

**Fairground, Tatemville, and Feiler Park
Vitality Plan**

January 2021

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



(view to North)

STREET SCENE: VIEW FROM MEDING STREET



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SOURCES

1.0 Executive Summary

The primary purpose of this entire project must be to protect and enhance the lives of approximately 3,000 people that live the designated project area. That area includes 57th Street and Meding Street to the north, and Montgomery Street to the east, Derenne Ave to the South, and CXS railroad track to west. All aspects of the project should improve the housing conditions in this area, provide for new housing in this area, increase employment in this area, explore the establishment of a soundstage, expand neighborhood recreation in the area, restore and enhance the nature areas, and establish a public square, esplanade, and connectivity.

The following report provides a review of the assets, opportunities, and challenges regarding the development of the Fairgrounds property located at 4701 Meding Street.

The Fairgrounds property presents a uniquely transformational opportunity to improve the surrounding neighborhoods and lives of the people that live within them. The property fronts Meding Street just north of Derenne Avenue in the Tatemville and Feiler Park neighborhoods. It is strategically positioned between downtown Savannah and the U.S. Army Hunter Army Airfield. The property is adjacent to the Tatemville Community Park, which features a large lake, walking trail, recreational building, playground, and sport courts. This property provides a strategic opportunity to stimulate both residential and commercial revitalization in the area, building on existing recreation and infrastructure assets.

The City will be issuing a Request for Proposal for the Fairgrounds Property which will incorporate:

- Improved information regarding the property's and neighborhood's opportunities and challenges,
- Greater level of public input and involvement, and
- Private sector ideas and concepts.

This report highlights the foundation requirements needed to make the Fairgrounds Property a transformational project for the neighborhood and its residents. Some key points are summarized in the table below.

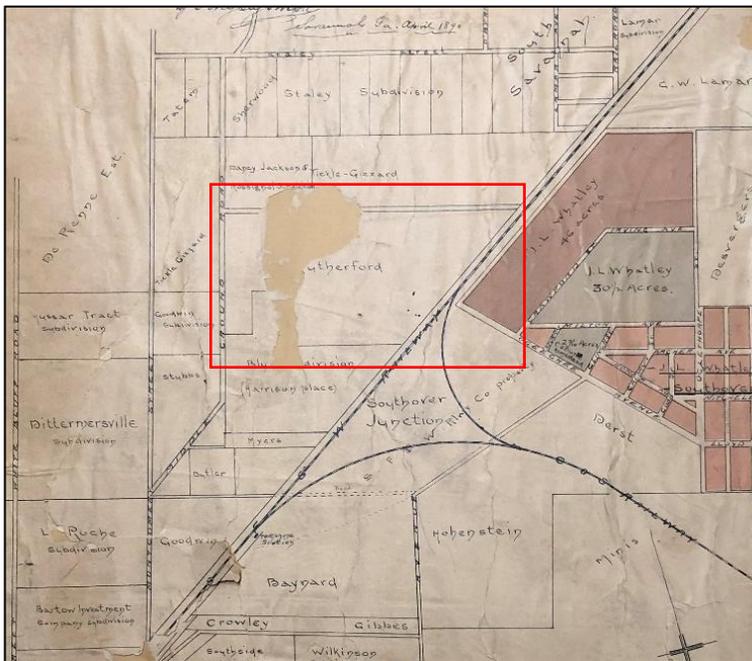
Item	Justification	Minimum Required Acreage
Neighborhood Recreational Expansion	The surrounding neighborhoods lack recreational fields and playgrounds between the Feiler Park playground on 57th Street to Staley Avenue. Access by residents north of 61st Street to the walking trail, playground, neighborhood center, lake, and basketball court at Tatemville Park should be considered. A direct connection between the Fairground site and Tatemville Park should be considered.	12
Nature Preserve	The site plan contain a Forested Upland and Forest Wetland habitat. Proposals should reflect the intrinsic value of the freshwater and hardwood wetlands within and adjacent to the site. The preservation and expansion of wetlands could benefit the development by assisting with storm water management and would support the city's initiatives for sustainability and climate change.	10
Connectivity, Square Concept, and Streetscapes	A central square, internal streets, sidewalks, walkways, and trails will be required to support the connectivity needed to the neighborhoods, potentially using the poor soil areas to maximize the land area that can be used for development. The northern property frontage on 61st Street and the Meding Street frontage should include an esplanade with tree planting and landscaping to beautify adjacent neighborhoods and establish an appropriate residential buffer on the border of the site.	8
Soundstage	The Georgia Film industry has shown tremendous growth and opportunity. Development in this area can help support high paying quality jobs in the large growing film ecosystem in the City of Savannah.	4
Drainage Mitigation	The site has significant drainage challenges. Proposals should outline the stormwater mitigation plan to allow for a better understanding of the proposal's feasibility.	-
Commercial Development	A feasibility analysis should be included for any commercial proposals, including proposals for a soundstage, recreational complex, hotel, housing, and retail facilities. Any housing proposal needs to specify the type and density proposed. Proposals must demonstrate economic viability of a concept.	-
Neighborhood and Community Benefits	Proposals should explicitly address how the development will benefit the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. The City proposes moving forward with an expanded housing rehabilitation program for Tatemville and Feiler Park in concert with the Fairgrounds Development.	-
Soils and Geotechnical Plan	Approximately 14 acres of the site are affected by previous filling activities of construction debris. Using this area as streets and open spaces seems prudent. Geotechnical considerations should be included in technical and cost proposals.	-

2.0 HISTORY OF PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

The Fairgrounds Property is located at 4701 Meding Street in Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia. On August 5, 2016, Savannah City Council approved the purchase of the 65 +/- acre tract for \$2.9 million from the Savannah Exchange Club Fair Association, Inc. The purchase was finalized by deed on September 1, 2016.

2.1 Fairgrounds Property

The Fairgrounds has traditionally been a large tract of land held by a single property owner. City maps first show this property identified as early as 1890 by “Rutherford.” The Savannah Exchange Club purchased the property in 1952 for use as a fairground. The Savannah Exchange Club was chartered in 1926 and has sponsored the Coastal Empire Fair since 1949 to support youth organizations, particularly the Victor Jenkins Boys Club. In 1983, they secured a loan of \$185,000 through City Development Authority revenue bonds in order to install a trade show facility on the property. Following the property’s sale to the City in 2016, the Exchange Club leased the Fairgrounds in 2017, 2018 and 2019 in order to hold the Coastal Empire Fair while they sought a new permanent site.



Location of Fairgrounds outlined in red (north oriented at the bottom).

“Key plan showing the approximate relative positions of Southover Junction & the City of Savannah...1890.”
3121-008, Engineering – East/West Maps, #EW/W-284.



Location of Fairgrounds outlined in red (north oriented at top).
Savannah Area Geographic Information System (SAGIS)
snapshot, December 22, 2020.

The Fairgrounds are nestled among several distinct neighborhoods or subdivisions. *Appendix A:1 Fairgrounds & Vicinity Historical Maps* provides a visual history of the area through maps preserved in the City of Savannah Municipal Archives.

2.2 Dittmersville

To the northeast of the Fairgrounds is Dittmersville, laid off in 1866 and bounded on the north by Kingsville, on the east by White Bluff Road (Bull Street), on the south by the Georgia Hussars Lot, and on the west by Montgomery Street. Dittmersville consists of 90 building lots with a central park. The subdivision is bisected from east to west by 55th Street through 58th Street. North-south streets include Barnard (Boyd) and Jefferson (Crane) streets.*

2.3 Sylvan Terrace

Sylvan Associates began developing Sylvan Terrace neighborhood in 1954. This 83-acre subdivision is located between Bull and Montgomery streets, 61st Street on the north, and Pulaski Elementary School on the south. The property had formerly been part of the DeRenne Estate.

2.4 Tatemville

A neighborhood that wrapped around the Fairgrounds’ eastern and southern sides is what had been known as Tickle Gizzard. The southern section of Tickle Gizzard was eventually absorbed into Tatemville immediately south of it. Today Tatemville is recognized as bound on the north by 63rd Street, on the east by Montgomery Street, on the south by DeRenne Avenue, and on

the west by Ewell Street. Tatemville was developed in 1889 by Robert H. Tatem, and the name eventually overtook the surrounding neighborhoods of Tickle Gizzard, Scotland Heights, and Staley Heights. The Tatemville Community Improvement Association (TCIA) was chartered in 1972 to promote the welfare of the area's residents, secure adequate educational and recreational facilities, and improve neighborhood beautification. A groundbreaking was held for the Tatemville Community Park in 1997 on open land that had been used for farming by locals. The park's centerpiece is a 20-acre lake created by the excavation of sand for the Truman Parkway. The Tatemville Community Center, constructed by Chatham County and operated by the City of Savannah, was dedicated in 2000, with a 2,400 square foot addition dedicated in 2012.

2.5 Railroad and Summerside

Railroad tracks run along the western edge of the Fairgrounds tract, and are now under the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad. Just west of the tracks is Summerside, laid out in 1915. Summerside is a triangular development with Ogeechee Avenue (Stark Avenue) on the north, the railroad tracks and Summerside Avenue on the southeast, and Calhoun Street on the west. Immediately north of Summerside is Southover and Southover Junction. Today Derenne Middle School and Hodge Elementary School are located on Southover Junction.

2.6 Feiler Park

Going back east over the railroad tracks is the neighborhood of Feiler Park. It is bounded by 57th Street on the north, Meding Street on the east, 61st Street and the Fairgrounds on the south, and the Fairgrounds and the Montgomery Landing apartments on the west.

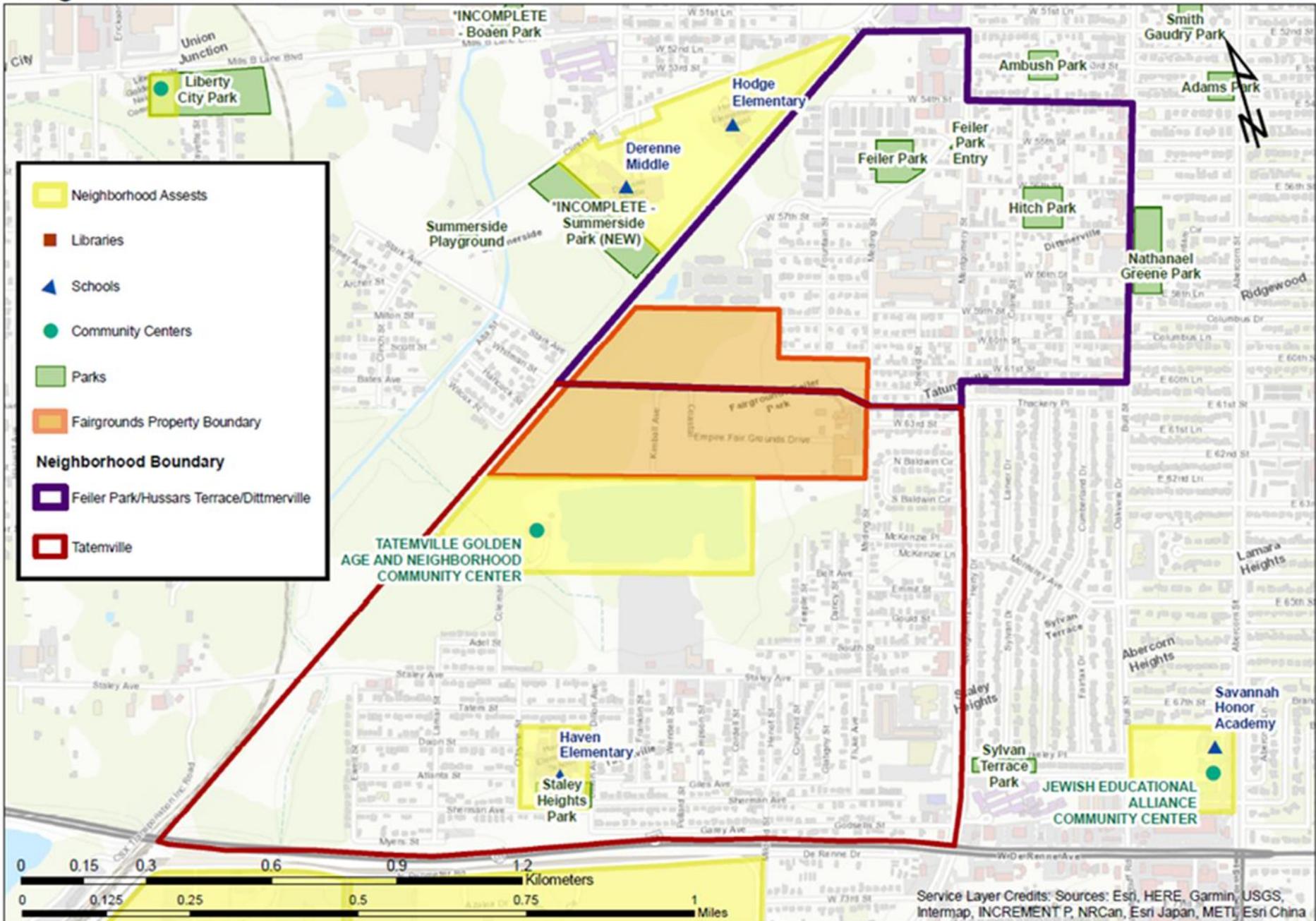
2.7 Demographic and Employment Data for Fairgrounds Property surrounding neighborhoods

The residential area surrounding the Fairgrounds property contains approximately 3,000 people. Information about this population comes from the 5-year, 2018 American Community Survey census data for census tract 44. This census tract covers over 80% of this area, and estimates the population of that census tract in 2018 as 2,337.

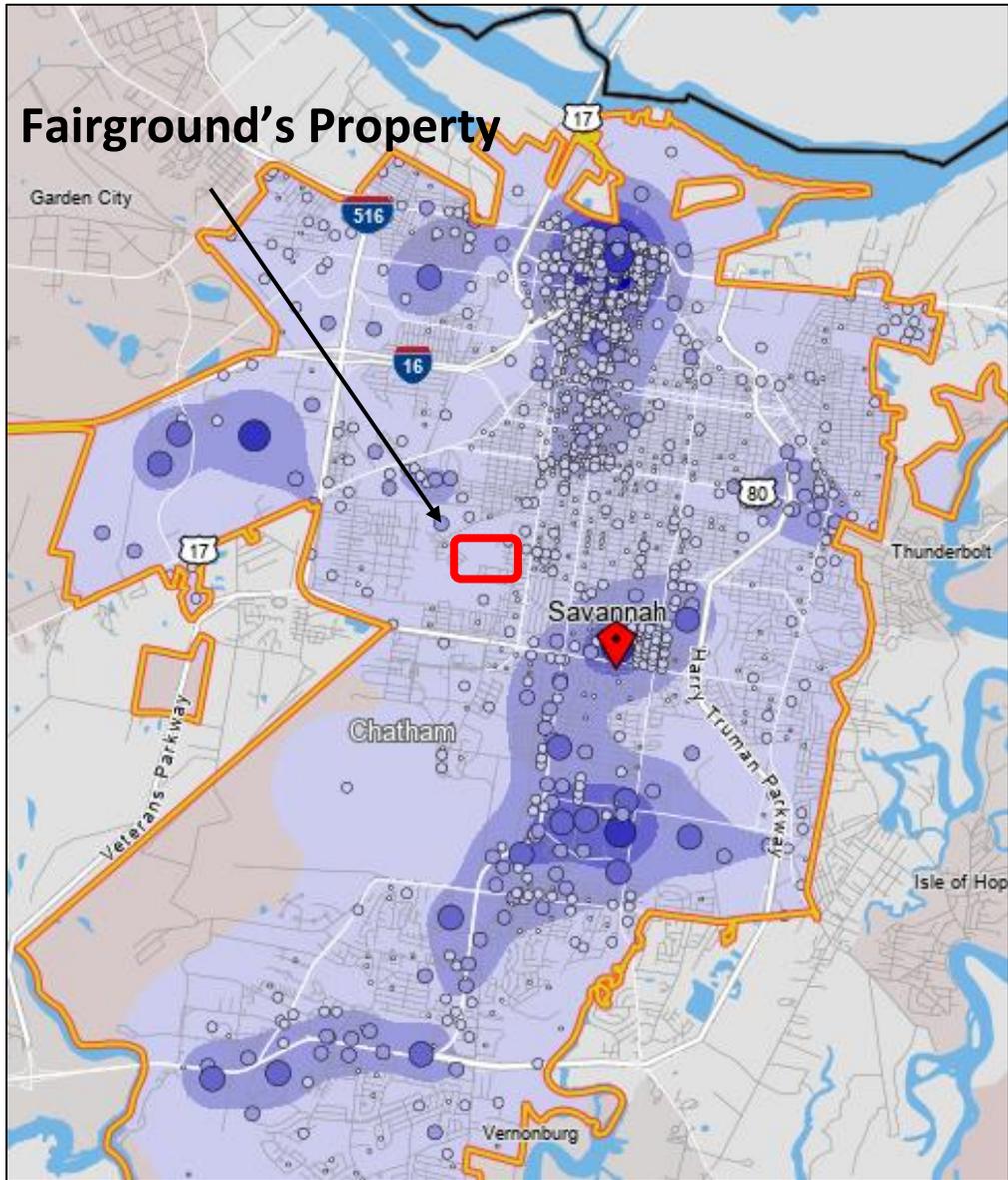
Poverty in this area is substantially higher than the rate for the city as a whole. The 2018 poverty rate for Savannah was 22.9%, with the rate in the Fairgrounds neighborhoods being 36.6%. Of this population, 29% are children under 18, of whom 60.5% lived below the poverty line. For people 65 and older, who make up 15% of the Fairgrounds neighborhoods, the poverty rate was somewhat lower, at 19.4%.



Neighborhood Assests



Employment Centers, City of Savannah



3.0 HOUSING, LAND-USE, AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Housing

- Tatumville has approximately 974 residential housing units. Of these, approximately 66% are non-owner occupied and 34% are owner occupied.
- Feiler Park has approximately 421 residential housing units. Of these, approximately 71% are non-owner occupied and 29% are owner occupied.

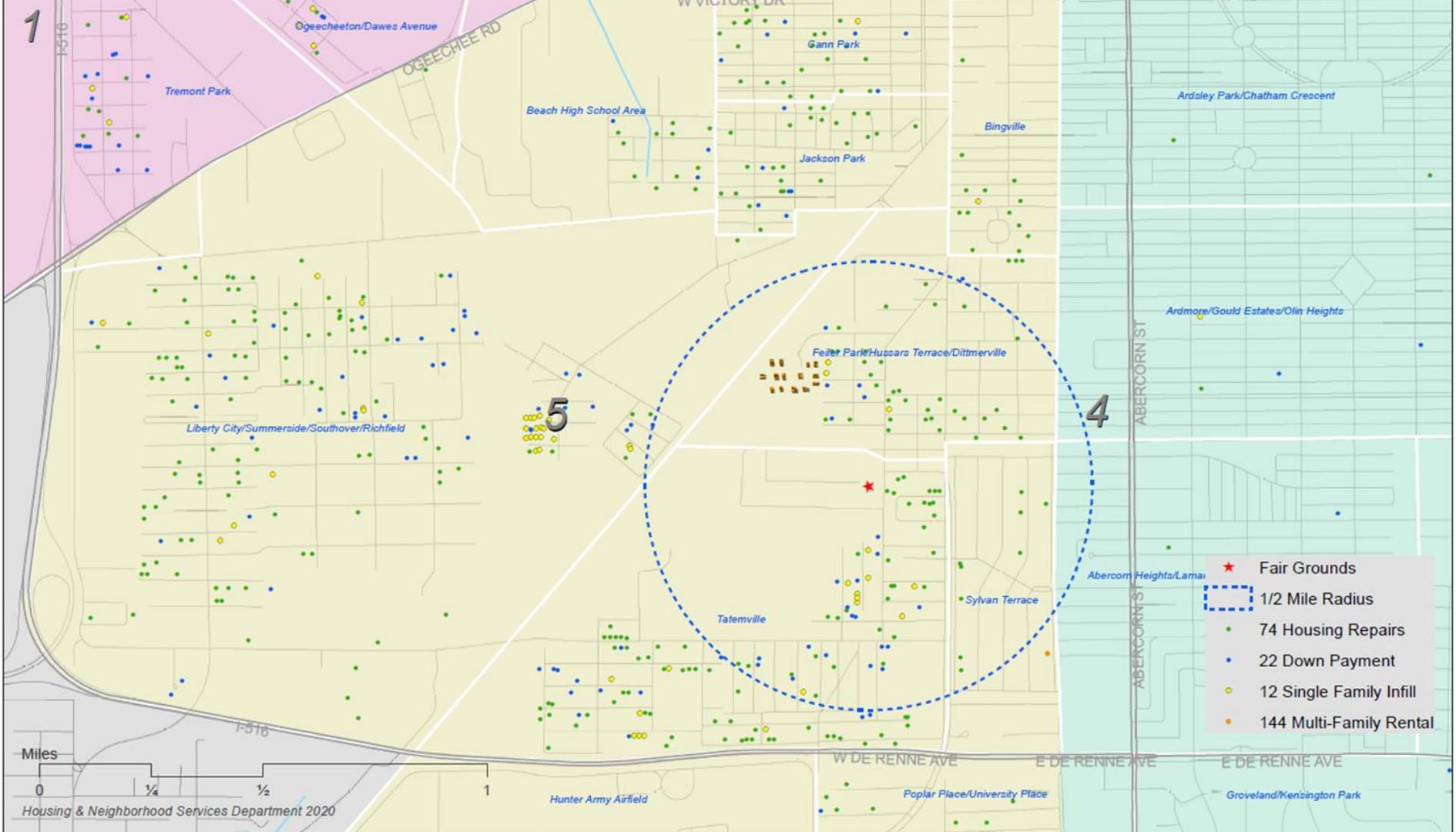
In the three-year period of 2018-2020, the Housing and Neighborhood Services Department and partners have supported 56 owner-occupied (homeowner) home improvement projects in the Feiler Park and Tatumville neighborhoods with about \$364,000 of investment—an average of about \$6,500 per house. During this same three-year period, four home buyers purchased homes in these neighborhoods through our DreamMaker home purchase program using about \$42,500 in down payment assistance—an average of about \$10,600 per house.

The following maps show Housing and Neighborhood Services Department and partner housing activities impacting 252 dwellings in the 15 years between 2004-2019 in District 5 within ½ mile of the fairgrounds. This includes 74 owner-occupied (homeowner) home repair projects, 22 first time homebuyer home purchase down payment projects, 12 new single family houses built for sale to first time home buyers, and 144 Montgomery Landing apartments built by the non-profit Paces Foundation with the support of neighborhood.



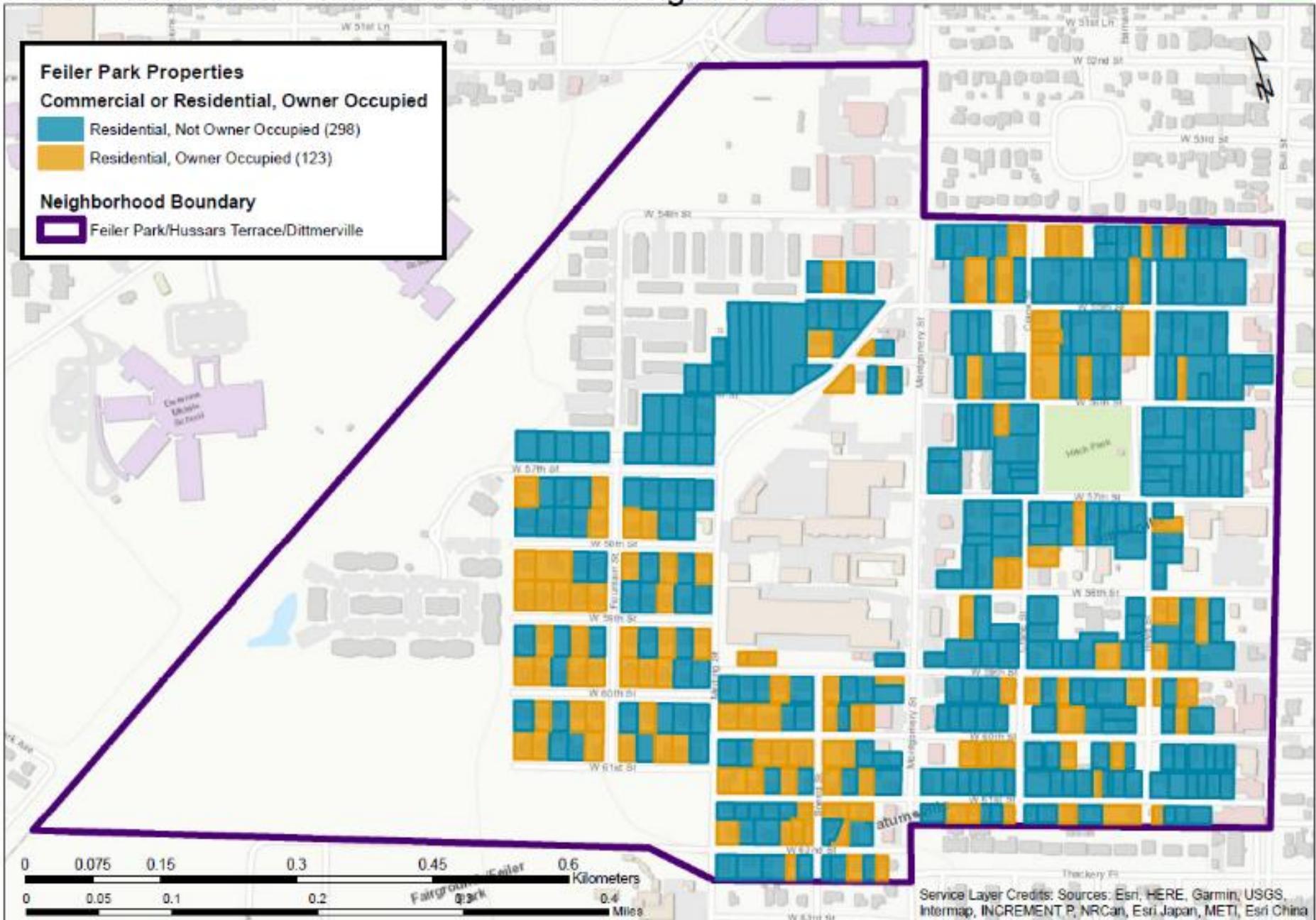
District 5 Housing Activity Within 1/2 Mile of Fairgrounds 2

2004 to 2019



Miles
0 1/4 1/2 1
Housing & Neighborhood Services Department 2020

Feiler Park/Hussars Terrace/Dittmerville Neighborhood



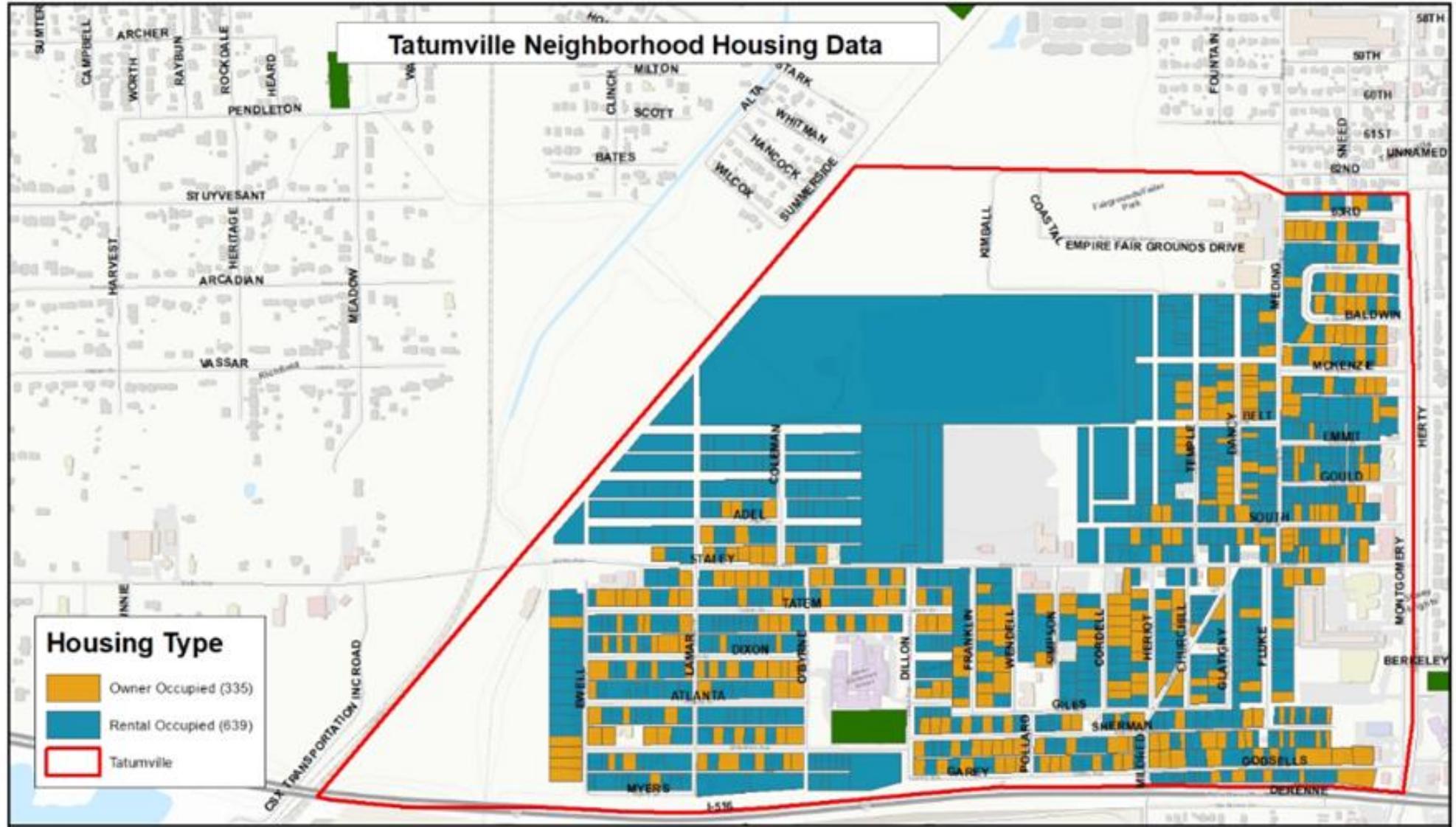
Date: Jan 2021 Map By: JT of Development Services

The information on this map is intended to be used for REFERENCE ONLY. While this map is believed to be correct based on available data, no guarantee may be made as to its absolute accuracy.

Tatumville Neighborhood Housing Data

Housing Type

- Owner Occupied (335)
- Rental Occupied (639)
- Tatumville



Map Design: 07/15/2013

The information on the map is intended to be used for reference ONLY. While this map is believed to be correct based on available data, no guarantee may be made as to its absolute accuracy.



3.2 Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Revitalization Plan

As part of the long-term investment in the revitalization of this area in conjunction with the Fairgrounds Property Development, any sale's net proceeds should be dedicated to two specific transformational purposes for the surrounding area:

- Neighborhood housing renovations, and
- Commercial revitalization.

Proceeds from the PPP Fairgrounds Project would be appropriate to dedicate to this purpose as the revitalization of the neighborhood is part of the purpose of that project. Rather than wait for the completion of the RFP process and the finalization of the Fairgrounds' Development Agreement, we propose to begin a housing rehabilitation program immediately. Such a program would:

- Provide funding for housing renovations by existing homeowners with specific needed home improvements, such as roofs, structures and code compliance. These homeowners would be eligible for grants which are forgivable if agreed-upon improvements are made.
- Provide funding also for the purchase and renovation of vacant structures.
- Potentially provide funding for new housing construction on vacant lots.
- In all cases, local and minority preferences would be considered

3.3 Affordable Housing Project Partnerships by City of Savannah

- Developments average 12.46 rental dwelling per acre
- 13% of units are ownership dwellings
- 12.6% of renters are above Area Median Income (AMI)

Location/Info	Total Dwellings	Rental Dwellings	Ownership Dwellings	Rental Dwellings Per Gross Acre	Renter Income Mix	Rent Range Per Number of Bedrooms	On-Site Commercial
Ashley Midtown	339	306	33 19 Townhomes 13 On-Site 1 Adjoining	18 gross acres 17 dwellings per gross acre	272 Below 60% AMI 34 Above 60% AMI	No information provided but similar to others	Yes—available but not developed
Cuyler-Brownville Include Charity Hosp Florence St School	219	158	61 Off-Site Infill	5.6 gross acres 28 dwelling per gross acre	156 Below 60% AMI 2 Staff	\$ 219 1-BedRm Low \$ 956 3-BedRm High	N/A
Sustainable Fellwood	352	320	32 Total 13 On-Site 19 Adjoining	8.4 gross acres 38 dwelling per gross acre	257 Below 60% AMI 63 Above 60% AMI	\$ 476 1-BedRm Low \$1,045 4-BedRm High	Yes—available but not developed
Savannah Gardens	621	524	97 Total 95 On-Site 2 Adjoining	25 gross acres 21 dwellings per gross acre	472 Below 60% AMI 48 Above 60% AMI 4 Staff	\$ 136 1-BedRm Low \$1,254 4-BedRm High	Yes—available but not developed
The View I & II (Hitch)	172	172	0	5.3 gross acres 32 dwellings per gross acre	137 Below 60% AMI 35 Above 60% AMI	\$ 515 1-BedRm Low \$1,039 4-BedRm High	No

3.3 Land Use and Zoning

The City of Savannah Exchange Club Fairgrounds, located at 4701 Meding St, consists of two parcels surrounded by a mix of residential, business and industrial uses. The parcels (PINs 20108 01001 and 20109 08001) are each zoned Conservation–Park (C-P).

The [Conservation District](#) principal use classification seeks to preserve and protect certain lands, marsh and wetland areas or to provide for parkland. Permitted uses are limited to conservation and, with certain limitations, recreation and other uses that are not contrary to the natural character of the districts. Specifically, the C-P zoning classification is established to preserve and enhance parkland as permanent open space to meet the active and passive recreational needs of residents and to also protect cultural and historic resources. Permitted uses are limited to parks and recreation, cemeteries and other uses that promote open space and preservation of resources. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the properties Parks/Recreation. Listed below are the uses permitted by right or limited uses with conditions.

C-P Uses

C-P	√= Permitted Use L= Limited Use S=Special Use	Use Standards
Agriculture, personal	√	
Agriculture, restricted	√	
Botanical garden/arboretum	√	
Cemetery (Mausoleum, Columbarium, Memorial Park)	L	Sec. 8.3.1
Cemetery, pet	L	Sec. 8.3.3
Community Garden	√	
Park, general	√	
Wildlife Refuge	L	Sec. 8.3.4
Library/community center	√	
Museum	√	Sec. 8.7.24
Campground; recreational vehicle park	S	Sec. 8.4.8
Golf course	√	
Stadium or outdoor arena; Amphitheater; Outdoor sports facility or complex	L	Sec. 8.4.13
Retail consumption dealer (on premise consumption of alcohol)	S	Sec. 8.7.24 and Sec. 7.14
Watercraft Launch/Ramp	√	
Utilities, major	S	
Utilities, minor	√	

Parcels surrounding the Fairgrounds are primarily residential in nature. To the west of the properties, from Montgomery Street and DeRenne Avenue to 52nd Street, the majority of parcels are zoned Residential Single-family-6 (RSF-6) with the exception of a few parcels zoned [Neighborhood Business \(B-N\)](#) and [Light Industrial-Transition \(IL-T\)](#). These parcels have a FLUM designation of Commercial-Suburban and Transportation/Communication/Utilities. To the south of the parcels are primarily zoned RSF-6. An adjacent parcel at 500 Staley Avenue is zoned Planned Development with a FLUM designation Residential- Suburban Single Family with most properties designated Residential-Suburban Single Family on the FLUM. An abutting property immediately to the north is zoned Residential Multi-family-2- 15 acres per unit (RMF-2-15). Adjacent to this property are two parcels zoned Residential Multi-family-2-20 (RMF-2-20) acres per unit.

Housing Type	RMF-2
<u>Single-family detached</u>	P
<u>Single-family attached</u>	P
<u>Two-family</u>	P
<u>Townhouse</u>	P
<u>Stacked Townhouse</u>	P
<u>Three-Four Family</u>	P
<u>Apartment</u>	P

Any mixed-use development on the parcels would require rezoning and revision of the existing FLUM designations. The existing housing stock in the area is primarily single-story, single-family construction established on a grid infrastructure with roughly 30-foot street ROW. Traffic calming has been implemented in the area and the construction of multi-family housing may have a significant impact on traffic in the area.



Figure 1 Subject parcel with surrounding residential zoning designations.



Figure 2 2801 Meding St facing north toward W 52nd St.



Figure 3 2801 Meding St facing South toward Derenne Ave.



Figure 4 2801 Meding St facing East at entrance to site.



Figure 5 2801 Meding St facing East at 62nd St.



Figure 6 Kimball Ave facing West adjacent to the subject sites.

4.0 Legal Parameters, Procurement, and Governing Statues

- Georgia state law governs the disposition of municipal real property
- O.C.G.A. § 36-37-6 requires an auction or sealed bid. Neither were included RFP Event # 7911.
- O.C.G.A. § 36-91-5 governs public private partnerships (P3). State law require a solicitation period of 90 days for a P3. The RFP Event #7911 was listed for 60 days which does not meet the statutory requirement.

Georgia statutes governing the disposition of municipal real property are O.C.G.A § 36-37-6 and governing public-private-partnerships are O.C.G.A.§ 36-91-5.

O.C.G.A. § 36-37-6

This statute governs the disposition of City real property generally with specific requirements involving sales, trades, leases, and others forms of conveyance. Regarding third-party sales to non-governmental entities, all sales shall be awarded:

“to the highest responsible bidder, either by auction or sealed bid after due notice has been given. Any such municipal corporation shall have the right to reject any and all bids or to cancel any proposed sale. The governing authority of the municipal corporation shall cause notice to be published once in the official organ of the county in which the municipality is located or in a newspaper of general circulation in the community, not less than 15 days nor more than 60 days preceding the day of the auction or, if the sale is by sealed bids, preceding the last day for the receipt of the proposals... If the sale is by sealed bids, the notice shall also contain an invitation for proposals and shall state the conditions of the proposed sale...The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any transaction authorized in subsections (c) through (j) of this Code section.”

The primary method for disposition of municipal real property is via auction or sealed bids after providing adequate public notice. The City of Savannah typically uses the sealed bid method of disposition. If the sale method is by sealed bid, then a request for proposals stating the associated conditions of the sale is required. The sale must be awarded to the highest responsible bidder after an evaluation of bids is completed, or the bids are rejected. A Georgia licensed real estate broker may be employed by the municipality to help market and facilitate a sale, subject to specific conditions and processes.

There are many exceptions to the requirement of an auction or sealed bid disposition process, including exceptions for: trades; the sale of industrial parcels in a municipal industrial park; the sale of small, irregular shaped remnant parcels; the sale of

properties conveyed to the City via deeds of gifts, wills, or donation with specific disposition restrictions; the sale or conveyance of properties encumbered by federal or state disposition restrictions; properties sold pursuant to Urban Redevelopment Laws; properties conveyed to other governmental for public purposes; sales of surplus road right-of-way; sales of museum and recreation sites, and more.

The City cannot proceed with a potential sale of the property pursuant to the recent RFP, because it did not include a solicitation of sealed bids. Therefore, if a sale of the property is desired, then the process must be re-started by issuing a revised RFP that includes a solicitation of sealed bids in accordance with the provisions of this statute.

O.C.G.A. § 36-91-5

This statute governs public-private-partnership (P3) deals involving municipalities. A “Qualifying Project” as defined by this law is “any project selected in response to a request from a local government...as meeting a public purpose or public need. The term shall not include and shall have no application to any project involving:”

- A. The generation of electric energy for sale
- B. Communication services
- C. Cable and video services
- D. Water reservoir projects

This statute also governs the receipt, processing of, and acceptance of unsolicited proposals.

The qualifying public purpose or public need in this case is a desire by the City to solicit a project that will yield economic development (job creation), affordable housing, and neighborhood-scale recreation/park space.

When seeking a Qualifying Project, the municipality shall:

- 1) Seek competing proposals by issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for not less than 90 days, and
- 2) Review all proposals based on the criteria established in the RFP.

After evaluating and ranking proposals received, the municipality shall begin negotiations with the first ranked proposer. If the municipality and proposer can’t reach a “Comprehensive Agreement” (a defined term) stating the economic benefits to be paid to the City; the number of permanent jobs to be generated; the number of affordable and market rate housing units to be developed; the type and quality of neighborhood-scale park and recreational amenities to be developed; etc., then the municipality can negotiate with the second ranked proposer, and so on until a deal is reached or all proposals are rejected.

Municipalities may not loan funds to a P3 partner but may enter into lease agreements with a P3 partner. If the Comprehensive Agreement involves the City leasing back a portion of the project (such as the park and recreation space to be developed), then any such multi-year lease shall be considered a debt and apply against the debt limitation of the municipality.

The recent RFP for the Fairgrounds parcel was opened on June 19 and closed on August 18. Thus, the solicitation period was 60 days. This does not meet the statutory solicitation period of 90 days for P3 agreements.

Therefore, if a P3 deal is desired, the process must be re-started by issuing a revised RFP that is posted to the public for at least 90 days.

4.0 Environmental and Physical Characteristics

- The Fairgrounds Property is one of the largest properties remaining in the urban core of the City of Savannah
- The is 66.5 gross acres with more than one half in a flood hazard area
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that approximately 8.1 acres of the site are jurisdictional wetlands and ditches; representing about twelve percent of the overall site
- A phase 1 and phase 2 environmental site assessment (ESA) has been completed on the site. It determined no hazardous waste reporting or remediation plan was applicable. A debris field that consists of former construction demolition material was discovered that consist of combined area is approximately 14 acres.
- The assessment revealed the soils and subsurface conditions were mostly suitable for development, except the areas affected by buried construction debris.

The Fairgrounds Property is a rare and valuable site in the City of Savannah (City). It is one of the largest whole properties remaining in the urban core located north of DeRenne Avenue that is mostly vacant and available for redevelopment without concerns of historical impacts. The site is improved with a series of eighteen structures/buildings comprising a total of 60,302 square feet. The largest building is a +/- 24,000 square foot former airplane hangar built in a Quonset hut design. Other buildings include an administrative building, storage buildings, a livestock pen/display building, ticket booths, restrooms, and more. The buildings are old and no longer represent the highest and best use of the property. It is anticipated the buildings will be demolished to make the underlying site available for redevelopment at highest and best use or a desired public use. Following is a brief summary of key physical/environmental characteristics of the site.

4.1 Size, Shape, and Topography

According to an ALTA survey of the site prepared for the City, the former fairgrounds site located at 4701 Meding Street encompasses 66.5 gross acres. It is one of the largest whole parcels remaining in the urban core north of Derenne Avenue. To put this size in perspective, the former fairgrounds is more than double the size of Forsyth Park (which contains +/- 26 acres) and nearly as big as Daffin Park (+/- 75 acres). The Eastern Wharf (former Savannah River Landing) tract along the eastern riverfront was another large vacant site in the urban core until a couple years ago when it was subdivided into many smaller parcels for development. Thus, the scale for redevelopment and recreational use of the former fairgrounds is one of the biggest opportunities remaining in urban core of the City of Savannah.

The site is somewhat rectangular-to-irregular in shape. It enjoys 920 feet of frontage and primary access along Meding Street, a two-lane neighborhood connector road. The southern boundary of the site extends a depth of 2,941 linear feet (more than one-half mile) and adjoins the Tatemville neighborhood and Tatemville Community Center. The western boundary of the site fronts CSX railroad tracks and extends 1,729 linear feet (one-third mile). The northern boundary consists of two legs; one extending 1,127 linear feet (adjoining an apartment complex) and the other extending 706 linear feet along Sixty-First Street adjoining the Feiler Park neighborhood.

The topography of the site varies. The eastern portion along Meding Street is the highest elevation at approximately 30 feet above sea level. The site then falls significant from east to west. The lowest elevations are situated along the western boundary adjoining the railroad tracks at approximately 10 feet above sea level (this is also the location of some wetland areas). Thus, the site falls gradually by approximately 20 feet over its depth.

4.2 Access and Visibility

Access is currently provided via four public streets: Meding Street, Sixtieth Street, Sixty-First Street, and Kimball Avenue. All are two-lane asphalt paved neighborhood streets. The site has extensive frontage and visibility from the streets. However, these streets are secondary in nature and are not primary traffic arterials.

The site is located approximately one block west of Montgomery Street, a four-lane divided primary north/south traffic arterial. Montgomery Street connects with DeRenne Avenue/I-516 to the north about six-tenths of a mile to the south. North of the site, Montgomery Street narrows to two-lanes and extends southward to the downtown area. For years, hundreds and thousands of patrons of the fair used these roadways to access and egress the site.

4.3 Flood Zone

More than one-half of the property is located within a flood hazard area. The flood hazard area is primarily located in the western, lower elevations of the site. The eastern portion of the site (adjoining the access roads) is the highest elevation and is located outside the flood hazard zone.

Development within a flood hazard area is governed by the City's flood mitigation ordinance. This ordinance requires the finished floor area of any habitable dwelling or structure be raised to at least one foot above the flood hazard zone elevation. In addition, any fill used to raise such finish floors must balance on-site. Specifically, if fill is used to raise the finished floor, then that fill area must be cut on-site (though suitable soils may be substituted for unsuitable soils). This typically results in cannibalization of property and conversion of cut areas into retention ponds and flood storage facilities. In the alternative, a structure can be developed on piers/pilings to raise the finished floor area without the use of fill. In either case, these extra measures drive up the cost of development as compared with development of lands above the flood hazard line. As a result,

lands designated in flood hazard areas typically have less value and diminished development appeal as compared with lands situated above the flood hazard line.

4.4 Wetlands

The City retained a consultant to flag wetland areas which were then reviewed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corp). The Corp later issued a jurisdictional determination (JD) stating that approximately 8.1 acres of the site are jurisdictional wetlands and ditches; representing about twelve percent of the overall site. These jurisdictional wetland areas are delineated and shown on the ALTA survey of the property. Any future development of the site would seek to avoid impacts to these jurisdictional wetlands. If impacts cannot feasibly be avoided, then a permit and mitigation plan would be required from the Corp.

Please note the JD extends for five years and currently is set to expire in June 2021. Staff is in process of applying to extend the JD for another five years.

4.5 Environmental Site Assessments: Phase 1 and Phase 2

A phase 1 environmental site assessment (ESA) was performed as part of the site due diligence process. This initial assessment identified several potential recognized environmental conditions, including:

- A 500-gallon above ground diesel fuel tank.
- Potential areas of buried construction/demolition debris and utility pole disposal.
- Potential areas of household dumping activity in the woods/wetlands.
- An on-site septic tank system.
- Possible lead-based paint and asbestos in buildings.

A phase 2 ESA was then performed to sample soil, ground water, and building components to better assess conditions and risks. Regarding building components, samples were taken to test for the presence of asbestos and lead-based paint due to the age of the structures and construction materials applied. Asbestos was found to be contained in the roofing, ceilings, and flooring of several of the buildings. In addition, the presence of lead-based paint was detected in several of the buildings. This is not an uncommon situation in Savannah due to the age of many of the structures in the area.

Asbestos was used extensively as a building insulator and fire retardant during the 1800s and early-to-mid 1900s. Similarly, lead was a common ingredient in paints during the same period. It wasn't until the 1970s and 1980s when scientific evidence and health concerns regarding these constituents raised risk awareness which escalated to the point of the establishment of new regulations, standards, and buyer behaviors. The asbestos and lead contaminants will need to be remediated (removed in a safe manner consistent with professional and regulatory standards) prior to demolition and removal of the structures. The City's environmental consultant provided specifications and plans for removal of these materials.

Regarding soils and groundwater, extensive soil and groundwater testing was performed to establish the limits and contents of the buried debris. Specifically, 67 test pits were excavated to determine the type and extent of debris buried on the site, and 17 temporary test wells were placed to assess ground water conditions. None of the samples identified contaminants that met or exceeded regulatory reportable levels. Therefore, no hazardous waste reporting or remediation plan was applicable.

The debris field consists of former construction demolition material that was placed on the site in the past to apparently level out and firm-up portions of the property for fairgrounds use. There are two separate areas of debris. The combined area is approximately 14 acres and is located toward the middle and northern sections of the property.

The prior owner of the property removed and remediated any environmental concerns associated with the above ground fuel storage tanks, disposal of utility poles, and household dumping from the site prior to the City closing on the property. The buried construction debris and the buildings remains on-site. An analysis performed prior to closing indicated it was not financially feasible to excavate the buried debris, remove and transport it to a landfill, and backfill the voids with suitable construction-grade fill. However, the debris will present geotechnical challenges if a building is proposed for this area of the property.

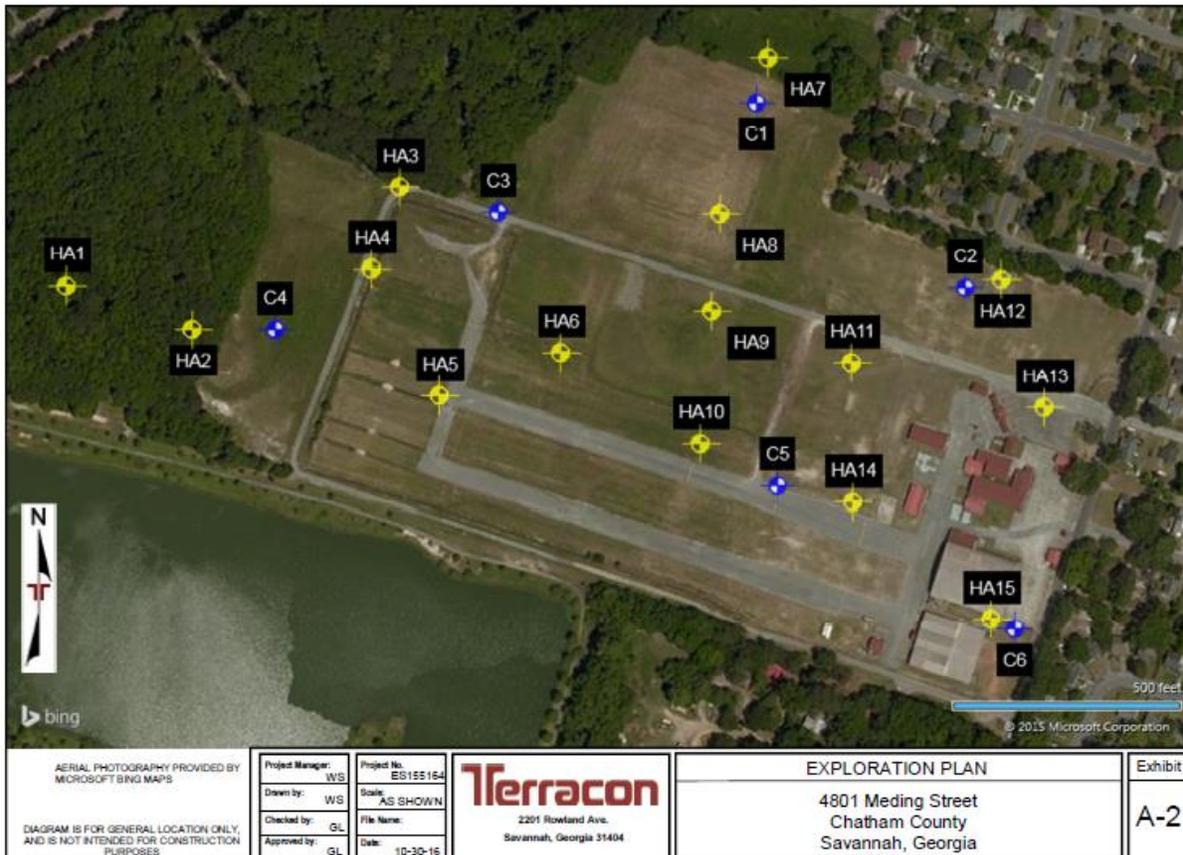
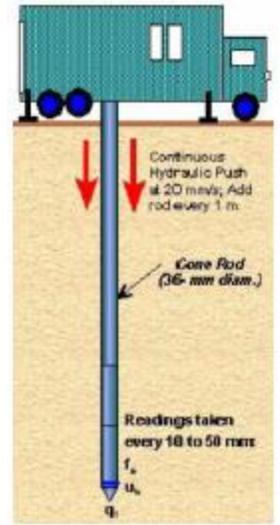
4.6 Geotechnical Exploration

A geotechnical exploration of the site was conducted to understand general soil stability and suitability for development. The assessment revealed the soils and subsurface conditions were mostly suitable for development, excepting the areas affected by buried construction debris. The following is a summary of some of the reported conclusions:

- The topsoil in the upper 4 to 8 inches are brown silty sand with grass and tree roots. Below the topsoil to a depth of about 5 to 6 feet below ground surface is loose to medium dense silty sands to poorly graded sands. The silty sands are followed by a loose to dense silty sand layer with interbedded soft clays layers...
- The on-site soils may be considered suitable for structural fill material for the proposed development provided they the foreign, objectionable materials are not present in the soils. However, due to shallow groundwater, the excavated soils may be too wet for immediate placement. A drying period should be planned for during construction...

The higher elevation soils outside the flood hazard area and debris fields are suitable for construction use. However, the lower elevations soils located in the flood hazard area may be too wet for some construction uses, though drying them out could potentially resolve that moisture content concern.

The report contemplated the buried debris would be removed prior to development of any building on top. However, subsequent analysis indicated that such removal and back-filling was not financially feasible. It may be possible to use piles/piers to pierce the debris and establish a firm foundation for suitable building without excavating these materials; subject to providing a crawl space or above grade separation space. This could be further evaluated once a development plan is finalized. The consultant also reported the debris field could be capped with suitable fill materials and left in place for potential development with parking lots, ballfields, trails, sidewalks, greenspace, etc.



6.0 Infrastructure

The western half of the parcel is located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) with a Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 14' MSL (or AE 14).

6.1 Stormwater

Storm infrastructure within the fairgrounds is very minimal with a few ditches and short sections of closed pipe. The property drops significantly in elevation east to west (Elev. 30' to approx. Elev. 10' or less). The western half of the parcel, located at a significantly lower grade than the eastern half, experiences overland flooding during significant rain events. These areas are located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) with a Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 14' MSL (or AE 14). FEMA establishes these BFE's based on their model of a 100 YR storm event (rainfall of approx. 10" to 11" of rainfall over a 24 hour period). In addition, the City of Savannah completed an update to their XPSWMM stormwater Hydrology and Hydraulic (H&H) model report associated with the Springfield Canal drainage basin at the end of 2019. This model used the latest available data and was calibrated to Hurricane Matthew field verified high water marks. This model provided a maximum water surface elevation or inundation to approximately elevation 13' MSL within the Fairgrounds parcel, based on a 100YR storm event.

6.2 Wetlands

Site review of existing habitats within the Fairgrounds assessment area evaluated opportunities to restore, enhance, and preserve wetland habitats and development of an interpretive trail within this urban setting. The following provides a brief summary of our findings:

Habitats: The following habitats were observed during our site visit.

- Existing Development: The review area contains developed upland including the former fairgrounds campus, Tatumville Community Park, public roads, and surrounding residential lots.
- Forested Upland: This area consists of mature forested upland habitat dominated by a variety of native tree species including water oak, sweetgum, loblolly pine, live oak, etc. Tires, bottles, cans, bricks, concrete, and a variety of other trash/debris was observed within the upland area. It is assumed that the presence of debris on the ground surface would indicate that debris is likely present below the surface to an unknown depth.
- Forested Wetland: This habitat is dominated by mature sweetgum, water oak, swamp tupelo, and red maple in the overstory and a variety of native shrub and herbaceous wetland species in the understory. Man-made ditches, the railroad, and dumping of debris appears to have altered the natural hydrology of the wetland.
- Man-made Ditches: Several man-made ditches extend through the wetland and adjacent upland. It appears these ditches were constructed to drain the adjacent wetlands and uplands. It is also assumed that these ditches have been incorporated into the overall stormwater management system of the surround developments.
- Existing Railroad: An active railroad is located adjacent to and west of the assessment area.

Wetland Restoration & Enhancement: Opportunities to restore, enhance, and preserve natural wetland habitat within the site have been evaluated. While a wide variety of prescriptions can be applied to wetland restoration and enhancement projects, this assessment focused on vegetative and hydrologic conditions and actions that could occur and would result in an improvement to these two categories.

- Wetland Vegetation: The wetland areas are dominated in the overstory by mature water oak, sweetgum and red maple. The understory contains a variety of native sapling and shrub species. All species noted during the site visit are common for wetland areas within the Coastal Plain of Georgia and Chatham County. For this reason, direct vegetative enhancement opportunities were not observed (i.e. removal of invasive species, reestablishment of natural/native wetland species composition, etc.).
- Wetland Hydrology: The hydrology within the wetland areas has been altered by a variety of anthropogenic features including drainage ditches, the railroad and surrounding urban development. It appears that the wetland area historically connected/drainage to the west and into the Springfield Canal watershed but the railroad has bisected the wetland areas west of Coleman Street and the Fairgrounds. While other connections may be present, lidar imagery depict two possible culvert connections under the railroad including one northwest of Coleman Street and one northwest of Kimball Avenue. It appears that these ditches and culverts have been managed as part of the stormwater

system for the fairgrounds and surrounding residential development (57th Street through 61st Street and Tatumville). While hydrology restoration and/or enhancement opportunities within the wetlands may be possible by filling of ditches, improving connectivity under the railroad, restoring the natural surface water connectivity to the west, etc., a complete engineering study would be required to determine modifications to the existing railroad to provide improved hydrologic connectivity and if those modifications are feasible, as well as design requirements to alleviate potential secondary impacts within the stormwater system by implementing the restoration and enhancement project (i.e. impact to stormwater system associated with filling ditches).

- Debris: As noted above, a wide variety of surface debris was observed during the site visit. It is assumed that the presence of debris on the surface would indicate that non-natural fill has occurred and debris would be present to some depth below the surface. Removal of this debris would provide another opportunity for enhancement. However, excavation/removal requirements may be cost prohibitive. Further evaluation of the cost associated with removing the debris would be required by a qualified geotechnical and environmental engineering firm.

Interpretive Trail: The site does contain a mature forested habitats dominated by native species. If the City of Savannah wishes to pursue the interpretive trail concept, a qualified land planner or landscape architect would be able to evaluate the opportunities to construct an at-grade trail through upland and elevated boardwalks through wetlands which could be used for educational purposes.



Photo 1: Upland habitat



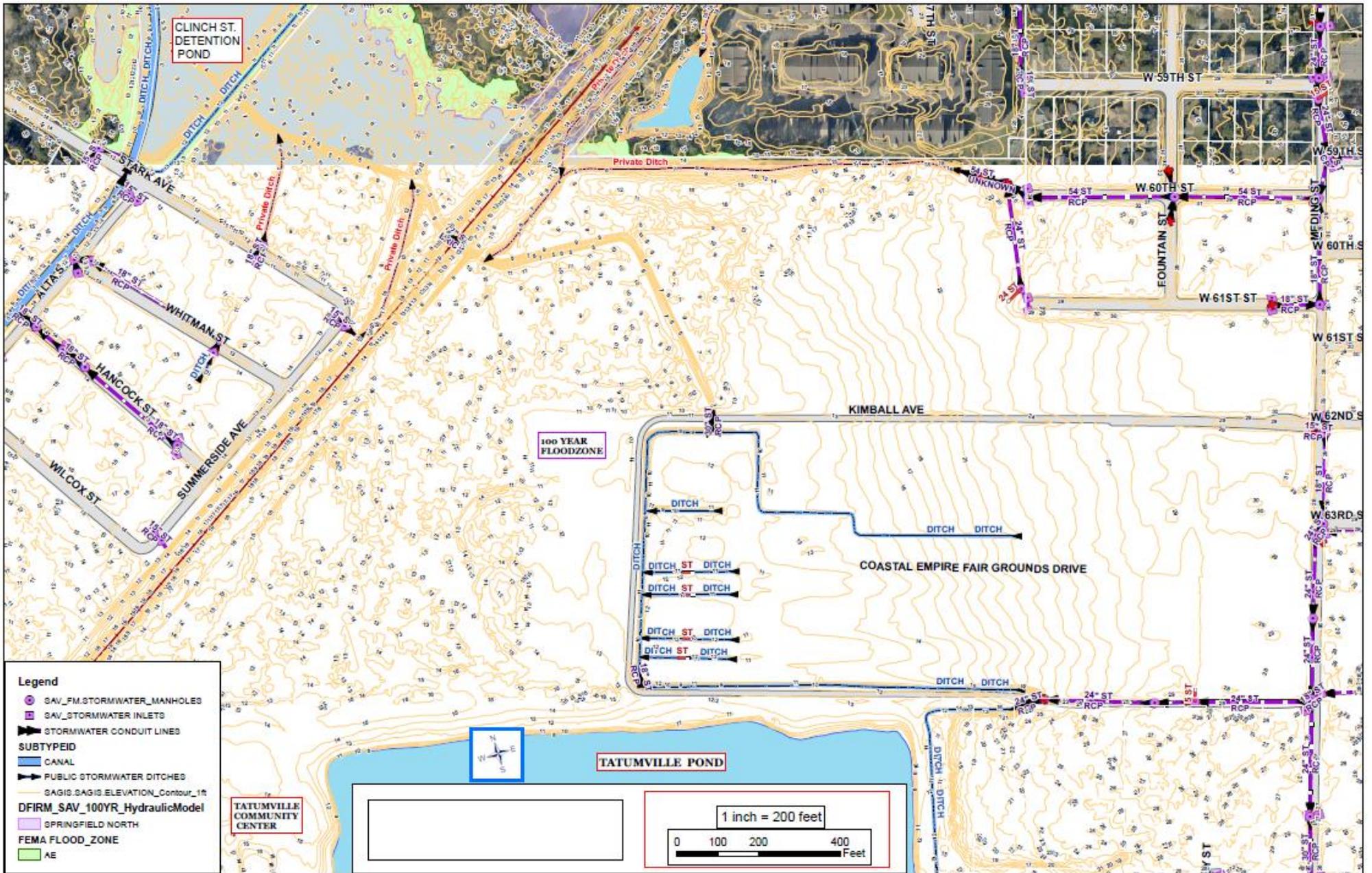
Photo 2: Upland habitat

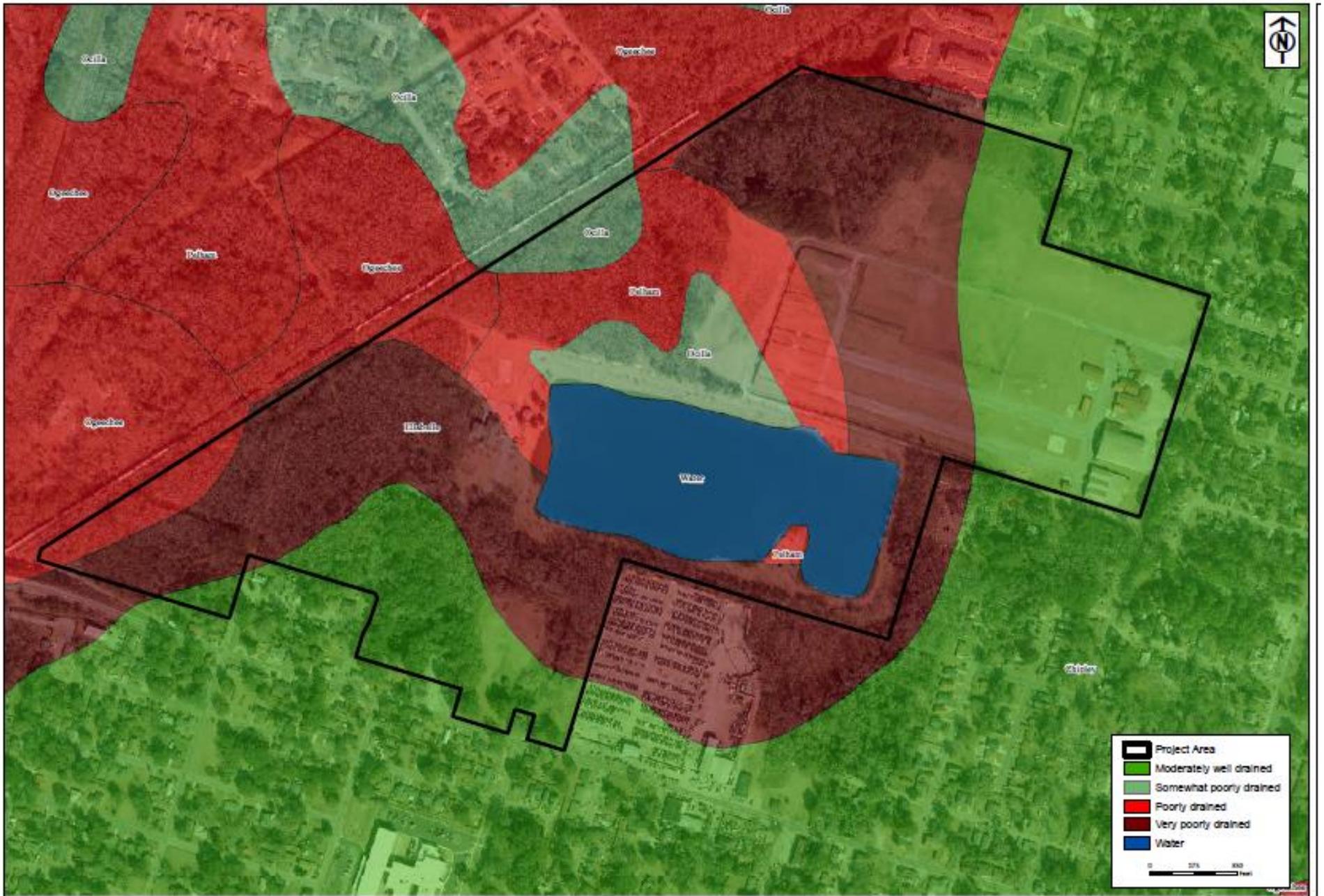


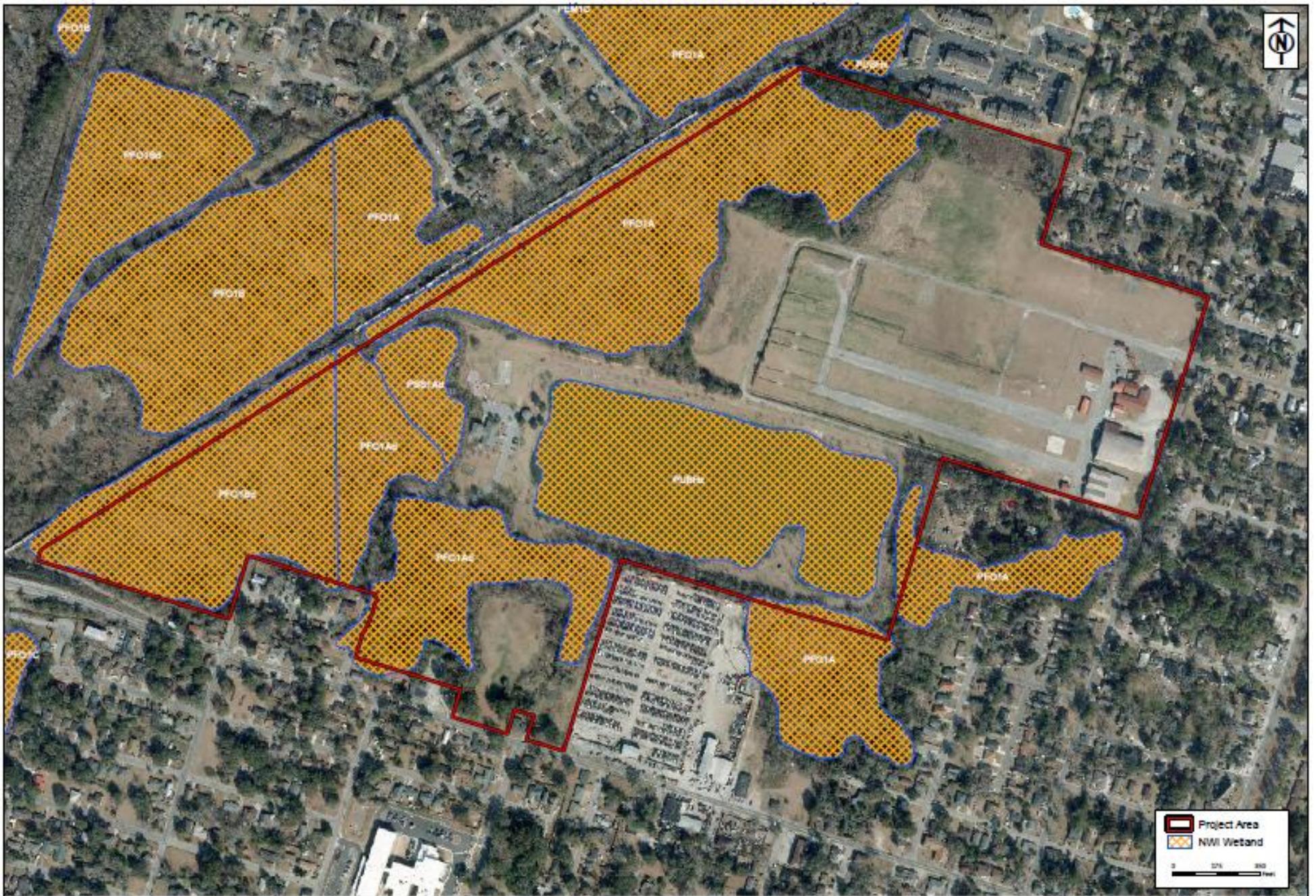
Photo 3: Upland area with trash/debris

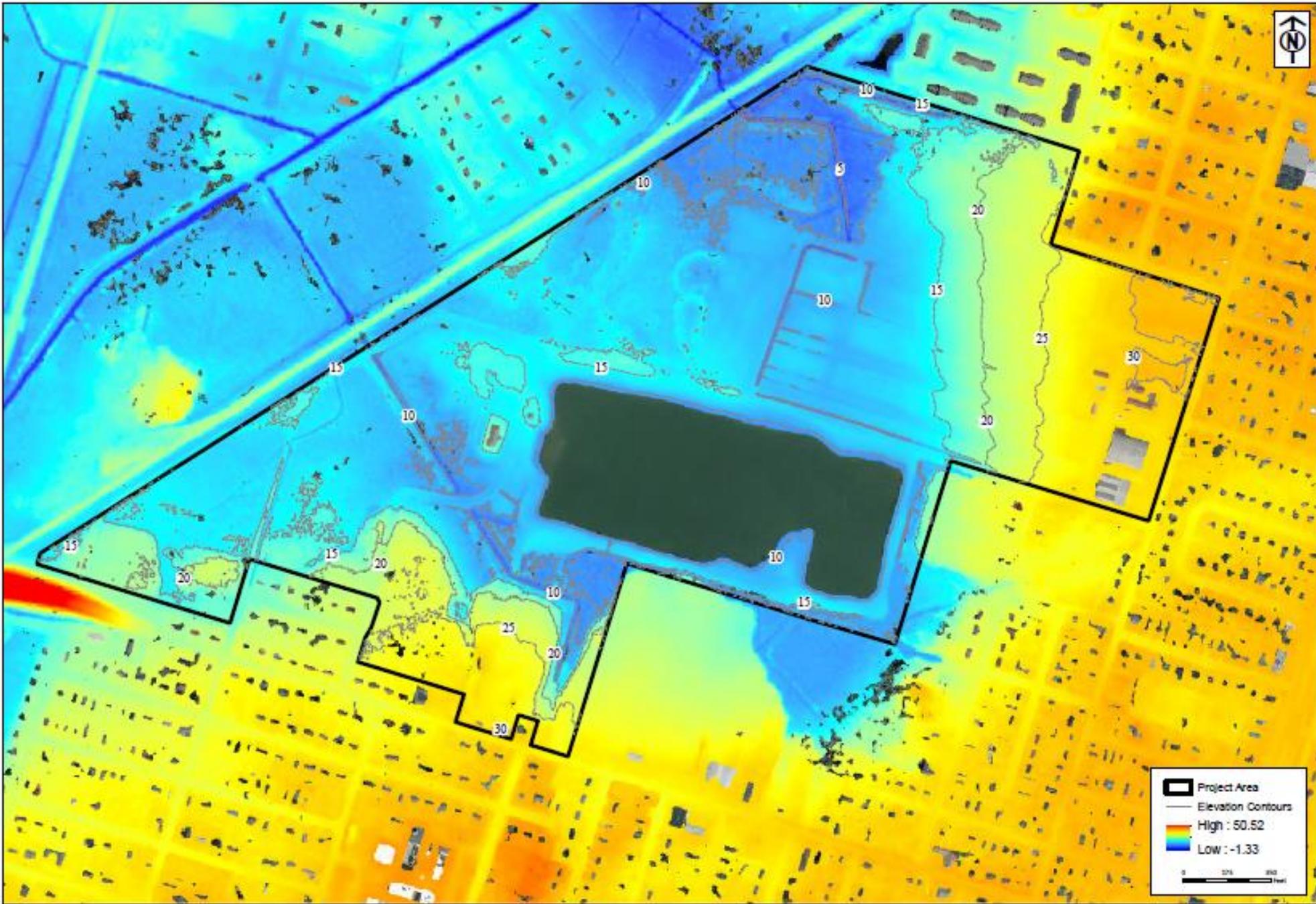


Photo 4: Freshwater wetland habitat









6.3 Traffic

The Fairgrounds property has direct access from Meding Street at the intersection of West 62nd and West 63rd Street Streets (primary) on the east and from Kimball Street (secondary) on the south side of the property. Both Meding and Kimball Streets are classified as local roads.

Current Traffic Data

Recent traffic counts from Meding Street, 400-500 blocks of West 63rd Street, and Staley Avenue are as follows:

Street	Segment	Average Daily Traffic
West 63rd Street	Montgomery Street to Meding Street	292 VPD
Meding Street	West 62 nd Street to Kimball Ave	1,231 VPD*
Staley Avenue	West of Meding Street	6,751 VPD*
Staley Avenue	East of Meding Street	6,546 VPD*

*Vehicles per day

Known Traffic Concerns

Meding Street

- Limited right-of-way – only 30’ from West 57th Street to Staley Avenue
- Current roadway is 28’ wide.
- Many of the properties that front or abut Meding Street have driveways onto Meding
- Other homes that front Meding have no off-street parking; they park on Meding.
- Sidewalk on the west side from Montgomery to West 58th Street. No available ROW to install further south.
- Drivers using Meding as a shortcut between Montgomery Street/West 54th Street and Staley Avenue/Tatemville necessitated traffic calming measure installation in 2018.

West 62nd and West 63rd Streets

- Short segments of residential streets between Montgomery and Meding Streets.
- Used for direct tractor trailer access to the Fairgrounds property.
- Constructed to residential standards; not intended for sustained use by heavy vehicles
- No curb and gutter; stormwater sheet flow.

Staley Avenue

- Limited right-of-way - only 30’ beginning 350’ west of Montgomery Street and continuing to O’Byrne Street where it widens to 40’ ROW.
- Georgia Power 36” diameter concrete transmission poles on the northernmost edge of the City’s ROW from the Deanie Frazier Overpass east to Glatigny Street where the lines cross and poles shift to the south side.
- Georgia Power transmission poles on the northeast corners of the intersections at Coleman Street and Lamar Avenue.

Other

- Limited setbacks – many homes are close to the street
- Fences – fencing installed on property lines (including front yards) pushes pedestrians to walk in the street and force CAT buses to swing extra wide when turning.
- Businesses along Montgomery Street use the residential street frontages for vehicle storage (mechanic shops).
- Complaints of cut-through traffic on Gould and South Streets between Montgomery and Staley by drivers bypassing the traffic signal at Montgomery and/or the STOP control at Meding and Staley.

Constraints

- Two-thirds of the south side of the fairgrounds abuts the Tatemville Golden Age and Neighborhood Community Center along with a lake and walking trail.
- On the north side, the property is constrained by a small neighborhood and an apartment complex.
- On the west, a 150' CSX rail right-of-way runs the entire length of the property.

The constraints on three sides of the property severely limit opportunities for alternate access. Lamar Street has unopened right-of-way into the Golden Age Center parcel. Coleman Street enters the Golden Age parcel where it becomes a driveway to the parking lot. Both Lamar and Coleman originate at Staley Avenue and run north through a residential neighborhood.

6.4 Adjacent Capital Investment

Over the last five years, the Capital Improvement Projects Department identified the following enhancements for the Feiler Park Neighborhood:

- Feiler Park Entrance Sign
Cost: \$7,027.40
Completed: April 2016
- Feiler Park Walking Trail and Playground
Cost: \$94,168.68
Completed: April 2014
- Feiler Park Phase I Project – Installed the median on 57th Street to create a Boulevard and adding sidewalk to 57th Street.
- Sidewalk was placed from 57th to 56th.
Cost: \$564,618.73 (construction)
Completed: August 2011
- Feiler Park Phase II Project – Installed a new traffic signal at Meding and Montgomery
- Installed sidewalk along Meding from 56th to Montgomery.
Cost: \$419,556.80 (construction)
Completed: May 2013
- Traffic Calming
Godsells Street
Cost: \$25,580
Completed: 2019
- Meding Street
Cost: \$87,482
Completed: 2019



Appendix

A. Georgia Film Office Industry Report- Sound Studio 01/06/21

In 2007, the direct spend of the film, television and interactive entertainment industries in Georgia was an estimated 67.6 million. In 2008, The Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act was passed. Since that time, the industry has grown exponentially -- with a direct spend of \$2.2 billion in FY19, despite losing more than 4 months due to the global pandemic. Although we dropped from a direct spend of \$2.9 billion in FY19, FY20 was on track to beat last year's growth. This marks the first year since the introduction of the 2008 Film Tax Credit legislation that the figures did not meet or exceed the previous year's figures. In addition to the growth in the number and size of projects shooting in Georgia, we have also experienced a tremendous growth in the number of support service companies locating in the State. Literally hundreds of companies have either located on expanded in the state to support the film industry. There is no other market that has seen the kind of soundstage growth that we have seen since 2010, and we are still scrambling to find more. In 2009, we had one purpose built sound stage complex in Georgia—Riverwood Studios in Senoia—its total stage space was 45,000 square feet. In 2018, AMC purchased Riverwood for “The Walking Dead.” Today, Georgia has more than 1.6 million square feet of purpose-built soundstages, and more than 2.1 million square feet of retrofitted soundstages—there are also warehouses throughout greater Atlanta that are consistently used for film work.



Here is a timeline of the most significant film infrastructure developments since the incentive was passed:

2010—EUE/ Screen Gems signed a 50-year lease with City of Atlanta for Lakewood Fairgrounds. In addition to retrofitting the historic buildings into soundstages, they added several new purpose-built soundstages.

2011--Atlanta Film Studios Paulding County opened in Hiram. Sitting on 11 acres, Atlanta Film Studios Paulding County hosts two 20,000 square foot sound stages 32,000 square feet of mill space and 10,000 square feet of production office. This has recently been purchased by Swirl Films.

2012-- Raulet Property Partners opened Mailing Avenue Stageworks, an 85,000-square-foot film and television production facility just south of historic Grant Park.

2013—Pinewood Studios announced its first U.S. location and Fayetteville now hosts Pinewood Atlanta Studios. Set across 700 acres and home to 18 sound stages ranging from 15,000 to 40,000 square feet, it has an extensive backlot spanning 400 acres.

2015-- In August 2015, the Georgia Film Academy, a partnership between the USG and the TSG to fasttrack students into the film industry, was created. The concept for the Georgia Film Academy was identified through the High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI) which was launched in January 2014 to address Georgia's most critical workforce needs. The Georgia Film Academy is now teaching film and television curriculum at 25 campuses throughout Georgia. It has one soundstage.

2015-- Eagle Rock Studios Atlanta announced the grand opening of its new television studio operations in Gwinnett County, Georgia. Located at 6205 Best Friend Road, the former 690,000-square-foot Kraft warehouse space was converted to house four, 30,000-square-foot sound stages.

2015—Integral announced the opening of Third Rail Studios in Doraville, consisting of 60,000 square feet of purpose-built soundstages, 27,500 of production suites and 70,000 of mill/flex space. 2015- Westside Stageworks was added to the Stageworks family in September of 2015. WS is in the Fulton Industrial District of Atlanta and includes production office, mill shop, and a 40,000 square foot stage area.

2016--Tyler Perry Studios purchased 330 acres of the former Fort McPherson and built 12 soundstages totaling more than 300K SF and another 150K SF of office.

2016—Atlanta Metro Studios opened in Union City and hosts 6 stages including the two largest purposebuilt soundstages in North America.

2016—Raulet Property Partners purchased and retrofitted the former Takahashi Works in Conyers to create Eastside Stageworks.

2017—BlackHall Studios opened in Dekalb County on Constitution Road. The nine sound stages range in size from 20,000 to 40,000 sq. ft. with ceiling heights from 42 to 45 feet. Mill space, special effects, and storage space total 175,000 SQ. FT. on the main campus and 400,000 sq. ft. on the expanded Blackhall East campus.

2018—Ozzie Areu, former COO of Tyler Perry Studios, and his brother Will, announced that they had purchased the former campus of Tyler Perry Studios to build a multi-faceted media campus encompassing music, tech, motion pictures, and television operations.

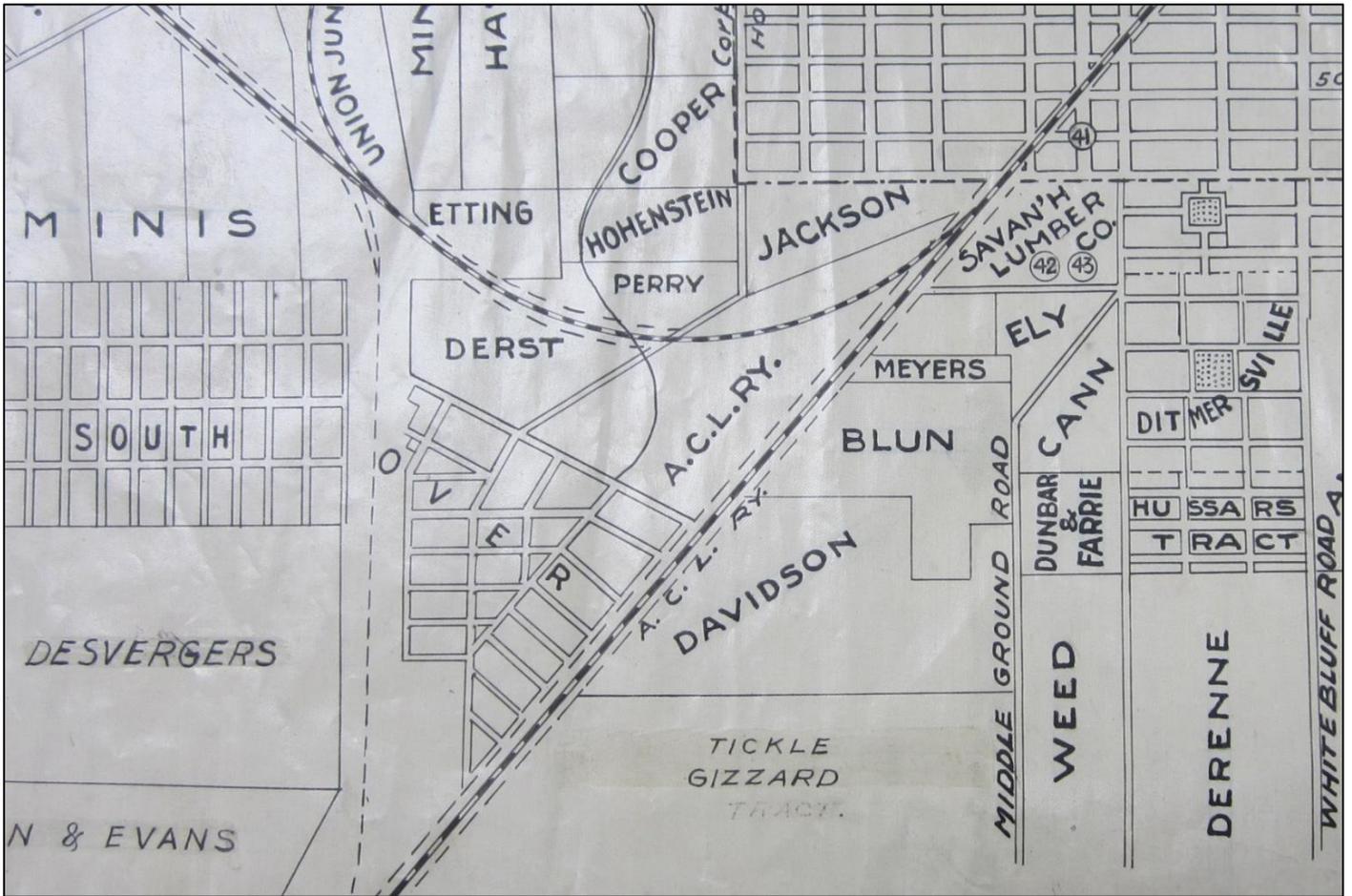
2018—Riverwood Studios, home to The Walking Dead, announced that they would start allowing tours of filming sites and their backlot in Senoia. All tickets through 2019 sold out within two days.

2020- In October, Pinewood Atlanta Studios in Fayetteville was rebranded as Trilith after cutting ties with its UK partner. Trilith Studios is part of a 935-acre master development with a slate of vendor businesses, content and tech companies, sound stages and 60,000 square feet of “smart stages” with virtual production technologies. The adjacent live/work community, formerly known as Pinewood Forest, is part of the 935 acres, and has been renamed Trilith. The studio, which opened in 2014 as joint venture between the Pinewood Group and Dan Cathy, is now all locally owned, and has plans for expanded production facilities.

2020—Cinelease-Three Rings Studios opened with 4 purpose-built soundstages on its 160-acre campus in Covington, GA and was fully booked before completion. In addition to bricks and mortar infrastructure, thousands of people have entered the local crew base by transitioning from other professions thanks to the training from the Georgia Film Academy.

While we once said we were ‘two crews deep,’ meaning we could crew two feature films shows simultaneously, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) now reports that the motion picture and television industry supports over 159,000 jobs and nearly \$9.2 billion in wages in Georgia, when including indirect and induced jobs and wages supported by the industry, such as caterers, lumber yards, and restaurants, calculated using the BEA’s RIMS II economic model. While 2020 was certainly an unusual year worldwide for the film and television industries, Georgia is on track to rebound quickly. We are currently hosting 9 feature film projects and 50 television series or pilots, and almost all the stages are occupied.

In 2020, new legislation, HB1037, was passed, which went into effect January 1, 2021. This bill will serve to further tighten the requirements for earning the film tax credit. Going forward, audits will be mandated, proof of distribution will be required before the allowance of the 10% Georgia Entertainment Promotion uplift, and more requirements will be of companies seeking to become a Georgia vendor for purposes of the Film Tax Credit. This new legislation proves Georgia legislators’ continued commitment to this industry. Georgia’s incentive- with no cap and no sunset date- is one of the best film incentives in the world. The Film Tax Credit—combined with Georgia’s diverse locations, deep crew base, infrastructure, temperate climate, and quality of life—make Georgia a great home for film production. As the number of streaming platforms continue to rise, creating the need for more filmed content, we anticipate that Georgia’s film business will grow as well. Despite the amazing growth in soundstages, currently we are still experiencing a shortage of stages— we currently have productions utilizing space at the Georgia World Congress Center since there are no trade shows going on due to the pandemic, but this is only a short-term solution to the stage space shortage.



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