



SAVANNAH

savannahga.gov

ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT
2020-2023

From the Desk of the City Manager

City Council –



CITY MANAGER

Joseph A. Melder

This document represents a comprehensive showcase of the journey of progress and accomplishment that our city has undertaken from 2020 to 2023. We have made historic investments to create and preserve affordable housing; prioritized the funding of civic infrastructure and acted on needed capacity enhancements in stormwater management; focused on proven solutions to homelessness; reiterated that public safety is our number one priority; taken the city organization Back to Basics, focused on delivering core services.

All of the work reflected upon within this report is the result of leadership from you, our City Council, along with the excellent guidance of the City Managers who preceded me in 2020 and 2021; Patrick Monahan, Michael Brown, and Heath Lloyd.

In the face of challenges, our community has demonstrated resilience, unity, and an unyielding spirit. We have come together to overcome adversity, embracing our diversity as a source of strength and innovation. This report captures our collective efforts, the milestones we have achieved, and the strides we have taken towards building a stronger, more inclusive city.

Our commitment to housing affordability and availability was exemplified by the Council's decision to invest a record \$15.4 million since 2020 in support of affordable housing, including \$10.4 million to the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund and nearly \$5 million in SPLOST funds for infrastructure projects in support of affordable housing developments.

As we came out of the difficulties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that our community had a major humanitarian issue to address — homelessness. This council chose not to shy away from the challenge, instead investing in proven solutions. Through your leadership, we established the Interagency Council on Homelessness to increase services and develop a community-wide plan. As a result, council has provided \$226,000 to fund a Day Center which assisted 362 individuals in its first six months of operation.

The focus placed on civic infrastructure during this administration was front and center in Council's decision in 2023 to maintain the lowest millage rate since 1987. This policy decision created the

availability of \$7.8 million to fund key stormwater improvements throughout areas of the city that have long been subjected to flooding.

During this administration, the city also faced public safety challenges head on, making needed investments to keep our community safe. In 2022, Council authorized \$4.3 million in salary increases for police and fire personnel, relaunched the Savannah Impact Program, and launched the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement which is dedicated to a collaborative community approach to violence reduction.

We also faced the reality that some of our core services were struggling to keep up with our community's growth, so we knew it was time to get Back to Basics. In 2022, Council reenergized Team Sanitation, providing \$6.7 million to right-size their staffing to meet the expanded needs of our community. This investment ultimately led to on-time recycling collection improving from 75% in 2021 to 98% in 2022.

Council made clear that recreational and community spaces in Savannah matter and embraced the transformational Recreation Reimagined initiative. This initiative represents more than \$4 million in enhanced recreational facilities and amenities throughout all city council districts.

Transportation safety was also reiterated as an official policy objective with Council's adoption of Vision Zero in 2022. This policy represents a focus on eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries in our community. The work ahead on additional traffic calming and finishing the Tide to Town network will help us reach this goal.

I am proud to serve as your city manager and to lead Team Savannah in achieving the goals you envision for our city. All of Team Savannah looks forward to continuing to work with City Council to make big things happen.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph A. Melder". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joseph A. Melder, City Manager



City Makes Historic Investments in Stormwater & Civic Infrastructure



The City of Savannah has undertaken numerous stormwater projects as we continue investing in this key infrastructure. City Council's recent approval of continuing generationally-low property tax rates is enabling the City to undertake some additional stormwater capacity projects.

STORMWATER PROJECTS

The City currently oversees about \$130 million in stormwater canal capital projects, with more planned as funds become available. The projects are all aimed at expanding canal capacity and the ability to reduce flooding, particularly in the flood-prone areas on the city's east and west sides. In 2023, the City Council voted to maintain the millage rate of 12.20 mills, which will generate an additional \$7.8 million to address stormwater needs, including Victory Drive Drainage Improvements on the Springfield Canal, Liberty City drainage improvements on the Springfield Canal, and the Montgomery Crossroads project at Hayner's Creek.

CASEY CANAL

The Casey Canal runs along the Truman Parkway and is a major drainage basin for much of midtown Savannah. In addition to improvements to topside canals and pump stations, the city is working on development of underground tunnels as a way to route water into the river.

BILBO CANAL

Site and survey work is underway to widen the section of the Bilbo Canal that runs south from East President Street to Normandy Street, which is about halfway between President and Wheaton Streets. It will be widened to 90 feet, like the northern section was previously.

SPRINGFIELD CANAL

The city is in the middle of a 30-year, \$60-plus million project to widen the canal to 100 feet, improve neighborhood drainage systems and install a new pump station. The city started work at the mouth of the canal, which empties into the Savannah River just below the Talmadge Bridge, and will work its way back to the canal's start, about five miles south.

In late 2023, the city received notice the FEMA had selected a stormwater project along the Springfield Canal for a \$30 million grant that will result in major drainage improvements for Cloverdale and Carver Village.

PLACENTIA CANAL

The Placentia Canal runs along the city's eastern edge, skirting Thunderbolt and carving a path through Savannah State University's campus.

The city has replaced several culverts along the canal, including some on SSU's campus, and will be creating retention ponds from city-owned properties that can act as water holders during major storm events.

ENMARKET ARENA

The City's largest-ever capital project, the new \$165 million, 9,500 seat arena has served as a gathering space for locals and visitors since opening its doors in early 2022. The arena's opening marks the completion of an idea that began nearly two decades ago to deliver a state-of-the-art entertainment venue that would be a catalyst and connector to economic mobility for the historic communities of Greater West Savannah. This project was funded by the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax.

BROUGHTON STREETSCAPES

Broughton Street has always been Savannah's Main Street, and the City has always been committed to its vitality. In 2023, we marked the completion of Broughton Streetscapes Phase I, which is the most significant investment into a streetscape the City has ever made. The project came with a total cost of \$13.3 million, entirely funded through the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. This project included replacement of storm drainage infrastructure, new brick paver sidewalks, parking and crosswalks; granite curbing; lighting; landscaping; hardscapes; bike racks; benches; accessible sidewalk ramps; and the creation of a festival zone between Whitaker and Drayton Streets.

WATERS AVENUE STREETSCAPE

Waters Avenue was once a thriving commercial corridor with a mix of small local businesses owned by both African American and white residents. With the goal of reviving this historically prominent economic corridor, the City began a three phase streetscape project in 2016. The Waters Avenue Phase III Streetscape Project, completed in 2023, represents the final phase. The full project was a \$6.6 million investment, mostly funded by the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax.

City Invests, Partners to Create & Preserve Affordable Housing



The City has responded actively to pressures on residents associated with increasing costs for housing by creating major public-private partnerships to address long-term housing needs in our community. In the last 4 years, these efforts have assisted nearly 2,700 households in Savannah.

HISTORIC INVESTMENTS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The City of Savannah has invested a record \$15,368,165 since January 2020 in support of affordable housing, including \$10,376,750 in the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund and \$4,991,415 in SPLOST funds for infrastructure projects that support the development of affordable housing at Dundee Cottages and Savannah Gardens.

Together, the City and housing partners have invested approximately \$309.7 million citywide to help improve housing for 2,684 households between January 2020 and June 2023 including persons experiencing homelessness, renters, homeowners, and first-time homebuyers.

DUNDEE COTTAGES PROJECT

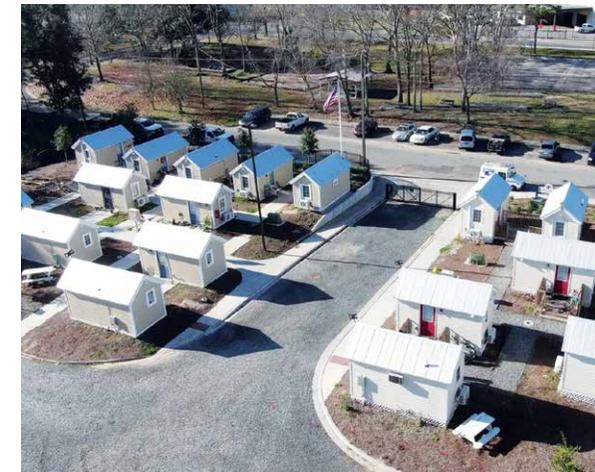
The Dundee Cottages project on the Eastside is a true Housing First initiative—prioritizing permanent housing with low barriers. The project is specifically designed for families and individuals experiencing homelessness in the Chatham County/Savannah area. Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless will be the lead agency and will manage, administer, and develop the community wide entry system helping people experiencing homelessness access a pathway to housing. The 40 additional units of housing being developed on Dundee Street will be a part of the system ensuring equitable access for all.

GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIP

The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) is partnering with the City of Savannah to invest \$6 million in workforce and affordable housing. GPA will make this investment in annual installments of \$750,000 each year for at-least 8 years. In just its first year, the GPA funded Port of Savannah Area Workforce Housing Initiative is expected to leverage an additional \$3 million in available capital, which will pay for more than 70 low- and moderate-income households to improve their housing or purchase new homes.

SAVANNAH GARDENS

Since January 2020, the City has approved \$1.75 million necessary to complete public infrastructure installation and help leverage resources to complete construction of 120 dwellings in the final phase of Savannah Gardens—a development initiated by the City in 2005 that has resulted in a \$122 million private/public investment to transform a neighborhood and create 619 new homes for renters and first time home buyers. The 120 new affordable dwellings include 84 apartments, 22 houses for first time home buyers, and 14 dwellings for families experiencing homelessness. The overall development is expected to be complete by the end of 2023.



Council Prioritizes Policies to Increase Housing Availability, Affordability

Mayor Johnson and City Council took action to address affordable housing needs in 2020 with the establishment of the Housing Savannah task force. This task force returned a set of recommendations that led to the formation of Housing Savannah, Inc.

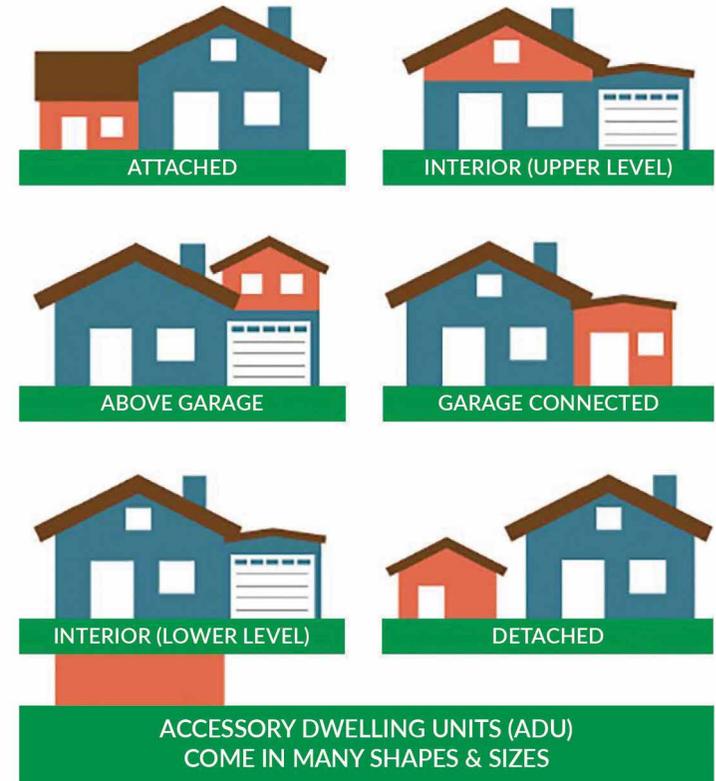


ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)

In May 2023, City Council voted to expand the number of lots in the city eligible for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and encourage property owners to add more lower-cost housing to the city. According to a 2021 study by the Housing Savannah Task Force, about 40% of households in the city cannot afford quality housing. To be classified an ADU, dwellings must have a bathroom, a bedroom and a kitchen. While most ADUs in Savannah are carriage houses, which typically are not attached to the main residence, ADUs do not have to be separate from the principal building on the lot. The apartments can be attached structures, a room in an attic or basement, a space above a garage, or even a converted garage. The changes to the ordinance were designed to be an incremental change to the rules that govern ADUs. The goal was to make ADUs feasible housing options in more areas of the city, while also protecting adjacent properties from the impacts of over-building. But the biggest change in the approved ordinance revisions are to incentivize property owners to create ADUs to generate passive income, while also addressing the affordable housing shortage.

HOUSING SAVANNAH PLAN + HOUSING SAVANNAH, INC.

City Council established a 40-member Task Force in August 2020 to examine and assess local housing needs and opportunities and to develop a comprehensive plan to improve housing availability, accessibility, and affordability for the greater Savannah community. In July 2021, the Housing Savannah Task Force produced an Action Plan recommending five major strategies and 43 associated action items, one of which was the creation of a non-profit organization to focus on education, advocacy, and fundraising for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF). City Council endorsed the Action Plan in the fall of 2021. The City took the lead in establishing a new non-profit organization, Housing Savannah, Inc. In March 2022, to increase awareness within the community about the housing challenges we're facing, the importance of pro-housing efforts and initiatives, and to raise private and philanthropic investment for the SAHF. Housing Savannah hired an Executive Director in November 2022 and since then the organization has been working to initiate and foster collaborative relationships with a wide variety of housing practitioners; identify our community's unique challenges



As the City has approached the policy matters that impact housing availability and affordability, we have engaged our community every step of the way. From 2022-2023 the City held community meetings throughout every aldermanic district to discuss changes to rules regulating accessory dwelling units.

and opportunities with regard to housing; develop an education campaign to establish a common understanding and common language for the community around affordable housing; establish pro-housing advocacy priorities; and develop a fundraising strategy to encourage private and philanthropic investment in the SAHF.

Council Invests in Proven Solutions to Reduce Homelessness



INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

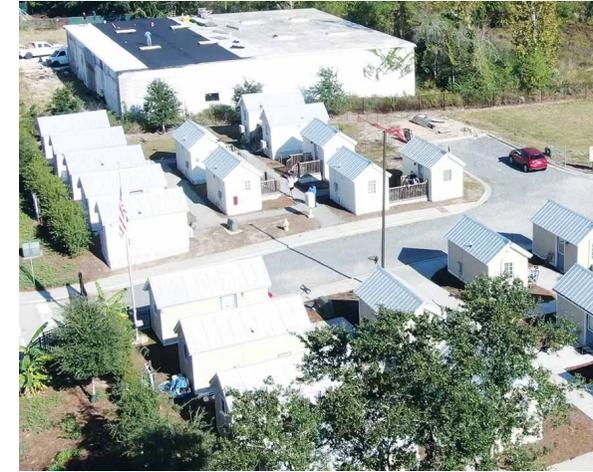
The Savannah City Council approved the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) in 2022. The Savannah-Chatham County Interagency Council on Homelessness expanded the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board to include key government agencies and now has a dedicated professional city staff member focusing on homelessness daily. The ICH/CoC leads several committees that are responding to the issues of homelessness and working to increase services to community members in need. In the coming months, the ICH/CoC will be creating a comprehensive community-wide plan to address homelessness.

DAY CENTER

In December 2022, the City of Savannah, in partnership with Union Mission, established a Day Center which now offers much needed shelter and support services throughout the day. The City invested \$226,000 for this initiative. The Day Center provides connections to health care services, employment programs, counseling, and provides meals to those living on the street while connecting them to housing services and programs. In the first six months of operation, the Day Center assisted 362 unique individuals, connected 65 people to housing, helped 128 people obtain counseling services, and served more than 13,000 meals.



The City has nurtured and enhanced partnerships with non-profit agencies working to assist those experiencing homelessness in our community. This collaboration culminated in the establishment of the Interagency Council on Homelessness.



Affordable housing developed on Dundee Street in East Savannah is a game changing project in the City's housing first approach to addressing homelessness, and part of an ongoing partnership with the Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless.

OUTREACH TEAM

The City of Savannah invested \$155,000 to support street outreach program teams, in collaboration with the Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless, to engage those currently lacking stable housing who instead live in places not meant for human habitation. The Outreach Team works with community partners to connect those on the streets with the tools and resources to exit homelessness. Through continuous engagement, the Outreach Team builds the trust necessary to help individuals off the street and into shelter and housing services.

A major investment in public safety occurred in 2022, when City Council voted to raise starting police wages to \$50,000 and starting fire wages to \$48,000. Both moves made Savannah's public safety agencies some of the highest paid in Georgia. City Council voted again in 2023 to raise pay even higher.



Council Invests in Public Safety

PUBLIC SAFETY WAGE INCREASES

The City of Savannah implemented substantial investments in public safety, including pay increases, retention bonuses, referral bonuses, and a lateral entry program. The pay increases resulted in a \$51,263 starting salary for Savannah police officers and a \$49,200 starting salary for Savannah firefighters, both up from a previous starting salary of \$44,000.

These initiatives represented nearly \$4.3 million in additional annual investments in public safety, putting Savannah's public safety departments in the top 5% in pay among agencies in Georgia.

As a supplement to these higher starting salaries, we also implemented:

- **\$5,000 new hire sign-on bonus**
- **2-year \$5,000 retention incentive**
- **\$7,500 lateral entry sign-on bonus**

In Savannah Fire, the new investments included upward adjustments to the starting salaries of all advanced firefighters, fire engineers, fire investigators, and fire prevention inspectors.

INVESTMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY

The City also invested in police technology initiatives, including:

- **a new training simulator,**
- **expansion of ShotSpotter to now provide a presence of the technology in all city council districts,**
- **thirty-two (32) new flock cameras which read license plates and send instant alerts to law enforcement officers when the cameras identify license plates that match those on lists of cars that are stolen or otherwise of interest to the police,**
- **new Brief Cam technology service which allows police officers to review hours of video in minutes.**



Expanding the physical footprint of our fire department is key to our ability to continue responding quickly and effectively when emergencies happen.

NEW FIRE STATION IN THE HIGHLANDS

In 2021, we officially opened the brand-new Highlands Fire Station 14. The Savannah Fire Department operated out of what were supposed to be temporary trailers for more than a decade before moving into this new facility. Our first district Highlands neighbors and our Savannah firefighters deserved this permanent, state-of-the-art fire station to ensure families and homes in this neighborhood are protected and served to the best of our city's ability. This project is part of the City's efforts to invest equitably in every neighborhood.

City Partners with Community on Public Safety

RELAUNCH OF THE SAVANNAH IMPACT PROGRAM

After a 5-year hiatus, the Savannah Impact Program (SIP) was relaunched in 2022. SIP is a specialized unit within the Savannah Police Department, operating as a “Community Reentry Collaborative”, primarily focusing on “high risk” and “at risk” youth and adults. The SIP collaborative is comprised of sworn and civilian police personnel as well as numerous community supervision agencies to include the Georgia Department of Corrections, Board of Pardons and Parole, Chatham County Juvenile Court and the Department of Juvenile Justice. The Savannah Impact Program’s approach to reducing recidivism is identification and confrontation of serious offenders’ core problems of poor education, lack of job skills, substance abuse and lack of community resources. The program combines all the necessary resources into a single location, thereby eliminating the hurdle of accessibility.

LAUNCH OF THE OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY & ENGAGEMENT

The City of Savannah established the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (ONSE) in 2022, dedicated to implementing crime reduction strategies and increasing neighborhood safety through a collaborative community approach.

The Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement is focused on:

- *Identifying and engaging youth at the highest risk of participating in or being a victim of violent crime, connecting them to comprehensive support services, and providing an “off-ramp” for individuals to pursue positive growth and development opportunities.*
- *The ONSE team works with the community to develop and sustain a citywide network of violence prevention and intervention services and track the community’s progress toward reducing crime and increasing neighborhood safety.*

- *The Savannah City Council approved \$1 million in 2022 to support the city’s neighborhood safety and engagement initiatives. These funds provided community grants to organizations to support credible messengers, violence interrupters, conflict management, out-of-school activities, youth sports, counseling and mentoring activities that engage the most vulnerable youth in alternatives to violence and crime.*

FIRE ACCREDITATION – SETTING THE STANDARD INTERNATIONALLY

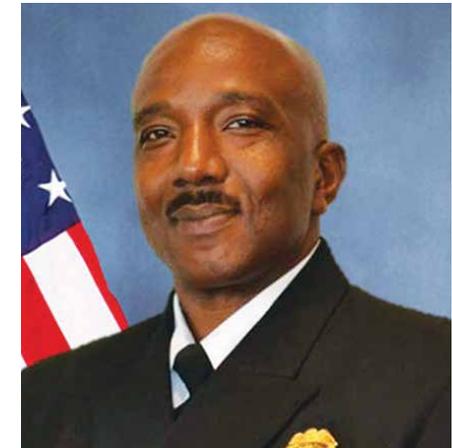
The Savannah Fire Department received Re-accredited Agency status with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) for meeting the criteria established through the CFAI’s voluntary self-assessment and accreditation program. Savannah Fire is among 112 fire departments with both ISO Class-I status and CFAI international accreditation. About 250 agencies have achieved Internationally Accredited Agency status with the CFAI and the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. As an ISO Class-I, CFAI accredited department, Savannah Fire ranks in the top 0.4% of the nation’s nearly 30,000 fire departments.

NEW CHIEFS IN TOWN

Elzie Kitchen was appointed Savannah’s Fire Chief on November 7, 2022. Chief Kitchen had served as interim Fire Chief since July 2, 2022. A Johnson High School graduate and Savannah resident since 1977, Chief Kitchen originally joined the City’s Water Department in 1997 and has served the Savannah Fire Department since 1998.

Lenny Gunther was appointed Savannah’s Police Chief on the 29th of December in 2022. Chief Gunther had served as interim Police Chief since July 29, 2022. Chief Gunther joined the Savannah Police Department as a patrol officer in 2001 and moved up through the ranks to his most recent position of assistant chief in 2019.

Fire Chief Elzie Kitchen



Police Chief Lenny Gunther

City Gets Back to Basics: Sanitation & Park and Tree

SANITATION INVESTMENTS

Sanitation was a huge part of our Back to Basics focus, with a commitment in 2022 of \$6.7 million to right-size their staffing and fleet to meet the expanded needs of our community. This investment included 29 new positions to significantly enhance litter and recycling programs, which ultimately led to on-time recycling collections going from less than 75% in 2021 to 98% in 2022. Team Sanitation has also played a big role in our organization's investment in neighborhoods, hosting more than 40-yard waste and bulk item collection events — known now as our Rock the Block District Cleanups.

PARK & TREE INVESTMENTS

In 2023, the City has invested in the Park and Tree Department by adding 51 new positions and creating a new litter and maintenance team focusing on improving the maintenance of our public park spaces, sports fields, right-of-way medians and greenspace city-wide. In addition, we returned the Cemeteries Division to Park and Tree, streamlining the processes of divisions that have a lot in common. This year, Cemeteries took charge of Evergreen Cemetery and has been working to restore the facility and provide dignity to the individuals interred there.

Park & Tree is also responsible for 83 miles of open and closed lanes. A closed lane is one that can't be used to deliver public services, such as being too narrow to provide access for sanitation or public safety vehicles. Many closed lanes were becoming easy targets for illegal dumping, requiring the City to use public resources cleaning up the illegal waste, in addition to performing regular maintenance activities such as mowing. To help prevent this illegal activity, City of Savannah Park & Tree crews completed the installation of locking, swing-arm gates at 62 closed lanes. Part of the 2022 Back to Basic budgetary plan, the City committed \$500,000 to fund the fabrication and installation of the gates. The City will continue to provide regular maintenance services within the gated lanes.



The City has gotten back to basics in Park and Tree by investing in additional capacity and realigning similar services in order to diligently maintain our world-famous greenspaces.

City Gets Back to Basics: Road Resurfacing & Smart Meters



Smart meters are currently being installed for water customers in areas throughout the City. Phase one of system-wide implementation will represent a total of 10,000 smart meters and is expected to conclude in December 2023.

ROAD RESURFACING

From 2020 to 2023, Savannah has been on a roll when it comes to giving our roads a major facelift. We've put our money where our wheels are, investing nearly \$18 million to resurface almost 100 lane miles of city streets. That means smoother rides and safer travels for everyone. Whether you're a local on your daily commute or a visitor exploring our beautiful city, these efforts show our dedication to keeping things moving in the right direction. So, next time you hit the road in Savannah, know that we're working hard to make your journey as smooth as possible!

SMART METERS

The City of Savannah and its contractors began the first phase of the system-wide implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) or "smart" meters for its water customers starting in mid-June 2023. AMI meters collect real-time water usage information and transmit that data to the City via a cellular signal. The benefits of AMI meters include more accurate field data collection for use in customer bill calculation, reduced manual meter reading allowing staff to work on other water system tasks and projects, and improved data analysis to promote water conservation efforts.

The City completed a successful AMI pilot project in the first quarter of 2023. In the pilot, City staff worked with meter installation contractors to replace 1,082 manually read meters with new smart meters. In the first phase of system-wide implementation, a total of 10,000 water meters will be upgraded to AMI meters. The first phase is expected to conclude in December 2023.

City Focuses on Increasing Connectivity & Safety Throughout Savannah



Vision Zero is the City's commitment to a future with no serious injuries or fatalities being caused by vehicle accidents. The expansion of our trail network will be a key component of this initiative's success.

TIDE TO TOWN INVESTMENTS

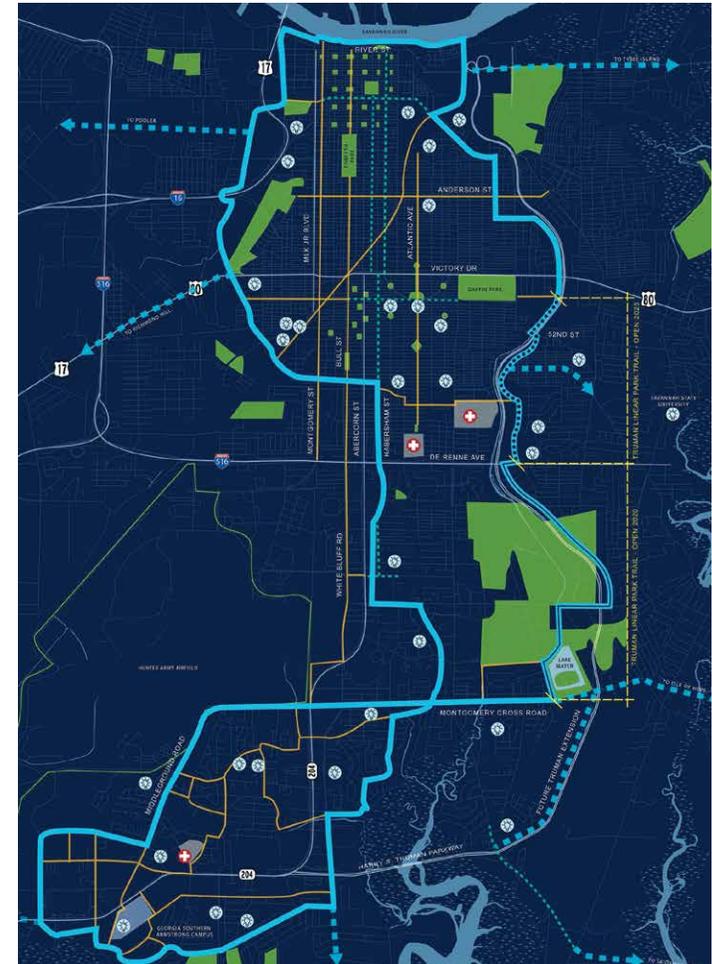
The City's current Tide to Town project is a \$6.8 million investment being used to fund the Truman Phase 2B trail project and the core route along Middleground Road. The investment is made up of a \$1.5 million federal grant, \$4 million from the American Rescue Plan Act, \$1 million from SPLOST 7, and \$325,000 from the City's parking fund. Construction on these new phases of Tide to Town should commence in late 2023 or early 2024. Additional funding of \$10 million from the Hotel-Motel tax will allow for further future expansion of the trail system.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Between 2020 and 2023, Savannah has prioritized safer streets through traffic calming efforts. We've invested over \$500,000 in this initiative, installing 27 temporary traffic tables and 13 permanent ones on residential streets across the city. Our goal? To ensure a secure and relaxed experience for everyone on the road—drivers, walkers, and bikers. Next time you're out and about in Savannah, you'll see our commitment to a smoother and safer journey firsthand.

VISION ZERO

The City of Savannah acknowledges that traffic fatalities and serious injuries are preventable, and even one traffic fatality is far too many. Between 2016 and 2021, there were 92 traffic fatalities and 730 serious injuries in Savannah, with an average of 18.4 deaths and 146 serious injuries each year, and Georgia ranks 9th in the nation for the most dangerous state for people to travel. Savannah renewed its commitment to safer streets in 2022 with the adoption of Vision Zero, a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.



The City's current Tide to Town project is a \$6.8 million investment being used to fund the Truman Phase 2B trail and the core route along Middleground Road. The above image represents the fully imagined trail network throughout the City.

City Invests in Community Spaces

Our commitment to recreational opportunities throughout the City has been ever-present the last few years. The Recreation Reimagined initiative represents more than \$4 million in recreational facilities and amenities through all city council districts. In 2022, we resurfaced 12 basketball and tennis courts, and over the course of 2023 our neighborhoods have seen splash pads being constructed, athletic facilities opened, and community centers rehabbed and upgraded.

INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY CENTERS

Community centers have been a particular focus of the last four years, as we've worked to complete new centers and unveil improvements to existing centers, including:

GRANT CENTER

The new Grant Center was completed in May 2023 and represents a \$4.5 million investment. This center provided a new gymnasium building of 10,380 square feet containing a full-size basketball court. The new gymnasium replaces the existing Grant Center Gymnasium and is the only City-owned regulation size gymnasium on the west side of Savannah. The building also includes locker rooms, public restrooms, an entrance lobby, a snack bar, and an office.

MOSES JACKSON CENTER

Improvements were also completed at the Moses Jackson Center building. The two existing storage rooms on the west end of Moses Jackson were renovated into a fitness room and workout room. In addition, the existing windows in the Moses Jackson building were replaced with new energy efficient windows. The Moses Jackson building is connected to the new Grant Center building by sidewalks and a covered walkway.

DELAWARE CENTER

Renovations to the Delaware Center, totaling \$1.6 million, were completed in 2023 and the facility was reopened to the public. The renovations included interior and exterior painting, new building entrance, new flooring.

The City also completed installation of new HVAC units, a roof replacement and converting the existing residential kitchen to a commercial kitchen.

HUDSON HILL CENTER

The new Hudson Hill Community Center, a \$2.8 million project, is located within Rebecca N. Gray Memorial Park. It provides a new central hub for community, recreation, education and sports. The new community center is a 4,800 square foot facility replacing the demolished 3,800 square foot building. The new facility consists of classrooms, offices and a large assembly space with a commercial kitchen. A new lighted parking lot is adjacent to the covered pavilion near the entrance of the center.

RESTORING TRIBBLE PARK

In late December 2021, the water level at Tribble Park Lake began to decrease due to a breach in the wall. In October 2022, City Council authorized a contract to repair the Joseph Tribble Park Lake for approximately \$2.5 million. The designed solution included the construction of a 12-foot-wide clay wall along the embankment on the west side of the lake. Crews also filled in all voids that formed under the current breached area and replaced the walking trail in the affected area. The City of Savannah reopened Joseph Tribble Park in May 2023 following the completion of restoration work to the lake.

RESTORING HISTORIC KIAH HOUSE

Galvan Foundation, a mission-driven organization with several Savannah-based initiatives, and the City of Savannah, have agreed to purchase the Kiah House property, located at 505 W. 36th St., from the Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF) and restore it as a cultural and civic institution. The Kiah House initiative builds on significant recent commitments to community development in Cuyler-Brownsville. In November 2022, Galvan collaborated with the City of Savannah to commit \$1 million to provide local homeowners with low-interest loans for home repairs, and a \$5 million investment to build and renovate 25 properties.



In 2022, the City resurfaced 12 basketball and tennis courts, and over the course of 2023 our neighborhoods have seen splash pads being constructed, athletic facilities opened, and community centers rehabbed and upgraded.

City Prioritizes Transportation Infrastructure & Safety Enhancements



IMPROVING GWINNETT STREET

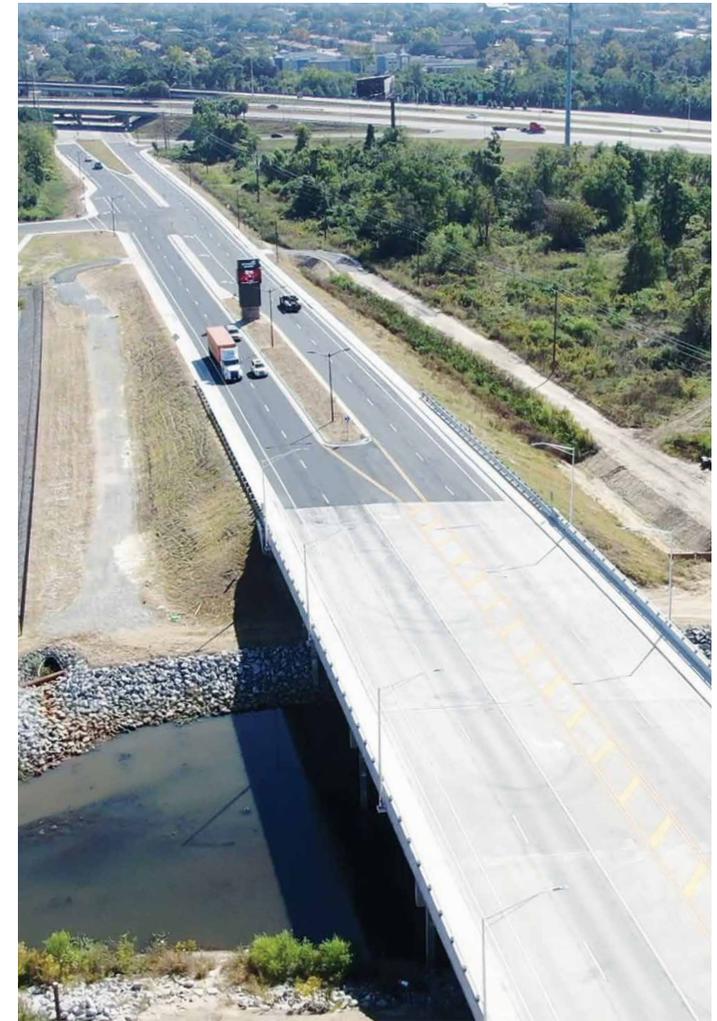
The Gwinnett Streetscape Project, which focused on both widening and beautification, was a nearly \$14 million enhancement to the gateway to Savannah's Historic Westside. The improvements included widening the existing two-lane roadway to a four-lane roadway with sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and a landscaped median. In addition, widening of a section of the Springfield Canal coincided with the construction of a new bridge to raise the existing roadway elevations.

DELESSEPS AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Construction is underway on the \$6.9 million DeLesseps Avenue Improvements project. The DeLesseps Avenue Improvements Project is implementing the City of Savannah's Complete Streets ordinance. The project will include adding sidewalks and bike lanes in both the east and west directions. This project will also improve drainage by adding curb and gutter, pipe and drainage inlets along the limits of the project. Pedestrian facilities at two existing traffic signals will also be upgraded. The project runs along DeLesseps Avenue from Waters Avenue to Skidaway Road. This project is anticipated to be completed in July 2025.

INVESTING IN SIDEWALKS THROUGHOUT SAVANNAH

From 2020 to 2023, the City of Savannah has demonstrated an unwavering dedication to ensuring the safety and accessibility of our sidewalks. A notable highlight within this time frame is the investment of \$5 million exclusively aimed at the improvement of City sidewalks. With an emphasis on progress and inclusivity, the commitment to sidewalk maintenance has translated into tangible results, boasting a remarkable tally of over 2,500 sidewalk repairs accomplished year-to-date. This accomplishment not only showcases our city's resolve to foster walkable communities but also underscores our determination to create an environment where citizens can traverse with confidence and ease.



The Gwinnett Streetscape Project focused on both the widening and beautification of the gateway to Savannah's Historic Westside. This project represented an investment of \$14 million.



Transportation infrastructure improvements have been a key area of focus for the City, with construction commencing and completing major projects all over the community.

City Council Addresses Community Needs Through Policy Action

IMPACT FEES

In 2023, the City of Savannah began charging development impact fees to help defray the costs of expanding capital facilities to serve new growth and development. Our approach to developing impact fees in Savannah was driven by data, best practices demonstrated across Georgia, and engagement with local stakeholders, and our community as a whole, every step of the way. We now have another tool to assure that expansion of City services into growing areas is funded equitably and sustainably.

Impact fees are determined by the City's Development Impact Fee Ordinance, which City Council approved in February 2023. The ordinance includes a three-year phased implementation of the impact fee program:

- **Year 1: 50% of maximum impact fee**
(\$1,965 for a single-family home)
- **Year 2: 75% of maximum impact fee**
(\$2,948 for a single-family home)
- **Year 3: 100% of maximum impact fee**
(\$3,931 for a single-family home)

Additionally, a resolution was adopted providing a 25% exemption for affordable housing.

HOTEL-MOTEL TAX

During the 2023 Legislative Session, our local delegation unanimously passed a local bill moving Savannah into a new hotel-motel tax category that was created in 2008. This clause allows the City of Savannah to adjust the tax rate from 6 percent to 8 percent, and creates a new capital funding stream, which by state law, can only be used to develop Tourism Products. These additional funds, almost entirely coming from visitors, will allow the City to invest in key infrastructure projects, including River Street redevelopment; restoration of the Historic Waterworks Building; and major investments in the Tide to Town trail network.

100% SAVANNAH PLAN

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, July of 2023 was the hottest month in recorded history. The climate is changing rapidly, and all evidence suggests that it will continue to do so if we don't change the ways we generate and use energy. Recognizing these risks, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution to achieve 100% renewable electricity community wide by 2035 and 100% renewable energy community wide by 2050. This makes Savannah the fifth city in Georgia to commit to such a goal. Like the 100% Savannah resolution, the 100% Savannah Clean Energy Plan is a product of community involvement. Over the course of roughly two years, City staff worked with community members to develop strategies for achieving the resolution's goals.

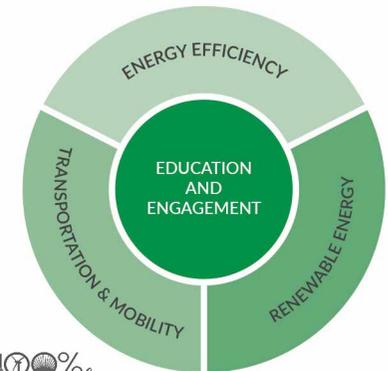
\$15 MINIMUM WAGE

City Council invested in Team Savannah, the individuals who keep our community safe, clean and thriving, in 2022 by raising our minimum rate of pay for City employees to \$15 per hour. This investment took place on January 1, 2022 and ultimately resulted in a nearly 8.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment for all city employees, which helped them to maintain pace with inflation.

COUNCIL & COMMUNITY RENAMED A HISTORIC SQUARE

The 139th Administration made a major decision to remove the name of John C. Calhoun from one of Savannah's squares. Following this decision City Council and staff embarked on a comprehensive, yearlong public engagement process that resulted in the selection of a new name for the square. Susie King Taylor Square is Savannah's first square named after a woman and the first one named after a person of color. This monumental decision brought the story of one of history's unsung heroes to the forefront in our community.

KEY FOCUS AREAS

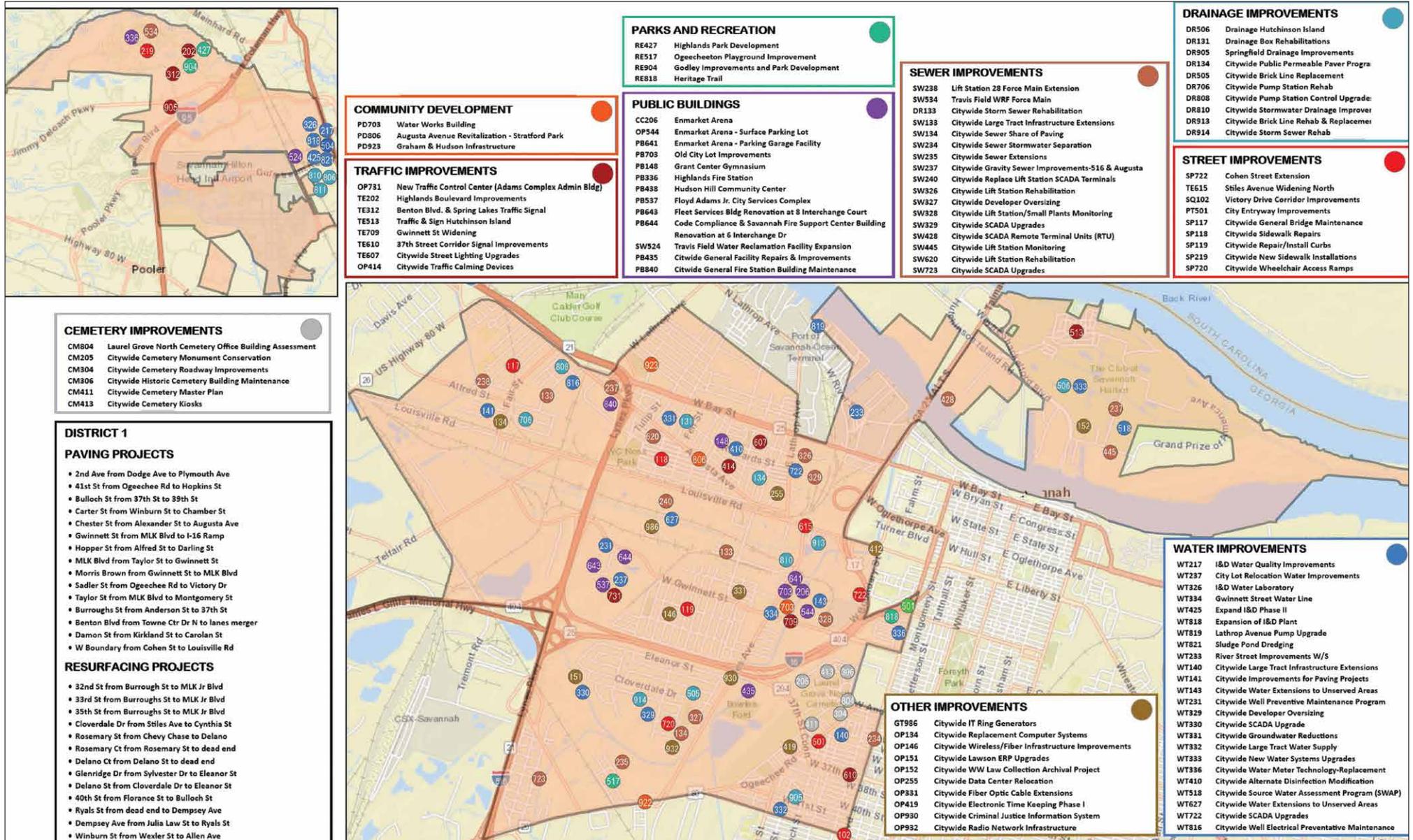


100%
of
Savannah



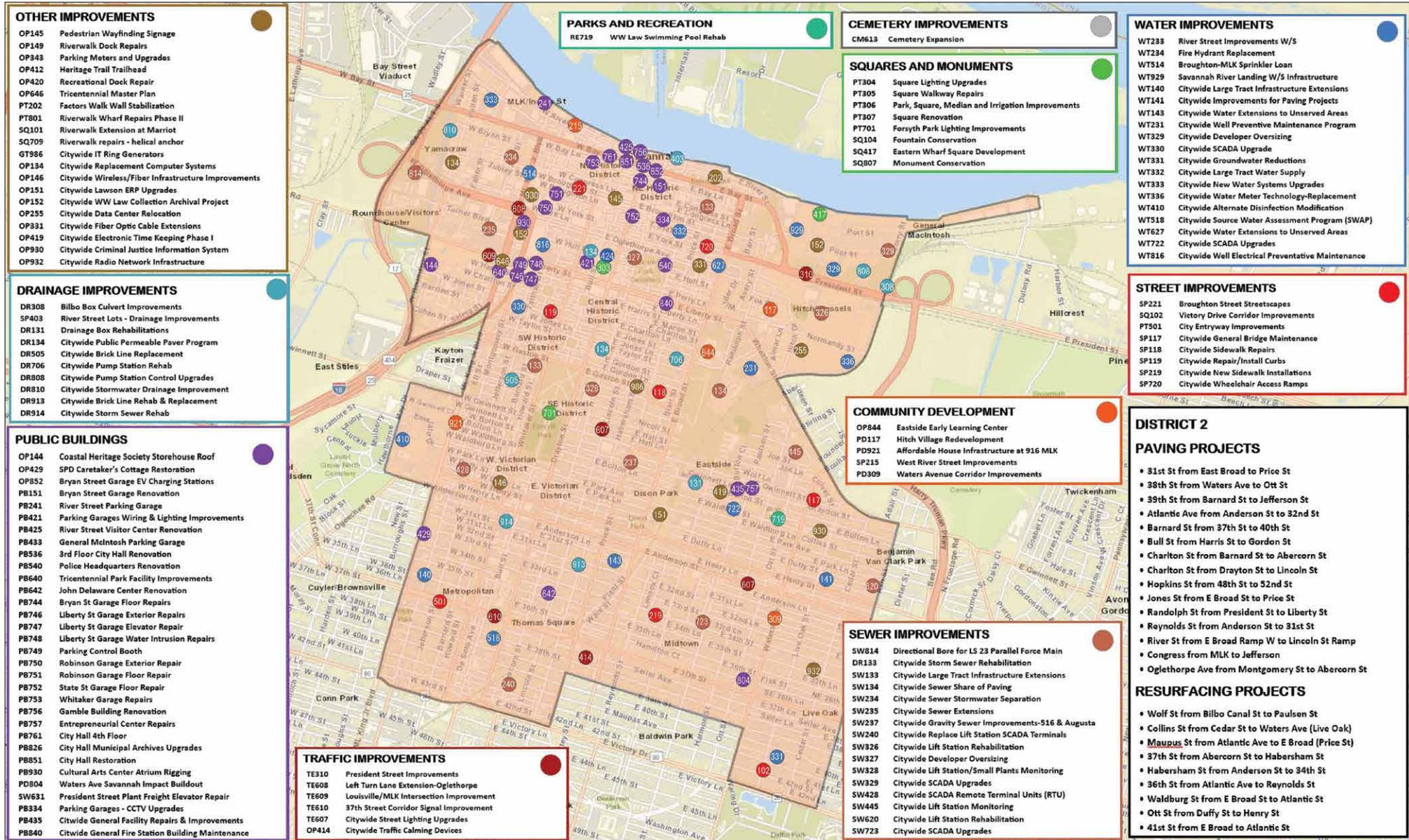
The City's commitment to enacting progressive, forward-thinking policies has resulted in initiatives that provide new revenue streams, invest in public employees and protect the long-term vitality of our natural environment.

District 1



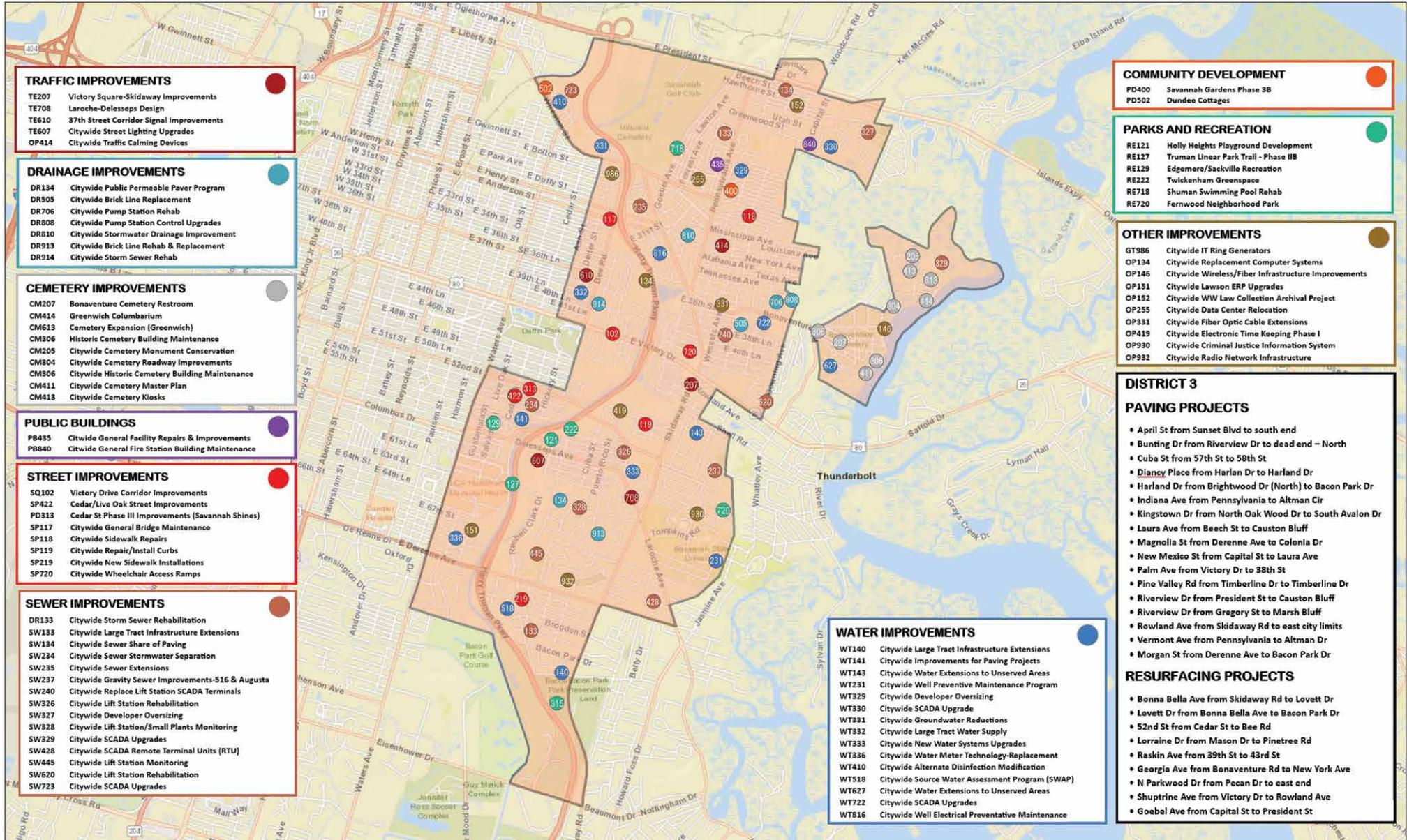
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District 2



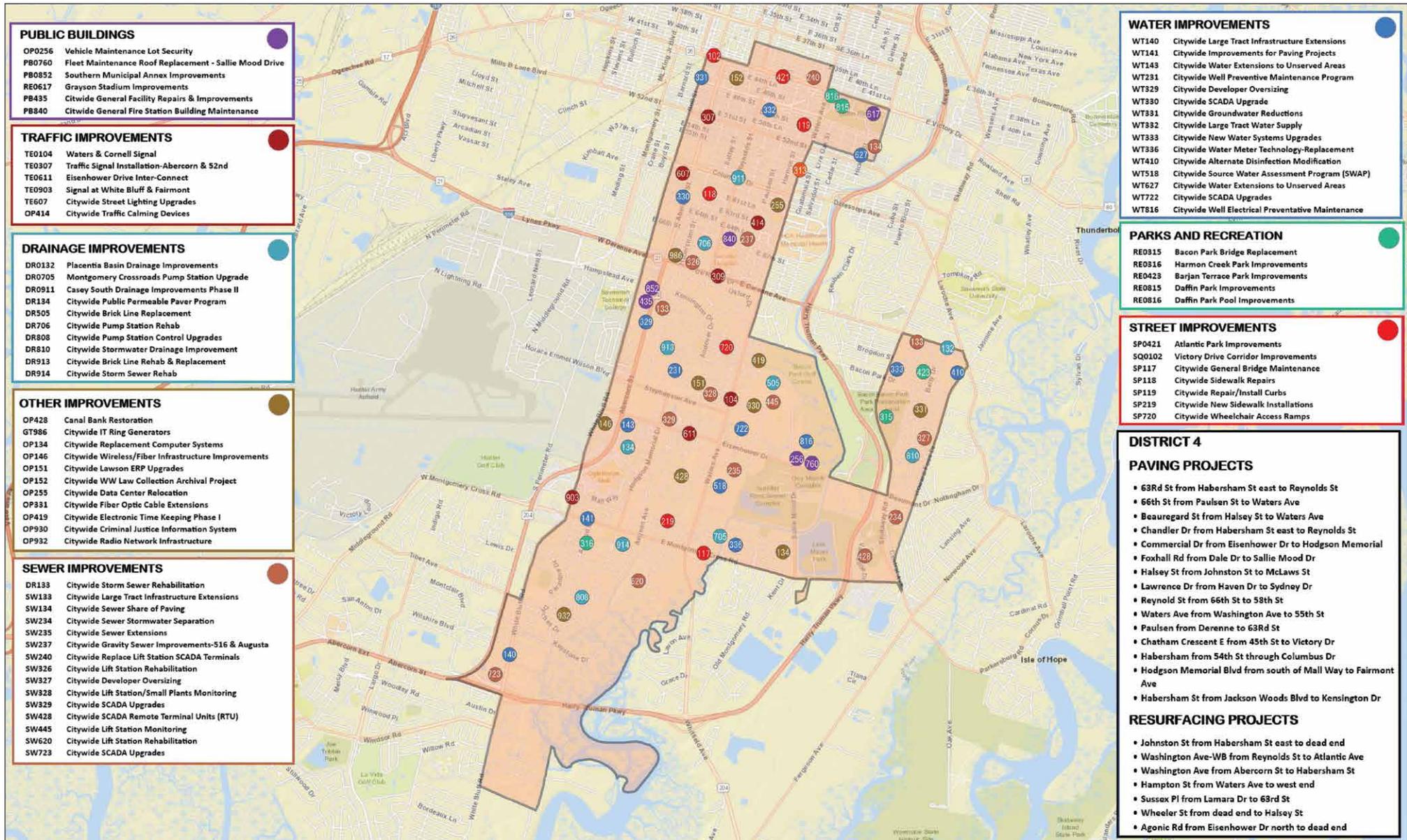
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District 3



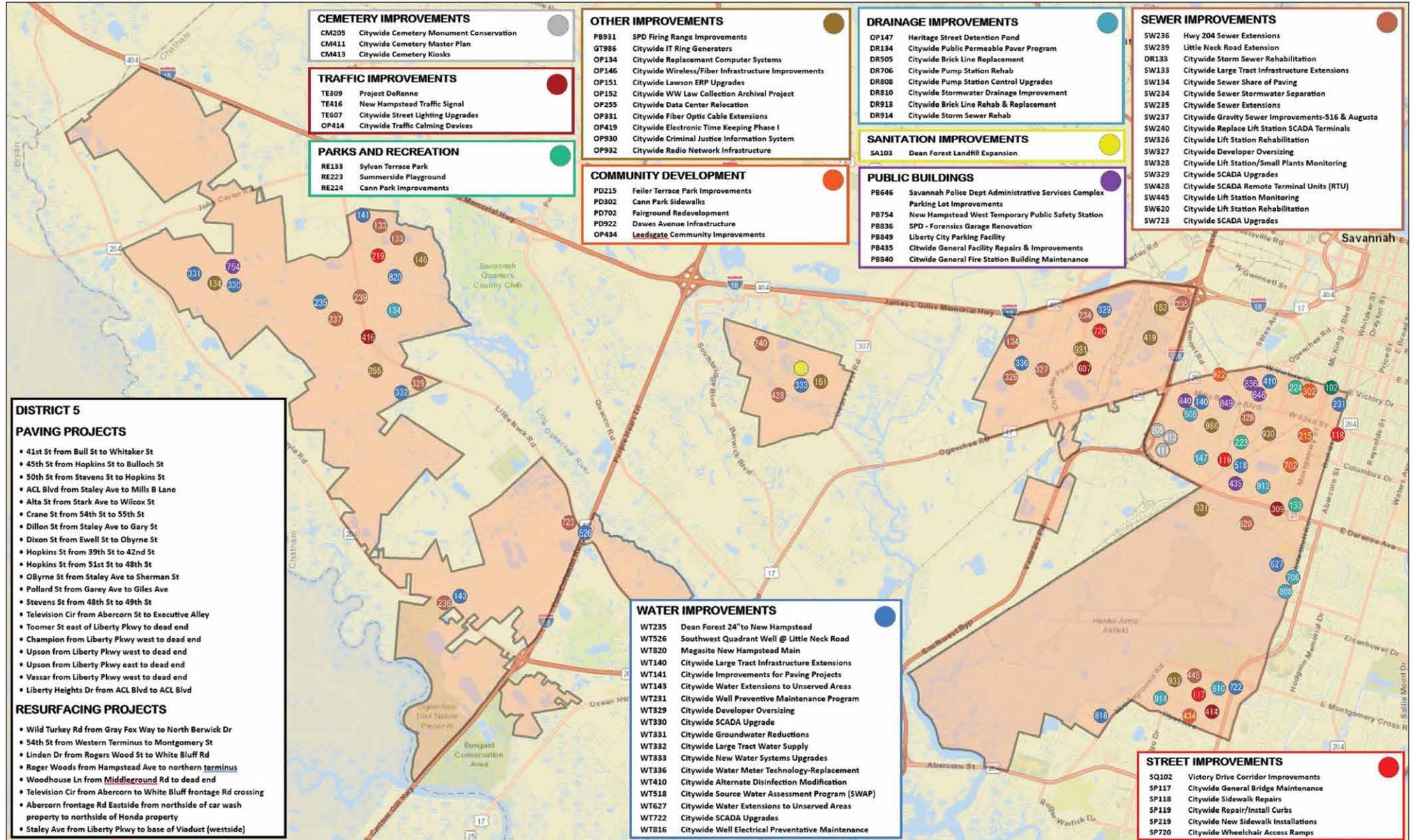
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District 4



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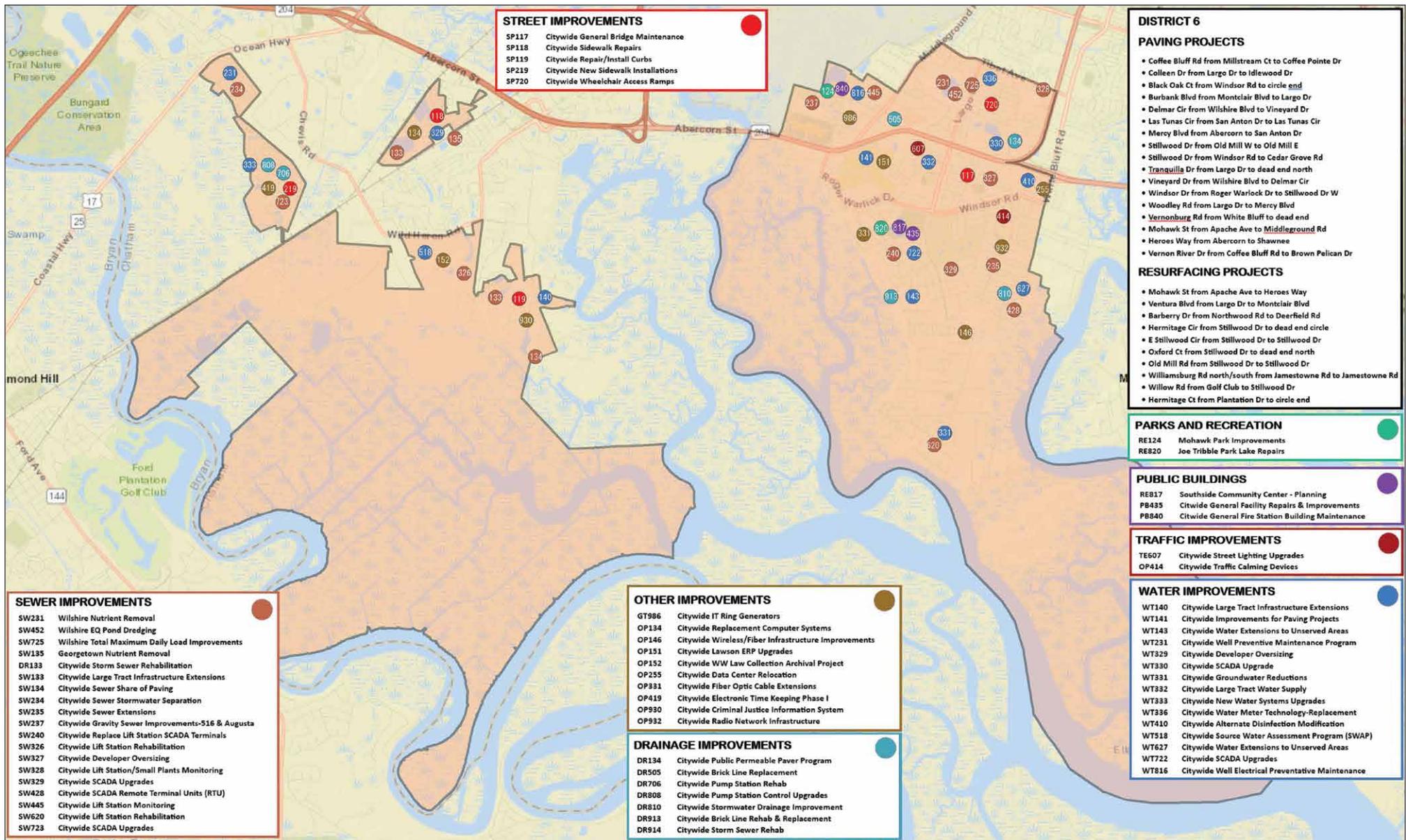
District 5



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GW: 20230518
CM: 20230519

District 6



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The Members of the 139th Administration of the Savannah City Council

January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2023



MAYOR
Van R. Johnson, II



POST 1, AT-LARGE
Keshia Gibson-Carter



POST 2, AT-LARGE
Alicia Miller Blakely



DISTRICT 1
Bernetta B. Lanier



DISTRICT 2
Detric Leggett



DISTRICT 3
Linda Wilder-Bryan



DISTRICT 4
Nick Palumbo
Vice Chairman of Council



DISTRICT 5
Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz
Mayor Pro Tem



DISTRICT 6
Kurtis Purtee



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