

commercial and private property. We will expand on the previously mentioned Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (GSMM) shortly.

## **Landscaping Ordinance and Business Licenses**

We still have quite a few existing City Ordinances that help establish a litter reduction playbook for the City of Valdosta. One of which can be found under Chapter 62- Landscaping. In this section under General Requirement 62-122 (e) Maintenance; ***The owner and/or developer is responsible for maintaining all plant material in a healthy condition. Such maintenance practices shall include sufficient water, weeding, replacement of dead plant material, proper pruning and litter removal***. We find yet another reference that the business/property owner is responsible for cleaning up the trash. Even when visiting Chapter 14, we find in section 14-6 Vermin harborage that ***“It shall be unlawful for any person to store or accumulate on any premises, improved or vacant, in the city, any abandoned, decayed, or deteriorated buildings, automobiles, trucks, house trailers, appliances, building materials, trash, rubbish, debris, or any other material which is conducive to the spread of rodent infestation which would create a place of vermin harborage hazardous to the health and welfare of the residents of the city”*** There is an appellate process and any business found in violation can be denied a business license or have their existing one revoked. We can now visit the State requirements as well as those established by the GSMM that the city of Valdosta is required to follow as standard. However this would be a repetition of what has already been stated thus far.

## **Reporting to the State of Georgia**

One thing that the Georgia State law discusses that has not been covered thus far. Under Georgia State Law 12-8-31, Solid Waste Management Plan Reporting, per this requirement, the state of Georgia requires a report to the Governor and General Assembly on the status of litter prevention and abatement. This litter report shall include but is not limited to an itemization of expenditures and form the Solid Waste Trust Fund for the prevention and abatement of litter, a compilation and analysis of litter prevention, collection and enforcement efforts. A statement of progress in achieving a litter prevention ethic and recommendations for improving litter abatement and prevention efforts.

## **A Proactive Approach**

We can see the intent from all of these existing publications plus many that we have not discussed, is that we should all take a proactive approach to tackling the litter problem, especially when it comes to stormwater management.

## **Police Citations**

The litter problem became sufficiently severe in 2018 that the Valdosta Chief of Police issued a department-wide memorandum informing all law enforcement officers to aggressively issue citations to those citizens they find littering. The Chief of Police gave specific instruction that warnings were not to be given. Such aggressive targeting of the average citizen is justifiable and should continue due to the scope of the problem.