

# Planners Post

*Planning Tomorrow's Future Today*

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## Valdosta Receives GATEway Grant

The City of Valdosta was awarded a \$19,490 GATEway Grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)—part of \$1.9 million that the GDOT awarded to government entities across the state for community landscaping projects on state routes.

Eighty-three applications for worthy community projects were submitted for this round of grants, and Valdosta was one of 43 communities awarded. In addition, Valdosta was one of only two communities who received the grant in GDOT District 4, which is made up of 36 counties.

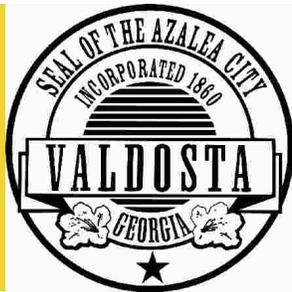
“The city is proud to be a recipient of these grant funds, which will enable us to move forward with creating attractive and welcoming gateways into our beautiful community,” said Historic Preservation/Special Projects Planner Emily Foster. “This is the first of 10 gateway projects that the city hopes to accomplish as funding allows, and other local gateway projects will be modeled from this prototype design.”

Gateways are entrance points into and out of communities, are marked typically by landscaping and welcome signage, and are usually located along major transportation corridors at the city limits.

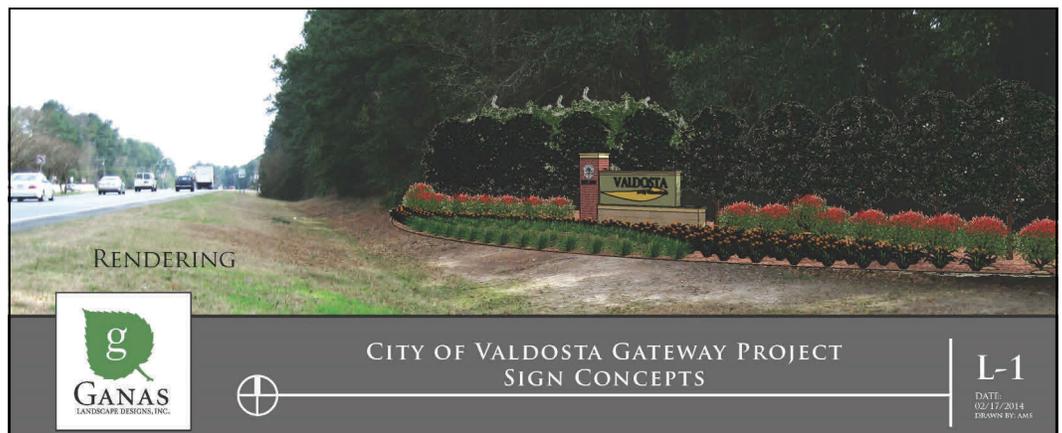
In Valdosta, gateway planning and related studies were conducted in 2004 and 2010 to establish the priority for 10 gateway locations. As a result of these studies, the new gateway utilizing GDOT funds will be created at the city entrance on North Valdosta Road (State Route 7), east of the Withlacoochee River Bridge. The Valdosta gateway includes the planting of new landscaping and the installation of a modern and attractive sign structure featuring the “Valdosta, A City Without Limits” logo.

The GATEway Grant program uses revenue collected from permit fees for vegetation removal in front of outdoor advertising signs to fund these awards to Georgia communities, and the grant funding may only be used for landscaping beautification. The city will be utilizing a different funding source to pay for the signage at this location.

“We are pleased to be awarded the GATEway grant, which provides us the opportunity to create positive, visual experiences for visitors and citizens traveling to and from our city,” said City Manager Larry Hanson. “The entry points to our city should reflect a sense of pride in our vibrant community.” For more information, contact Emily Foster at (229) 259-3563 or [efoster@valdostacity.com](mailto:efoster@valdostacity.com).



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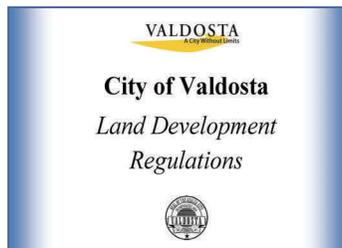
CITY OF VALDOSTA GATEWAY PROJECT  
SIGN CONCEPTS

L-1

DATE: 02/17/2014  
DRAWN BY: AMS

## Amendments to the LDR Adopted in June

On June 5th, the Valdosta City Council adopted amendments to two Chapters of the City's Land Development Regulations (LDR). These were Chapter 06 Definitions, and Chapter 218 Use Regulations. The most significant amendment was to replace the former Use Table with a completely new one. The main purpose was to rearrange and streamline the Use Table in order to make it more easy to use, as well as making sure that full range of possible land uses was covered.



Staff spent several months completely rebuilding the Use Table from scratch, utilizing all the categories listed in the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), which has been an integral

part of the Use Table for the past 5 years. Staff also reviewed the former Use Tables in the LDR as well as former Zoning Ordinance, to make sure that nothing important was left out. Staff also reviewed similar listings of uses from ordinances in several other communities as a comparison, again to help make sure nothing was left out. Draft versions of the new Use Table were reviewed and discussed at Planning Commission meetings during the

spring, and were also reviewed by the Chamber's SORT Committee. The end result was a new Use Table that is more comprehensive than the former Table. It also organizes uses by major categories as follows: Residential & Institutional, Business & Professional, Industrial, and Miscellaneous. Within each major category, many of the similar uses are now grouped together. For example, all of the automotive-related uses are grouped together, as well as the medical uses, lodging facilities, professional offices, recreational uses, etc... It should be noted that in general, the zoning districts in which uses are allowed remain mostly unchanged from the prior Table. However, there have still been a few changes to some of these — mostly relaxing some of the restrictions by allowing some of the uses in a few more districts. But more importantly, the Table now includes a full range of listed uses which eliminates some of the previous guesswork and confusion.

In addition to the new Use Table, there were some related amendments made to the Definitions portion of the LDR to help ensure these are consistent with the naming of the uses in the Table.

Contact the Planning and Zoning office at (229) 259-3563 with any questions about these recent amendments.

## Historic Preservation Planner Receives AICP Certification

The City of Valdosta is pleased to announce that Emily Foster, Historic Preservation and Special Projects Planner, has earned American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification. AICP is the professional institute of the American Planning Association, whose members "pledge to adhere to ethical standards and engage in ongoing professional development through continuing education." Certified planners use a variety of skills to find solutions to community problems in ways that will move the community toward desired long-term goals. Ms. Foster's professional expertise and experience in historic preservation program administration, historical building and urban design analysis, special planning project management, and regulatory compliance provided a basis from which to draw for the AICP Comprehensive Exam, which she successfully passed in May.

Ms. Foster has worked with the City of Valdosta Planning and Zoning office for over 5 years, and previously worked as the Historic Preservation Planner at the South Georgia Regional Development Center, now Southern

Georgia Regional Commission. She received her Master's in Historic Preservation from Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland.

Having served as a leader in many organizations that promote local history and historic preservation, Ms. Foster has also led projects that improve quality of life for the citizens of Valdosta. AICP certified planners must meet rigorous standards, maintain their expertise through continued education, and serve community interests.

The Planning and Zoning Division congratulates Emily for this accomplishment. She joins Planning and Zoning Administrator Matt Martin as the second AICP certified planner currently employed by the City of Valdosta, and both will continue working to provide a better future for the City's citizens.



## Two Valdostans Honored For Historic Preservation Efforts

The City of Valdosta honored Dr. Richard Saeger and David Sutton with the Harold M. Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award for their long-term contributions to historic preservation. Mayor John Gayle, Historic Preservation Planner Emily Foster and Historic Preservation Commission Chairman Harry Hamm presented the awards at the June 19 Valdosta City Council meeting. This year marks the first time two individuals received this prestigious award, named in honor of Valdosta's "Father of Historic Preservation."

"The Valdosta Preservation Awards program brings deserved attention to the significant accomplishments of those who help preserve irreplaceable treasures in our community and make Valdosta a unique place for citizens and visitors to enjoy," said Foster.

**Dr. Richard Saeger**, who has lived in historic houses throughout his life, is a proud recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award. When he moved to Valdosta in 1972, he and his wife purchased a circa 1900s Queen Anne home on Adair Street, in which they rehabilitated and lived for 10 years. The couple then moved to his present house on East Park Avenue—an English Vernacular Revival Cottage with Colonial Revival elements, located in both the Valdosta Historic District and Brookwood North National Register District—where he undertook repairs to preserve and maintain the character of this historic home. He joined the National and Georgia Trusts for Historic Preservation, and educated himself on the policies and benefits of preservation, which he gladly shared with others. In the 1990s, he became actively involved in the Historic Brookwood North Neighborhood Association and Valdosta Heritage Foundation, serving multiple terms as both an officer and as president, and in which he continues to be involved. In 1996, Dr. Saeger was appointed to the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission, where he is serving in his 5th term and is the current Vice-Chair. Dr. Saeger has also served on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, representing the south central region of Georgia, as well as the Board of Directors for the Valdosta-Lowndes Habitat for Humanity, where he has helped to integrate compatible new housing in the Valdosta Historic District.

Lowndes County native **David J. Sutton** also received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his lifetime of historic preservation influence. Sutton and his wife purchased the "Monroe House" -- what is now known as the Monroe-Sutton-Haller House -- in the Fairview neighborhood. The 1896 Queen Anne house designed by architect Stephen Fulghum inspired Sutton's 30-year commitment to its restoration. Sutton's enthusiasm for rehabilitating his home spread into the Fairview neighborhood, and he assisted others in purchasing and restoring many historic houses in Valdosta's historic neighborhoods. He helped research the history and



architectural significance of these houses as well, allowing a new generation to discover the rewards of historic preservation. Through his vocation as an urban planner, Sutton accomplished projects that benefited both his neighborhood and the community at large. His leadership was instrumental in turning a large nuisance property in the middle of Fairview into a passive city park. Sutton was also responsible for working with the City of Valdosta to reduce speeding along Central Place by closing this street's access from Central and Hill Avenues and getting a four-way stop sign installed at the intersection of Floyd and Wells Streets—making the Fairview neighborhood a more safe and livable area. Sutton was also instrumental in saving the Barber-Pittman House and the J. T. Roberts House. Although Sutton moved away from Valdosta approximately a decade ago, his influence on historic preservation continues to have a major impact on the city of Valdosta.

"Both Lifetime Achievement Award recipients have demonstrated a high level of influence in local historic preservation, yet each recipient has made their mark in different ways over the past four decades," said Hamm. "Their combined efforts and numerous contributions are immeasurable and have made our city a better place by protecting and promoting Valdosta's history."

The Historic Preservation Commission began the annual awards program in 2009, as part of our city's observance of National Historic Preservation Month, to recognize property owners who do outstanding work to preserve historic buildings or promote historic preservation, while following local regulations that protect the built heritage within our Historic District. These awards provide positive reinforcement of the Historic District design review process, promote goodwill within our community, and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our citizens in the preservation and reuse of our historic buildings. For more information about the City of Valdosta Preservation Awards, contact Emily Foster at (229) 259-3563 or at [efoster@valdostacity.com](mailto:efoster@valdostacity.com).



**Due to the 100 Black Men of Valdosta Annual Barbeque Cook-Off on August 1st and 2nd at the Historic Courthouse Square, Farm Days will be held on only the third Saturday in August (August 16th). The regular Farm Days schedule will resume in September and October.**

## Savannah Hosts Preservation Conference



As the premier educational and networking event for those who are committed to saving places, PastForward, the 2014 National Preservation Conference, pushes new frontiers in programming, outreach and engagement with robust opportunities for onsite, online, and virtual experiences. [Sign up](#) to receive 2014 conference updates.

**Innovative Resources and Tools:** PastForward features in-depth **Learning Labs**, on the ground exploration through **Field Studies**, **Intensive Workshops** and live demonstrations, films and exhibits in the **Preservation Studio**. [Click here](#) to see how SCAD students are participating in the conference programming on revolving funds.

**Expect the Unexpected:** PastForward, engages new audiences in Savannah and virtually with **TrustLive**, live-streaming marquee presentations that explore preservation through new lenses including climate change, real estate, data mapping, and new audiences. Stay informed with [2014 PastForward updates](#).

Be sure to join our [Facebook PastForward event page](#) and follow the conference with Twitter hashtag - **#presconf**.

*The 2014 National Preservation Conference, PastForward, is brought to you by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in collaboration with SCAD: The Savannah College of Art and Design and in partnership with the Historic Savannah Foundation.*

## Overhead Banner Program

### Calling all nonprofit organizations!

Does your organization have an event that needs to be advertised to the Valdosta community? Use an overhead banner to get the word out!

An organization's event banner can be hung "over the street" at any two of the City's five locations for up to two weeks. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, organizations must submit an Overhead Banner Application and a \$90.00 application fee to the Planning and Zoning Division office. After your application is approved, simply drop off your banner at the City's Traffic Management Center at 316 E. Adair Street, and the City will install the banner at your chosen location(s).

For more information about Overhead Banners, contact the Planning and Zoning Division office at (229) 259-3563 or visit the City's sign information website at: <http://www.valdostacity.com/Index.aspx?page=91>

## Noise Ordinance Amendment

On July 24, the Valdosta City Council voted to adopt a new Noise Ordinance that creates standards based upon zoning classification and establishes separate distance standards that are stronger for residential areas and more liberal for commercial areas to respect the nature of each use.

In 2005, the City adopted the previous Noise Ordinance to address general issues of noise volume. Being a unified ordinance for all zoning classifications, it was understood that residential areas would be managed differently than commercial areas.

The newly adopted ordinance puts in place specific days, times, distances, and times of operation. It also establishes new distance standards that vary by zoning classification and limits the time for outdoor entertainment, prohibits loud music from vehicles on private property, and makes it a violation for any indoor entertainment establishment to keep their doors open during operation, among other changes.

To read the new noise ordinance, please visit [www.valdostacity.com](http://www.valdostacity.com). For information regarding this ordinance, contact the Planning and Zoning Division at (229) 259-3563.

## Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development



Stormwater runoff is a major cause of water pollution in suburban and urban areas, such as in the City of Valdosta. When rain falls in undeveloped rural areas, the water is absorbed and filtered by soil and plants. When rain falls on our roofs, streets, and parking lots in developed areas, the water cannot soak into the ground. In most urban areas, stormwater is drained through engineered collection systems and discharged into nearby waterbodies. The stormwater carries trash, bacteria, heavy metals, and other pollutants from the urban landscape, degrading the quality of the receiving waters.

Higher flows can also cause erosion and flooding in urban streams, damaging habitat, property, and infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure (GI) uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage water and create healthier urban environments. GI is a relatively new and flexible term that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) refers to as systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes to infiltrate, evapotranspire, or reuse stormwater or runoff on the site where it is generated. GI can be used at a wide range of landscape scales in place of, or in addition to, more traditional stormwater control elements to support the principles of Low Impact Development (LID).



LID is an approach to land development (or redevelopment) that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. LID employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features, minimizing effective imperviousness to create functional and appealing site drainage that

treat stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product. There are many practices that have been used to adhere to these principles such as bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels, and permeable pavements.



LID can be applied to new development, redevelopment, or as retrofits to existing development. LID has been adapted to a range of land uses from high density ultra-urban settings to low density development.

The environmental and economic benefits can include: Improved water quality, reduced number of costly flooding events, restored aquatic habitat, improved groundwater recharge and enhanced neighborhood beauty.

To learn more, please visit the following EPA websites:

Green Infrastructure (GI): [http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/gi\\_what.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/gi_what.cfm)

Low Impact Development (LID): <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/green/>

The City of Valdosta has a stormwater permit with the Georgia EPD, which encourages the use of GI/LID practices and approaches on both new and redeveloped sites. To learn more about the Stormwater Division, please contact Emily Davenport, Stormwater Manager at 229-259-3530 or visit our website at [www.valdostacity.com/stormwater](http://www.valdostacity.com/stormwater).

### Green Infrastructure Examples

[Bioswales](#)

[Green Streets & Alleys](#)

[Rain Gardens](#)

[Downspout Disconnection](#)

[Land Conservation](#)

[Rainwater Harvesting](#)

[Green Roofs](#)

[Permeable Pavements](#)

[Urban Tree Canopy](#)

Contact the  
**Planning & Zoning Division at:**  
**229.259.3563**

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aarzayus@valdostacity.com

**Contact**  
**Valdosta Main Street at**  
**229.259.3577**

Ellen Hill  
Main Street Manager  
ehill@valdostacity.com

Vacant  
Main Street Program Coordinator

**Upcoming Meetings/Events:**

**Historic Preservation Commission**

8/4 - 5:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

8/5 - 2:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**City Council**

8/7 - 5:30pm | City Hall

**Central Valdosta Development Authority**

8/12- 2:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**City Council**

8/21 - 5:30pm | City Hall

**Greater Lowndes Planning Commission**

8/25 - 5:30pm | Lowndes County Health Dist. Admin. Office

**Labor Day Holiday**

9/1 | City of Valdosta Offices Closed

**Historic Preservation Commission**

9/2 - 5:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

9/9 - 2:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**Central Valdosta Development Authority**

9/9- 5:00pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**City Council**

9/11 - 5:30pm | City Hall

**City Council**

9/25 - 5:30pm | City Hall

**Greater Lowndes Planning Commission**

9/29 - 5:30pm | Lowndes County Health Dist. Admin. Office

**Historic Preservation Commission**

10/6 - 5:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

10/7- 2:30pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**City Council**

10/9 - 5:30pm | City Hall

**Central Valdosta Development Authority**

10/14- 5:00pm | City Annex Multi-Purpose Room

**City Council**

10/23 - 5:30pm | City Hall

**Greater Lowndes Planning Commission**

10/27 - 5:30pm | Lowndes County Health Dist. Admin. Office

**Be Smart: Submit a Site Plan at the START!**

The City of Valdosta *strongly encourages* Site Plan submittal **BEFORE** full plan submittal. This allows staff the opportunity to comment on major components of the development, which can affect all aspects of the site. Items on the Site Plan should include setbacks, parking, buffering, access, detention, and landscaping. Each of these items has a significant impact on the location and layout of a building, which can affect the architectural and building plans. Unfortunately, if items are shown incorrectly on the Site Plan and a full set of plans has already been created based on incorrect information, the result is often wasted time and money.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.VALDOSTACITY.COM/PLANNING](http://WWW.VALDOSTACITY.COM/PLANNING)**

**The CITY OF VALDOSTA...A City Without Limits, A Region of Opportunity!**