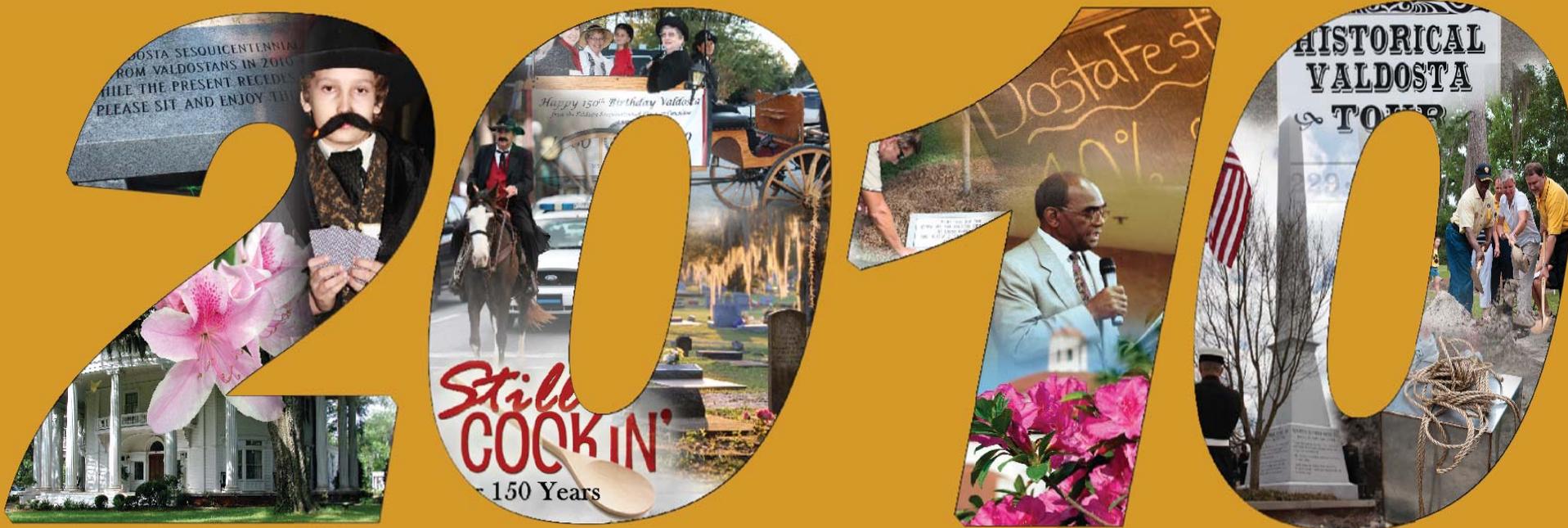


City of Valdosta, Georgia



2010 Annual Report



From the City Manager

It is my pleasure to present the 2010 City of Valdosta Annual Report, our 16th consecutive report, designed to inform our citizens, elected officials and other interested individuals of our city's progress last year.

In the midst of an exciting milestone year for our city—our 150th anniversary—the City of Valdosta continued to experience budget challenges felt by individuals, businesses, and government systems across our state and nation. Though reductions to the budget were necessary again this year, the city continued to responsibly seek alternate funding sources. The city was fortunate to receive more than \$3.6 million in grant funding in 2010 for public safety, neighborhood development and emergency watershed protection purposes. Furthermore, city employees continued to make adjustments to accommodate economic conditions, with no decrease in services to our citizens. In 2010, the city continued to operate in a fiscally responsible manner.

Throughout the year, city employees continued to provide top-notch municipal government, public safety and quality of life services to our citizens and visitors through our customer-centered departments. Our Fire Department maintained its ISO rating of 2—one of the highest ratings in the state—and proudly serves as the Georgia Search and Rescue Team, Task Force 2, serving all of Southwest Georgia. The Valdosta Police Department, a “Flagship Agency” accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) since 1999, served our community in 2010 with impeccable investigation and crime-solving capabilities and an unyielding public presence. Both departments were resourceful with grant funding to maintain the best public safety services for citizens.

In 2010, the City of Valdosta maintained its 4.11 tax millage rate, among the lowest of any major city in Georgia. The city has not had a property tax increase since prior to 1995, a remarkable feat given the economic hardships experienced by communities across the state and nation.

In addition to the educational events that took place yearlong in observance of our sesquicentennial, the city provided citizens with information on demand through our award-winning website, quality programming on Metro Valdosta 17, timely newsletters and E-News blasts and a host of other citizen engagement opportunities and resources. This year, 25 citizens participated in the inaugural Government 101 Citizens Orientation Program, designed to give City of Valdosta residents age 21 and older an inside look at how their local government operates daily.

Realizing the struggles that our local businesses have endured in the economic downturn, the city maintained its pro-business attitude by streamlining the permitting processes, providing greater opportunities for area businesses through the Valdosta Small Emerging Business program, and by encouraging development and redevelopment with local incentives and job tax credits for qualifying businesses.

In spite of the economy, Valdosta continues to excel as a regional retail hub. Valdosta's Overall Retail Pull Factor held at 2.17, the second highest pull of any county in Georgia, meaning for every \$1 Valdostans spend on goods and services, a visiting consumer to Valdosta spends \$1.17. Annual retail sales in the Valdosta Metropolitan Statistical Area topped \$2.8 billion in 2010, growing slightly from 2009 figures and depicting a 53 percent growth over the last three years.

The City of Valdosta remained committed to protecting our environment through the region's most comprehensive recycling program, neighborhood clean-ups, grant funding for brownfield assessments and redevelopment, and a commitment to public education.

Thank you for taking the time to review the work of your local government throughout the pages of this report. Special mention should be given to the 580 dedicated city employees for the tremendous service each provides to the citizens of Valdosta, our elected officials who provide us with leadership and direction, and the fine citizens of the Valdosta community to whom we are privileged to serve. I invite you to take a closer look at our organization by visiting us at www.valdostacity.com.

Sincerely,

Larry H. Hanson
City Manager
hanson@valdostacity.com



Mission

To be known by our customers and others for high quality municipal services.



www.valdostacity.com

Purpose

To provide public services that meet or exceed the expectations of citizens.

To improve the quality of life in the community by a sincere commitment to the ideals of public service.

To be creative and innovative in our approach to the needs of citizens, recognizing the trust and confidence that our citizens place in us as caretakers of governmental services.

To be efficient and effective and use wisely the public resources we are entrusted to manage.

Quality Service by Quality People

Valdosta — A City Without Limits

Table of Contents

Valdosta City Council Districts	4
Mayor & Council.....	5
City of Valdosta Organization.....	6
Department Heads.....	7
Economic Development.....	8
Public Involvement Department.....	10
Community Development Department.....	12
Utilities Department.....	14
Fire Department.....	16
Engineering Department	18
Public Works Department.....	20
Human Resources Department.....	22
Police Department	24
Finance Department	26-28
Grants Awarded.....	30
Municipal Court.....	31
Accolades	32-33

Valdosta Mayor & City Council



Mayor John J. Fretti



Councilman John Eunice
At-Large
(1/1/2004-8/10/2010)



Councilman Ben Norton
At-Large
(12/9/2010 -present)



Councilman James R. Wright
District 1



Councilman Joseph Vickers
District 3



Councilman Tim Carroll
District 5



Councilwoman Deidra A. White
District 2



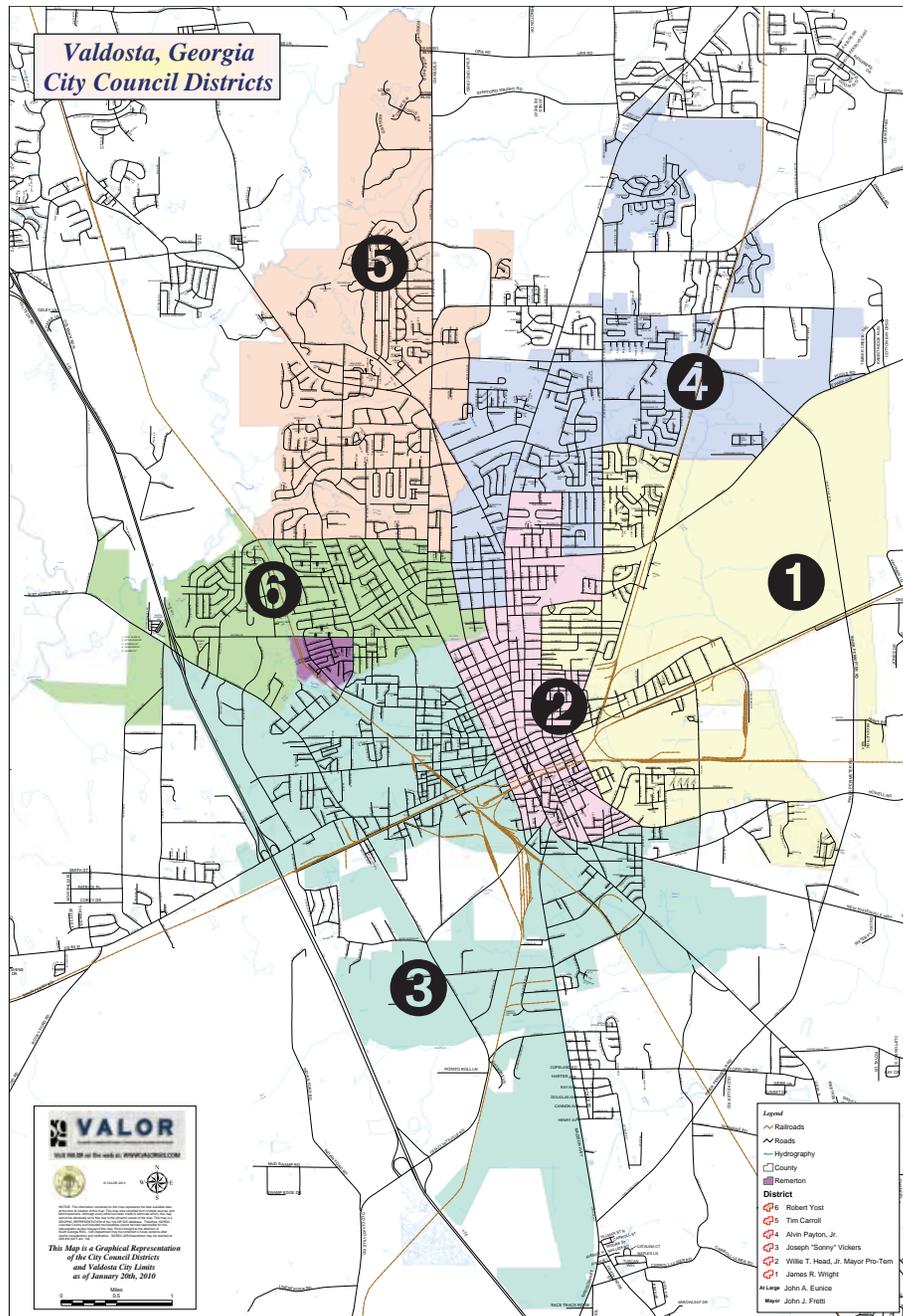
Councilman Alvin Payton, Jr.
District 4



Councilman Robert Yost
District 6

The Mayor and members of the City Council invite and encourage the citizens of the City of Valdosta to attend City Council meetings whenever possible, because good government depends on the interest and involvement of citizens. City Council meetings are held on the first and third Thursday following the first Sunday of each month, although changes may be necessary to avoid conflicts with holidays. City Council Work Sessions are held on the Tuesday before the first City Council meeting of each month. Meetings are held on the second floor of City Hall, located at 216 East Central Avenue, in beautiful Downtown Valdosta.

Citizens are also encouraged to visit the City of Valdosta website at www.valdostacity.com for agendas, minutes, and other valuable information about our city government and services.



Valdosta City Council

John J. Fretti jfretti@valdostacity.com	Mayor
James R. Wright jwright@valdostacity.com	Councilman, District 1
Deidra White dawhite@valdostacity.com	Councilwoman, District 2
Joseph Vickers jvickers@valdostacity.com	Councilman, District 3
Alvin Payton, Jr. apayton@valdostacity.com	Councilman, District 4 Mayor Pro Tem (8/19/2010 -present)
Tim Carroll tcarroll@valdostacity.com	Councilman, District 5
Robert Yost ryost@valdostacity.com	Councilman, District 6
John A. Eunice jaeunice@valdostacity.com	Councilman, At-Large (1/1/2004-8/10/2010) Mayor Pro Tem (1/7-8/10/2010)
Ben H. Norton bnorton@valdostacity.com	Councilman, At-Large (12/9/2010-present)

www.valdostacity.com



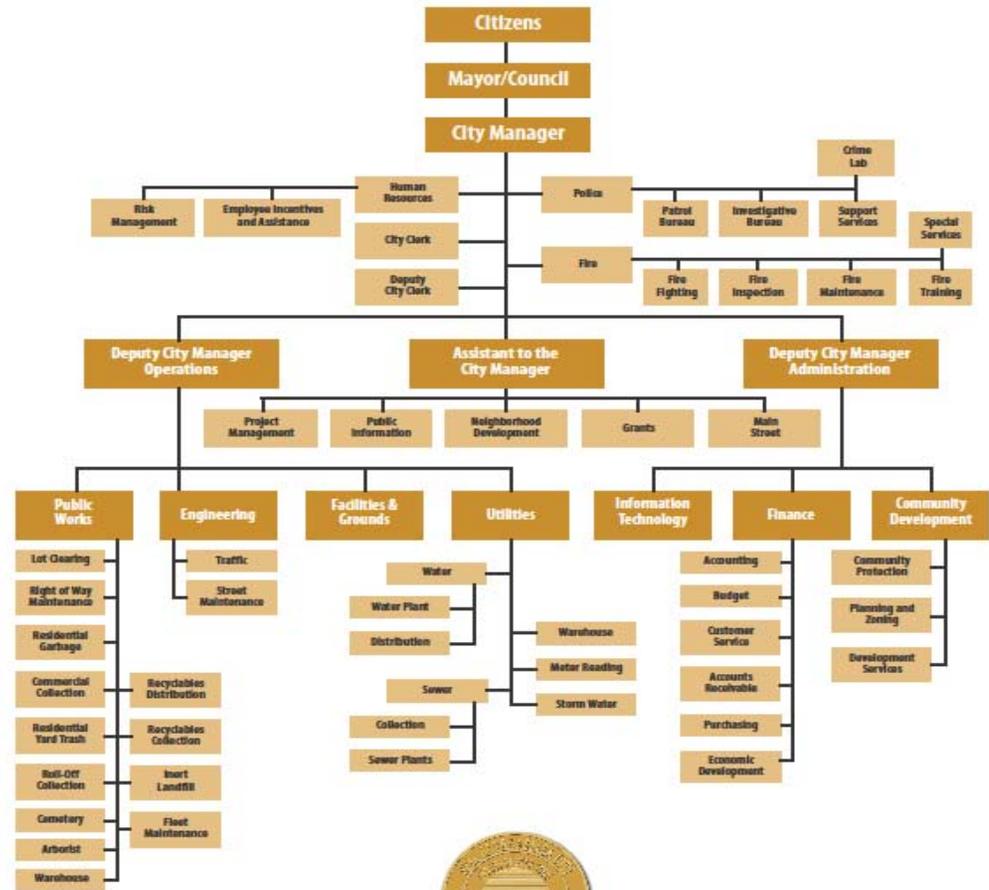
City of Valdosta Organizational Chart

The City of Valdosta operates under a Council-Manager system of government. The elected officials are the policy makers who establish a vision for our city, and together they hire the manager to carry out policy and ensure that all citizens are equitably served. The manager coordinates the work of the department heads and other employees, who help ensure the smooth and efficient delivery of services. The manager also has the responsibility of preparing the budget, directing day-to-day operations, managing personnel and serving as the council's chief policy advisor.

Valdosta citizens may participate in accomplishing the business of the city by serving on a variety of boards, commissions, authorities and advisory committees. A policy, adopted by the Mayor and Council in 2008, established the process for making appointments and has provided greater opportunities for more citizens to participate in their local government.

In 2010, the city launched the inaugural Valdosta City Government 101 orientation program, an initiative of the Mayor and City Council that gives City of Valdosta residents age 21 and older an inside look at how their city operates daily. The six-week program exposes participants to all city departments and their services.

More information about our city government and the various opportunities to serve the community may be found by visiting www.valdostacity.com, where citizens and other interested individuals may also sign up to receive regular E-news notifications.





Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager

The primary function of the Assistant to the City Manager is to provide direct support to the City Manager in city-wide public policy development, project development and management. The office oversees the Public Involvement Department, which consists of four specific divisions: the Public Information Division, which includes Metro Valdosta Channel 17; the Neighborhood Development Division; the Grants Administration Division, and the Valdosta Main Street Program. Contact Mara Register at (229) 259-3571 or mregister@valdostacity.com.



John Whitehead, III, Deputy City Manager for Operations

The primary function of the Deputy City Manager for Operations is to provide the City Manager with city-wide operations support. The office specifically oversees the areas of Public Works, Automotive/Fleet Center, Fuel Center, Engineering, Utility Services and Facilities and Grounds. Contact John Whitehead at (229) 259-3585 or jwhitehead@valdostacity.com.



Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager for Administration

The primary function of the Deputy City Manager for Administration is to provide the City Manager with city-wide administration support. The office oversees the operations of the Finance Department, which includes the offices of Accounting, Budget, Customer Service, Accounts Receivable, Purchasing and Economic Development; the Community Development Department, which includes Community Protection, Planning and Zoning and Development Services; and the Information Technology Division. Contact Mark Barber at (229) 259-3518 or mbarber@valdostacity.com.



City of Valdosta Department Heads

L-R: Utilities Director Henry Hicks, Fire Chief J.D. Rice, Community Development Director Mike Martin, Deputy City Manager for Operations John Whitehead, III, City Manager Larry Hanson, Assistant to the City Manager Mara Register, City Engineer Von Shipman (retired August 2010), Police Chief Frank Simons, and Human Resources Director Charlie Felts. Not pictured: Deputy City Manager for Administration Mark Barber and City Engineer Pat Collins who was hired in December 2010 to replace retired City Engineer Von Shipman.





Economic Development in Valdosta

Valdosta, the principle city of the Valdosta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), offers regional residents and consumers a dynamic economy, boasting a wide-ranging mix of industries. Home to 54,518 residents in the city proper, over 160,000 in the MSA, and approximately 650,000 regional consumers within its retail pull of 15 to 17 counties in South Georgia and North Florida, Valdosta continues to grow despite the recent economic downturn.

During 2010:

- ▶ Valdosta's Overall Retail Pull Factor held at 2.17, the second highest pull of any county in Georgia, according to the 2011 Georgia County Guide. This means for every \$1 Valdostans spend on goods and services, a visiting consumer to Valdosta spends \$1.17. This equals to 59 percent of additional funding towards local services and beneficial programs due to this local sales tax boost from non-resident consumers. Annual retail sales in the Valdosta MSA topped \$2.8 billion in 2010, growing slightly from 2009 figures and depicting a 53 percent growth over the last three years. Valdosta continues to excel as a regional retail hub.

- ▶ The value of new residential single family construction permits issued during 2010

totalled \$7.6 million, a 29 percent decrease from the prior year, yet still a positive indication of growth in Valdosta. New commercial construction decreased 64 percent from 2009 figures, to \$11.5 million, along with \$13 million expended on commercial additions and expansions, meaning more than \$41 million of business growth occurred during 2010 in our city.

- ▶ Valdosta State University grew to a 12,898 student enrollment in 2010, a new record and a 4.9 percent increase over the previous year and a part of the 40 percent growth over the past five years. VSU also completed more than \$80 million in new construction and renovations within the last two years. Additional projected academic buildings and residence halls improvement projects, as well as a \$3 million project for a combination football practice field and soccer complex, are projected for the future. VSU's annual economic impact is approximately \$331 million.

- ▶ South Georgia Medical Center, the region's largest non-governmental employer, has an annual impact of more than \$480 million on Valdosta, according to a study released in March of 2010. Plans are underway for a multi-year, multi-million dollar implementation of a com-

puterized Electronic Medical Record system. SGMC's Occupational and Industrial Medicine Center opened in 2010 at a cost of \$1.2 million; the Pearlman Cancer Center underwent a \$360,000 renovation; and Langdale Place, a senior living facility affiliated with SGMC, underwent a 1,250-square foot expansion. SGMC has plans to add a new five-story parking deck, state-of-the-art Outpatient Imaging Center, and a 130,000-square foot, 96-private patient room tower in the near future.

- ▶ Wiregrass Georgia Technical College was named the Technical College of the Year for the State of Georgia and is the fastest growing technical and community college in the nation. WGTC's enrollment topped out at more than 9,100 students last year, making it the largest technical college south of Macon.

- ▶ Moody Air Force Base began \$34 million worth of new construction and completed \$96 million of construction during their last fiscal year. Moody AFB is home to more than 6,100 military personnel and their families and has an annual economic impact on Valdosta in excess of \$350 million.

- ▶ The Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority (VLCIA) announced \$156 million in



capital investment and 579 new jobs in our community during 2010. The VLCIA was also instrumental in assisting several existing local industries in expansion and renovation this year and announced the area's first "green," eco-friendly project to our area. From 2006 through 2010, the VLCIA has brought 2,572 new, higher wage jobs and \$677 million in capital investments to our area.

► The City of Valdosta monitors and manages the growth of Valdosta's historic downtown area through the state and nationally recognized Main Street Office. In partnership with our local downtown merchants, Valdosta's Main Street district saw an increase of 70 employees. More than 30 events were hosted downtown, attracting over 85,000 visitors to the heart of our city.

► Wild Adventures Theme Park celebrated its 15th birthday and made a splash with plans for a \$4 million expansion to Splash Island Water Park in September and an impressive 20 big band concert line-up. Wild Adventures continues to attract more than 1 million visitors to Valdosta annually with most season ticket holders residing more than two hours from our city.

► The Valdosta Regional Airport experienced more than \$3.1 million in expansions and renovations as new T-hangars for private and corporate hangars were constructed and new lighting on the main runway and taxiways was added. The airport hosted 23,253 total flight operations with over 42,000 enplanements and 41,000 deplanements.

► The Gross Domestic Product of the Valdosta MSA grew by more than \$6 billion during the final part of the recent economic downturn (bea.gov), while the unemployment rate hung just below nine percent on average. This rate is only slightly better than the state's unemployment rate of more than 10 percent. Private industry suffered the most, and the average weekly wage in Lowndes County suffered a slight loss from \$570 to \$568.

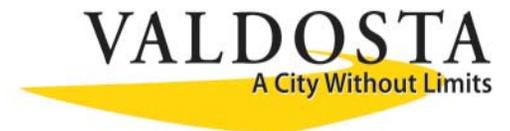
► Valdosta was selected as a "Top 3 Logistics Location in the Nation" by Site Selection Magazine and named among the first "Camera Ready Communities" by the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Division for Film, Music and Digital Entertainment.

► Valdosta welcomed the construction of The Residences at Five Points – a high-end, multi-residential complex in the midtown area,

Southwest Georgia Bank in the northern section of the city, Cheddar's Restaurant on Norman Drive, several new shops and expansion in the Valdosta Mall, and the beginning of construction on the \$42 million Grove Apartment Complex and Campus Crest project that will include more than 580 new residential units and additional commercial development. The city's redevelopment plans for the MLK corridor continued, and the Downtown Master Plan was also completed.

Valdosta continues to be a regional powerhouse and a viable choice for new residential and commercial interests. Valdosta's economic development goals for the future are to continue to enhance future growth by attracting new and supporting existing businesses, encouraging economic prosperity and diversity, and to further assist in the creation of additional jobs within the Valdosta MSA. The city remains proactive in attracting businesses and industries by gathering and providing essential and accurate data, marketing the city's amenities, offering business expertise and local research, exploring the availability of incentive based development zones within the city, and supplementing other key agencies and authorities as needed to continue its commitment to growth locally and globally.

With strength in local leadership and a pro-business attitude, Valdosta remains a "City Without Limits...A Region of Opportunity!"





IT'S IN OUR HANDS



Public Involvement Department

Engaging the Community

The Public Involvement Department is managed by the Assistant to the City Manager. The department supervises the Neighborhood Development Division; the Public Information Division, which includes Metro Valdosta Channel 17; the Grant Administration Division; and the Valdosta Main Street Program. The Assistant to the City Manager also conducts research and drafts public policy on behalf of the City Manager and assists in a variety of special projects and city initiatives.

The Neighborhood Development Division had a successful year as they continued to promote reinvestment in the city's neighborhoods through owner-occupied repair assistance, homebuyer education and down payment assistance. The division continued to assist in the preservation of existing homeowner housing in the Designated Revitalization Area (DRA) through the repair, rehabilitation and reconstruction of homes either through the Southern Hospitality Workcamp or through the city's major repair program. Twenty-seven families were assisted through these programs in 2010. More than 220 citizens attended homebuyer education and skills classes through division-funded programs and 15 families were assisted in purchasing their first home. Staff continued work to implement a comprehensive approach to the city's redevelopment efforts with the Westside Neighborhood Redevelopment Project, and began preparation to expand into the Tom Town and Pinevale neighborhoods. This model project brings all of the city's resources to the table to promote redevelopment on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis to include homeowner assistance, code enforcement efforts, infrastructure improvements, transportation improvements, historic preservation

and economic development. Staff also hosted a variety of meetings in the community providing information on the city's Section 3 Plan and related activities, and a Housing Summit that provided comprehensive information pertaining to homeowners from a variety of local and state agencies.

The city did see a slight increase in the annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation, which totaled \$647,678 for 2010. The Neighborhood Development Division capped off the year with notification from the Federal Home Loan Bank of an award of \$800,000 from the Affordable Housing Program fund. This award is the single largest award the City has received to date to assist homeowners and the funds will work in conjunction with CDBG funds to expand the City's effort to assist in homeowner repair in the DRA.

The Grant Administration Division also had a successful year in pursuing and securing more than \$2.2 million in grant funding from numerous state and federal agencies to support programs, equipment and staff needs in the Fire Department, Police Department, Neighborhood Development Division, Utilities Department and Public Works Department. These funds are a vital resource implementing and supporting critical services to our citizens.

The Public Information Division worked tirelessly to promote the various programs and services offered by the city to the local community, along with their incredible effort in organizing events to celebrate the city's sesquicentennial year. Staff continued to work



"I am extremely proud of the outstanding effort of all Public Involvement Department staff in serving our citizens. They continue to show their commitment to improving the quality of life for all of our citizens through effective communications, hard work and dedication. The year 2010 was a banner year for securing resources for our neighborhood development efforts. We are extremely grateful to the leadership of our city for their constant support of these efforts."

--Mara Register, Public Involvement Department Head & Assistant to the City Manager

with a group of committed volunteers to plan and host the 2010 Sesquicentennial Events, while continuing to communicate and educate our citizens through many other public relations tools to include the Annual Report, press releases, newsletters, the city's website, a weekly E-news blast, community videos, special events, group tours and Metro Valdosta Channel 17. Some of the special events celebrating our local community included the Annual Bird Supper that hosted hundreds of attendees from the local, state and national level, and Georgia Cities Week that included a variety of events for our citizens. Metro Valdosta 17, the city's government access channel, produced multiple local programs including *City Focus* and other shows highlighting all of the various departments and programs of the city.

The nationally accredited Valdosta Main Street Program, in partnership with the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA) and other important stakeholders, continued to make strides in the redevelopment of the historic downtown district through giving attention to business recruitment and retention, marketing and promotions, assistance in private rehabilitation projects, and the coordination of numerous special events. The CVDA in partnership with the city completed the first-ever comprehensive Downtown Master Redevelopment Plan. The plan was adopted by both the CVDA and the City, and will serve as a guide for public and private investment in the downtown for the next 20 years. The CVDA worked to market the downtown district through advertising and hosting events to include the Brown Bag Concert Series and the Holiday Open House festival. The division also assisted with First Fridays, Art After Dark and the annual Barbeque Contest. The Main Street Program also coordinated and hosted the state Heart and Soul Tour that brought state-level economic and downtown development professionals to the community. The primary focus for the program and the CVDA will continue to be the facilitation of redevelopment projects through assisting in packaging the various incentives available for private developers.

The Public Involvement Department also worked on many other programs and projects to include staffing the Valdosta-Lowndes Land Bank Authority, coordinating the Community Listening Forum on Violence and staffing the Community Task Force on Violence, serving on the 2011 Census Complete Count Committee, providing assistance to the City Manager on a variety of public policy issues and property acquisition projects, coordinating and implementing the new City Government 101 citizen orientation program, and completing many other special projects.

Mission

The mission of the Public Involvement Department is to enhance the quality of life in the City of Valdosta through neighborhood revitalization, community development, public awareness, and protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens.



Community Development Department

Comprehensive Development Services

The Community Development Department provides building code enforcement, plan review, and permitting services and provides the coordination and collaboration of all development services for the development community. In 2010, the department continued to make advancements in improving our customer service and the permitting process. We visited other cities to observe their processes and sought the feedback of various sources in order to gain new ideas about how our process may be improved. This year, department professionals completed over 10,637 inspections and issued over 5,998 permits.

In order to serve local businesses more effectively and maintain a proactive business environment, we have reorganized our review team and review schedules. We have streamlined the First Step meetings held every Thursday in order to encourage new development in our community. New technology is also being considered to help speed up the review process and the electronic submittal of plans.

The buzz in construction is "Going Green," which prompted many changes in the codes. The Energy Code alone has seen more changes in 2010 than in the past 10 years combined. The six certified and cross-certified field inspectors of the Community Development Services Division--a joint city-county division--have worked diligently to stay on top of the changes and are looking forward to working with the construction community to make 2011 another productive year.

The permit clerks continue to use an updated program which helps them better serve the customers and provides a better record keeping system for permanent records



“The Community Development Department is dedicated to providing our construction and development community with quality customer service to insure the safety of our citizens as well as the investment in the future of our community.”

— Mike Martin, Community Development Department Director

and archives. Online permitting capabilities allow permit holders the ability to monitor their permits, inspections, and to track their progress. Utilizing this technology fosters better communication for ultimate project success.

The Planning and Zoning Division ensures quality growth and development consistent with the Greater Lowndes 2030 Comprehensive Plan, by efficiently processing land use cases, business licenses, development plans, subdivision plats, sign permits, and other zoning matters for current and projected developments. The division made significant improvements to the Land Development Regulations in 2010. Staff also continued working on several projects such as the Brownfield Assessment Grant and implementation project among others.

This year, the seven certified city marshals that make up the Community Protection Division have continued improving neighborhoods through proactive enforcement of city ordi-

nances. The division was responsible for processing over 5,632 cases in 2010 and for streamlining standard forms to ensure accuracy and professionalism. They also helped coordinate two events that beautified our city neighborhoods: the Great American Clean Up in the spring and Make a Difference Day in the Fall.

Quick Stats

3599	Building Inspections
2739	Electrical Inspections
2291	Plumbing Inspections
2008	Mechanical Inspections
2319	Building Permits
1330	Electrical Permits
822	Plumbing Permits
1527	Mechanical Permits
5632	Community Protection Cases
551	Business Applications Approved
89	HPC and Administrative HPC Applications Processed
83	Sign Permits Processed
23	Rezoning, Variance and Special Exception Applications Processed
15	Subdivisions Processed

Mission

The mission of the Community Development Department is to be known by our customers, citizens, and others for high quality service, to protect the safety and well being of citizens, and to ensure the quality, integrity, and code compliance of the built environment in all of Lowndes County.





Utilities Department

Preparing for the Future

In 2010, the Utilities Department continued to build upon upgrading and improving its critical facilities and infrastructure by implementing specific strategies to rehabilitate its sewer collection system as well as planning for future upgrades of its water, sewer and stormwater systems.

As a result of surface water intrusion into portions of the Water Treatment Plant's existing wellfield, the department has taken a two-pronged approach to address the city's short and long term drinking water needs as well as ensure its long term sustainability for a safe, high quality water supply in the future. There is an ongoing search for an appropriate alternative wellfield location as well as evaluating the feasibility of upgrading the Water Treatment Plant to meet surface water treatment standards. Construction of a new 30-inch water transmission main will be completed in February 2011 and will allow for improved drinking water distribution, improved flows within the entire system, and maintain enhanced firefighting capabilities throughout the city. Water and sewer construction is expected to be completed in three of the priority annexed islands in early 2011, and the remaining annexed islands will all receive water and sewer services by the end of 2013. The analysis for the Hydraulic Water Model was initiated this past summer by Halcrow Engineering and its completion is anticipated in late December. This model will give the department the capability to evaluate current and future capacity needs, improve water flows and quality within the distribution system, develop an enhanced flushing program to significantly reduce fire hydrant flushing for water quality purposes, identify closed valves within the system, perform a Water Use audit and develop a short and long term Capital Improvement Plan. Replacement of the older Savannah Avenue/Fry Street elevated water storage tank is currently under design with construction of a new 2 million gallon replacement tank planned for 2011. The department also worked closely with the Valdosta Fire Department in December to ensure a successful ISO inspection and

evaluation. The department also completed construction of its new administration and operations building, bringing together various divisions under one roof, streamlining internal operations, and providing a city-wide operations center for emergencies.

Phase II of the city's Master Stormwater Management Plan began in 2009 and was completed in November of 2010. The goal of this update was to develop a prioritized list of long-term capital improvements to reduce stream flooding and identify projects to restore failing stream banks. Phase II identified 35 projects throughout the city with a total estimated cost of \$29.6 million and started the permitting process with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and the U.S. Corps of Engineers to design and construct the first set of projects. Phase III, once authorized, will develop bid packages and permitting assistance for designers to improve the roadway infrastructure in problem areas, and reduce flooding in conjunction with the stream restoration plan developed in Phase II.

The design of a new Withlacoochee Wastewater Facility Force Main, Pump Station, Equalization Basin with a new Influent Receiving Station and Headworks began in November 2010. Thirty percent of the design is anticipated to be complete by March 2011. The City of Valdosta has also submitted a new project worksheet for the relocation of the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This document is over 1,100 pages in length and is currently under review in FEMA's Region 4 Office based in Atlanta, Georgia. The proposed cost of relocation is approximately \$95 million and should be fully eligible for federal funding under FEMA guidelines.

A sewer collection rehabilitation action plan was implemented in 2010. This plan incorporates the initial phase for remote monitoring of all sewage pump stations through use



Quick Stats

Drinking Water Treated	3.2 Billion Gallons
Wastewater Treated	3.3 Billion Gallons
Water Customers Billed	19,742 Customers/Month
Sewer Customers Billed	18,538 Customers/Month
Stormwater Customers Billed	18,773 Customers/Month

In 2010, the Utilities Department met all of our water treatment goals, placing us way ahead of any other community in our region with a state-of-the-art system that will meet our water needs for the next several decades."

— Henry Hicks, Utilities Department Director

of a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system, annual replacement or rehabilitation of outdated sewage pump stations, and remote televising and smoke testing of the sewer collection system. The results of this work should significantly reduce sewer spills, inflow and/or infiltration (I&I) of ground and surface water into the sewer systems, as well as development of a prioritized long-term sewer collection system rehabilitation plan. Contracts for closed-circuit television inspection of the Mud Creek and Knights Creek sewer interceptors, which transport all sewage to the Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, were approved in December 2010. This inspection will determine which technologies will be employed to rehab these major lines and associated manholes. This work is expected to begin in early 2011 and to be completed by mid year 2011. Implementation of a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) was started in 2010 to improve work flow, as well as track and maintain historical documentation for all work performed within the department. In addition, the program can be utilized by other city departments to meet their work load management needs.

The Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility expansion plan was initiated in November 2009 and qualified for \$10 million in

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. The expansion will meet the sanitary sewer needs resulting from continued growth in the developing service areas and will also meet the regulatory requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division. Improvements include new technology to ensure optimum and efficient operations to move the department one step closer to its automation plan for all treatment plants and remote facilities. Completion of the liquid treatment portion of this expansion is expected to be completed by February 2011. Construction of the solids handling treatment process will follow with completion anticipated for February 2012.

In May 2010, the Utilities Department introduced a new Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Ordinance to eliminate sanitary sewer overflows caused by the accumulation of FOG in the sanitary sewer collection system. The program will eliminate one of the major causes of sewer spills and protect the environment and public's health with regards to these types of spills.

Mission

The mission of the Utilities Department is to be known by our customers for delivery of the highest quality municipal utility services possible through continuous improvement.





Fire Department

Rising Above the Challenges

The year 2010 was challenging to the Valdosta Fire Department as we had to make adjustments to our mode of operations due to changing economic conditions. As the city grew with additional annexations--new apartment complexes and high rise buildings at Valdosta State University and hotels near the Valdosta Mall--the VFD adjusted to these new calls for service.

The traditional way of responding to alarms no longer met the needs of our customers; therefore our department employed new concepts to provide excellent customer service to both our new and existing customers who utilize our city each and every day. One of the adjustments made involved how our department would respond to calls for service in multi-level parking garages. This was an entirely new concept, not only to our city, but especially to our fire department. Another challenge was increasing the average number of personnel responding to fire and emergency scenes. Prior to 2010, our department would average 12 firefighters on every structure fire in the city. The Insurance Services Organization (ISO) evaluation and the pending National Accreditation survey both require at least 15 firefighters on scene within a four minute timeframe. In order to meet this requirement, personnel that typically work an eight-hour shift were given additional duties at fire scenes on all second and third alarm calls for service. In addition to the new assignments for eight-hour personnel, one additional fire truck was also dispatched to all calls. These adjustments were made in 2010 helping the VFD improve our efforts to provide quality service satisfaction to all our customers.

Rated one of the best fire departments in the state, the VFD places the safety of citizens above all else. The department operates seven fire stations, equipped with 16 fire trucks, which include nine pumper trucks, three ladder trucks, one air/light truck, one airport crash/rescue truck, one urban/search and rescue truck, and one 2000-gallon tanker truck. Designated by the Governor's Office as a Georgia Search and Rescue Team, members provide regional coverage to all weapons of mass destruction for the Southeast Georgia area. Areas of service provided by the VFD include Fire Suppression, Fire Safety Education and Prevention, Code Enforcement, Hazardous Materials Mitigation, Confined Space Rescue, and First Responders. The department has 96 nationally and state-certified (NPQ) level-1 firefighters, and all certified members are trained to the highest level of hazardous material response and handling offered by the State Fire Academy. The VFD's response area covers approximately 54,000 citizens and as many as 500,000 residents of South Georgia and North Florida who utilize Valdosta as a hub for business, culture, education, leisure, and retail.

The VFD provides full-time, professional fire protection and educational services for the City of Valdosta, which helped the city earn a ISO Class 2 Rating. This rating allows for low property insurance premiums for city residents. In 2010, firefighters received a combined total of 25,000 hours of training, which included CPR Recertification Training, Hazardous Material Technician Refresher Training, State of Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training mandated Core Competency, ISO mandated Training, Emergency Vehicle Operator Training, Airport Rescue Firefighter training, and over 300 street map familiarization tests for all drivers and operators.



“Challenges are not met by fear. . . they are met by confidence.” -- Valdosta Fire Chief J.D. Rice

Utilizing all resources for the benefit of our community, the VFD partnered with Moody Air Force Base and City of Albany Fire Departments for a joint aircraft firefighter training exercise. Through a partnership with the City of Hahira Fire Department, a Juvenile Fire Setter Prevention Program was started for both the Valdosta and Lowndes County School Systems. Furthermore, an educational opportunity with Wiregrass Georgia Technical College and the city's Metro Valdosta 17 resulted in the VFD's first Public Safety Announcement video on fire prevention and safety.

In 2010, the VFD celebrated several significant achievements. The American Legion selected VFD Firefighter Marcus Haynes as the National Firefighter of the Year. Battalion Fire Chief Tom Robinson was elected to serve on the Executive Board of the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation. Sergeant Chris Feuerstein was awarded the Community Partners in Education Educator of the Year Award for her work in the city's CPIE program. Fire Stations # 1, 3, 5 and 6 were also awarded Community Partners in Education service awards for their work in the city's CPIE program. In addition to our staff successes, four students from the Valdosta City Schools System were selected as statewide winners in the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Essay Writing contest.

Quick Stats

- Responded to 2,644 alarms, an increase of 18 percent from 2009
- Average response time was 4 minutes 25 seconds, well below the national average of 6 minutes.
- Conducted 986 fire inspections of buildings and facilities
- Educated 6,015 students in fire prevention and safety through 141 programs
- Raised over \$ 10,751 for the Georgia Firefighter Burn Foundation through our annual “Fill the Boot” and Boston Butt fundraisers
- Conducted our Second Annual “Shop with a Firefighter” campaign to provide underprivileged children with Christmas toys
- Serviced and inspected 2,901 city fire hydrants in preparation for the ISO evaluation
- Pre-fire planned 2,124 city businesses for occupant load and potential fire load hazards
- Awarded \$ 20,000 grant from the Office of Homeland Security for the Regional Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) Team

Mission

The mission of the City of Valdosta Fire Department is to respond in a safe manner to all reported emergencies of our customers, to protect their lives and property through fire prevention, public education, and the mitigation of emergencies and disasters, whether natural or man-made.





Engineering Department

Paving the Road for the Future

In 2010, Engineering Department personnel provided professional civil engineering and surveying services for all types of municipal public works projects. Projects included water and sewer extensions, paving, drainage, traffic control and pavement maintenance work. One of the most important functions of the Engineering Department is to manage and coordinate all Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) projects. Private development plans are also reviewed to ensure conformance to various city ordinances. All construction performed on city rights-of-way must be approved and inspected by city engineering personnel.

Our primary goal is to provide the best services at the lowest cost to the taxpayers. Customer service is paramount.

Building and Renovations

City Hall Roof
Fire Stations #3 & #4 Renovations
Municipal Court Building
Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant Sludge Facility

Water and Sewer Main Extensions

Boone Drive Utilities
Brookfield Water Main and Sewer, Murphy Oil
Cheddar's Restaurant Water and Sewer
Country Club Road Sewer Main Extension
Cross Roads Baptist Church Water Main Extension
Five Points Apartment Complex Utilities
Freedom Park Expansion
Futch Medical Center
Harmon Drive Apartments Water and Sewer
McKey Park Utilities
Remerton Water Main
Spring Hill Street Utilities
Staten Road Water Main
Valdosta Regional Airport Utility Extension

Drainage

Alden and Canterbury Ditch Piping
Bermuda Run Drive Underdrain
Browns Canal and Lamar to West Reconditioning
Hillendale and Jerry Jones Storm Drainage
Meadowbrook Drive Ditch Paving
Springhill Underdrain
Sugar Creek Bank Restoration
Troupe Street Drainage Repairs

Road Projects

Forrest Street Right Drop Lane
Lee Street Paving
Melody Lane and Lankford Drive Restriping
W. Mary Street and Winding Way SPLOST Paving
Gornton Road Resurfacing
Wetherington Lane Resurfacing

Subdivisions Accepted

Branch Point Subdivision, Phase 1 and 2
Highlands Commercial
Highlands Subdivision, Phase III
Knights Mill
Moulton Branch, Phase II and III
Shiloh Forrest, Phase III

Other

Brookwood Place Sidewalk
City of Valdosta Utility Building
LCPRC Community Center and Gymnasium
Freedom Park Expansion
Handicap Ramps on Ashley Street
Hill Avenue Sidewalks
McKey Park Tennis Court
Slater Street Sidewalks
N. Oak Extension Driveway Apron
Five Points Resurfacing



"Change can be viewed as a problem or an opportunity. Over the next fiscal year, the Engineering Department will seize the opportunities in these changing times."
-- Patrick S. Collins, P.E., City Engineer

Inspections

Driveways Inspected	84
Land Disturbance Permits Issued	7
Soil Erosion Inspections on Permitted Sites	109
Soil Erosion Inspections on Non-Permitted Sites	10
Corrective Actions Taken on Soil Erosion	2
Potential Soil Erosion Problems Being Investigated	9
Pond Inspections Performed	77
Rights-of-Way Authorization Numbers Issued	238
Certificates of Occupancy Issued	35
Construction and Site Plans Reviewed	53

Street Maintenance

Potholes Repaired	663
Washouts	2,877 ft
Trench Lines	1,404 ft
Root and Base Cuts	454
Water and Sewer Cuts	82
Driveways Repaired	109
Edge Washouts	254
Sidewalks	1,720 ft
Base and Root Repair	24,882 ft

Locations Saw Cut	792
Storm Drains Cleaned	253
Concrete Curb and Gutter	221
Trip Hazards	65 ft
Asphalt	344 tons
Concrete	555 yds
Millings	247 tons
Sidewalks Cleaned	1,108 ft

Traffic

Bulbs Replaced	84
Loops and Detectors Repaired	14
Emergency Call Out	54
Loops Installed/Repaired	23
Overhead Signs Installed/Replaced	6
Signal Heads Installed/Replaced	16
LEDs Installed	289
Traffic Counts	29
Misc Equipment Replaced/Install	115
Pedestrian Lights Installed/Repaired	16
Banners Installed/Removed	103

Signs

Signs Installed	559
Traffic Counts	91
Painting Removed	1,280 feet
Stop Signs Repaired	885
Street Signs Repaired	1,269
Trimming of R.O.W.	1,379
Stop Bars/Arrow Painted	85
Painting	9,637 ft
Thermo Arrow/Stop Bars	24
Over Head Signs Made	23
Reflectors Installed	51
Barricades Installed	246
School Zone Upgrades	10
Bumps and Humps Installed / Removed	44
Valdosta Glitter Signs	86



Mission

The mission of the Engineering Department is to provide the highest quality engineering services for the community that involves transportation, street maintenance and the survey, design, and construction oversight of street, water, drainage and miscellaneous public works improvements.



Public Works Department

Caring for the Environment

The Public Works Department is responsible for the daily operation of sanitation services and the repair and maintenance of city vehicles and equipment. The department's scope of services includes, but is not limited to: residential and commercial sanitation, residential yard trash, right-of-way maintenance, neighborhood recycling, the city cemetery, the arbor division and street trees, automotive/fleet maintenance, warehouse, facility/building maintenance, special pickups and the compost and mulch landfill.

In 2010, the department had several significant accomplishments. Solar Powered Trash Compactors and Recycle bins were installed in the downtown Valdosta corridor. All compactors and bins were funded by a Litter Grant from the Deep South Solid Waste Authority. The grant also provided the funding for the "Please Don't Litter, Make Valdosta Glitter" signs posted throughout the city limits designed to draw attention to the fundamental method of beautifying our neighborhoods simply through litter control.

The Valdosta Regional Recycling Hub is dedicated to single-stream recycling, accepting recycle commodities from within a 75 mile radius of the city. This process reduces the need for residents to sort newspaper, plastic, glass, aluminum and steel commodities into separate collection bins, and encourages more residents to



Quick Stats

17,318	Residential Sanitation Customers
1,290	Commercial and Small Business Customers
17,629	Residential and Commercial Recycling Customers
9.10	Tons of Food Scrap Processed For Compost
286	Miles of Right-of-Way Maintained
80	Miles of State Right-of-Way Maintained
1,129	Miles of Streets Swept and Cleaned
2,779	Number of Special Pick Ups
3,311	Tons of Recyclable Materials Collected
26,777	Tons of Solid Waste Collected
9,683	Tons of Yard Trash and Organic Materials Collected
67	Tons Collected from Electronics Recycling Events
9,324	Tons of Yard Waste Processed for Mulch

The work of the Public Works Department stems from responsible city leadership with strong convictions in regard to current environmental issues. We continually look for ways to decrease our carbon footprint, while maintaining quality services for our citizens.” —John Whitehead III, Public Works Department Director & Deputy City Manager for Operations

recycle. In 2010, the Public Work Department continued to promote single-stream recycling to city and Lowndes County residents and commercial businesses through a federally-funded grant. The Public Works Department was also instrumental in overseeing a new ordinance that now requires private haulers operating in City of Valdosta limits to provide recycle services to multi-unit dwellings that choose to recycle.

The Arbor Division pruned over 1,844 city trees, planted over 236 trees, and removed 112 trees. The division also issued over 47 tree permits. In 2010, the division was instrumental in the city being named Tree City U.S.A. for the 24th consecutive year—one of the longest held Tree City communities in the state of Georgia.

In addition to other accomplishments for the year, the Public Works Department is also proud to have hosted two Electronics Recycling events, in partnership with Atlanta Recycling Solutions and Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful. The department collected and properly disposed of over 133,500 pounds—or 67 tons—from these two events.



Mission
The mission of the Public Works Department is to provide consistent and quality customer service in all aspects of daily operations to our customers and citizens of the City of Valdosta.



Human Resources Department

Supporting the City Team

The Human Resources Department works year around to hire qualified new employees, train current employees and recognize city employees who go above and beyond their normal duties.

Staff participated in the Wiregrass Georgia Technical College Job Fair in May of 2010 resulting in outreach to approximately 75 applicants. The department processed 27 new hires during the year, including filling the key positions of Main Street Manager and City Engineer.

Employee training continued to be a primary focus during 2010 with classes offered in defensive driving, stopping workplace harassment, blood borne pathogens and preventing workplace violence. Approximately 98 employees attended the training opportunities.

Health and Wellness efforts paid off in 2010 as the city was awarded a grant by the Lowndes County Board of Health to establish a Walk for Fitness Program which enrolled 36 employees. The goal of the program is to establish a healthy life style by increasing physical activity while providing information on nutrition and disease prevention.

In September, the city partnered with CareHere Corporation to begin the process of establishing an on site employee health clinic. The clinic will eventually provide care to employees and their dependents at no cost while allowing the city an opportunity to control expenses by utilizing its own facility.



“Preserving core values in the midst of change is the key to success in Human Resources.”
 — Charlie Felts III, Human Resources Department Director

In October, the Employee Relations Committee along with the Safety and Health and Wellness Committee sponsored the city's second annual Health Fair and Blood Drive. The event was held at Mathis Auditorium and provided health screenings and educational information from various community health organizations to over 100 employees and their dependents.

The Employee Relations Committee is made up of representatives from all city departments, and the committee organizes the annual Thanksgiving luncheon and nominates an Employee of the Month each month who goes above and beyond his or her normal duties or reaches a career milestone. The deserving employee is recognized at the monthly City Council meeting, receives a framed certificate and a \$200 check, and his or her name is engraved on a plaque that is displayed in City Hall.

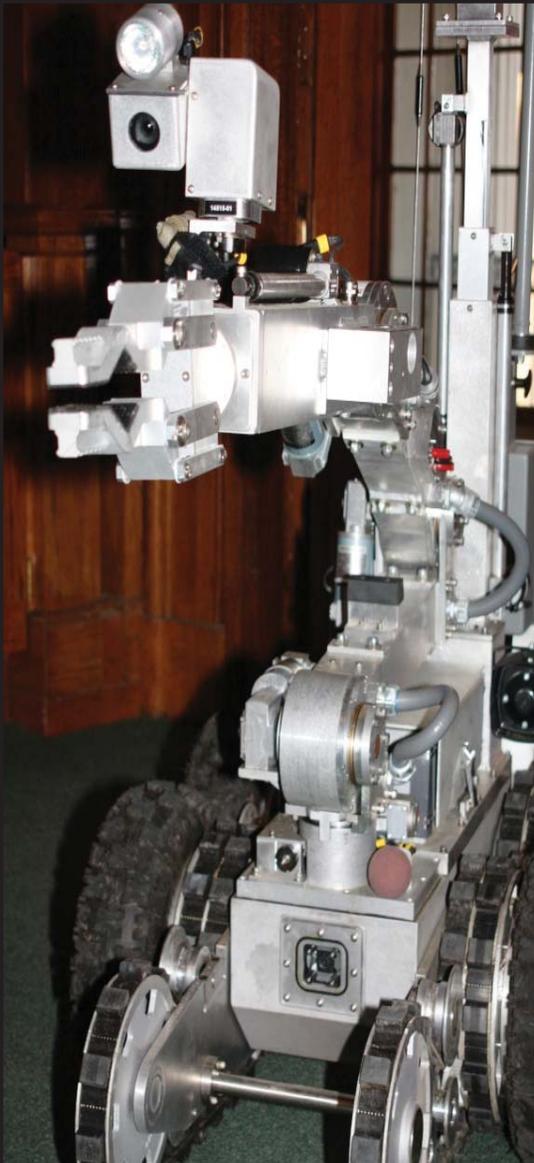
Quick Facts

- 1300 Applications and Resumes Processed
- 114 Health Fair Attendees
- 98 Employees Trained
- 27 Employees Hired



Mission

The mission of the Human Resources Department is to offer quality, efficient and courteous service to all customers.



Police Department

Award-winning Law Enforcement

The Valdosta Police Department, consisting of positions for 145 sworn personnel, 23 non-sworn support personnel and 18 part-time employees, is comprised of three bureaus: the Bureau of Patrol Services, the Bureau of Investigative Services, and the Bureau of Support Services. Modern training and equipment allow this award-winning department to function superbly.

The Bureau of Patrol Services, considered the backbone of the organization, continued their mission this year to maintain a safe community. The bureau received 81,893 calls for service, made 21,180 total arrests, issued 15,627 traffic citations, investigated 2,581 traffic accidents, made 283 DUI cases and investigated 497 cases of family violence. The bureau also utilized community policing activities to reduce crime in the city to include the Neighborhood Watch Program, Crime Prevention Seminars, crime analysis reports provided to field personnel, directed patrols based on crime analysis, and the use of the Mobile Command Vehicle as a mobile precinct in identified problem areas.

The Bureau of Investigative Services (BIS) was successful this year in the detection and apprehension of criminals who have been involved in major criminal activity and ended the year with outstanding crime clearance rates. Detectives were responsible for investigating 5,539 cases, resulting in 694 arrests, 716 felony charges and 493 misdemeanor charges. Additionally, the BIS raised and maintained their crime clearance rates above the national average for all Part 1 Crimes as defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) System and improved on all clearance rates from 2009. The city recorded four homicides in 2010; however, the VPD Person's Crime Unit, along with other

departmental personnel, worked diligently to solve all of homicides, resulting in a homicides solvability rating of 100 percent. The Bureau and Cold Case Investigative Unit continues to work leads and follow up on information on cold case homicides and hopes to have resolution to these cases in the near future. Other clearance rate improvements included nearly a 38.5 percent increase in clearing burglaries, a 52.15 percent increase in clearing rapes, and a 43.96 percent increase in clearing robberies (when considering 2009 cases cleared in 2010).

VPD officers worked diligently to recover stolen property and successfully recovered approximately \$271,826 in property (an increase of \$167,415 from 2009). Also, \$167,334 in property was seized by departmental personnel (an increase of \$6,014 from 2009).

In 2010, the Narcotics Unit—which is an integral part of the BIS—increased the clearance rates of cases they worked by 4.38 percent, resulting in the investigation of 464 narcotics related cases and 227 arrests, which includes 328 felony charges and 170 misdemeanor charges. The unit saw an increase in gun seizures and narcotics seizures of marijuana plants for 2010. The narcotics unit has one detective assigned as a K-9 officer, and that detective—along with his K-9 partner, Rudy—were responsible for 78 arrests (an increase from 2009), the seizure of over \$6,298 in currency, the recovery of eight weapons, and the seizure of sizeable amounts of marijuana, cocaine and other illegal drugs.

The VPD Gang Unit is assigned to a multi-jurisdictional and federal task force headed by the FBI. The Gang Unit and Task Force, along with the members of the VPD Power Squad (a specialty squad as-



“The Valdosta Police Department is dedicated to service and committed to justice. The men and women of the VPD strive each day to deliver the quality service that our citizens deserve. I truly believe that some of the best people in law enforcement work here in the Valdosta Police Department.” — Frank Simons, Valdosta Police Chief

signed to combat “street crimes”), were successful in combating gang-related crimes in the city and the surrounding area. The unit made 48 arrests and participated in 28 community Gang Awareness Programs.

The VPD prides itself in having a high standard of training both new and experienced personnel. The in-house training unit provided over 3,478 hours of in-house core training, in addition to over 1,742 hours new personnel training and orientation. In house training was augmented by over 2,822 hours of off-site or adjunct training. VPD personnel received training in a variety of basic and advanced courses, including homicide investigation, gang schools, pharmaceutical abuse investigation, firearms and tracing identification, narcotics investigation, basic hostage negotiation, burglary suppression, DUI enforcement, traffic accident investigation, domestic violence issues, criminal procedure update, arrest, search and seizure issues.

The VPD continually works to maintain CALEA (Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies) and the State of Georgia Accreditation status, with the next CALEA reaccreditation scheduled for April 2011 and the state reaccreditation scheduled for Fall 2011.

The VPD continues to be very proactive in pursuing grant funding from various state and federal organizations to meet department goals while reducing impact on city operating costs. In 2010 the department received and/or maintained the following grants: three Criminal Justice Coordinating Grants totaling \$392,817; the Georgia Governor’s Office of Highway Safety Highway Enforcement of Aggressive Traffic grant for \$46,900; two Edward Byrne Memorial Grants totaling \$102,165; a Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) Bio-Metric Fingerprint Scanner Grant for \$21,350; a U.S. Department of Justice Stimulus Recovery Act Grant

for \$221,185; the Federal Appropriation Request Grant from Congressman Jack Kingston’s Office for \$500,000; and the COPS Federal Recovery Grant for \$1,055,957.

Patrol Officer Larry Nara was selected to be the Explosives K-9 Handler, made possible through a GEMA Bomb Dog Continuation Grant for \$7,438. Nara and his K-9 partner were trained and are fully operational for the police department and other agencies that request their assistance.

The Valdosta/Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory (VLRCL) opened its doors in 2010. Located at 1708 North Ashley Street, the lab is occupied by crime scene personnel from both the city and county, forensic specialists, an evidence custodian and a crime laboratory director. The crime lab currently provides fingerprint services and ballistic services. In the future, it will offer toxicology services and other chemistry related services. The VLRCL has coolers for body storage prior to autopsy transport, and the city is currently working on a project to provide a vehicle processing area in a building adjacent to the laboratory. The dream of operating a joint crime laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment and room for growth has become a reality.

Mission

The mission of the Valdosta Police Department is to maintain social order within prescribed ethical and constitutional limits while providing professional law enforcement services to the citizens and visitors of Valdosta.



Finance Department

Efficiency and Accountability

In 2010, the department continued its tradition of excellence in properly managing the city's funds, while providing the highest level of customer service to citizens.

The department was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2009. This is the 25th consecutive year that the city has received this award.

The department also received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009, for the 14th consecutive year. The award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting. In order to earn this award, a government must publish a budget document which meets program criteria as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide and as a communications device.

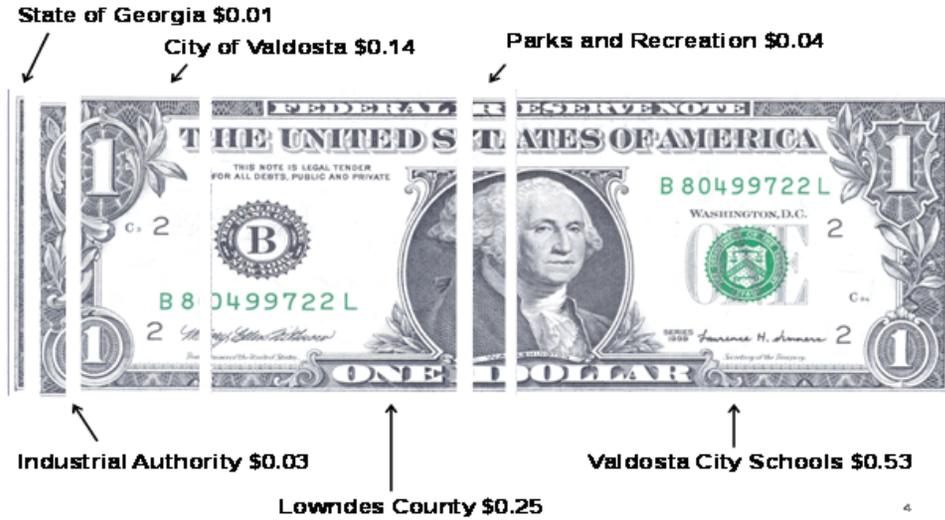
Each year, Georgia requires an annual audit of the books of accounts, financial records, and transactions of all administrative departments of the city by independent certified public accountants selected by the Mayor and City Council. The Finance Department is pleased to report that it has once again successfully completed a financial audit for the fiscal year with outstanding remarks. Furthermore, the city has no general fund debt and less than \$10 million in total enterprise debt—a remarkable accomplishment achieved by sound financial management.



"In an increasingly uncertain economy, the City of Valdosta has searched for innovative ways to meet the needs of citizens with the financial resources available to it. This commitment to quality and fiscal conservatism has left the city with a sound financial outlook."
 — Mark Barber, Finance Department Director & Deputy City Manager for Administration

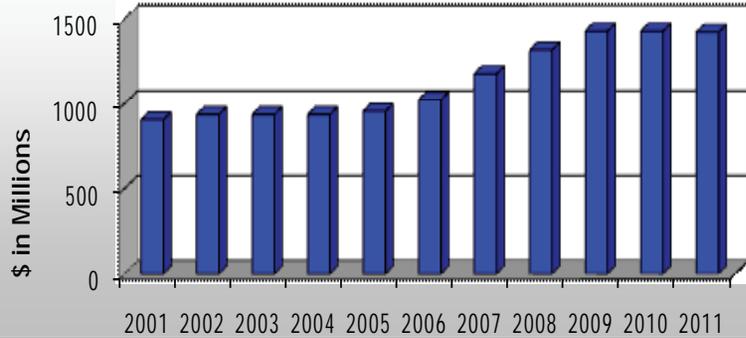
Where Does Each City of Valdosta Resident's Property Tax Dollar Go?

Property taxes make up less than 7.45% of the funding necessary to operate the city. Although the City of Valdosta's budget is approximately \$75.2 million, less than \$5.6 million of this is generated from property taxes. The largest sources of revenue in the city are sales taxes, water and sewer fees, sanitation fees, franchise fees and property taxes.

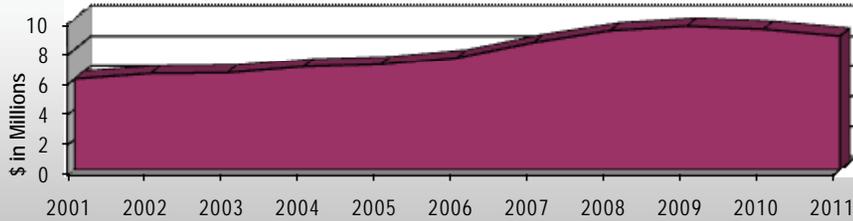


Mission
 The mission of the Finance Department is to provide financial reporting and excellent customer service for all internal and external customers, while developing innovative and cost-effective ways of financing city services and facilities.

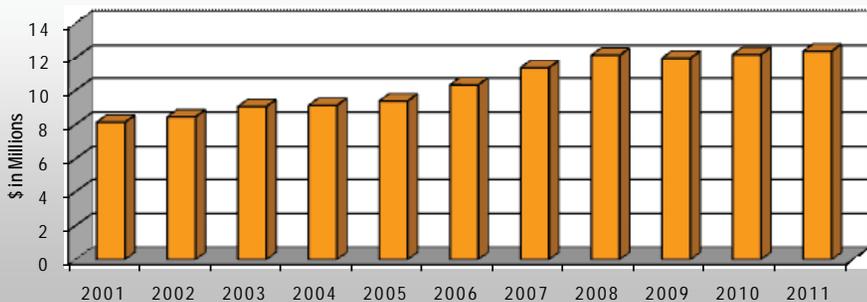
Ad-valorem Tax Base Each Fiscal Year



Growth in Business Gross Receipts Taxes



General Fund Ending Balance



Optimistic Financial Outlook

The financial condition and long term outlook for the City are better than most local governments. The sustained growth of three primary economic indicators supports this view. The adjacent graphs evaluate the growth trends of these factors.

Property Values – Property values represent growth in construction and development.

Business Gross Receipts Taxes – These taxes are based on business gross receipts. As the receipts from the taxes increase, it reflects the health of Valdosta’s economy.

General Fund Ending Balance – The General Fund ending balance reflects the city’s ability to meet ever-increasing demands for general services while remaining financially sound and fiscally responsible by providing a buffer for short-term fluctuations in the economy.

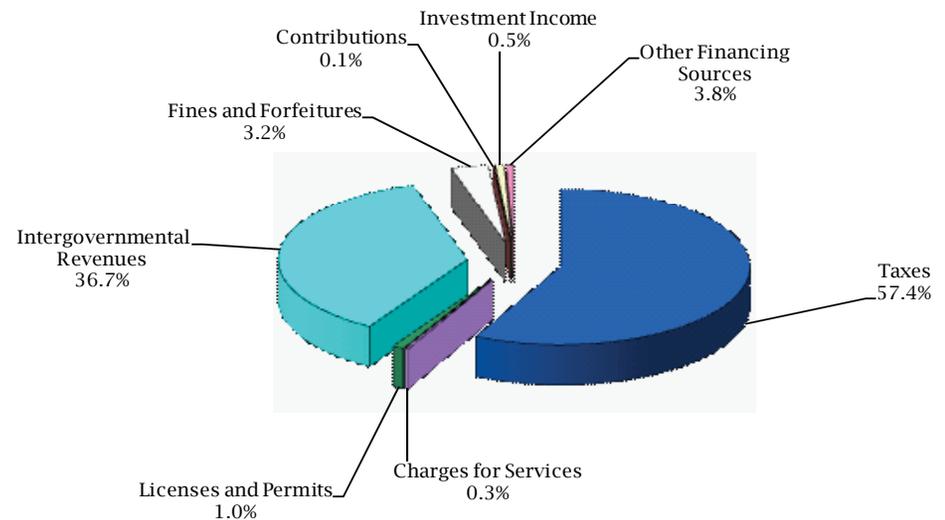
The City of Valdosta has survived the recent economic downfall significantly better than surrounding communities, the State of Georgia, and the nation as a whole. The city has been able to maintain its workforce as well as provide longevity increases to employees, while other communities have implemented wage freezes, employment reductions, and reductions in services for citizens.

While the city has certainly been affected by the economy, conservative budgetary policies and adherence to sound financial policies and philosophies have provided a hedge against anemic property tax revenues, increased fuel costs, and surging healthcare costs.

General Government Revenues

The majority of General Government Revenues is generated by the collection of sales tax. The amount of this tax collected represents a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) that funds General Fund operations and a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) that funds various capital projects for the city.

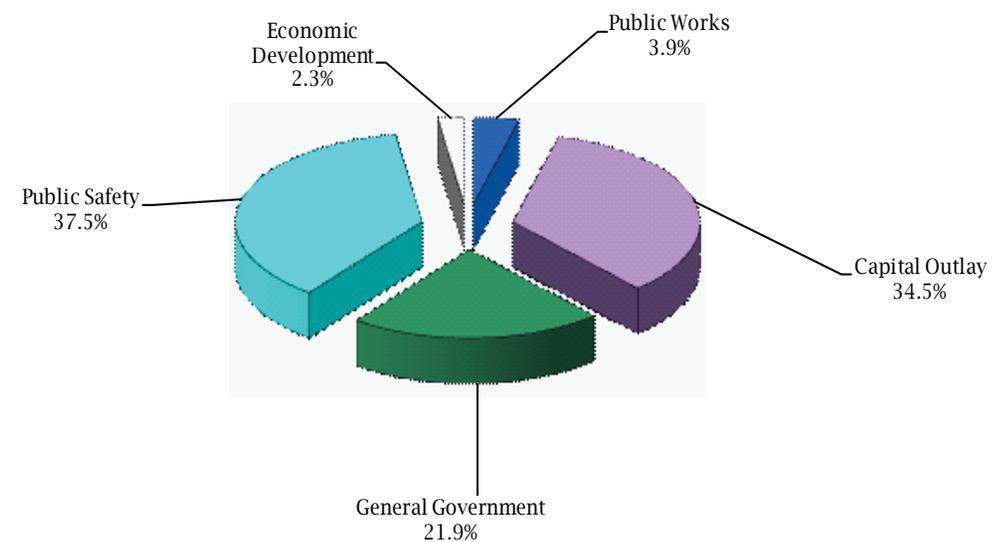
These revenue sources tend to be relatively stable; however, projections of revenue for the upcoming year are extremely conservative. The general outlook for Valdosta has improved steadily over the past ten years and it is anticipated that growth in real estate, industry, and agricultural development will slowly rebound as Valdosta emerges from the negative effects of the economy.



General Government Expenditures

The General Government Expenditures group is broken down into the following seven areas:

Public Safety	Police and fire protection
Public Works	Costs associated with street and road maintenance
General Government	Costs associated with the administration, legislative and financial aspects of city business
Capital Outlay	Costs associated with new infrastructure
Economic Development	Costs associated with the administration of building rehabilitation, ordinance enforcement, grants and public information





Grants Awarded

Grants Funded Since January 1, 2010

	Amount of Grant
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council JAG Recovery	\$239,102.00
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council JAG Recovery	\$24,949.00
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council JAG Recovery	\$128,766.00
GEMA - Fire Department	\$23,000.00
GEMA - Fire Department	\$15,000.00
Wellness Grant - Lowndes County Board of Health Mini-Grant 2010 (South Health District)	\$1,300.00
Emergency Watershed Protection (Browns Canal @ Lamar/Oliver streets)	\$136,834.00
Emergency Watershed Protection (Sugar Creek @ Creekside Restaurant)	\$650,000.00
2010 Local JAG	\$48,249.00
CDBG Entitlement Funding	\$647,678.00
Community HOME Investment Program (Georgia DCA)	\$306,000.00
Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) - 2011	\$46,900.00
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council - Paul Coverdell Grant	\$98,781.00
2010 Congressionally Selected Award - DOJ	\$500,000.00
2010 Bullet Proof Vest Grant	\$13,650.00
GEMA - Fire Department	\$20,000.00
GEMA - Police Department	\$21,350.53
GEMA - Police Department	\$3,500.00
Federal Home Loan Bank	\$800,000.00
Deep South Solid Waste Authority Grant for Solar Compactors/Recycling Units	\$50,000.00
Total	\$3,775,059.53

***From the records of the City of Valdosta Grants Administrator



Municipal Court for the City of Valdosta

The State of Georgia has over 370 municipal courts with the City of Valdosta Municipal Court being one of the largest. Cases handled by the Municipal Court and heard by Judge Vernita Lee Bender include misdemeanor traffic violations and misdemeanor criminal cases, including possession of less than an ounce of marijuana, shoplifting and city ordinance violations.

The City of Valdosta Municipal Court is housed in the former Fire Station No. 1, located at 100 S. Oak Street, and is the first dedicated court building owned by the City of Valdosta. The Municipal Court houses a large renovated court room and offices for the Municipal Court Judge, Court Administrator, Clerk of Court and staff.

Payments for traffic citations that do not require mandatory court appearances may be made at the Valdosta Police Department, located at 500 N. Toombs Street. Information regarding the payment process and contact information is located

on the back of the citation. The arraignment date to appear in Municipal Court is located on the front of the citation near the bottom for individuals who wish to contest a traffic citation.

General operating hours of the Municipal Court are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and court sessions convene at 9 a.m. each day, Monday through Friday.

In addition to a full court schedule, the Municipal Court staff remains involved with the youth in our community through mock trials, the Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) program, the Lowndes Youth Leadership League, Special Olympics, Career Day, and a variety of other special events that provide positive role models and encouragement for our next generation of leaders.

Quick Facts

The City of Valdosta Municipal Court is a full-time court

Over 16,000 cases were docketed in the Court

Court is held an average of four days a week

Over 370 municipal courts exist in the State of Georgia, with Valdosta's Municipal Court being one of the largest

Probationers completed approximately 36,288 community service hours at soup kitchens, libraries, non-profit organizations, recreational facilities and public cemeteries

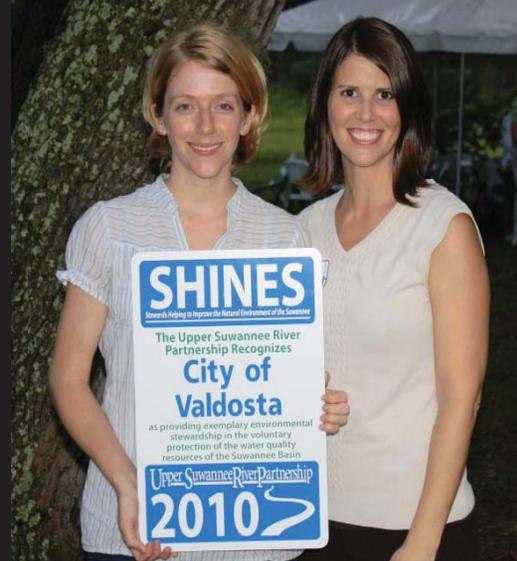
Probationers donated approximately 17,225 pounds of food to the local food bank.

Sentinel Offender Services supervised approximately 1100 cases monthly for the Court

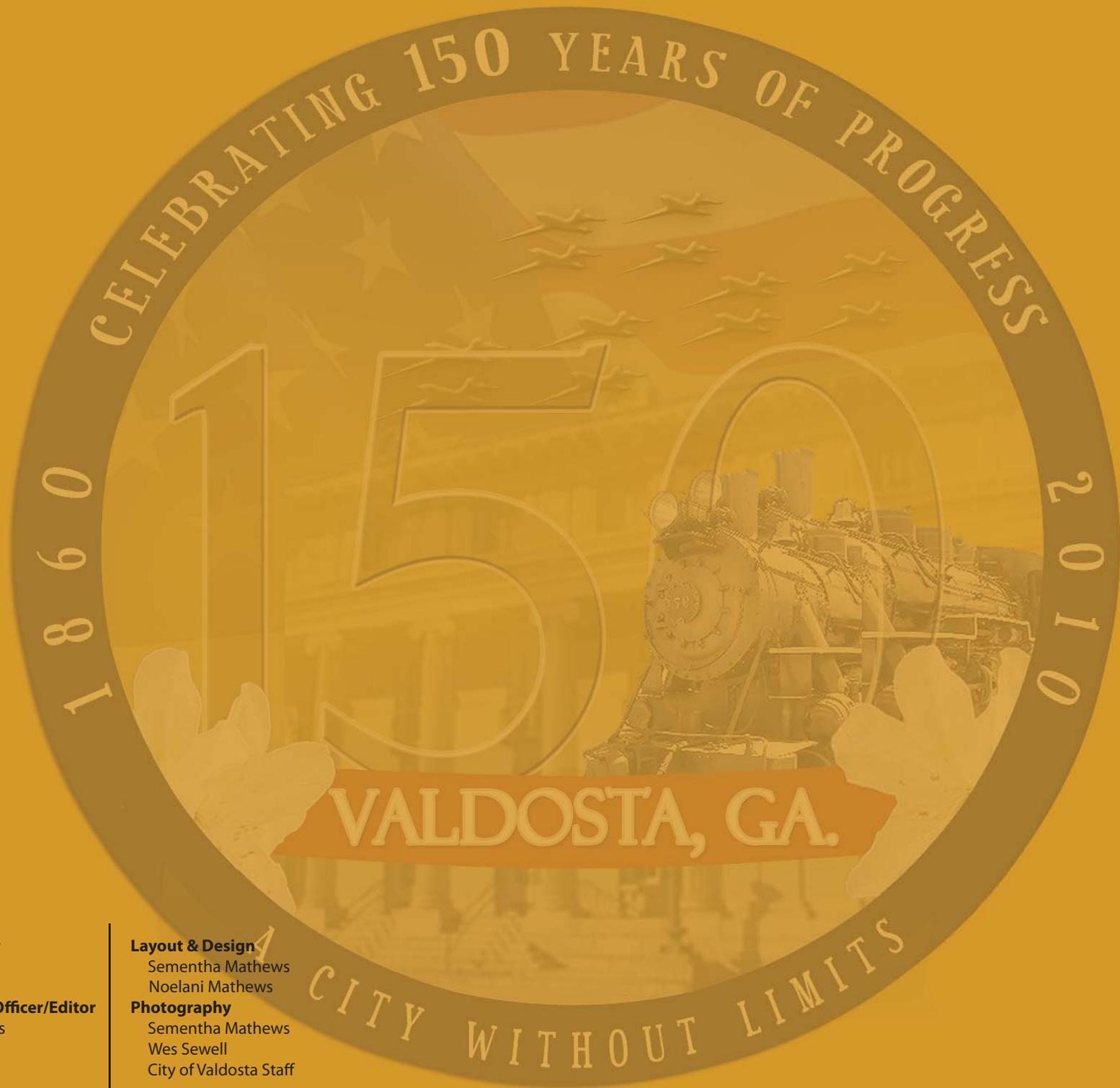


Accolades

- ▶ Retained our ranking as the second highest overall retail pull factor in the entire State of Georgia at 2.17, according to the University of Georgia (UGA) Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development. Annual retail sales in the Valdosta MSA topped \$2.8 billion in 2010, growing slightly from 2009 figures and depicting a 53 percent growth over the last three years.
- ▶ Recognized as a 2010 Top Government Website Award recipient by online encyclopedia and reference resource Juggle.com for its e-government and communication initiatives. The site, located at www.Valdostacity.com, was one of nine municipal websites in Georgia recognized for a variety of site features and functionalities, including usability, timely content, access to online government services and technological innovation.
- ▶ Received the Georgia Planning Association's Great Places in Georgia award for a large community for Downtown Valdosta.
- ▶ Received national accreditation for the Valdosta Main Street Program for the 14th consecutive year.
- ▶ Named among the first "Camera Ready Communities" by the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Division for Film, Music and Digital Entertainment.
- ▶ Received the SHINES (Stewards Helping to Improve the Natural Environment of the Suwannee) Award from the Southern Georgia Regional Commission for our environmental efforts in the Suwannee River Basin and our investment to protect our area's natural resources through water, sewer and stormwater management.
- ▶ Named a Tree City U.S.A. community by the National Arbor Day Foundation for the 24th consecutive year for its commitment to community forestry.
- ▶ Certified the first seven businesses through city's Valdosta Small Emerging Business Program (VSEB) which gives businesses access to a wealth of educational resources, the Access to Capital Program, a bonding assistance program, and regular correspondence on local government bidding opportunities.
- ▶ Went live with a video tourbook on the city's website that feature 10 professionally produced videos covering a range of topics—such as business incentives, economic development, dining and shopping, and area attractions—that are receiving potential exposure from prospective residents, visitors and businesses from across the state, nation and literally the world.
- ▶ Collaborated with Project Save our Students (SOS) on plans for the Community Trail of Tranquility that provides a safe walking route that connects East Park Avenue to Ponderosa Drive.
- ▶ Selected as a "Top 3 Logistics Location in the Nation" by Site Selection Magazine.
- ▶ Dedicated the new Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park, which features a 41-foot monument—the largest of its kind in the state—12 granite tablets engraved with information on Dr. King's life and legacy placed throughout the park, attractive lighting, walkways, and landscaping.
- ▶ Launched the inaugural Valdosta City Government 101 orientation program, an initiative of the Mayor and Valdosta City Council to provide a program for citizen education and involvement.



- ▶ Launched the Sunset Hill Cemetery Interactive web site (funded by a Georgia Historic Preservation Fund grant from the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources), a Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-enabled web site used by anyone interested in learning about the generations of Valdostans laid to rest at the city-owned Sunset Hill Cemetery.
- ▶ Showcased as one of nine cities in the 2010 Georgia Cities Foundation “Heart & Soul of Georgia” Bus Tour, sponsored by the Georgia Municipal Association and the Georgia Cities Foundation, educating state agency heads, business leaders, downtown developers and philanthropists on the importance of successful downtown development and its role in supporting economic development efforts for regions and communities.
- ▶ Hosted 108 youth from around the country through the Southern Hospitality Group Workcamp to repair 20 substandard houses by providing basic home repairs, painting and minor construction, at no cost to elderly or disabled homeowners.
- ▶ Unveiled the new Valdosta Police Department “Steeda-ized” vehicles, the result of a partnership of the City of Valdosta and Steeda Autosports.
- ▶ Celebrated Georgia Cities Week in April, joining cities across the state in showcasing the role city government plays in the quality of life for its citizens, with a host of public events such as: the outdoor city council meeting, a blood drive, a customer appreciation day, a job shadow day for local high school students, a 6th-grade essay contest, a community-wide photo contest, and an employee appreciation luncheon.
- ▶ Participated in Earth Hour for the third consecutive year, along with more than 1,000 cities around the world committed to going dark for the one-hour March event to unite citizens in a call for global action on climate change.
- ▶ Awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 25th consecutive year by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 13th consecutive year--the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting.
- ▶ Received the Georgia Work Ready Community of Excellence designation.
- ▶ Hosted, in partnership with Keep Lowndes/Valdosta Beautiful (KLVB) and Atlanta Recycling Solutions, two Electronic Recycling Events that helped citizens properly dispose of 67 tons of electronic waste.
- ▶ Maintained the Valdosta Fire Department’s Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 2 rating, one of the highest in the state.
- ▶ Celebrated over 17 events throughout the year, attended by thousands of citizens, in observance of the city’s sesquicentennial year, with events such as: the Downtown DostaFest, Reflections on the Generations, Paths to Paradise, Back to the Future 2060 time capsule burying event, a series of Historic Valdosta Tours, and a host of other events for the enjoyment of the members of our community.



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