

# 2010 Urban Redevelopment Plan

City of Albany



Albany-  
Dougherty  
Economic  
Development  
Commission



PREPARED WITH ASSISTANCE FROM:



Southwest Georgia  
Regional Commission

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## INTRODUCTION

This City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Plan, in accordance with the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Act (O.C.G.A. sec. 36-61-1 et. seq.), is intended to address the aging downtown commercial corridor, Broad Avenue, the Roosevelt corridor and the surrounding housing north of the corridor in need of redevelopment. Once a thriving district, it is now plagued by disinvestment, high crime, poorly maintained housing stock, high commercial vacancy rates, business closures and a low percentage of business licenses in the area. An Urban Redevelopment Plan and Opportunity Zone are the next steps in the redevelopment process of this particular area, which began in 1996 with the Albany Riverfront Master Plan and continued with the 2008 Albany Tax Allocation District. The City of Albany will apply for an Opportunity Zone to be coterminous with this Urban Redevelopment Area.

The City of Albany was founded in 1838 as a regional transportation center and was laid out on a basic grid of east-west and north-south streets. Initial development began along Broad Street, west of the Flint River, and radiated

**“Two factors inhibit development of this healthy business climate. First, the physical state of many of downtown buildings is deteriorated. Private building stock has not been maintained, and public investment in downtown has been insufficient. Secondly, the neighborhoods surrounding downtown are distressed...”**

*~Albany Downtown Riverfront  
Master Plan 1996*

outward. Until the early 1970's, the downtown area served as the primary location for retail and other businesses. A city directory from this era lists a plethora of tailors, shoe stores, dry goods, grocery stores, contractors, architects and businessmen that operated in and around the vicinity of downtown. In 1976, the Albany Mall pulled the large

anchor stores from the downtown area, and the smaller family-owned businesses struggled to retain the same level of consumer traffic. For many years, the downtown commercial corridor has experienced disinvestment and high vacancy rates. After the 1994 flood, the worst in Albany's recorded history, a renewed emphasis was placed on downtown and its revitalization. The Albany Dougherty Inner City Authority, along with the help of many other organizations and individuals, created the Albany Downtown Riverfront Master Plan in 1996 to address redevelopment in this area.

**"A plan such as this one is a major mile stone in a much longer process. New hopes and dreams will be added to those contained in these pages, and new leadership will become available to carry them forward."**

*~Albany Downtown Riverfront  
Master Plan 1996*

The City of Albany successfully carried out many of the public sector components of the Downtown Riverfront Master Plan, including the Flint River Greenway Trails, Ray Charles Park, Riverfront Park, the Flint RiverQuarium and Turtle Grove Play Park. The TAD and this Urban Redevelopment Plan are the latest efforts to attract the private investment needed to complete the vision.

The Albany Downtown Riverfront Master Plan highlighted three goals for redevelopment: economic vitality, quality of life and a future for the next generation. This Urban Redevelopment Plan is the next step to achieve those goals.

**“Albany will evolve into an active economic, cultural and social center for South Georgia. The government will be lead by visionaries who can effect change, provide continuity and consistency of vision, and have a heart for every citizen. Albany will be a safe, beautiful, world-class community focused on providing a high quality of life for all citizens, both in its neighborhoods and in its vibrant downtown. Albany will be an important destination and a desirable place for families. It will have a progressive high-quality image both internally and externally, providing nationally attractive employment and educational opportunities for existing and future residents. Growth will be sustainable and respectful to the natural environment and the historic character of the community with services sufficient to support existing and future development. A spirit of “One Albany” will evolve built on strength, pride and diversity”.**

*~Albany-Dougherty County Comprehensive Plan (2005-2025)*

## CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Urban Redevelopment Plan for the City of Albany is consistent with the City’s current Comprehensive Plan (2005-2025). The Community Vision is the framework by which the City will guide community growth and development for the next twenty years.

According to the Comprehensive Plan, the economic development goal is to identity local economic development trends, opportunities and

resources to determine economic needs and goals and to develop a strategy for the economic well-being of Albany-Dougherty County. Several of the areas included in the Comprehensive Plan are an integral part of this Urban Redevelopment Plan.

Future housing demand to satisfy projected population growth is a critical component of the Albany Comprehensive Plan. Housing is by far the largest item in a family budget and the only wealth many families will ever acquire. In Albany's Comprehensive Plan, the housing element provides the opportunity to assess the adequacy of current and future housing needs in conjunction with economic development needs.

Some other indicators that impact housing needs are population changes, wages, available infrastructure, local revenue and cost of living. To preserve and protect current and future housing stock, code enforcement is a primary issue. The City has adequately addressed this problem with a dedicated code enforcement department that works with the community for compliance, but will enforce if the needs warrants it.

The housing and rental costs in Albany-Dougherty County are lower than the state average, according to U.S. Census. According to the Department of Community & Economic Development, the low ownership rate can be explained by a lack of low cost housing and low income and credit problems of persons waiting to own their home. The floods of 1994 and 1998 had a significant impact on the housing stock. Attractive, well-designed neighborhoods can foster strong communities and are in asset for the residents.

Albany has a program that rehabilitates single family homes in south and central parts of the city. The current plan states that financial incentives

to renovate housing in the area would attract more people and generate economic development.

Some long range recommendations mentioned in the plan focus on development of blocks or limited development in certain areas, based on the City's priorities and the availability of HOME funds. The Department of Community & Economic Development has indicated that the outlook for the City of Albany is above average but certain types of housing are needed: special need groups (elderly, disabled, person diagnosed with AIDS and related diseases, and person physically disabled). Some zoning requirements restrict this group. In addition, the cost of conversion and meeting ADA requirements is costly.

*Housing Development Issues listed in the Comprehensive Plan*

- *Encourage the construction of an array of housing types within the urbanized area including sing-family, duplex, multi-family, and mixed use.*
- *Provide government incentives and programs to encourage the development of affordable housing by the private sector.*
- *Provide government incentives and programs to provide housing and services for underserved population such as the elderly disabled, low income and very low income.*
- *Improve condition of dilapidated and deteriorating privately owned housing through a combination of aggressive code enforcement and government assistance programs.*



- *Amend development regulations as necessary to remove impediments to the development of desirable housing types.*

The Albany - Dougherty County Comprehensive Plan examines current and future infrastructure demands and needs. One goal is to direct growth to locations which have proper access to: existing transportation system; minimal environmental constraints, sufficient storm water treatment capacity, compatible existing land use and readily available sewer and water infrastructure. This will reduce the cost of infrastructure improvements and expansion. This is the case for the URP/OZ..

However, the comprehensive plan indicates that infrastructure needs will continue to be addressed throughout this planning period. The Short Term Work Program and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) both address the infrastructure needs for the next 20 year planning period as well. The City and County are both well aware that the provision of public infrastructure can limit, or constrain future development.

## COMMUNITY'S LAND USE OBJECTIVES

The Comprehensive Plan takes an assessment of the current and future utilizations of the land. The assessment examines where land is, how it is currently used and how it will be used in the future. Some classifications of land are: residential, commercial, industrial, public/institutional, transportation communication and utilities, parks/recreation/conservation, agricultural/forestry, open water and underdeveloped. According to the Comprehensive Plan almost 12% of the County's land area is currently used for residential.

A vast majority of the residential is low density within the City of Albany. There are some medium and high density areas located within the city consisting of small single family lots, duplexes, town homes, row housing and cluster housing. The high density residential areas consist of low-rise multi-family.

During the past decade, the new housing in the City of Albany has been concentrated in the northwest, with leap frog development found along Dawson and Gillionville Road, Newton Road and Leary Road near the Airport, Hill Road in East Dougherty County and along Moultrie Road at the County line. Within the city limits, residential development is characterized by single-family, detached dwellings on small to medium lots, 6,000 square feet to 12,000 square feet in size.

The greatest residential densities occur in the vicinity of downtown, where some of the more dilapidated housing stock is found. The majority of the older, established, residential neighborhoods are found in the areas to the north and south of downtown Albany. Small and large lot single-family homes are predominant. Most of the lots are smaller and would be difficult to develop in accordance with contemporary needs and current zoning.

Within the last 20 years, the character of downtown Albany has been redefined. Until the 1970's, the downtown served as the commercial center for the entire city and the Southwest Georgia Region. Since then, the downtown has lost its importance as a commercial center and become instead a center for government, service and cultural activities. The physical character of downtown is still undergoing transition. The desired pattern of land uses in the Urban Redevelopment Area are mixed uses -- office, government, retail, institutional, residential and entertainment. Based on current land use, as well as zoning ordinances, any of these uses is appropriate within the URA area and should be permitted, assuming that applicable design and concurrency standards are satisfied.

The Future Land Use Plan of the City of Albany's Comprehensive Plan designates the potential area sited for urban redevelopment as primarily commercial with pockets of medium to high residential. Traditionally, the smaller lots are challenging and difficult to develop in accordance with most zoning ordinances. The City also has many vacant lots throughout this Urban Redevelopment Area. According to ADICA, about 50 percent of the square footage in the downtown commercial corridor is vacant. Vacant lots so close to the heart of the City can be an indicator of the lack of private investment in an area.

## **BOUNDARIES OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

This Urban Redevelopment Area/Opportunity Zone contains the downtown commercial corridor that runs along West Broad Avenue from Front Street to Slappey Boulevard. It also contains the buildings on Jackson Street from Oglethorpe Boulevard to Pine Avenue, not including the government-owned buildings. In addition, the area includes the Roosevelt Avenue corridor from Gillionville Road to Madison Street and the vernacular housing stock between Washington Street and Jackson

Street from Flint Avenue up to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, not including Phoebe Putney or its affiliates. Please see map for details.

## EXPLANATIONS OF NEGATIVE CONDITIONS

This City of Albany URP/OZ can be described as an aging, historic, downtown commercial corridor and dilapidated, vernacular housing north of the commercial corridor. Significant disinvestment, high crime, poorly maintained housing stock, high commercial vacancy rates, business closures and a low percentage of business licenses plague this area.

The Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law (O.C.G.A. 36-61-1 et. seq.) defines a redevelopment area as “a slum area which the local governing body designates as appropriate for an urban redevelopment project.”

A slum area is defined in the law as an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, which by reason of:

- Dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence;
- Inadequate provision of ventilation, light air sanitation, or open spaces;
- High density of population and overcrowding;
- Existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or;
- Any combination of such factors is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, or crime and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.

## Albany Police Department Incident Report

*\*Number of incidents within this URP/Opportunity Zone for the previous 3 years\**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Incidents</u>
Oct 2007 – Dec 2007	192
2008	742
2009	705
Jan 2010 – Sept 2010	431

*\*Total number of incidents in Albany for the previous 3 years\**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Incidents</u>
Oct 2007 – Dec 2007	3,627
2008	18,321
2009	12,720
Jan 2010 – Sept 2010	8,236

*Total sq. miles of City of Albany = 55.9 mi<sup>2</sup>*

*Total sq. miles of URP/OZ = .64 mi<sup>2</sup>*

*\*URP/OZ area is .01% of the total area for the City of Albany\**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percent of Incidents (URP/OZ Responsibility)</u>
Oct 2007 – Dec 2007	5%
2008	4%
2009	5%
Jan 2010 – Sept 2010	5%

*Source: David Sparks, Crime Statistics, Albany Police Department*

Although this URP/OZ comprises only one tenth of one percent of the area of the City of Albany, according to the Albany Police Department, 5% of crime in the City occurs in this area.

From August 2009 to September 2010, the City of Albany issued 4,758 code violations. 283 of them were located inside the URP/OZ. During that time, almost 6% of all code violations were located within the URP/OZ, an area that is only .01% of the total area of the City of Albany. GIS Data was not available from 2007-August 2009.

**City of Albany Code Enforcement Violations**  
Date: 8/2009 - 9/2010

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number</u>
In OP Zone	283
City/Countywide	4,758

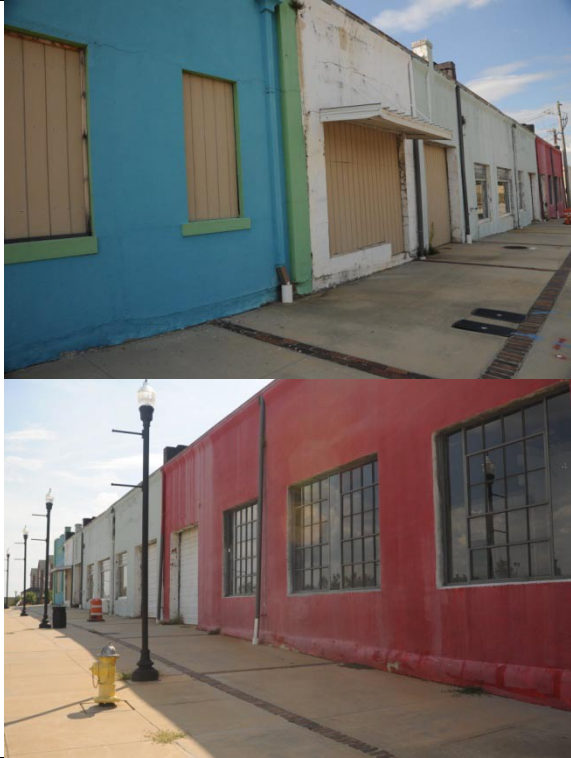


*Source: Mike Tilson, Director of Code Enforcement, City of Albany*





From a September 2010 windshield survey, 40% of the commercial buildings in the URP/OZ are vacant. ADICA reports that about 50% of the square footage of downtown commercial property is vacant. Some buildings located on the following pages are several floors tall, but were counted as one vacant building.

33% of homes in the URP/OZ appear vacant.




Buildings in the Downtown Commercial Corridor vacant for 3 or more years:

Numbers 1-12. Reported and owned by Bob Brooks:

<p>1</p>		<p><b>101-103 N. Front Street</b> <b>6,000 sq ft.</b></p>
<p>2</p>		<p><b>109 N. Front Street</b> <b>6,000 sq. ft.</b></p>
<p>3</p>		<p><b>115 W. Broad Ave</b> <b>3,550 sq. ft.</b></p>

<p>4</p>		<p>125 W. Broad Ave. 12,000 sq. ft.</p>
<p>5</p>		<p>141 W. Broad Ave. 4,000 sq. ft. (green and black annex bldgs)</p>
<p>6</p>		<p>100-102 N. Washington St. 37,000 sq. ft.</p>
<p>7</p>		<p>128-144 W. Broad Ave. 51,000 sq. ft.</p>







<p>8</p>		<p>148 W. Broad Ave. 9,000 sq. ft.</p>
<p>9</p>		<p>226-228 W. Broad Ave. 30,000 sq. ft.</p>
<p>10</p>		<p>213 W. Roosevelt Ave. 16,500 sq. ft.</p> <p>On most days, one will find anywhere from a couple of men up to a dozen sitting along the street under the shade of the trees.</p>

<p>11</p>		<p>401 N. Jackson St. 3,000 sq. ft.</p>
<p>12</p>		<p>405 N. Jackson St. 10,000 sq. ft.</p>

Numbers 1-6. Reported and owned by John Wurst:

<p>1-3</p>		<p>100, 102, 104 Pine Ave. 1,400 sq. ft., 1,300 sq. ft., 1,300 sq. ft.</p>
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4		108 Pine Ave. 1,500 sq. ft.
5		110 Pine Ave. 11,300 sq ft.
6		129-133 Front St. 2,024 sq. ft.

		<p><b>114 N. Washington St.</b></p> <p><b>18,000 sq. ft.</b></p> <p><b>This building is 114 N. Washington. It is located along the downtown commercial corridor and has been vacant for more than six years.</b></p>
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There are many vacancies along the Roosevelt Avenue corridor as well. In addition, the area appears blighted, along with two designated brownfields.



**Figure 1.** These two buildings are located along Lipsey Dr, which is part of the Roosevelt corridor. The building on the left is covered with profanity-laden graffiti and the building on the right is almost totally covered in vines and overgrown shrubs and trees.



**Figure 2.** These two properties are also along Lipsey Dr. The owner of the warehouse on the right reported that his property is divided into five rental spaces. The largest space, 4,500 sq ft, has been vacant for six years. Of the other four spaces, totaling 12,000 sq ft, one is occupied and three are vacant. He also reported that he was forced to upgrade doors and locks after finding a homeless man living in his bathroom.



**Figure 3.** The picture on the left is a designated brownfield. The property is littered with barrels and containers that cover several acres and reach up to 10 feet or more in height. The Brownfield Identification Plan, issued by the Department of Community and Economic Development, reports that this decayed Roosevelt corridor continues until North Jefferson Street.

From 2007 to September 2010, the City of Albany issued 4,841 business licenses. Less than five percent were located within this Urban Redevelopment/Opportunity Zone Area. GIS data was not able to separate the number by year.

City of Albany Business Licenses Granted	
<u>Location</u>	<u>Total</u>
City/Countywide	4,841
In Op Zone Only	219

The dilapidated housing north of the commercial corridor is in need of redevelopment. According to census data, the families living in those homes are not financially equipped to repair the failing structures.

**Low Educational Attainment** – The residents within this URP/OZ are significantly less well educated than in the surrounding areas. 43.9% of the residents in the URP/OZ do not have a high school diploma, a rate much higher than the City residents (26.6%).

2010 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment	
<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Population Percentage</u>
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	18.20%
9 – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade, No Diploma	25.70%
High School Graduate	27.10%
Some College, No Degree	17.60%
Associate Degree	3.70%
Bachelor's Degree	4.50%
Graduate/Professional Degree	3.20%

*Source: ESRI, Business Analyst*

**Low Household Incomes** – Incomes within the URP/OZ are low. Within the URP/OZ, the median household income is \$17,609, only 53% of the median household income in Albany (\$33,062). All areas are significantly below the statewide median income of \$49,509.

*Source: ESRI, Business Analyst*

**High Proportion of Families in Poverty** – Of the 368 families in the URP/OZ, 46.7% are living on incomes of less than \$15,000.

*Source: ESRI, Business Analyst*

**Low Labor Participation Rate** - 29% of the population 16 years + within the URP/OZ are unemployed. That number is almost double the rate of 15.3% for the City of Albany.

*Source: ESRI, Business Analyst*

ESRI Business Analyst makes data available in the current year for very specific boundaries. However, they do not archive historical data. The Department of Labor makes available historical unemployment data, but only down to census tracts. The URP/OZ is located in census tracts 0800, 0900, 1200 and 1300. For each of these census tracts, the unemployment rate is higher than the state average. In some tracts, the average is five times the state average.

Year	Tract	Rate	State Avg
2009	0800	35.1	9.6
	0900	13.5	
	1200	26	
	1300	40	

2008	0800	26.3	6.2
	0900	9.3	
	1200	18.8	
	1300	30.8	
2007	0800	22.3	4.6
	0900	7.6	
	1200	15.7	
	1300	26.3	

*Source: Georgia Department of Labor*

**Renter Housing Dominates** – Within this URP/OZ, 61.4% of housing units are renter-occupied and only 13.6% are owner-occupied. 25% are vacant.

*Source: ESRI, Business Analyst*

**Low Housing Values** – Homes within this URP/OZ are worth significantly less than those in other parts of City of Albany. The median home value in this URP/OZ is \$62,500, only 67% of the median values for the City of Albany (\$92,715).





**Figure 4.** These homes are located on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between Washington and Jackson. The windows are boarded up and it appears that they are vacant.



**Figure 5.** These homes are also on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Both are posted with signs as unfit for human habitation and scheduled for demolition.



**Figure 6.** These houses are located along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between Washington and Jackson. The homes boarded up and the yards are in disarray. In the photo on the left, the house to the far right has a large pile of old clothes on the front porch.



**Figure 7.** These homes are located on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, between Washington and Jackson. The windows are boarded up and they appear to be vacant.



**Figure 8.** These two dwellings are located on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue between Washington and Jackson. The apartment building on the left is vacant with some boarded up windows and is need of some repairs. The house in the picture on the right is vacant with a couch in the driveway and an old, used tire in the front yard. The shrubs are overgrown with vines growing on the house.



**Figure 9.** These two dwellings are located on W. Society Avenue between Washington and Jackson. The duplex on the left is boarded up and appears to be vacant. The duplex on the right is also boarded up and in need of significant repairs.



**Figure 10.** These two pictures are also from W. Society Avenue. The house on the left has some windows boarded up and is in need of roof repairs. The roof, left of the dormer, has no shingles. The photo on the right shows a large pile of trash just off the street and also a smaller pile of trash on the other side of the street.

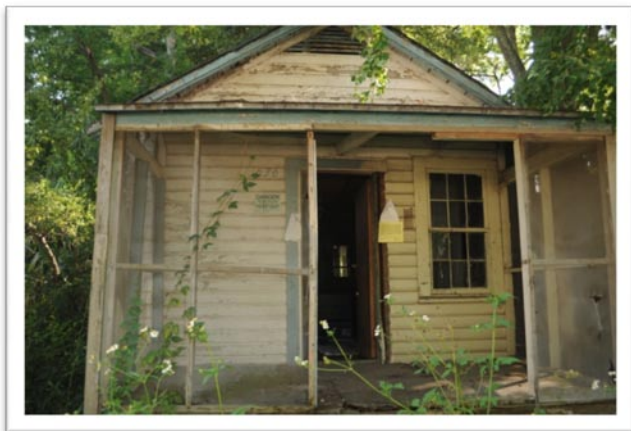


**Figure 11.** This house, on W. Tift Avenue between Washington and Jackson, has been identified as uninhabitable due to unsafe plumbing hazards.



**Figure 12.** This apartment building on W. Tift has some windows boarded up and appears to be vacant. It is attached to another property in need of repairs that runs along Washington Street.

**Figure 13.** This apartment building is located on W. Residence Avenue between Washington and Jackson. Some of the windows are boarded up, the yard is in disarray and it appears to be vacant.



**Figure 14.** This house is located on the south side of Flint Avenue between Davis and Madison. It has been identified as uninhabitable.

Along Broad Avenue to Slappey Blvd, there are many housing structures that need significant repairs and many vacant businesses.



**Figure 15.** The picture on the left is of the rear of the vacant business at 731 W. Broad Ave. The photo on the right shows the front of the building along Broad Ave. The roof is caved in on the west side of the property.



**Figure 16.** The building on the left, 803 W. Broad Ave, is vacant. Across the street, 814 W. Broad looks inhabited, but adds to the outdated, messy and unattractive streetscape found along the W. Broad corridor.



**Figure 17.** The building on the left, 816 W. Broad Ave, is 15,625 sq ft and has been **vacant for more than five years**. It was once a showroom/retail electrical and lighting store. The house on the right, 826 W. Broad, is vacant and has all windows and doors boarded up.



**Figure 18.** The house on the left is 827 W. Broad Ave. Windows and doors are boarded up and it appears to be vacant. The house on the right, 847 W. Broad Ave, has some boarded up windows and is in need of significant repairs.



**Figure 19.** The duplex pictured on the left is 851 W. Broad Ave. Both duplexes are aged and in need of some repairs. They are inhabited, but without being painted, along with other obvious aesthetic needs, their appearance adds to the blight found on W. Broad Ave between downtown and Slappey Blvd.



**Figure 20.** Chuck's Furniture & Appliance, 910 W. Broad Ave, is closed. The yellow tape in the window says "SEIZED BY THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE – LAW ENFORCEMENT."



**Figure 21.** Pictured on the left is 933 W. Broad Ave. According to the owner, this building has been vacant for 12 years. Pictured on the right is 923 W. Broad Ave, which has been vacant more than five years.



**Figure 22.** The old Pritchett Ford building at 410 N. Slappey Blvd. was legally identified by the City of Albany as being maintained in a blighted condition. This property is also identified as a brownfield.



**Figure 23.** The Mabry Motel is located at 375 N. Slappey Blvd. The Albany Drug Unit reported that six arrests have been made at this location since 2007.



**Figure 24.** The Carmike Theater building is located at 1121 Gillionville Road. Originally built in 1967, this site is considered a “grayfield” as well as being listed as one of the City’s brownfield properties.

There are also many dilapidated homes and structures along streets adjacent to and north of Broad Avenue, from Slappey Blvd. to Byron Road.



**Figure 25.** These two properties are located along Haley Street, north of Broad.





**Figure 26.** These homes are along Cleveland Ave, north of Broad. They are inhabited, but are in need of repairs.



**Figure 27.** These homes are located along Harding Street, north of Broad. The truck parked in front of the house on the left is being held off the ground by a jack. It appears to have been parked there for some time.



**Figure 28.** These two homes are located along Byron Road. Byron is a very short road that runs diagonally from Pine Ave to Broad Ave. Most of the homes on this street are vacant and several are deemed unsafe for human occupancy.

## DESCRIPTION OF PARCELS TO BE ACQUIRED

Currently, the City of Albany has nine properties in various stages of acquisition and demolition. Future plans may include acquiring other parcels of property as part of its redevelopment efforts if those properties are deemed unsafe for human occupancy.

## PLAN TO LEVERAGE PRIVATE RESOURCES

Upon approval of this Urban Redevelopment Plan, the City of Albany will seek to establish an Opportunity Zone. According to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, "Opportunity Zones are intended to encourage development, redevelopment and revitalization in areas that have higher levels of poverty and are underdeveloped or suffer from blight." The Opportunity Zone designation allows all businesses located within the zone to take advantage of the maximum job tax credit allowed under law; \$3,500 per job created at a minimum creation threshold of two jobs. This tool will ensure that the best state incentives are available to new and expanding businesses.

Businesses who qualify may also be eligible for funding options through the City of Albany Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund administered by Albany Community Together, Inc. Revolving Loan Funds work as gap financing, filling the gap between what a traditional lending institution is willing to lend and what the business can provide in equity.

## STRATEGY FOR RELOCATING DISPLACED RESIDENTS

The City of Albany has no current plans to relocate residents because this Urban Redevelopment Plan targets empty, uninhabitable structures. Should the plan call for displacements of residents in the future, the City will follow the relocation standards of the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Properties Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

## COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS TO BE PLACED ON PROPERTIES

Design guidelines for structures must follow those set forth by the Historic Preservation Commission in 2000 and must be consistent with the Albany Downtown Riverfront Master Plan. Changes will be administered under existing municipal planning and zoning procedures.

## NEEDED PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

According to ADICA, Broad Avenue is to be replaced. Sidewalk repairs and improvements are also scheduled in the downtown area. The Georgia Department of Transportation has plans to build a new bridge over the Flint River at Society Avenue as well. The supporting infrastructure of downtown creates safe streets and a safe environment. The high number of vacant buildings in the Urban Redevelopment/Opportunity Zone contributes to the decline of the downtown. As the utility of the existing buildings continues to decline, public service demands will increase.

## STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

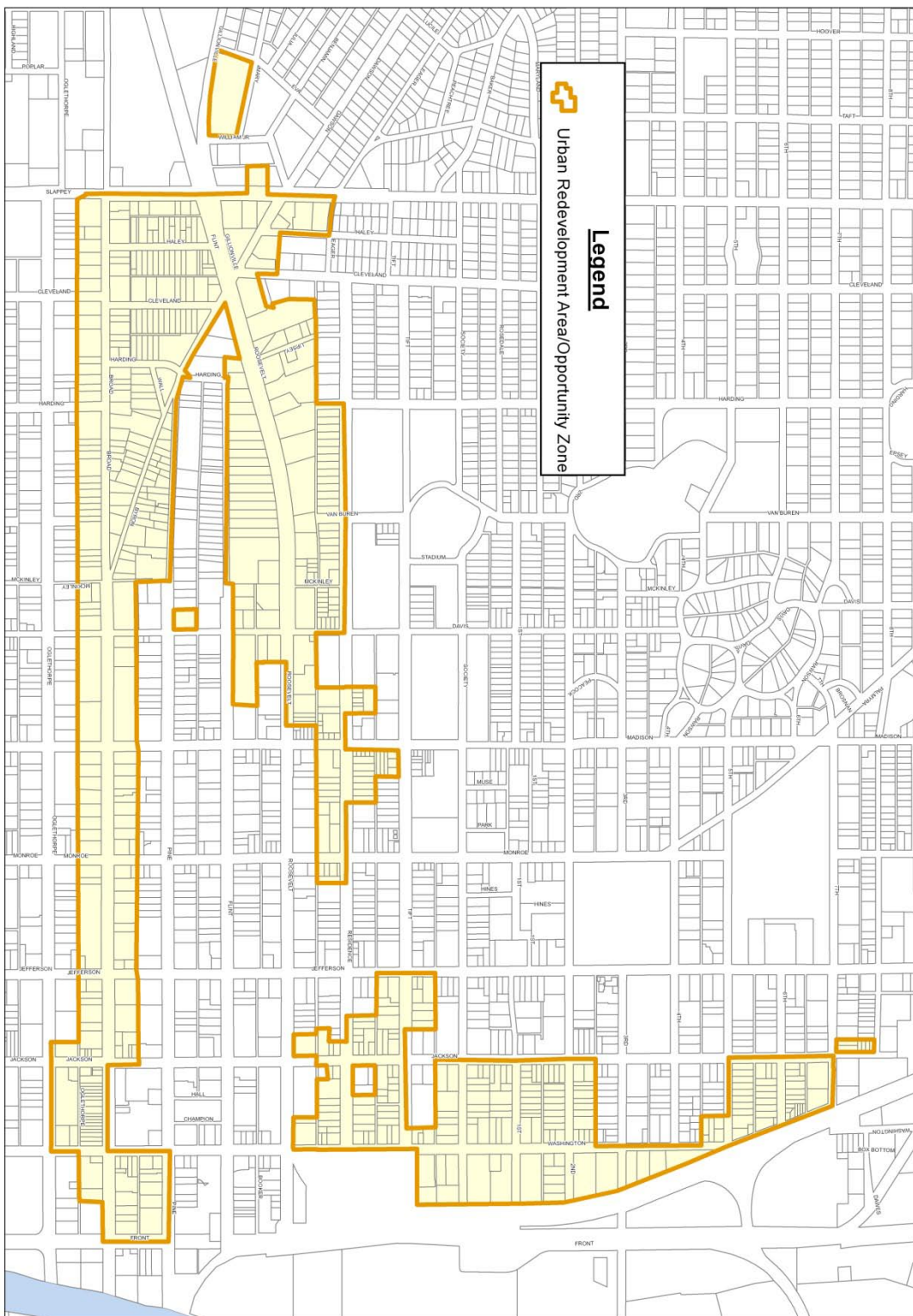
The strategy for implementing this URP/OZ stems from the Albany Riverfront Master Plan and the 2008 Albany Tax Allocation District. Each of these plans involved public input and have been adopted by the Mayor and City Council. ADICA will guide the implementation of this URP/OZ.

ADICA is the redevelopment agent for Downtown Albany, Georgia. ADICA is a statutory authority whose mission is to build and maintain a healthy and vibrant Downtown community and promote Downtown as an exciting place to live, work, play and visit.

ADICA was formed in 1977, at the request of Downtown property owners and concerned citizens of Albany-Dougherty County, to provide enhanced services within the Downtown Improvement District.

ADICA is dedicated to promoting the Downtown area, building a Downtown neighborhood, serving as a one-stop shop for information on Downtown and advocating the interests of Downtown property owners and stakeholders.

# APPENDIX A – MAP OF URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA



**A RESOLUTION ENTITLED 10-R 198**  
**A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE CITY OF ALBANY URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN; REPEALING PRIOR RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

WHEREAS, the Urban Redevelopment Act, O.C.G.A. § 36-61-1, et. seq., gives cities broad powers to redevelop blighted or threatened areas of the community and encourages involvement of private enterprise and public/private partnerships to redevelop neglected areas of the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Act is intended to address the aging downtown commercial corridor, Broad Avenue, the Roosevelt corridor and the surrounding housing north of the corridor in need of redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the citizens of the City of Albany to adopt the Urban Redevelopment Plan,

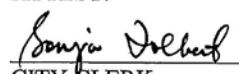
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the City of Albany, Georgia and it is hereby resolved by authority of same:

SECTION 1. The City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Plan is hereby approved and adopted.

SECTION 2. A copy of said Plan is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as fully as if set forth verbatim.

SECTION 3. All resolutions, or parts of resolutions, in conflict herewith are repealed.

  
MAYOR

ATTEST:  
  
CITY CLERK

Adopted: October 26, 2010

Introduced By Commissioner: Pike  
Date(s) read: October 26, 2010

## **RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ALBANY DESIGNATING AN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA AND URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council for the City of Albany, Georgia (the "City") is the elected governing authority for the City; and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 61 of Title 36 of the Official Code of Georgia provides for the creation of an Urban Redevelopment Plan for an Urban Redevelopment Project as those terms are defined in O.C.G.A. 36-61-2; and

**WHEREAS**, the Redevelopment Area (the "Area") is loosely described as:

W. Broad Avenue from N. Front Street to Slappey Boulevard; N. Front Street from W. Broad Avenue to Pine Avenue; N. Washington Street from W. Roosevelt to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; the west side of N. Jackson Street from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; the east side of N. Jackson Street from 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the north side of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue; the south side of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue from N. Washington Street to N. Jackson Street; 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from N. Washington Street to N. Jackson Street; the north side of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue from N. Washington Street to N. Jackson Street; 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from N. Washington Street to N. Jackson Street; the north side of W. Tift Avenue from N. Jefferson Street to N. Jackson Street; the south side of W. Tift Avenue from N. Washington Street to N. Jefferson Street; W. Residence Avenue from N. Washington Street to N. Jackson Street; Byron Road from W. Broad Avenue to Pine Avenue; N. Harding Street from W. Broad Avenue to Pine Avenue; N. Cleveland Street from W. Broad Avenue to Pine Avenue; N. Haley street from W. Broad Avenue to Flint Avenue; the east side of Slappey Boulevard to W. Residence Avenue; Pine Avenue from Slappey Boulevard to McKinley Street; W. Roosevelt Avenue from Slappey Boulevard to N. Madison Street; the south side of W. Residence Avenue from N. Harding Street to N. Davis Street; W. Residence Avenue from Madison Street to Monroe Street. **See map of Urban Redevelopment Area for detailed description.**

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined by the Mayor of the City that within the Area exists certain "slum and blight" within the City's jurisdiction, as that term is defined in O.C.G.A. 36-61-2, in that there presently exist buildings both residential and nonresidential, which by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, vacancy, or obsolescence are conducive to crime and are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare; the presence of a substantial number of vacant, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures; defective or inadequate street layout; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness for present or future development; development impaired by transportation noise or by other environmental hazards; or a combination of such conditions that substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the City, retards the provisions of adequate housing accommodations, and

constitutes an economic or social liability and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined by the Mayor and Council of the City that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of the Area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined by the Mayor and Council of the City that the Area should be designated as an Urban Redevelopment Area as defined by O.C.G.A. 36-61-2; and

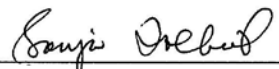
**WHEREAS**, City of Albany Planning and Development Services prepared a workable strategy to eliminate and prevent the development or spread of "blight," as that term is defined in O.C.G.A. 36-61-2, to encourage rehabilitation, to provide for the redevelopment of such "blighted areas," and to undertake such activities as may be suitably employed to achieve these objectives to be known as the proposed 2010 City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Plan; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the City of Albany, Georgia herby designate ADICA as the redevelopment agency for the City pursuant to O.C.G.A. 36-44-4 (a) and to exercise the redevelopment powers set forth in Chapter 44 of Title 36 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council that the 2010 City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Plan is hereby approved and adopted.



Mayor, Willie Adams



Clerk

October 26, 2010

Date

October 26, 2010

Date



## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC HEARING DOCUMENTS

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners of the City of Albany will hold a public hearing to discuss the approval of the 2010 Urban Redevelopment Plan for the City of Albany, Georgia.

The purpose of the Plan is to revitalize the downtown commercial corridors, W. Broad Avenue and Roosevelt Avenue, and adjacent housing north of these corridors through implementation of Opportunity Zones, which according to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs “are intended to encourage development, redevelopment and revitalization in areas that have higher levels of poverty and are underdeveloped or suffer from blight.”

The general boundaries of the Urban Redevelopment Area include W. Broad Avenue from Slappey Blvd. to Front Street; Roosevelt Avenue from Gillionville Road to N. Madison Street; and the area generally bounded by Jackson Street to the west, Washington Street to the east, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the north, and Flint Avenue to the south.

The hearing will be held on Tuesday, October 26, 2010 at 8:00 P.M.,  
222 Pine Avenue in Room 100.

As set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, the City of Albany/Dougherty County does not discriminate on the bases of disability, and will assist citizens with special needs given proper notice (seven (7) work days). The meeting room and building are handicap accessible. For information, please call (229) 438-3901.

## APPENDIX D – NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

## Liens stacking up for properties

September 8, 2010

Records show that 153 properties either have been or are set to be demolished by the city. - J.D. Sumner, government writer

Posted: 12:00 AM Sep 8, 2010

Reporter: J.D. Sumner, government writer

Email Address: j.d.sumner@albanyherald.com



Workers with the city's public works department demolish a residence at 501 Alice Ave. in this Herald file photo. More than \$389,000 worth of liens have been placed on demolished properties but only three, worth \$13,698, have been collected.

ALBANY, Ga. — A push by city leaders to remove or repair blighted property appears to be having the desired effect, but liens against property owners meant to recover some of the costs of the demolition work are largely going unpaid.

According to city documents obtained Tuesday by The Albany Herald, 153 properties throughout the city either have been demolished or are in line to be.

Of those, 60 have been razed either by city Public Works officials or the property owner, or have been burned during training for the Albany Fire Department personnel.

The city has filed 51 liens against those 60 demolished properties for a total of more than \$389,000. To date, only three of the property owners have paid their respective liens for a combined \$13,698.

Under Georgia law, City Attorney Nathan Davis says, by placing a lien on the property and not taking ownership of it, the city is limited in its ability to force the property owner to pay.

"Fi-fas (liens) are paid if the property owner rehabilitates the property or sells it, then we can collect," Davis told the commission Tuesday.

Despite the fact that the commission knew when it appropriated the funding to demolish the properties that recovering the funding would be tough, some on the board on Tuesday aired concerns that perhaps more should be done to help offset the costs of demolishing the structures.

Commissioner Jon Howard, who has been a driving force behind the demolition effort, said he has concerns that many of the properties that have been demolished are owned by individuals who don't live in Albany and who have shown no interest in fixing or selling the properties.

For example, White Development LLC owned the properties at 403, 405, 407, 409, 411, 413, 415 and 417 Whitney Avenue and 314 Westbrook Drive, which were all demolished July 13, 2009. The city has filed a lien against the properties for \$41,044.22.

White Development — whose principal agent, Michael A. White, lives in Rome, Ga. — is listed as being in noncompliance with the Georgia Secretary of State's office.

One option, Davis told commissioners, is to foreclose on the liens and, if they don't pay, take ownership. But that could take the properties off the tax rolls until the city is able to sell the property to a willing developer.

Some on the commission seem willing to look at taking action to try to recover the funding.

"We spend mega-bucks to tear these buildings down and then have to wait years to get the money, if we get it at all," Commissioner Tommie Postell said. "There's got to be something either through taxes or taking it or something."

# Taxes

Continued from 1A

"It's a tool, we hope, that will serve as an incentive to get the property owner to bring the property up to the proper codes and fix what needs to be fixed," Code Enforcement Director Michael Tilson said.

Once the changes are made, Pritchett can petition the court to remove the blight tax and, under Georgia law, he would be allowed to pay half of whatever the millage rate was at the time that he was assessed the tax — or roughly 4.6 mills — for three years as a "pat on the back" for fixing the problems, Tax Director Denver Hooten said.

With a brand new Zaxby's restaurant sitting across the street and surrounded by other businesses, Postell told commissioners during Tuesday's budget meeting that the building was an eyesore that has driven property values down in the area.

"It's dilapidated and worn out and something needs to be done," Postell said. "It's not fair to the other businesses around it, and it's right there on Slappey for everyone to see."

But assessing the tax may not end up being the solution some believe it could be.

According to collections officials in the tax office, Agunac has yet to pay the \$7,620.11 it owes in 2009 taxes on the property.

Agunac ended up with the property after a series of sales between the company and Slappey Land Partnership LLC that began in 2002.

According to tax records, Pritchett Ford obtained the property in 1963. In March 2001, Slappey Land Partnership and its manager, Thomas E. Pritchett, sold the property to Albany Slappey Point LLC, whose manager was Larry K. Morey, for \$483,000.

In May 2002, Slappey Land Partnership obtained the property from Albany Slappey Point through foreclosure.

Slappey Land Partnership and Agunac then began a

two entities, beginning in September 2002 when Thomas E. Slappey of Slappey Land sold the property to Thomas H. Pritchett of Agunac for \$1.3 million.

Agunac then sold the property back to Slappey Land Partnership in July 2003 for the same \$1.3 million.

The last sale of the property occurred in June 2004 when Slappey Land Partnership sold the property back to Agunac for \$510,000.

Tilson said the tax measure is an effort to give the owner an opportunity to fix the property before further action needs to be taken, but said that demolition is not currently part of the discussion.

"Demolition of that property is not being sought at this point," Tilson said. "We chose to exercise the blighted property tax ordinance as the best tool in this case and will see how that goes."

Code Enforcement, along with the city's Public Works department and the city attorney's office, has been pushing blighted properties through the nuisance abatement ordinance and into court and demolishing such residential properties at a hectic pace since the city allocated an additional \$500,000 of funding toward the effort last year.

Those funds are expected to be expended by mid-summer, Tilson told the Commission Tuesday.

Pritchett  
Ford

The Albany  
**HERALD**

# Former dealership's taxes set to triple

Tax officials say the owner of blighted midtown property has yet to pay last year's taxes.

J.D. SUMNER

jd.sumner@albanyherald.com

APR 16 2010

ALBANY — While the former dealership has become the poster child for the city's war on blight, a property that sits on the curb of another busy Albany artery is crumbling, prompting Albany City Commissioners and Code Enforcement officials to take a drastic step: tripling the property's taxes.

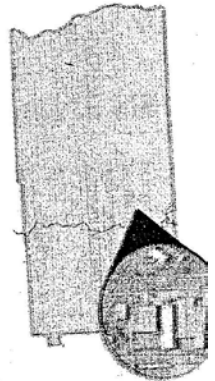
The former home of the Pritchett Ford dealership is at the center of what some in the city are calling a "high-growth zone," an area primed for development and job creation. But most of the structure currently sits dormant, with broken windows and vegetation creeping along its facade.

Once believed to be a meeting ground for street gangs, the property is now the target of the city's Code Enforcement unit, which, specifically, Commissioner Tommie Postell, has taken steps to initiate action on the structure.

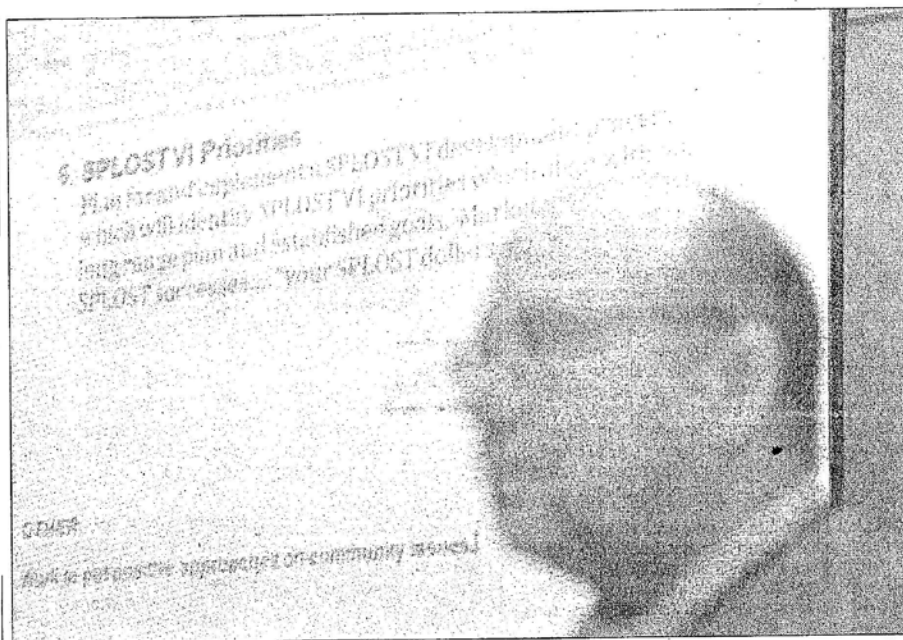
Using a rare tool in their arsenal, city officials have elected to impose the "blight tax" on the property owner, Thomas H. Pritchett and Agunac Inc., which will triple the city's

portion of the property's tax bill on the property. Currently at 9.157 mills, that means when the property tax bills are delivered in the fall, Pritchett will have to pay an additional 18.3 mills or so for letting the property go, tax officials say.

Please see Taxes, 4A



Special



j.d.sumner@albanyherald.com

Facilitator Gordon Maner from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government types in the city commission's priorities for 2010 on an overhead projector Monday. The commission again put public safety at the top of their list.

FEB 02 2010

# Public safety, blight demolition top Albany's 2010 priorities

Albany City Commissioners say that as much as 80 percent of upcoming sales tax projects will be infrastructure improvements.

**J.D. SUMNER**  
j.d.sumner@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — City leaders agreed Monday that public safety will stay atop their list of priorities for 2010 with blighted property eradication and overhauling the city's water and sewer infrastructure not far behind.

At their annual retreat at the Resort at Lake Blackshear, commissioners discussed and ranked the various issues confronting the city for 2010.

Commissioners expressed a desire to grow and expand the Albany Police Department's Gang Unit and other anti-gang initiatives in what Mayor Willie Adams said is an attempt to capitalize on momentum created in 2009.

"It's pretty clear that this commission is committed to advancing public safety and that anti-gang

efforts are central to that," Adams said.

The \$1 million Gang Unit was created last year and has arrested nearly 400 suspected gang members, City Manager Alfred Lott told the board.

Mayor Pro-tem Christopher Pike said that, in addition to ramped-up police efforts, that he would like to see an increase in intervention activities that target at-risk youth.

Continued efforts to demolish

Please see 2010, 4/

*blight demolition*  
*1 of 2*

The Albany  
**HERALD**

2 of 2

# The Albany HERALD

## 2010

Continued from 1A

or rehabilitate blighted properties throughout the city was chosen to be the second priority in 2010.

In addition to demolition, commissioners discussed creating a land bank program that would allow the city to demolish blighted properties and sell the property at fair market value to local developers in hopes of getting the properties back on the tax rolls.

The Pritchett Ford building on North Slappey Boulevard and the Heritage House Hotel both were discussed as projects that could get top billing in 2010.

Steps will likely be taken in 2010 to overhaul the city's aging water and sewer systems as commissioners discussed spending a large portion of the city's share of the upcoming local sale tax referendum money on infrastructure improvements.

The city is faced with updating and repairing the storm water and sanitary sewer systems — a task that could cost upwards of \$50 million to accomplish.

Adams said that while infrastructure improvements aren't likely to impress constituents, they are vital to improving the quality of life in Albany and enticing manufacturers and businesses to town.

"It's not exactly a feel-good kind of project, but we have to start doing something about the infrastructure," he said.

Commissioner Jon Howard cautioned against waiting to overhaul drainage systems.

"We can't procrastinate and wait and let another flood of 1998 or '94 happen and destroy more neighborhoods," he said.

The area's sixth special local option sales tax will go to the voters in November for approval and some commissioners estimate that as much as 80 percent

of the city's share could be earmarked for infrastructure improvements.

Rounding out the list of priorities for 2010 is economic development, poverty and development and planning of sales tax projects.

Commissioners also discussed encouraging community-wide fundraising efforts for a planned \$12 million regional Senior Citizen's Center, researching ways to get the city involved in the Strive to Thrive anti-poverty initiative currently building support throughout the area, and creating a special storm water utility development authority to oversee storm water improvements.

The retreat's facilitator, Gordon Maner from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, recommended that the commission consider taking a look at the city's brand and work to market it around the state.

"You know what your problems are, you just have to make sure you constantly spend your time improving them," Maner said. "What is your brand? What is the image you want to project? These are important considerations going forward."

The Dougherty County Commission is set to have its retreat at the Resort at Lake Blackshear next week.

# City to raze 76 properties

A list of the blighted properties is available at [www.albanyherald.com](http://www.albanyherald.com).

**J.D. SUMNER**  
j.d.sumner@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — Albany city commissioners have plans to vote next week on dedicating more than a half-million dollars to getting rid of blighted properties in a continued effort to raze dilapidated structures throughout the city.

If the plan is approved at the Nov. 24 business meeting, the Albany City Commission will move \$586,000 to Code Enforcement to clear out 76 blighted properties in the city. The plan funds asbestos abatement, environmental studies

and the landfill tipping fees and costs, Code Enforcement Director Mike Tison said.

But rather than pay in one lump sum, the commission agreed to fund the demolition in increments of \$100,000 at a time as that amount of properties pass through municipal court and become ready for demolition.

"I think this is great news," Ward 1 Commissioner Jon Howard, who has been pushing for a renewed focus on the destruction of blighted properties, said. "The city benefits in many ways when these structures are demolished. It's a quality of life issue, it's a public safety issue with the crack users and prostitutes living in

these buildings. It's just a win-win." The initiative outlined Tuesday would essentially expand Code Enforcement's FY 2010 budget for demolition by almost five times. The money would come from the current fiscal year budget, which goes through June 30, 2010 and would be adopted during a year-end budget amendment.

During discussion, Howard and Mayor Pro Tem Dorothy Hubbard both brought out concerns about what happens to the properties once the city demolishes them.

Tison and City Attorney Nathan Davis said that liens for the cost of the demolition are placed on the property and those liens, commonly known as FI-FAs, must be paid if

the property owner tries to sell or refinance the property, leaving the possibility that the city could get some of its money back.

Davis said that of the 90 or so properties that had already been demolished by the city over the last three years, only five or so had paid their FI-FAs.

To that end, City Manager Alfred Lott said that he would consider hiring a consultant who job would simply be to try and get those demolished properties sold to developers who will revitalize those properties so that the city would not only get its money spent on the demolition, but that it would also promote the re-birth of some communities currently suffering from blight.

The Albany  
**HERALD**

Demolition — CODE ENFORCEMENT  
WILL HAVE LIST

# Judge Urged to speed up blight cases

Some property demolition cases have been bogged down in court for years, officials say.

J.D. SUMNER

jd.sumner@albanyherald.com

OCT 09 2009

*Blight*

ALBANY — City Commissioner Tommie Postvell says his heart sinks a little lower every time he drives by his old neighborhood in central Albany.

It used to be a high-end neighborhood for blacks when I was a boy," Postvell said. "People cared about their houses. We had folks moving in from Turner Field. It was a nice place."

Now, the area on Madison Street where Postvell used to ride his bicycle or skates to school is littered with boarded-up shotgun houses, decrepit brick edifices and hollowed-out ruins.

Many of those properties, like at 301 N. Madison St., are on a path that will eventually lead to demolition by the City Commission. Because of the intricacies of that process, however, many of those cases have bogged down in litigation or in the courts — something that is beginning to frustrate elected city officials.

"Something has to be done to get these

cases done more quickly," Ward 1 Commissioner Jon Howard, who has long been an advocate of ridding the city of blight, said. "Some of these cases have drug on for months and there is no end in sight."

At Tuesday's commission meeting, local leaders urged Municipal Court Judge Willie Weaver to expedite the process and take into consideration what some feel is a never-ending process of change of ownership.

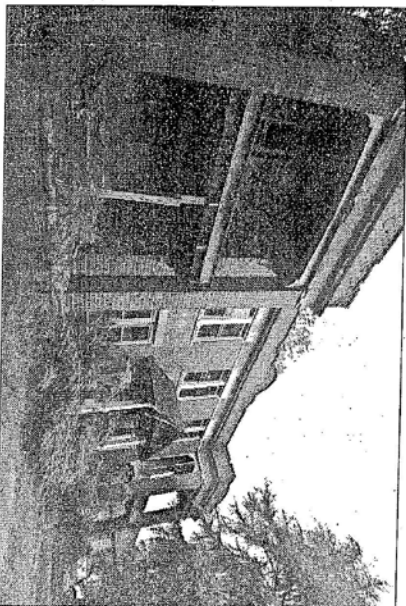
Howard has repeatedly targeted Mimosa Trailer Park in East Albany because of what he calls "deplorable" conditions and the area's penchant for criminal activity.

"Some parts of that place are like a Third World country and they have drugs and prostitution," Howard said. "Something — anything — needs to be done."

The city currently has more than 54 properties throughout Albany in some phase of the demolition process, Code Enforcement Director Mike Tilson said.

Some of those are in the asbestos abatement stage or are in the courts, he said.

During its last budget process, the city restored funding to Tilson's demolition budget, bringing the total amount to just over \$100,000. That money gets used quickly, Howard said, with costs associated with demolition in the thousands.



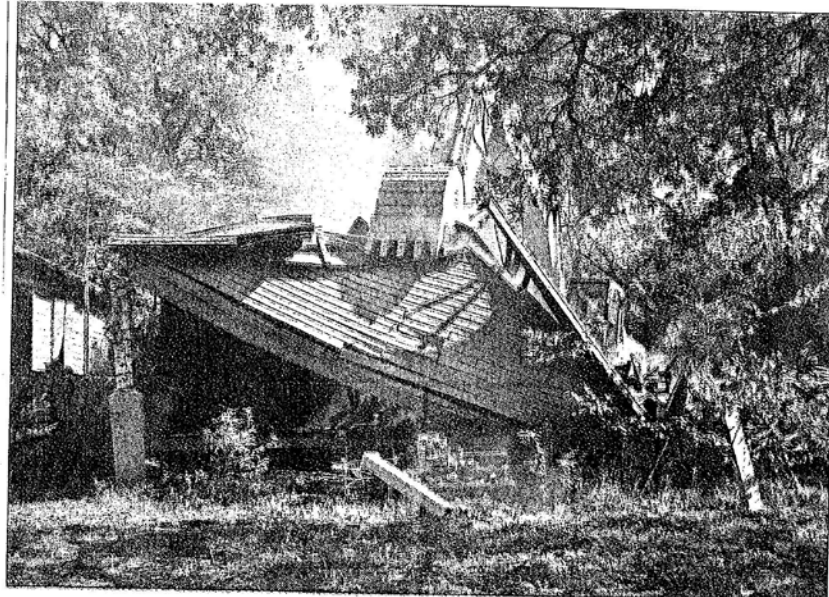
jd.sumner@albanyherald.com

The property at 301 N. Madison sits vacant and dilapidated near the intersection with Flint Avenue. City officials asked a Municipal Court judge to speed up the process through which buildings can be destroyed.

The Albany  
**HERALD**

*N. Madison*

8 houses



A City of Albany Public Works worker demolishes a home on the 400 block of West Whitney Avenue Tuesday. City officials tore down eight blighted homes on the block, prompting cheers from neighbors.

The Albany  
**HERALD**

# City continues to tear down vacant houses

Property owners of nearby homes say demolition of blight is key to downtown revitalization.

J.D. SUMNER  
j.d.sumner@albanyherald.com

JUL 01 2009

**ALBANY** — The city of Albany continued its fight against blighted homes Tuesday as Public Works officials demolished eight structures on Whitney Avenue.

The vacant homes were ordered demolished by the court, City Attorney Nathan Davis said.

A ninth home is set for demolition after asbestos is removed, Code Enforcement Director Mike Tilson said.

"This is a great day for this neighborhood," he said. "Progress has come to the people who have

to wake up and see these homes every day."

A lien will now be placed on the property, preventing any further development by the landowner until the city is repaid the cost of the demolition, which Tilson said is roughly \$5,500 per house.

The eight homes are the latest in an ongoing effort by Code Enforcement and the City Commission to raze vacant, dilapidated homes throughout the city.

On June 17, the last of nearly 17 blighted properties which consumed nearly a full city block on Hickory Avenue came tumbling down as excavators and bulldozers demolished those structures.

Those properties were demolished at the property owner's expense, without the city having to

Please see Vacant, 4A

W. Whitney

## Vacant

Continued from 1A

place a lien on the property.

Sitting adjacent to the Albany Civil Rights Museum, the land is prime real estate, said Lindsey Powell, a

property owner who is building homes in the Whitney and Gordon Avenue area.

"I'm glad that the city is taking such an aggressive approach to clearing out these neighborhoods," Powell said. "I'm trying to build quality homes but it's hard to get these neighborhoods moving in the right direction when

you have all of this sitting across the street."

"The key to revitalizing downtown is to take these homes and just tear them to the ground if the developer refuses to do anything to fix them. They're not conducive to building neighborhoods we can be proud of," he said.



Editorial

The Albany  
**HERALD**

JUL 01 2009  
It's addition  
by subtraction *BLIGHT*

Even if nothing takes its place, sometimes improvement is made simply by removal. That case was clear again Tuesday as the city of Albany continued its work to clean up neighborhoods of dangerous eyesores.

On Whitney Avenue right next to the Albany Civil Rights Institute sat nine dilapidated structures, all detracting from the museum that chronicles an important era in the development of Albany and Southwest Georgia.

Eight of those ramshackle buildings were razed by the city. The ninth will follow after asbestos abatement.

What will happen to the property now? It's in a pretty good location for development, but the property owner will have to satisfy the city's demolition bill — probably around \$50,000 — before he can build on it or do anything with it.

That's on the heels of 17 other blighted properties that occupied nearly a block of Hickory Avenue that the city demolished last month.

These demolitions provide instant neighborhood improvements. Even if nothing is located on the sites except grass, it's better than the sights that people in the neighborhoods had staring them in the face every day.

And it's encouraging to developers who don't want to spend money improving property within a stone's throw of eyesores that attract vagrants and criminals. If someone pays off the liens owed to the city for the work and improves the property where the buildings are razed, so much the better, both for the neighborhood and the city as a whole.

"I'm glad that the city is taking such an aggressive approach to clearing out these neighborhoods," Lindsey Powell, who's building homes in the Whitney and Gordon Avenue neighborhoods, said. "I'm trying to build quality homes but it's hard to get these neighborhoods moving in the right direction when you have all of this sitting across the street."

Just seeing an improvement in the environment can do a lot for the folks who live in an area. People tend to rise to expectations, and it's difficult to be motivated to make improvements if the house across the street is going to negate what you do.

This is a good, positive course for the city of Albany that's well worth the investment. Full speed ahead.

— The Albany Herald Editorial Board

# Developer eyes barn

Albany's downtown manager pushes a plan to raise property taxes on blighted commercial properties

**OCT 02 2008**

**SUSAN MCCORD**  
susan.mccord@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — A "dramatically improved" Holman Mule Barn in downtown Albany is being eyed by a South Carolina buyer for possible use as a farmer's market, Downtown Manager Don Bute announced after an 80-minute closed-door session with members of the

Albany-Dougherty Inner City Authority Wednesday.

"It almost looked like a brand-new mule barn," Bute said of the 1906 ADICA-owned structure that last month Code Enforcement Director Mike Tlison had informed ADICA was failing the city's own vacant building code.

Bute also unveiled the new Downtown Albany Web site, [www.lovealbanya.com](http://www.lovealbanya.com), and encouraged the board to support an effort to increase the property tax millage

Please see ADICA, 4A



Joe Bellacomo @ albanyherald.com  
**ADICA CEO Don Bute conducts Wednesday's board meeting.**

The Albany  
**HERALD**

1 of 2

MULE BARN on Broad



The Albany  
**HERALD**

A South Carolina buyer is looking at the Mule Barn in downtown Albany for possible use as a farmers market. file

## ADICA

Continued from 1A

rate on blighted commercial buildings, possible under 2002 state legislation, during ADICA's monthly meeting Wednesday.

ADICA is throwing a party 3 p.m.-5 p.m. Friday at the Governmental Building to promote the Web site, which is designed as a "one-stop shop" for downtown entrepreneurs and visitors to

"get the resources they need" to buy and improve downtown properties, start businesses in them, learn about downtown news and events and even book space in downtown venues, Buie said.

Friday doubles as a "First Friday" in Downtown Albany and precedes the city's International Festival Saturday, he said.

Wednesday, Turner Job Corps students were scrubbing and painting the railing around Gortatowsky Park, located in front of the

Governmental Building, to prepare the fountain area for new banners going up that promote the new Downtown Albany Web site and welcome visitors to Albany State University's homecoming game, Buie said.

Buie, who serves as ADICA executive director, also encouraged the board's support of a measure possible through 2002's Georgia House Resolution 391, which allows cities to raise the millage rate on blighted commercial properties.

If approved by the city,

properties defined as blighted under the state's definition could be assessed at four to six times the existing millage rate, Buie said.

"It's a deterrent," he said.

After ADICA board members Mark Lane and Phil Cannon questioned making an immediate show of support, Lane offered a motion to support the measure after the board has an opportunity to look at the legislation and examine its effectiveness in other cities.

2 of 2

(Block-by-block)

# Inspections begin in 'war on blight'

■ Downtown property owners receive courtesy letters warning of pending inspections.

MAR 12 2008

CARLTON FLETCHER  
carlton.fletcher@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — The city of Albany announced the firing of an opening salvo in its declared war on blight in the inner city Tuesday by notifying downtown property owners of the Code Enforcement department's efforts to locate and cite violators.

A letter signed by Code Enforcement Director Mike Tilson instructs property owners of procedures required under an ordinance recently adopted by the Albany City Commission to address the blight problem. Those procedures include the registration of vacant property and the filing of a plan outlining future use of the property.

"We started making the inspections yesterday," Tilson said Tuesday afternoon. "We have reorganized our department to facilitate this effort that has been approved by the city commission and is the vision of City Manager (Alfred) Lott.

"We've had to do a lot of what I call 'wet-ink' work, getting all the new forms printed up for the property owners. But you're going to see this office taking action."

Code Enforcement Inspectors Albert Hicks and Travious Trent have been charged with making a block-by-block inspection of all properties in the targeted area. Their assignment is part of the department's restructuring.

"When Mr. Lott first mentioned using two

Code Enforcement officers downtown, I told him the only way we could unplug our officers and dedicate the time and effort was to take the task of weed inspections off our officers," Tilson said. "We have some part-time personnel who will come on board specifically for that purpose."

Even with the moves made in recent weeks preparing for the battle against blight, many local citizens have expressed doubt that action will actually be taken.

"Just watch me," Tilson said. "This train is moving, and we've got the mayor, the commission, the city manager, the downtown manager and the Planning Commission on board. We've never been able to focus on one area of code enforcement before, so this is new territory for us.

"People have asked how many inspections we can do in a day, but we have no point of reference. We've always had to move from duty to duty, conduct a fire inspection, a follow-up inspection, a weed lot inspection any time we went into the field. Now, we're concentrating on building inspections. We may not know how many inspections we can do in a day right now, but you can bet we'll find our rhythm within a month."

Tilson said he's been assured the war against blight will not be restricted to the downtown area.

"We will use this block-by-block methodology in the targeted area until we're satisfied that we've completed the job," he said. "Then we'll move to the next targeted area. We don't know where that will be, but we're serious about cleaning up blight throughout this community."

HERALD  
The Albany

# Henry eyes new locale for Moon

■ A cornerstone downtown Albany restaurant may be moving to the west side of town

OCT 06 2007

CARLTON FLETCHER  
 cfletcher@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — The hottest rumor swirling around the Albany Civic Center during The Albany Herald's Taste of Home Cooking School event Thursday was the possible move of the popular downtown Harvest Moon restaurant to the former Fincher's Barbecue building at 2347 Dawson Road.

Harvest Moon owner Bo Henry would neither confirm nor deny those rumors Friday morning, saying he didn't want to make any kind of premature announcement.

"I don't want to put out an announcement either way until I'm sure of what I'm doing," Henry said.

"I'm certainly exploring my options, looking at possibilities right now."

"One of the things I'm doing is working with my landlord (at Harvest Moon) on a possible new lease for the restaurant. And I'm talking with people about the Fincher's building and other possibilities. I understand that my decision is news, is something people want to know about, but I'm not 100 percent sure what I'm going to do right now."

Henry and former partner Jim Whitaker were among the first business owners to locate in Albany's at-the-time mostly boarded-up downtown district when they opened Harvest Moon at 230 West Broad Ave. six years ago. Henry eventually bought

Please see Moon, 5A

# Moon

Continued from 1A

Whitaker out and became sole owner of the popular eatery, which has anchored on-again, off-again efforts to revitalize downtown.

A musician whose Bo Henry Band is one of the most popular groups in Southwest Georgia, Henry brought live music downtown to The Lot, located in the back of Harvest Moon. Such musical luminaries as former Bad Company lead singer Brian Howe, hard rocker band Confliction, Southern rockers Drivin' and Oyrin, the Lost Trailers and local favorites Monroe Brown played at what many said was their favorite local venue.

Henry has also helped owners Sandy Parkas and Lane State Theatre downtown.

The possible move of Harvest Moon to the Dawson Road location makes logistical sense for Henry, who plans to open his second restaurant, The Catch, in the next few days. Located at 2332 Whispering Pines Road, The Catch will be a mostly seafood restaurant and market with a varying menu, depending on the availability of fresh seafood.

"We'll have seafood dishes, oysters on the half-shell, steak, chicken, pork, ribs, things like that," Henry said. "The market will be mostly fresh seafood."

Community leaders say a move by Harvest Moon would be a tough blow for downtown to absorb.

"No one has a perfect crystal ball that can tell them what might happen, but (a move by Henry) would certainly be a setback," Albany Area Chamber of Commerce President Tim Martin said Friday. "Bo has been a tremendous advocate for downtown, and I think his words and deeds bear that out. He and his restaurant have a loyal following; a lot of people would be disappointed if he decided to move."

"Of course, in the business world, people have to make decisions that are best for themselves. We would hate to see Harvest Moon leave downtown, but if that is the case we'll all just have to reach a little deeper with our revitalization efforts. The Economic Development Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, the city, the county ... We're all committed to developing Albany."

Even while considering his options, Henry says he would hate to leave downtown.

"This is a business, and I have to look at what's best for me," he said. "I really don't want to leave downtown, but sometimes you have to make hard choices. Right now, I'm not 100 percent sure."

"I may make a final decision later today, I may make one over the weekend, or I may make one early next week. I'll know something soon."

The Albany  
**HERALD**

*Game Biz*

will close Sept. 1 and consolidate with its Lee County location.

# Custom Interiors leaving downtown

■ A high-end home interiors store is the latest to leave downtown Albany.

SUSAN MCCORD  
susan.mccord@albanyherald.com

JUN 21 2007

**ALBANY** — Two years ago, Custom Interiors believed it was at the forefront of a downtown revitalization effort. Now, a decision to leave downtown comes with many regrets.

"We were so excited about being one of the first ones down here," said Michelle Davis, manager of the design gallery, a wide boutique chock-full of furniture, accessories, rugs and hundreds of flooring and upholstery samples.

The North Jackson Street store was an expansion of Daphne McKenzie's interiors business, which moved from Dawson Road in Albany to Lee County in 2000.

While the Lee County location has thrived, the downtown project, a full-service design gallery, has a few dedicated patrons but never became the "bustling" business downtown planners promised three years ago, Davis said.

"The people that have come in here have been so positive," she said, adding customers told her it "could have been a store in Atlanta."

Unfortunately, shopping in downtown Albany just hasn't caught on and the sales are not happening, Davis said. Many homeowners even prefer to go to Atlanta to shop, she said.

Albany Tomorrow recruited Custom Interiors to the county-owned building with the offer of affordable rent, Davis said, just as the Flint RiverQuarium opened and the Hilton Garden Inn was under construction.

Owner Daphne McKenzie did not return phone calls, but has been quoted as saying she spent "thousands" in advertising that did not bring business to the downtown location, and that the threatened closing of the Flint RiverQuarium, this week from a shortage of

operating funds, was the final straw in her decision to leave downtown.

Custom Interiors is the latest of a handful of new restaurants and boutiques to close or leave downtown Albany. The business plans to be out by Sept. 1, Davis said.

"We still want to be a part of making things work downtown," she said. "It's not good for Albany for everybody to just leave."

While fine interiors are leaving the 1300 block of North Jackson Street, coffee and hairstyles are hanging on, for now.

James Leasley has managed Brown Bean, a coffee shop, since his son bought the business in March. "We have the product," said Leasley, "we just don't have the foot traffic."

Leasley said business is sufficient to get by but not "get rich," in spite of offering specialty coffee drinks made from beans ground during "the perfect window" of freshness. Free wireless internet access and late weekend hours help, but Leasley said he wished for a broader customer base that bought more drinks and desserts.

"We're here to help, but we're not going to throw our money away," he said. "It's a business."

A former resident of Philadelphia, Leasley said he's seen downtowns rejuvenate, but can't wait forever for Albany. The potential of high traffic at a new Ledo Road drive-through location has called, he said.

Next door in the same building, however, Leasley noted Salon Infinity is thriving.

Owner Darron Price, who's operated the salon for two and a half years, said his circumstances may be different.

"My business doesn't really rely on downtown traffic, but it is a central location," Price said.

While his salon chairs are typically occupied, Price said a major restaurant downtown would bring in even more customers.

Gone biz

The Albany  
**HERALD**

The Albany  
**HERALD**

# San Joe's Restaurant says, 'Adios'

Many patrons of a popular downtown Mexican restaurant were surprised to find the establishment closed Monday.

**CARLTON FLETCHER JUN 02 2009**  
Carlton.fletcher@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — Nobody's saying why at this time, but one of the mainstay eateries in Albany's downtown district, San Joe's Mexican Restaurant, closed its doors Monday, apparently for good.

A sign posted on the door of the restaurant at 212 W. Broad Ave. Monday said, "As (sic) June 1st 09 we're closing our

doors. San Joe's."

Signs in adjacent windows said, "To all our customers we want to say thank you for your support. Sorry for the inconvenience" and "All gift certificates will be honored at our Dawson location."

Calls to establishment owner Ramiro Alvarez, who along with wife Glenda Alvarez owns a second Mexican restaurant in Dawson, were not returned Monday, although a person answering the phone said Ramiro Alvarez would be available after he concluded a business meeting. Lights were on at the restaurant late Monday afternoon, but no one was visible

through the storefront.

Downtown Albany Manager Don Bute said he preferred not to comment on the restaurant's closure early Monday afternoon, but he did indicate that the sudden shutdown should not be a blow to the recent momentum generated by attempts to bring businesses downtown.

"Now is not the time to talk about this," Bute said. "There's more to this issue than what's being said in the community. We're meeting with the people involved in this situation later this afternoon to try and come up with a plan of action."  
"There should be further news later in

the week."

Calls to Albany-Dougherty Code Enforcement Director Mike Tilson late Monday were not immediately returned.

San Joe's has been one of inner-city Albany's busiest eating establishments since it opened three years ago. Its daily lunch traffic, chiefly a mix of downtown government, health care and education professionals, increased significantly when the next-door Harvest Moon restaurant left for a location in West Albany about a year and a half ago. Ramiro Alvarez announced plans to open a nightclub downtown last year at one of the then-vacant storefronts on West Broad.

*Gone Biz*

APPENDIX E – BROWNFIELDS IDENTIFICATION PLAN



*“Bridging Partnerships for Proactive Community Growth”*





>Site along 1100 block of East Broad Avenue, north of railroad tracks, 2010

Brownfield sites are classified as "real property, [in that] the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance or pollutant" [from *Brownfield Revitalization Act*, January 2002].

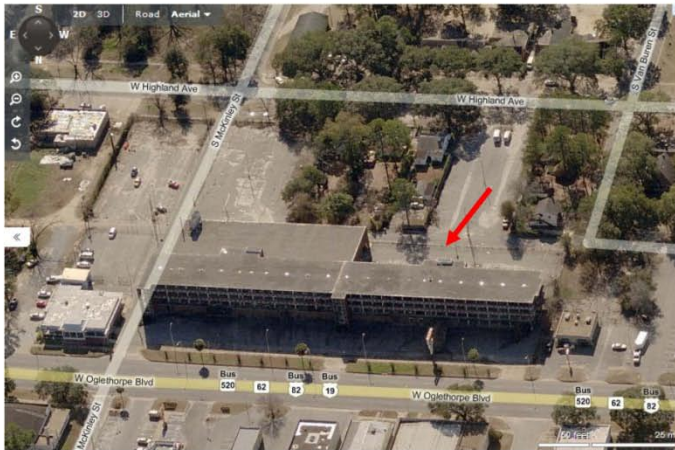
In response, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development expanded the slums and blight national objective to include "known and suspected contamination, as well as economic disinvestment." This decision, made in the final rule on May 24, 2006, better enabled brownfield remediation activities to meet CDBG eligibility criteria.

LIST OF PROPOSED SITES AND PAGES

Site #		
1	Heritage House	p/3
2	Pritchett Ford Lot	p/4
3	National Linen Service	p/5
4	Carmike Theater	p/6
5	Old Charlie's Paint & Body	p/7
6	Sunlite Cleaners	p/8
7	Thrift Store (former dry cleaners)	p/9
8	Roosevelt Avenue Corridor	p/10

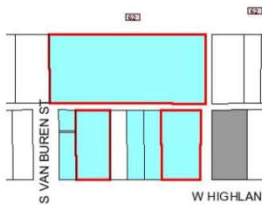
Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

3



**1**  
**HERITAGE HOUSE**

- 3.36 acre site, multiple parcels
- Constructed ca. 1968 as a hotel
- Partially gutted in preparation for remodel
- Found to have contained asbestos and the presence of lead-based paint
- Located along Oglethorpe Boulevard, a major commercial corridor
- Vacant for over ten years



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	GREENBRIER HOLDINGS & INVESTMENTS LLC
<b>Mailing Address</b>	116 KITTY HAWK DR MORRISVILLE, NC 27560
<b>Situs/Physical Address</b>	732 W OGLETHORPE BLVD

**VALUES**

<b>Land Value</b>	\$253,400.00
<b>Improvement Value</b>	\$394,400.00
<b>Accessory Value</b>	\$92,800.00
<b>Total Value</b>	\$740,600.00

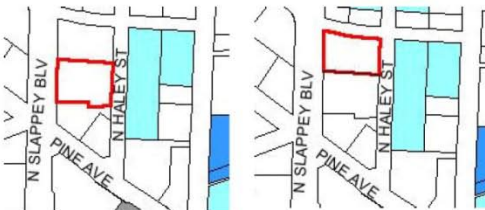
Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

4



**2**  
**PRITCHETT  
FORD LOT**

- o 1.85 acre site, two parcels
- o Constructed ca. 1955 as a car dealership, then service station
- o Site possibly contains car-related toxins
- o Located at intersection of N. Slappey Blvd and Dawson Rd., a major commercial corridor
- o Severely dilapidated, code enforcement has levied Blight Tax against owner



OWNERSHIP INFORMATION	
Name	AGUNAC INC
Mailing Address	P O BOX 1073 ALBANY, GA 31702
Situs/Physical Address	404 N SLAPPEY BLVD
Total Value	\$286,400.00
Situs/Physical Address	410 N SLAPPEY BLVD
Total Value	\$479,300.00

Department of Community & Economic Development

City of Albany, Georgia  
August 2010

Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

5



### 3 NATIONAL LINEN SERVICE

- o 3.18 acre site, one parcel
- o Constructed ca. 1952 for light manufacturing
- o Past use has including carpet production and dry cleaning services
- o Site possibly contains toxins/cleaning solvents
- o Located at intersection of N. Slappey Blvd and Oglethorpe Blvd. at T-section
- o Severely dilapidated, resale potential is limited due to condition of site



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	HIGHLAND LAND CO LLC
<b>Mailing Address</b>	P O BOX 72345 ALBANY, GA 31708
<b>Situs/Physical Address</b>	1120 W OGLETHORPE BLVD
<b>VALUES</b>	
<b>Land Value</b>	\$79,500.00
<b>Improvement Value</b>	\$199,100.00
<b>Accessory Value</b>	\$15,200.00
<b>Total Value</b>	\$293,800.00

Department of Community & Economic Development

City of Albany, Georgia  
August 2010

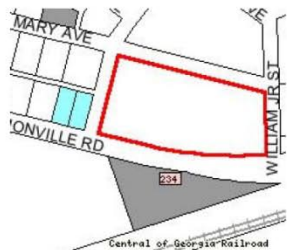
Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

6



# CARMIKE THEATER

- 4.81 acre site, one parcel
- Constructed ca. 1967 for movie theater
- High percentage of impermeable surface, considered a 'Grayfield'
- Located within site of Slappy Blvd and Gillonville Rd. a major commercial area
- Architecture style reflects 'Brutalism' movement, not viewed as aesthetically appealing
- Site with structure has limited re-use potential



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	C & S BANK TRUST CO
<b>Mailing Address</b>	C/O CARMIKE CINEMAS ELVELYN WILDER ESTATE P O BOX 391 / LEASE ADMIN COLUMBUS, GA 319020391
<b>Situs/Physical Address</b>	1121 GILLIONVILLE RD
<b>VALUES</b>	
<b>Land Value</b>	\$209,400.00
<b>Improvement Value</b>	\$469,500.00
<b>Accessory Value</b>	\$134,800.00
<b>Total Value</b>	\$813,700.00

Department of Community & Economic Development

City of Albany, Georgia  
August 2010

Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

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**5**

## OLD CHARLIE'S PAINT & BODY

- 0.62 acre site, one parcel
- Constructed ca. 1959 as a service repair garage
- Previously Slaughter Paint & Body shop
- Site possibly contains car-related toxins
- Located southeast of Flint Ave. and N. Davis St.
- Company has relocated to Pine Avenue and left this property vacated
- Without proper site remediation, future redevelopment efforts are limited



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	CHARLIE'S PAINT & BODY INC
<b>Mailing Address</b>	926 PINE AVE ALBANY, GA 31701
<b>Situs/ Physical Address</b>	624 FLINT AVE
<b>VALUES</b>	
<b>Land Value</b>	\$24,700.00
<b>Improvement Value</b>	\$65,200.00
<b>Accessory Value</b>	\$4,000.00
<b>Total Value</b>	\$93,900.00

Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

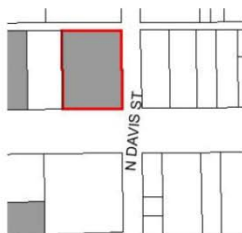
8



6

## SUNLITE CLEANERS

- 0.76 acre site, one parcel
- Constructed ca. 1924 as commercial
- Previously operated as a dry cleaning facility
- Site possibly contains toxins/cleaning solvents
- Located northwest of Pine Ave. and N. Davis St.
- Without proper site remediation, future redevelopment efforts are limited



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	LINGO JAMES JR
<b>Mailing Address</b>	P O BOX 1742 ALBANY, GA 31702
<b>Situs/Physical Address</b>	703 PINE AVE

**VALUES**

<b>Land Value</b>	<b>\$52,200.00</b>
<b>Improvement Value</b>	<b>\$17,300.00</b>
<b>Accessory Value</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total Value</b>	<b>\$69,500.00</b>

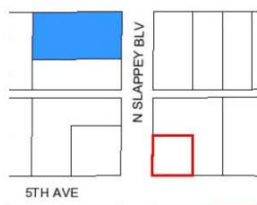
Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants

9



## 7 THRIFT STORE

- 0.23 acre site, one parcel
- Constructed ca. 1948
- Previously operated as a dry cleaning facility
- Now houses Greg's Thrift store
- Site possibly contains toxins/cleaning solvents
- Located northeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and N. Slappey Blvd.
- Owner of Safety Max, to the north, wishes to acquire property for expansion. Current environmental review poses a problem given the property's former use.



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	410 PROPERTIES LLC
<b>Mailing Address</b>	408 N MAGNOLIA ST ALBANY, GA 31707
<b>Situs/Physical Address</b>	1200 N SLAPPEY BLVD
<b>VALUES</b>	
<b>Land Value</b>	\$54,100.00
<b>Improvement Value</b>	\$24,400.00
<b>Accessory Value</b>	\$4,200.00
<b>Total Value</b>	\$82,700.00

Department of Community & Economic Development

City of Albany, Georgia  
August 2010





**8**

## ROOSEVELT CORRIDOR

- 8.26 acre site, several parcels
- Site in operation since ca. 1976
- Operates currently for waste services deposit
- Previous land use remains unknown
- Site possibly contains hazardous waste
- Located north of Roosevelt Avenue and west of N. Davis Street
- Corridor decay continues east until North Jefferson Street [SEE NEXT PAGE]



**OWNERSHIP INFORMATION**

<b>Name</b>	CONTAINER WASTE SERVICES INC
<b>Mailing Address</b>	717 FLINT AVE ALBANY, GA 31701
<b>Situs/ Physical Address</b>	717 FLINT AVE
<b>VALUES</b>	
<b>Land Value</b>	\$72,800.00
<b>Improvement Value</b>	\$133,300.00
<b>Accessory Value</b>	\$2,300.00
<b>Total Value</b>	\$208,400.00

*Brownfield Identification Plan for PPM Consultants*

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**Pictured are examples of the urban decay reflected by this former industrial corridor, bounded by North Cleveland to the west and North Jefferson to the east. Residential housing is situated north and west of the corridor, the downtown area is to the east, and the Oglethorpe commercial district to the south. Most buildings are vacant and suffer from limited re-use potential.**

Department of Community & Economic Development

City of Albany, Georgia  
August 2010

**CDBG funds can be used for the following Brownfield remediation activities:**

- Planning for Brownfield redevelopment, including public participation activities;
- Site acquisition;
- Environmental site assessment;
- Site clearance, including building demolition;
- Removal or remediation of contamination from sites or structures;
- Structural rehabilitation; and
- Construction of infrastructure and related improvements that enhance Brownfield site value or competitive advantage

[taken from ICF International – *CDBG and Brownfields: An Overview* ca. 2006]

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The eight initial sites listed within this guide are reflective of vacant or severely dilapidated property compromised by contaminants, real or perceived, that significantly deter redevelopment activity. Such sites were selected during a meeting held between City of Albany departments on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010, where present members decided to pursue an EPA Brownfields Assessment grant with the assistance of PPM Consultants, Inc.

## APPENDIX F – CITY OF ALBANY BLIGHT ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE  
ENTITLED *08-140*

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 16 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY, GEORGIA, BY AMENDING ART. II, Sec. 15, SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR A PROCESS TO IDENTIFY REAL PROPERTY MAINTAINED IN A BLIGHTED CONDITION, TO PROVIDE FOR DESIGNATION AS SUCH BY THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF ALBANY, TO PROVIDE FOR LISTING REMEDIAL ACTION NECESSARY, TO LEVY AN ADDITIONAL TAX MILLAGE RATE AGAINST SUCH REAL PROPERTY; TO SEGREGATE REVENUES RAISED FROM SUCH BLIGHTED CONDITION FOR USE FOR COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PURPOSES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the existence of real property, which is maintained in a blighted condition, increases the burden of government by increasing the need for government services, including but not limited to social services, public safety services, and code enforcement services. Rehabilitation of blighted property decreases the need for such government services; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of such service needs and in order to encourage community redevelopment, a community redevelopment tax incentive program is authorized by Section 4(d) of Article IX, Section II, Paragraph VIII of the Constitution of the State of Georgia [Ga. Laws 2002, p. 1497]; and

WHEREAS, it is the best interest of the City of Albany that a community redevelopment tax incentive program be established; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the City of Albany and it is hereby ordained by authority of same:

SECTION 1. From and after adoption of this Ordinance, Chapter 16, Art. II, Sec. 16-15 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Albany, Georgia shall read as follows:

Sec. 16-15(a): *Definitions* – The following terms, when used in this section, shall have the meaning ascribed to them:

(1) “*Blighted*” as applied to a piece of property means that property is being maintained in a blighted condition.

(2) “*Millage Rate*” means only the general millage rate for the City maintenance and operations.

(3) “*Public Officer*” means the building inspector, Code Enforcement Director, City Manager, Police Officer or any other city official who is authorized by law and this Code to exercise the powers prescribed by this section, or any agent of such officer or officers, or any other employee, officer or officers designated by the City Manager for purposes of this section.

Sec. 16-15(b): *Blighted Condition Designation* – In order for the property in question to be subject to official identification as blighted and subject to increased taxation, the property must be determined to be:

(1) unfit for human habitation or unfit for commercial, industrial, or business use and not in compliance with applicable codes; or

(2) vacant and being used in connection with the commission of drug crimes; or

(3) constituting an endangerment to the public health or safety as a result of unsanitary or unsafe conditions; and

(4) not a dwelling house, which is being used as the primary residence of one or more persons.

Sec. 16-15(c): *Procedure for Identification of Property as Blighted* – The procedure for official identification of real property as blighted includes:

(1) A request from a Public Officer or at least five residents of the City of Albany charging that any building, structure or property meets criteria described in Section 16-15(b).

(2) An investigation or inspection by a Public Officer and determination that the property in question meets the criteria described in Section 16-15(b).

(3) A Public Officer's issuance of a complaint in rem against the property. The complaint shall state which condition(s) under Section 2 exist on the property and what steps should be taken to remediate the property.

(4) A Public Officer's causing a summons and a copy of the complaint to be mailed via certified to the owner of the property. The latter is anyone revealed by a certification of title to the real property conducted in accordance with the title standards of the State Bar of Georgia. The summons shall notify the interested parties that a hearing will be held before the Municipal Court of The City of Albany ("hereinafter "Municipal Court") at a date and time certain. Such hearing shall be held not less than fifteen (15) days nor more than forty-five (45) days after the filing of said complaint. The interested parties shall have the right to file an answer to the complaint and to appear in person or by attorney and offer testimony at the time and place fixed for hearing.

(5) If after such notice and hearing, the Municipal Court determines that the dwelling, building or structure in question meets the criteria in Section 16-15(b) above, the Court shall state in writing findings of fact in support of such determination and shall issue

and cause its written findings to be served upon the interested parties that have answered the complaint or appeared at the hearing an order.

(6) No property shall be designated as blighted unless the Municipal Court of Albany enters an Order that finds the property in question meets the criteria described in Section 16-15(b) (1), (2) or (3). This Order constitutes official identification of real property as maintained in a blighted condition.

(7) If the Municipal Court finds that the property is blighted, it shall, in the same Order, list what must be done to remove the blighted condition designation, and give the owner a deadline in which to finish the work.

Sec. 16-15(d): *Imposition of Increased Tax Rate* – Property, which has been officially designated as blighted, shall be subject to an increased rate of City ad valorem taxation equivalent to a triple (3 times) the normal millage rate applied to the property, applied at the time of the issuance of the subsequent tax bill, as provided by general law. The increased rate continues to be applied to all subsequent tax bills until the property's designation as maintained in a blighted condition is removed as provided in this Section. This increased rate of taxation and the official identification of the property as blighted remain with the property if transferred to another owner.

Sec. 16-15(e): *Revenue Segregated* – Revenue collected from increases in rate of ad valorem taxation shall be segregated and applied to community redevelopment purposes.

Sec. 16-15(f): *Remediation* – The property in question may be rehabilitated at any time through remedial actions or redevelopment that conforms with the Municipal Court Order setting forth what must be done to remove the identification of the property as


maintained in a blighted condition. Owner may request removal of the property's designation as blighted from the city manager or from the Municipal Court upon proper proof, including an inspection by a Public Officer, that the property has been remediated and now conforms with the Court order listing what must be done to remove the identification of the property as blighted. The City Manager shall be notified in writing 10 days before any hearing in the Municipal Court.

Sec. 16-15(g): *Remediation Property Tax Rate* – Property which has had its designation as maintained in a blighted condition removed as provided in this Section will become eligible for a decrease in the rate of City ad valorem taxation equivalent to one-half (50%) of the normal millage rate applied to the property, applied at the time of issuance of the subsequent tax bill, as provided by general law. This decreased rate is applied to three years tax bills.

SECTION 2: All Ordinances, or parts of Ordinances, in conflict herewith are repealed.

  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
CITY CLERK  
Adopted: *October 28, 2008*

Introduced By Commissioner: *Hubbard*  
Date(s) read: *Oct 28, 2008*



APPENDIX G – REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT WORKSHEET

City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Plan

Amendment Worksheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The following is a checklist of items to be considered by city officials when amending the 2010 City of Albany Urban Redevelopment Plan. These items represent required plan components as defined in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 36-61-4 and 36-61-7.

**Statement that the Urban Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the City’s comprehensive plan.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Clearly defined boundaries of the proposed Urban Redevelopment Area (need not be contiguous).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation of negative conditions in the area necessitating redevelopment.**

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**Description of the city's land use objectives for the area (types of uses, building requirements, zoning changes, development densities, etc.)**

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**Description of land parcels to be acquired and structures to be demolished or rehabilitated.**

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**Strategy for leveraging private resources to aid in redevelopment of the area.**

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**Strategy for relocating any displaced residents.**

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**Any covenants or restrictions to be placed on properties in the redevelopment area in order to implement the plan.**

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**Public infrastructure to be provided (i.e. transportation, water, sewer, sidewalks, lighting, streetscapes, public recreational space, parking, etc.) to support redevelopment of the area.**

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**Financial Strategy for implementing the plan.**

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