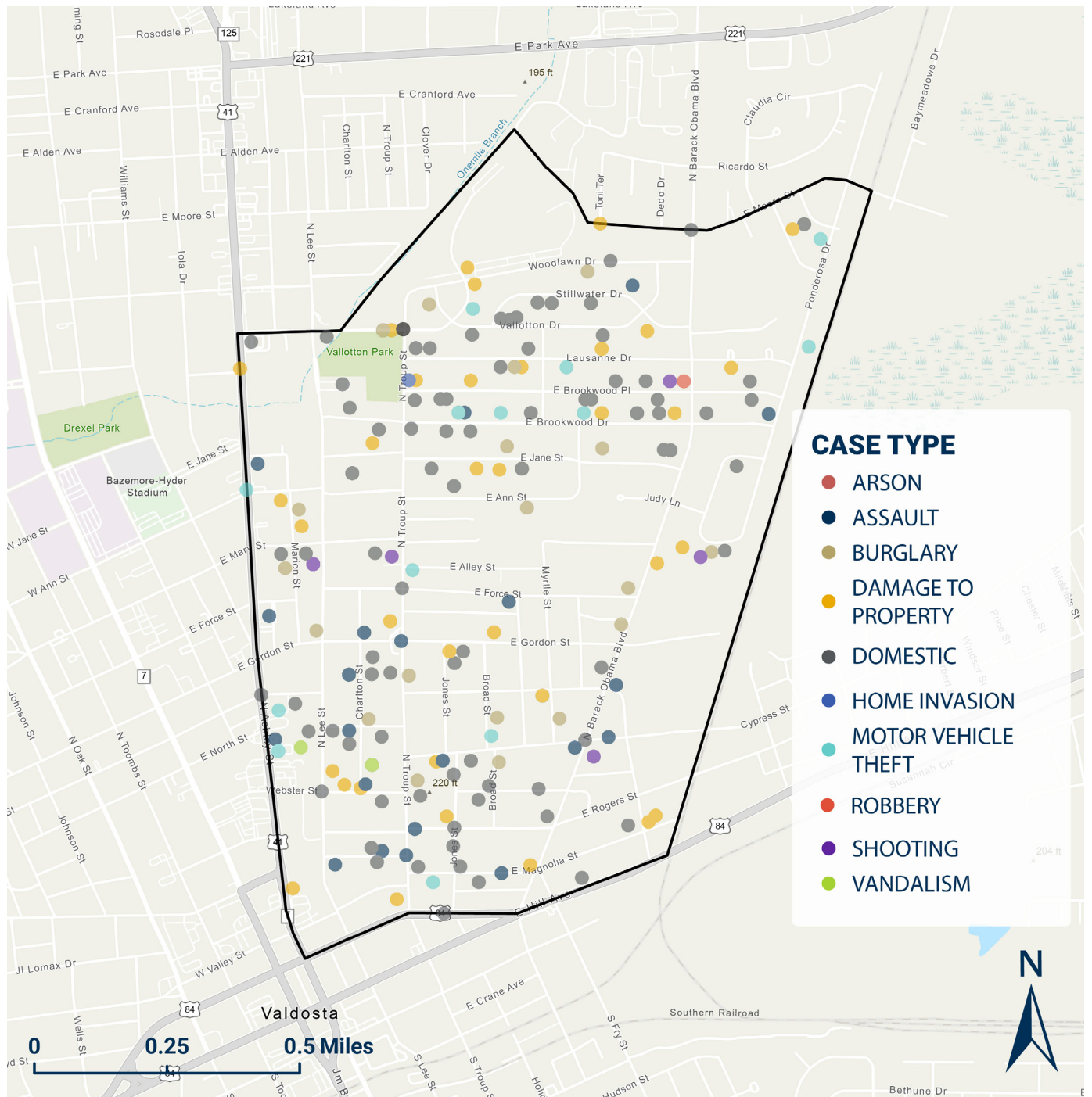
Figure 14: Study Area Connectivity



Neighborhood Crime

Figure 15 maps a subset of crime incidents for 2023. Incident rates are slightly elevated within the boundary, with most reported cases involving domestic disturbances. Additionally, there is a notable presence of burglaries and other property-related offenses. The slightly higher rate of incidents within the boundary can have several ripple effects on both community safety and housing stability.

Figure 15: Crime Locations

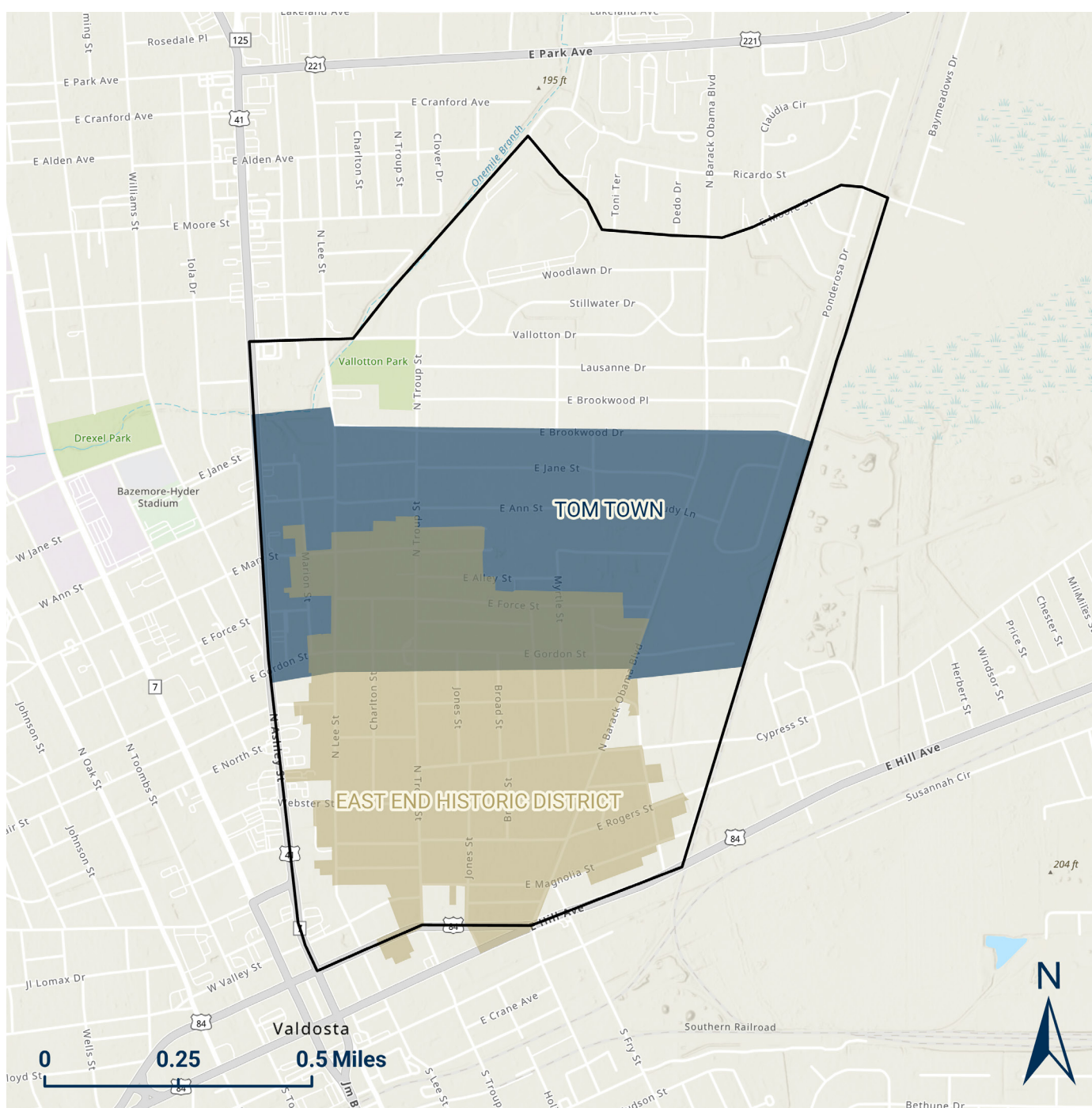


Historic Neighborhoods

The boundary includes the East End Historic District as well as the historic Tom Town neighborhood. The East End Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005, is located northeast of downtown and roughly bounded by North Ashley and East Ann streets, East Hill Avenue, and the Georgia and Florida Railroad line. The district includes 470 contributing buildings, a contributing structure, and a contributing site, as well as Smith Park. The district also includes work by local architect Lloyd Greer and is defined by its Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style architecture.

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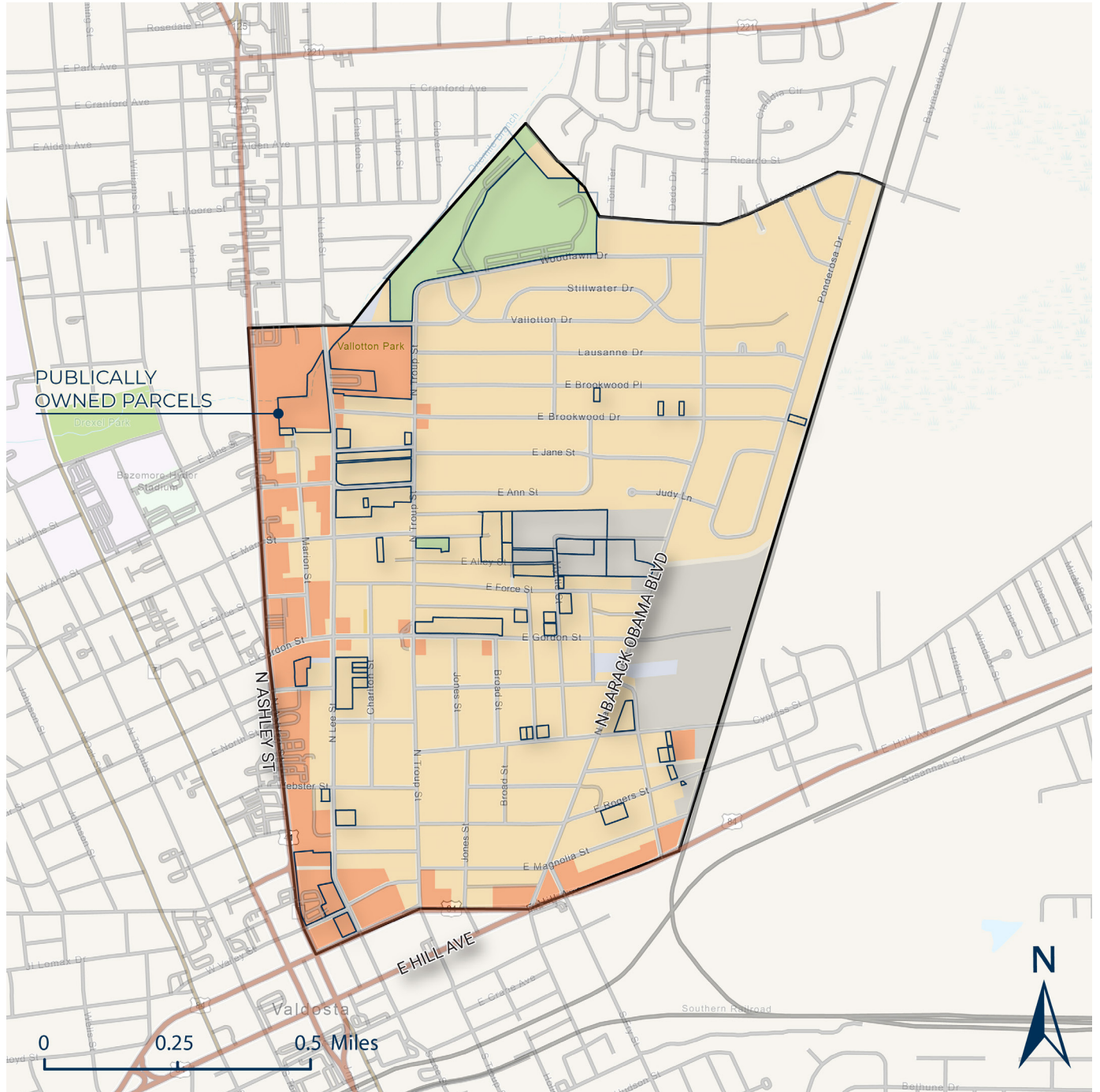
Figure 16: Historic Neighborhood Boundaries



Publicly Owned Property

Figure 17 illustrates the publicly owned parcels in the study area. There are several publicly owned parcels that could be used as community assets. Valdosta Housing owns multiple properties within the area, along with the Valdosta Utilities Department and the Public Works Department sites.

Figure 17: Publicly Owned Property



 PUBLIC PARCELS

ZONING

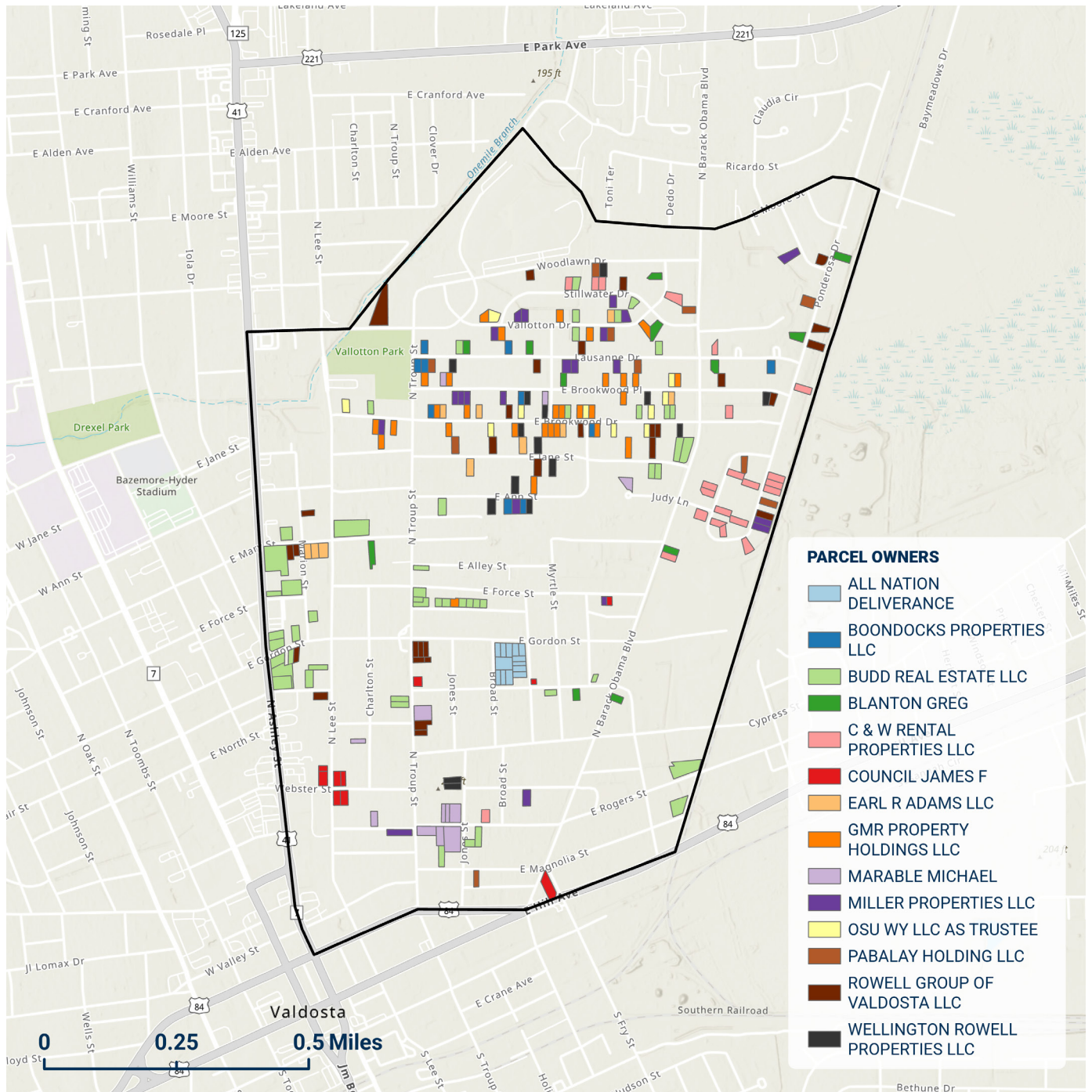
 COMMERCIAL
  ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE
  MANUFACTURING
  RESIDENTIAL

Major Property Owners

480 parcels have corporate owners, and many are in residentially zoned areas. This raises important questions for zoning, housing policy, and tenant protections. Local governments may consider strategies to balance corporate investment with affordable housing goals, such as incentives for mixed-income developments or requirements for community reinvestment.

Fourteen entities collectively own 255 parcels within the boundary, representing a substantial footprint in the area. Their shared presence positions them as key stakeholders in the local real estate landscape. By forming a collaborative group, these owners could help guide future development, support community goals, and contribute to more coordinated and responsive planning efforts.

Figure 18: Major Property Owners



03

RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An essential next step for planning implementation is integrating community engagement into the prioritization and implementation process. The goal of community engagement is to determine what residents and vested stakeholders view as the most critical initial recommendations to spark neighborhood transformation. Building momentum with the community can drive successful implementation and will be an important part of vetting recommendations included in this plan.



Specific next steps for this project include:

There are challenges with continued stakeholder engagement, especially for underrepresented groups. Low attendance and

Identify Local Stakeholders and Community Leaders

Examples include: local church leaders, neighborhood/civic association leaders, and neighborhood residents.

Conduct Stakeholder Interviews

Conduct one-on-one interviews with stakeholders to determine what they view as needs and challenges in the neighborhood.

Compare feedback to community data and proposed recommendations.

Form a Steering Committee of Local Leaders and Residents

Establish a steering committee (10-15 people).

Review Phase Two Plan and stakeholder feedback.

Set a regular meeting cadence to provide updates and solicit feedback from the steering committee. The steering committee should serve as the primary outreach partner to the community, especially for events.

participation at public meetings, in addition to strong opposition from individuals or groups on certain topics, is a challenge for every community. The recommendations included below are intended to increase community participation and project transparency.

- Ask participants if they would prefer to meet online or face-to-face.
- Allow enough time before meetings to share collateral material. This is especially important for steering committees being asked to regularly review and vet material.
- It is important to communicate consistently, not just about when the next meeting is, but to share positive stories, wins, or accomplishments with stakeholders to share how their input is driving change.
- Ensure there is a balance between sharing information and asking for feedback during all public engagement sessions.

Community engagement is a continuous process, not a one-time event. Successful redevelopment depends on building trust through transparent communication, education, and resident empowerment. Designating a champion, forming cross-community working groups, and setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goals will help drive implementation and ensure meaningful progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CASE STUDIES

The complete set of recommendations is below. Since some recommendations in the plan require further explanation, several case studies are included to showcase how other communities have implemented the suggested recommendations. These recommendations and best practices serve as a starting point for Valdosta and its partners to collaborate with local stakeholders and the community in crafting an implementation plan that receives local support and drives neighborhood transformation. The Continued Community Engagement section further outlines how to build and maintain implementation support. Images not directly sourced came from CEDR's image bank and stock photo search engines.

COMMUNITY GROWTH

Parcel Level Windshield Survey

- Conduct a parcel level windshield survey to determine the current use and external condition of every structure/parcel in the neighborhood.
- Results from the windshield survey can help determine pockets of vacancy or poor structure conditions, allowing decision makers to prioritize both investments and location.

Neighborhood Marketing and Branding

- Create a marketing and branding plan leveraging existing assets, and the history and culture of the neighborhood.
- Use the marketing and branding plan to promote redevelopment projects or new programs.
- Market and brand open space and parks to highlight the history and culture of the neighborhood.

Figure 19: Neighborhood Street Toppers



Neighborhood Excess Property Inventory

- Often, starting with publicly owned property is a great first step towards supporting neighborhood transformation; therefore, identifying publicly owned property and its potential redevelopment uses is a crucial initial step.
- Work with public partners to identify publicly owned property in the neighborhood.
- Once the publicly owned properties are identified, work with the owners to determine if there is a future strategic use for the property or if it is considered “excess” for that entity. If so, explore how the property could be utilized to support redevelopment efforts.

Commercial Node Support

- Adopt mixed-use zoning overlays that allow residential, retail, office, and civic uses in the same area.
- Explore or renew incentives like Federal Opportunity Zones.
- Allow adaptive reuse of vacant commercial buildings for housing or community uses.
- Focus efforts on key intersections or anchor blocks with existing assets.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION

Homestead Exemption Drive

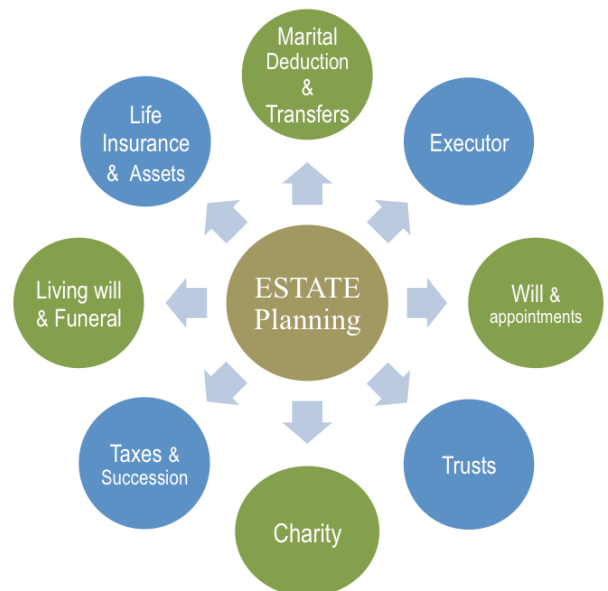
- Work with the Lowndes County Tax Assessor to determine potential owner-occupied residential units that do not currently have a homestead exemption, or who may qualify for a different exemption.
- Prioritize outreach to these households with information about the benefits of homestead exemptions and how to apply.
- Use the marketing and branding plan to create collateral outreach material about homestead exemptions and share this information at neighborhood events.



Estate Planning

- Estate planning is a critical component of neighborhood vitality, as it supports the smooth transition of property from one generation to the next. Having an estate plan also helps protect a family's legacy, creates generational wealth, and can help mitigate heirs' property issues.
- A first step in supporting estate planning in the neighborhood is to provide informational sessions to residents. Potential partners for this informational session include the library system and local law firms.
 - The [DeKalb County Library System](#) held an Estate Planning Workshop Series in partnership with a local law firm.

Figure 20: Key Elements of Estate Planning



Down Payment Assistance Program

- Sharing information on existing down payment assistance programs, such as [Georgia Dream](#), [Peach Plus](#), and [Peach Select Veterans Assistance](#) is a great first step to leverage existing funding sources to support homeownership.
- Targeted down payment assistance programs could be considered to help employees of Valdosta State University or SGMC live near their place of employment. Creating a down payment assistance program for these employees specifically for the study area could encourage homeownership in the area.
 - The University of Kentucky in Lexington created an [Employer Assisted Housing Program \(EAHP\)](#) to help employees find housing near campus. The program provides 5% of the purchase price (up to \$15,000) the form of a "forgivable" loan.

Historic Preservation

- Catalog local historic assets.
- Collect oral history stories from longtime residents about the neighborhood.

Address Vacant and Heirs' Property

- Heirs' property occurs when there is a lack of a formal will or estate plan for the property—resulting in unclear titles and fractured ownership among descendants. If these descendants have moved away, this can further complicate the resolution of title issues.
- Leveraging the existing land bank can help address some of these issues, by bringing current under-used property back to an active use.
 - The [Rome-Floyd Land Bank](#) is an active Land Bank in Georgia that serves as a best practice, especially with their property sale map.
 - The [Georgia Heirs Property Law Center](#) and the [Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund](#) are two potential partners that could address heirs' property and provide estate planning assistance.



Figure 21: Rome-Floyd Land Bank Home

Establish a Homeowner Rehabilitation Program

- Cities and non-profits across Georgia have created homeowner rehabilitation programs to address housing condition issues in their community, often using CHIP and HOME funds for their programs.
- The program could initially concentrate in the study area, potentially increasing impact through more strategic and coordinated investment.
 - To support funding and execution efforts, the city could seek partnerships with Habitat for Humanity or United Way. An example of this type of relationship in action is the [Homeowner Rehabilitation Program in Cherokee County](#), where Habitat for Humanity of North Central Georgia and Cherokee County have partnered to provide homeowner rehabilitation services.
 - [Focus Community Strategies](#) is a neighborhood based non-profit that supports housing stability through property rehabilitation and development, creating homeownership and rental opportunities across the income spectrum.



Flock Safety Raven Audio Detection

- [Audio detection](#) devices were deployed to monitor for gunshot sounds, sending real-time alerts to law enforcement for faster responses.
 - Albany has implemented the Flock Safety system and has seen a 30% increase in the number of gunshots reported accurately.
- With the addition of pan-tilt cameras and license plate recognition cameras, police can detect stolen vehicles while regulating areas without compromising residents' privacy.

Figure 22: Albany Flock Safety System



Environmental Design

- Incorporate [Crime Prevention through Environmental Design \(CPTED\)](#) principles when updating zoning ordinances.
- New developments with environmental design principals can demonstrate how projects can discourage criminal activity.

Figure 23: CPTED Example



04

PLACES TO VISIT

BEST PRACTICES IN NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT

Effective neighborhood redevelopment requires a thoughtful blend of community engagement, strategic investment, and long-term vision. Across the Southeast, several communities have pioneered innovative approaches to revitalization that offer valuable lessons for others. This section highlights best practices drawn from four exemplary initiatives—South Tifton (Tifton, GA), Laney Walker (Augusta, GA), Pleasant Hill (Macon, GA), and Northside (Spartanburg, SC). Each of these neighborhoods faced distinct challenges, from physical disconnection and housing blight to economic stagnation and loss of cultural identity. Through collaborative planning, establishment of a lead agency with dedicated staffing resources, targeted funding, and inclusive development strategies, they have begun transforming into vibrant, resilient communities. Their experiences can serve as a roadmap for neighborhood redevelopment in Valdosta.



South Tifton Urban Redevelopment Plan

The [South Tifton Urban Redevelopment Plan](#) (Tifton, Georgia) - A comprehensive initiative aimed at revitalizing historically underserved neighborhoods of Phillipsburg and Unionville.

Figure 25: South Park Avenue



Laney Walker Bethlehem Neighborhood Plan

The [Laney-Walker Bethlehem Neighborhood Plan](#) (Augusta, Georgia) - the redevelopment area spans nearly 1,100 acres in Augusta's urban core, encompassing the historic African American neighborhoods of Laney Walker and Bethlehem. The neighborhoods are adjacent to downtown Augusta and near major employers and institutions like Augusta University.

Figure 24: Laney Walker



Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan

The [Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan](#) (Macon, Georgia) - Pleasant Hill is a historically Black neighborhood in Macon. The area includes historic institutions like the Georgia Academy for the Negro Blind, Green Street School, and Progressive Christian Academy.

Figure 26: Pleasant Hill



Northside Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan

The [Northside Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan](#) (Spartanburg, South Carolina).

The Northside neighborhood is a 400-acre historic mill village just north of downtown Spartanburg, adjacent to Wofford College.

Figure 27: Northside Neighborhood



The redevelopment efforts in South Tifton, Laney Walker, Pleasant Hill, and Northside demonstrate that meaningful change is possible when local stakeholders are engaged in shaping the plan, rather than being “planned for” and where investments are aligned with local needs. These case studies underscore the importance of mixed-income housing, cultural preservation, strategic partnerships, and infrastructure improvements in fostering neighborhood revitalization. By adopting and adapting these best practices, prioritizing citizen engagement and initiating quick-win projects to gain momentum, neighborhoods can be part of revitalization that honors their history while securing their future. Ultimately, successful redevelopment is not just about physical transformation—it’s about restoring opportunity, dignity, and connection for the people who call these places home.

05

APPENDIX

Community Engagement Strategy: A Housing Savannah-Inspired Model

To ensure the long-term success and sustainability of neighborhood redevelopment efforts, this plan suggests a community engagement framework modeled after Housing Savannah, a nationally recognized initiative that has successfully mobilized residents, stakeholders, and institutions to address housing affordability and neighborhood revitalization in Savannah, Georgia.

Tactical Implementation:

Community Task Force Formation

Establish a neighborhood-based task force composed of residents, local business owners, faith leaders, youth representatives, and housing advocates.

Neighborhood Listening Sessions

Host regular listening sessions to gather input on housing needs, redevelopment priorities, and community concerns.

Resident-Led Education Campaigns

Launch awareness initiatives to demystify affordable housing and combat stigma, tying housing prices to workforce incomes and ALICE data.

Workforce Housing Advocacy

Partner with local employers and institutions to advocate for workforce housing solutions that allow essential workers to live near their jobs. Housing Savannah's success in securing support from the Georgia Ports Authority demonstrates the power of cross-sector collaboration.

Youth and Creative Engagement

Collaborate with local schools and arts organizations to engage youth in storytelling, design, and visioning activities.

South Tifton Urban Redevelopment Plan

Background and Focus Areas

Historically, South Tifton has suffered from disinvestment, deterioration, and declining property values, with little public or private investment over the past 40 years.

The redevelopment area spans from Matt Wilson Elementary School to the old Horizon Mill site, within city limits.

Key Issues

Deterioration of housing stock and infrastructure.

Lack of broader community engagement.

Discrepancies in property values and historic preservation compared to North Tifton.

No dedicated entity focused on South Tifton's improvement.

Strategic Response

In 2018, the city adopted the South Tifton Redevelopment Assessment & Strategy.

The Tifton Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA) was created in 2019 to lead the effort.

A Redevelopment Director was appointed to manage community outreach, grant writing, and project execution.

Laney Walker/Bethlehem Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan

Background and Focus Areas

The initiative began in 2008, driven by the Augusta Commission's legislation to reverse decades of blight and disinvestment.

The historic African American neighborhoods are adjacent to downtown Augusta and near major employers and institutions like Augusta University.

Key Issues

Bethlehem: 70% of housing in poor or dilapidated condition; 30% of parcels vacant.

Laney Walker: 33% of housing in poor or dilapidated condition; 20% of parcels vacant.

High levels of poverty, unemployment, and general distress qualified the area for special redevelopment designations.

Strategic Response

A multi-phased revitalization strategy was developed that included a public engagement plan, and a housing and economic development plan.

A pattern book and builders construction manual were also created to support consistent development.

Funding was secured through bond financing.

Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan

Background and Focus Areas

Pleasant Hill is a historically Black neighborhood in Macon, once a thriving center of Black middle and professional class life.

The neighborhood was split in half by Interstate 75 in the 1960s, leading to decades of disinvestment, blight, and decline.

Key Issues

Limited commercial activity, poor infrastructure (sidewalks, lighting), and lack of safe public spaces.

Blight and deteriorating housing stock are widespread.

Economic disparity: Residents face high poverty rates and low life expectancy compared to nearby affluent neighborhoods.

Strategic Response

A Pleasant Hill Strategic Plan was developed with input from over 400 residents, funded by the Downtown Challenge Grant.

Several federal grants were secured to reconnect the neighborhood, and for planning of sidewalks, transit and a new commercial district.

Northside Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan

Background and Focus Areas

The Northside neighborhood is a historic mill village just north of downtown Spartanburg, adjacent to Wofford College.

Once a vibrant working-class community, it experienced decades of disinvestment, blight, and high crime, becoming one of the city's most challenged areas.

The Northside Initiative was launched in 2010 as the most ambitious neighborhood revitalization effort in Spartanburg's history.

Key Issues

Lack of quality housing, educational opportunities, and community infrastructure contributed to systemic poverty and instability.

Most of the single-family housing units were vacant or abandoned at the start of the project.

There were dilapidated multifamily units that were a major source of poor living conditions and crime.

Strategic Response

The Northside Development Group (NDG) was formed to act as a land bank and lead redevelopment efforts.

NDG partnered with residents (Northside Voyageurs), the City of Spartanburg, and institutions like Wofford College, Spartanburg Regional Healthcare, and the Mary Black Foundation.

A HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant supported master planning, including street grid redesign, traffic calming, and mixed-use development.

Table of Figures

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Phase Two Study Area | 7 |
| Figure 2: Community Amenities | 8 |
| Figure 3: Racial Composition | 12 |
| Figure 4: Population by Age..... | 12 |
| Figure 5: Educational Attainment | 12 |
| Figure 6: Residential Typology | 13 |
| Figure 7: Year Structure Built | 13 |
| Figure 8: Study Area Income and Affordability | 13 |
| Figure 9: Neighborhood Home Values | 13 |
| Figure 10: Recent Residential Sales..... | 14 |
| Figure 11: Study Area Zoning | 15 |
| Figure 12: Study Area Character Area Map | 16 |
| Figure 13: Study Area Commercial Areas | 17 |
| Figure 14: Study Area Connectivity | 18 |
| Figure 15: Crime Locations | 19 |
| Figure 16: Historic Neighborhood Boundaries | 20 |
| Figure 17: Publicly Owned Property | 21 |
| Figure 18: Major Property Owners | 22 |
| Figure 19: Neighborhood Street Toppers | 25 |
| Figure 20: Key Elements of Estate Planning | 26 |
| Figure 21: Rome-Floyd Land Bank Home | 27 |
| Figure 22: Albany Flock Safety System | 28 |
| Figure 23: CPTED Example | 28 |
| Figure 24: Laney Walker..... | 30 |
| Figure 25: South Park Avenue | 30 |
| Figure 26: Pleasant Hill | 31 |
| Figure 27: Northside Neighborhood | 31 |



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