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GATED COMMUNITIES AND THE SEA AND THE "STRENGTH" OF REAL ESTATE CAPITAL IN VERTICALIZATION IN ARACAJU-SE

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Abstract

Urban expansion is the result of capital interests seeking greater profitability. To this end, the real estate market uses land multiplication, associated with the spread of new lifestyles and "housing concepts," which combine elements such as security, isolation, social homogeneity, and exclusivity. The choice of areas for consumption and appropriation by private capital for the implementation of gated vertical condominiums has been aligned with proximity to natural amenities, the availability of infrastructure and collective facilities, and urban regulations that enable greater income generation and target audiences. Given this, this research seeks to analyze the characteristics of verticalization under the leadership of real estate capital in Aracaju-SE, between 2000 and 2020. To this end, bibliographic surveys and information on the licensing permits for the developments were carried out, which were tabulated and specialized in cartography. However, verticalization has strengthened densification in established neighborhoods and appropriated vacant areas, enabling urban expansion and aggravating the reduced supply of infrastructure in distant neighborhoods. In this sense, the state, through legislation, plays a fundamental role in the reproduction of real estate capital, thus increasingly exacerbating socio-spatial segregation.

Keywords: Verticalization. Urban Expansion. Real Estate Capital. Urban Legislation.

Resumo / Resumen

CONDOMÍNIOS FECHADOS E A "FORÇA" DO CAPITAL IMOBILIÁRIO NA VERTICALIZAÇÃO EM ARACAJU-SE

A expansão urbana é resultado da efetivação de interesses do capital na busca por maior lucratividade. Para isso, o mercado imobiliário se utiliza da multiplicação do solo, associada à difusão de novos estilos de vida e "conceitos de moradia", que articulam elementos como segurança, isolamento, homogeneidade social e exclusividade. A escolha das áreas de consumo e apropriação pelo capital privado para implantação de condomínios verticais fechados tem sido alinhada pela proximidade às amenidades naturais, oferta de infraestrutura e equipamentos coletivos, pelas normas urbanísticas que possibilitam maior captação de renda e público-alvo. Diante disso, esta pesquisa busca analisar as características da verticalização sob protagonismo do capital imobiliário em Aracaju-SE, entre os anos 2000 até 2020. Para isso, foram realizados levantamentos bibliográficos e de informações nos alvarás de licenciamento dos empreendimentos, que foram tabuladas e especializadas em cartografias. Contudo, a verticalização fortaleceu o adensamento em bairros consolidados e apropriou-se de áreas vazias, possibilitando a expansão urbana e agravando a reduzida oferta de infraestrutura em bairros distantes. Nesse sentido, o Estado, através da legislação, tem papel fundamental para a reprodução do capital imobiliário, acirrando assim, cada vez mais, a segregação socioespacial.

Palavras-chave: Verticalização. Expansão Urbana. Capital Imobiliário. Legislação Urbana.

CONDOMINIOS GATE Y LA "FORTALEZA" DEL CAPITAL INMOBILIARIO EN LA VERTICALIZACIÓN EN ARACAJU-SE

La expansión urbana es el resultado de la materialización de los intereses del capital en la búsqueda de una mayor rentabilidad. Para ello, el mercado inmobiliario se sirve de la multiplicación del suelo, asociada a la difusión de nuevos estilos de vida y «conceptos de vivienda», que articulan elementos como la seguridad, el aislamiento, la homogeneidad social y la exclusividad. La elección de las áreas de consumo y apropiación por parte del capital privado para la implantación de condominios verticales cerrados se ha alineado con la proximidad a las amenidades naturales, la oferta de infraestructura y equipamientos colectivos, y las normas urbanísticas que permiten una mayor captación de ingresos y público objetivo. Ante esto, esta investigación busca analizar las características de la verticalización bajo el protagonismo del capital inmobiliario en Aracaju-SE, entre los años 2000 y 2020. Para ello, se realizaron estudios bibliográficos y de información en las licencias de los proyectos, que fueron tabulados y especializados en cartografías. Sin embargo, la verticalización fortaleció la densificación en barrios consolidados y se apropió de áreas vacías, lo que permitió la expansión urbana y agravó la reducida oferta de infraestructura en barrios distantes. En este sentido, el Estado, a través de la legislación, tiene un papel fundamental en la reproducción del capital inmobiliario, lo que agrava cada vez más la segregación socioespacial.

Palabras-clave: Verticalización. Expansión urbana. Capital inmobiliario. Legislación urbana.

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INTRODUCTION

In a society marked by class conflicts, social inequalities manifest themselves in urban spaces, establishing patterns of exclusivity exploited by the market through housing as a product, which excludes a huge portion of the population that cannot afford to buy property. As a result, self-built housing has been increasingly replaced by construction mediated by real estate developers, fostering self-segregation, with income levels as a differentiating attribute of forms of appropriation of space (Correa, 1999; Villaça, 2001).

Since the 21st century, capital has begun to spread new lifestyles and "housing concepts" that combine elements such as security, isolation, social homogeneity, facilities, and services, whose marketing strategies create demand for the symbolic valorization of new areas and the implementation of real estate products (Caldeira, 2000).

As strategies for appropriating space, the real estate market diversifies its products, including vertical condominiums, mixed-use vertical developments, and club condominiums, linked to different forms of insertion into space, such as in densely populated areas, or opening new axes of expansion. In addition, the state, through projects and interventions financed by the federal government and international agencies, has favored the circulation of capital and people, ensuring infrastructure and road system conditions, facilitating access to more distant areas.

This article addresses the production of vertical housing by the private sector in Aracaju since the 2000s, the year the Urban Development Master Plan (PDDU) was enacted, analyzing the concentration of this process in space, the effects of urban legislation, and the characteristics of the developments. To access data such as location, number of developments, and number of housing units, among others, information was collected from the Multifamily Development Licensing Permits issued by the Municipal Works and Urbanization Company (Empresa Municipal de Obras e Urbanização) of the Municipality of Aracaju (França, 2019; Santos, 2022; CEPUR, 2023).

URBAN PRODUCTION AND VERTICALIZATION: THE MORE APARTMENTS, THE BETTER...

The production of capitalist space is the result of the multiple and simultaneous actions of social and economic agents in the logic of urban land appropriation and the dispute for control of urbanized land, based on rules of valorization (Harvey, 1980; Correa, 1999). Harvey (1980) also asserts that land is a commodity and has a differentiated value according to its location, and that legislation, which can be more or less restrictive for the occupation of certain areas, also interferes in the construction of space.

The state, through its complex and multiple actions, has its interference as one of the greatest contributions to urban expansion. This is because it sometimes operates contradictorily, exacerbating social inequalities when it 'provokes' the actions of real estate developers by using public resources to encourage the appropriation of land value gains for the real estate industry (Correa, 1999).

In turn, the real estate sector appropriates the capacity to structure space according to its interests, serving the capitalist logic of production and transformation of land use. One of its tactics is to seek, together with local governments, conditions to make its products viable, through the implementation of infrastructure and/or changes in regulations that enhance land occupation (Correa, 1999; Harvey, 1980).

For Harvey (1980) and Lefebvre (2008), the capitalist city is the place of social materialization, the result of the performance of agents who can benefit from new spatial configurations resulting from the accumulation of capital and the social reproduction of capital accumulation. The densification of empty spaces serves the logic of the dispute for control of the best-located land, in order to obtain greater profits, even though this requires the destruction of the natural environment (Villaça, 2001).

In Brazil, a milestone for real estate reproduction is due to technological development that favored the emergence of metal and reinforced concrete structures in civil construction and the spread of elevators, revolutionizing the way buildings were designed and built and enabling the multiplication of land and, consequently, the densification of more consolidated areas of cities (Somekh, 2014).

On the other hand, the role of the real estate sector was consolidated by Decree No. 5481/1928, which determined the partial sale of buildings with more than five floors and the ideal fraction of the land as part of the condominium owner's property, providing a legal basis for verticalization, which had been occurring since 1940, especially in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Subsequently, this regulation was revoked with the enactment of Federal Law No. 4951/1964, which provided for condominiums and real estate developments (Somekh, 2014; Botelho, 2007).

It is worth remembering that at that time, the National Housing Bank financed, through a federal government housing program in partnership with the states, the construction of housing in areas far from urban centers, many in the form of vertical buildings, understood as an evolution of land subdivision, by multiplying the land (Botelho, 2007). This policy triggered a process of fragmented occupation of the consolidated fabric, especially from the 1970s onwards, which marked most capitals and metropolitan regions.

Using the concept of dispersed urbanization, characterized by Reis (2006, p. 46) as “changes in the modes of organization of the urban system and in the organization of the urban fabric,” one can explain the process of unfolding urbanization that is spatially distant but maintains links between itself as parts of a single urban system. This is facilitated by the adoption of new lifestyles by the population, which acquires greater mobility, organizing its daily life on an intra-urban and metropolitan scale, generating the creation of several centers of centrality, with areas designed by real estate capital in the urban peripheries, contrasting with the surrounding area due to their divergent characteristics and altering landscapes.

INSERTION OF VERTICAL CONDOMINIUMS IN THE URBAN SPACE IN ARACAJU

The capital of Sergipe, Aracaju is located in the eastern part of the state, with an area of 182 km², where 602,757 inhabitants live (IBGE, 2022). Similar to most medium-sized Brazilian cities, the production of urban space in Aracaju follows capitalist logic, which has location as a determining factor, whose verticalization, in particular, took on significant proportions after the approval of the Master Plan (2000).

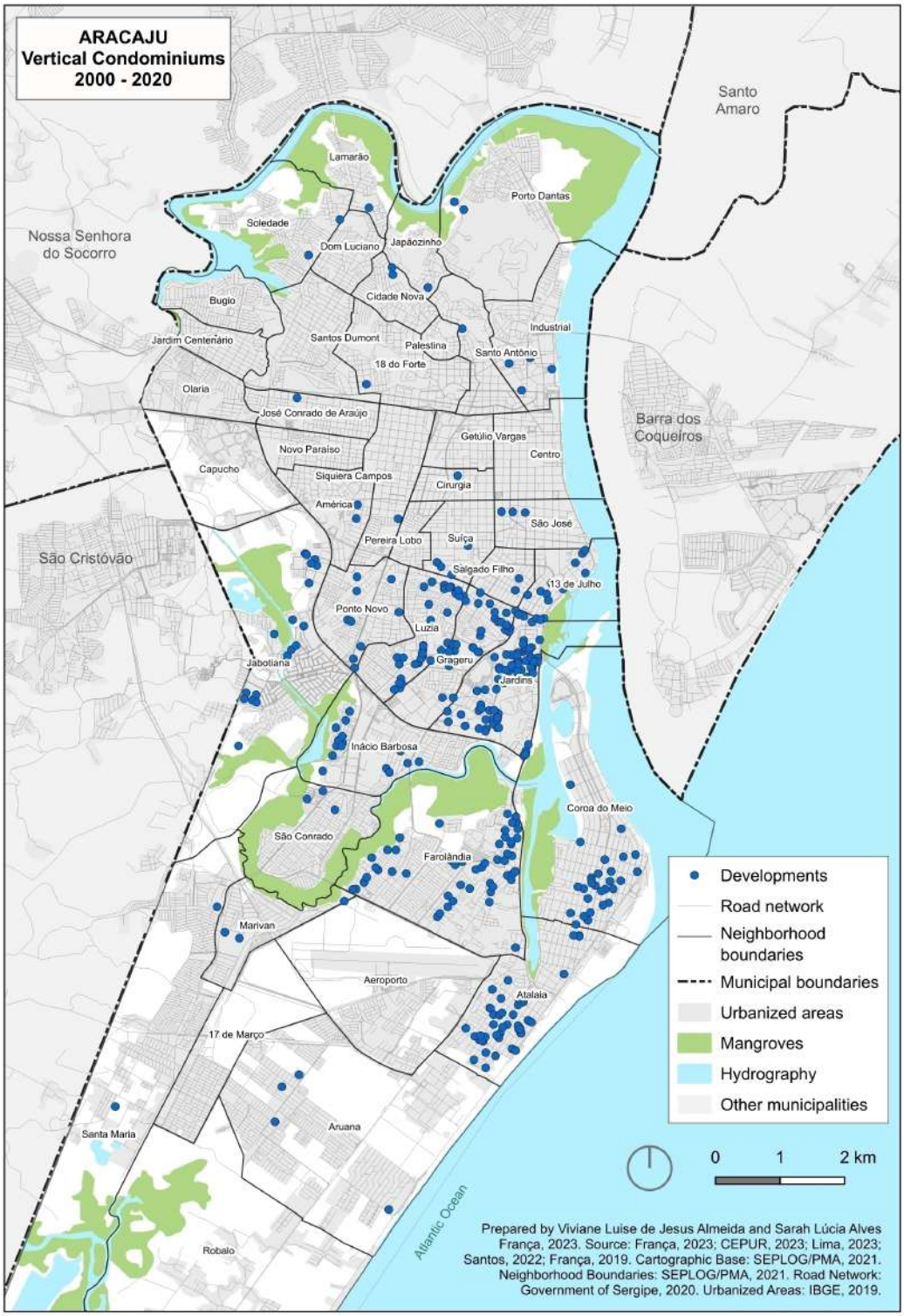
Undoubtedly, the growing expansion in the number of real estate developments in Aracaju between 2000 and 2020 was driven by the boom in civil construction in the country, especially with the incentive for real estate credit, which led to a multiplication in the number of construction companies and the development of partnerships between local and national companies (França, 2019). This contributed to the search for new areas of land consumption, leading to the significant licensing of vertical condominiums (364 developments, totaling 38,872 apartments), concentrated in the neighborhoods of Jardins, Farolândia, Atalaia, Luzia, Coroa do Meio, Jabotiana, Grageru, Inácio Barbosa, and 13 de Julho (Table 1 and Map 1).

Some of these neighborhoods enjoy a privileged location due to the presence of natural and environmental attractions, such as Atalaia and Coroa do Meio, close to the seafront, and Farolândia, with Tiradentes University in the vicinity, built in the late 1990s, which is a hub for housing students who migrate from other cities. In the Jardins neighborhood, the market benefits from the presence of a shopping mall, which increases property values, as well as Parque da Sementeira, used for sports and leisure activities (Silva, 2003).

In the Atalaia neighborhood, 42 vertical condominiums (2242 apartments) were built for the upper-middle class, with up to three towers and 16 floors, mainly around the Oceânica Avenue, whose selling point is “proximity to the beach and the city center” (França, 2019, p.98). The Coroa do Meio neighborhood shows a similar trend, with 30 licensed condominiums (1525 apartments), with up to eight floors and a greater number of towers, aimed at middle-income groups.

Area	Neighborhood	Developments	Apartments
East	13 de Julho	12	421
	Cirurgia	1	56
	Jardins	80	4323
	Grageru	25	1812
	Luzia	29	4741
	Salgado Filho	8	422
	São José	3	212
	Suíça	3	156
North	Bugio	1	384
	Cidade Nova	3	474
	Industrial	4	364
	Porto D'Anta	2	560
	Santo Antônio	1	192
	Santos Dumont	2	124
	Soledade	2	328
West	América	2	406
	Jabotiana	18	3351
	José Conrado de Araújo	1	176
	Ponto Novo	9	1542
	Siqueira Campos	1	156
South	Aruana	5	1048
	Atalaia	42	2242
	Coroa do Meio	30	1525
	Farolândia	52	7689
	Inácio Barbosa	19	3932
	São Conrado	4	672
	Marivan	3	952
	Santa Maria	2	612
Grand Total		**364**	**38872**

Table 1 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Developments, and Apartments by Neighborhood, 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.



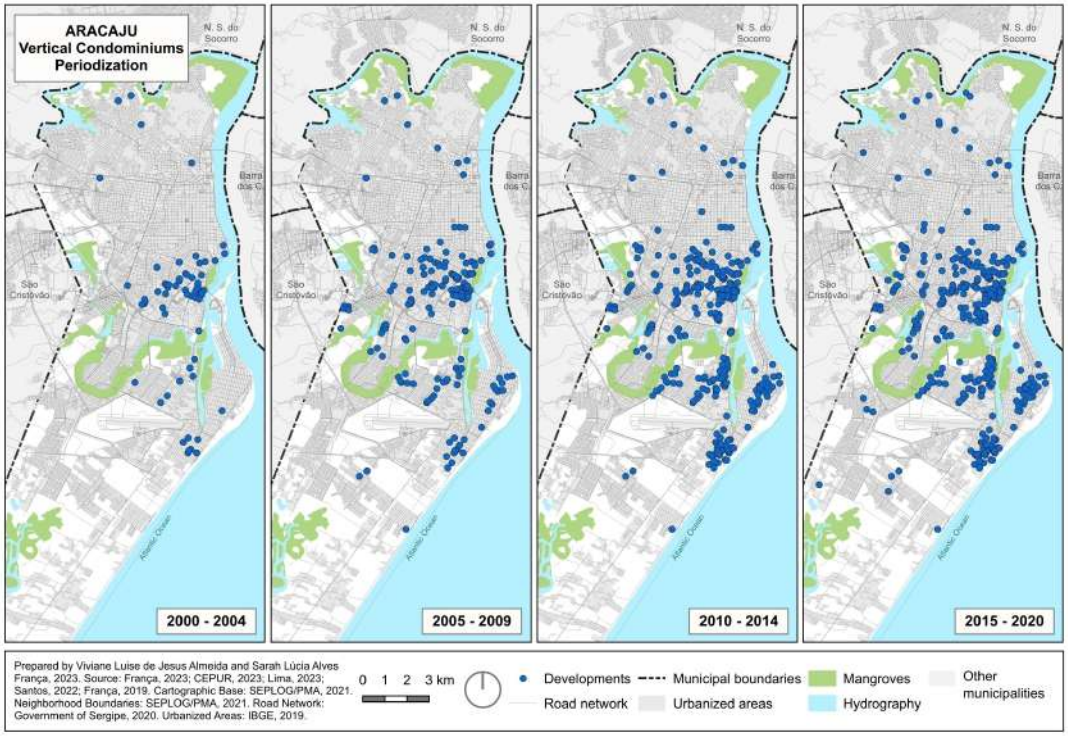
Map 1 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, 2000-2020

The Farolândia neighborhood, whose Tiradentes University Campus and proximity to the Jardins and 13 de Julho neighborhoods are factors of attractiveness, has 52 condominiums (7689 apartments), standing out as the neighborhood with the highest number of apartments (19.78% of the total).

Located near the center, Luzia received 29 condominiums (12.19% of the total apartments), with 3747 apartments licensed between 2005 and 2014 out of a total of 4741 units in the neighborhood between 2000 and 2020. The landscape changed along the Adélia Franco Avenue and around the Rio Branco Asylum, and on Alameda das Árvores.

The Jardins neighborhood stands out in terms of the number of vertical condominiums between 2000 and 2020 (80 condominiums with 4343 apartments). In 2003, Silva (2003) pointed out that the segregated spatial configuration is marked by the location of developments according to social patterns: those close to the Hermes Fontes Avenue have a greater number of blocks and are home to middle-class families, while those close to Parque da Sementeira catered to the upper-middle-income bracket, whose apartments were valued for their privileged location.

Located in the western zone, the Jabotiana neighborhood underwent transformations in its predominantly horizontal landscape with empty spaces. After 2007, the verticalization that began in 2000 continued with the insertion of developments subsidized by the Residential Lease Program (PAR) (Almeida, 2022b). Starting in 2010, supported by the opening of municipal legislation, the Minha Casa Minha Vida Program (PMCMV), and the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), the market invested in 10- to 16-story buildings, whose advertising emphasizes the proximity to amenities and the ease of access to the neighborhood, even though, in practice, this offer is incipient, generating several socio-environmental conflicts. These strategies resulted in the licensing of 18 vertical condominiums, with 3351 apartments, and 22 developments subsidized by the PMCMV, with 4136 homes (Almeida, 2022b) (Map 2).



Map 2 - Jabotiana neighborhood, Vertical housing production, 2000-2021. Source: Almeida, 2022b.

Despite the incipient verticalization, since 2005, the Aruana neighborhood has undergone changes in its horizontal landscape, interspersed with empty spaces and natural elements, giving way to five vertical buildings intended for low-middle-income families, in addition to developments financed by the PMCMV (França, 2019; Almeida, 2022a).

FORMS OF APPROPRIATION AND SOCIO-SPATIAL SEGREGATION: CHARACTERIZATION OF VERTICAL CONDOMINIUMS

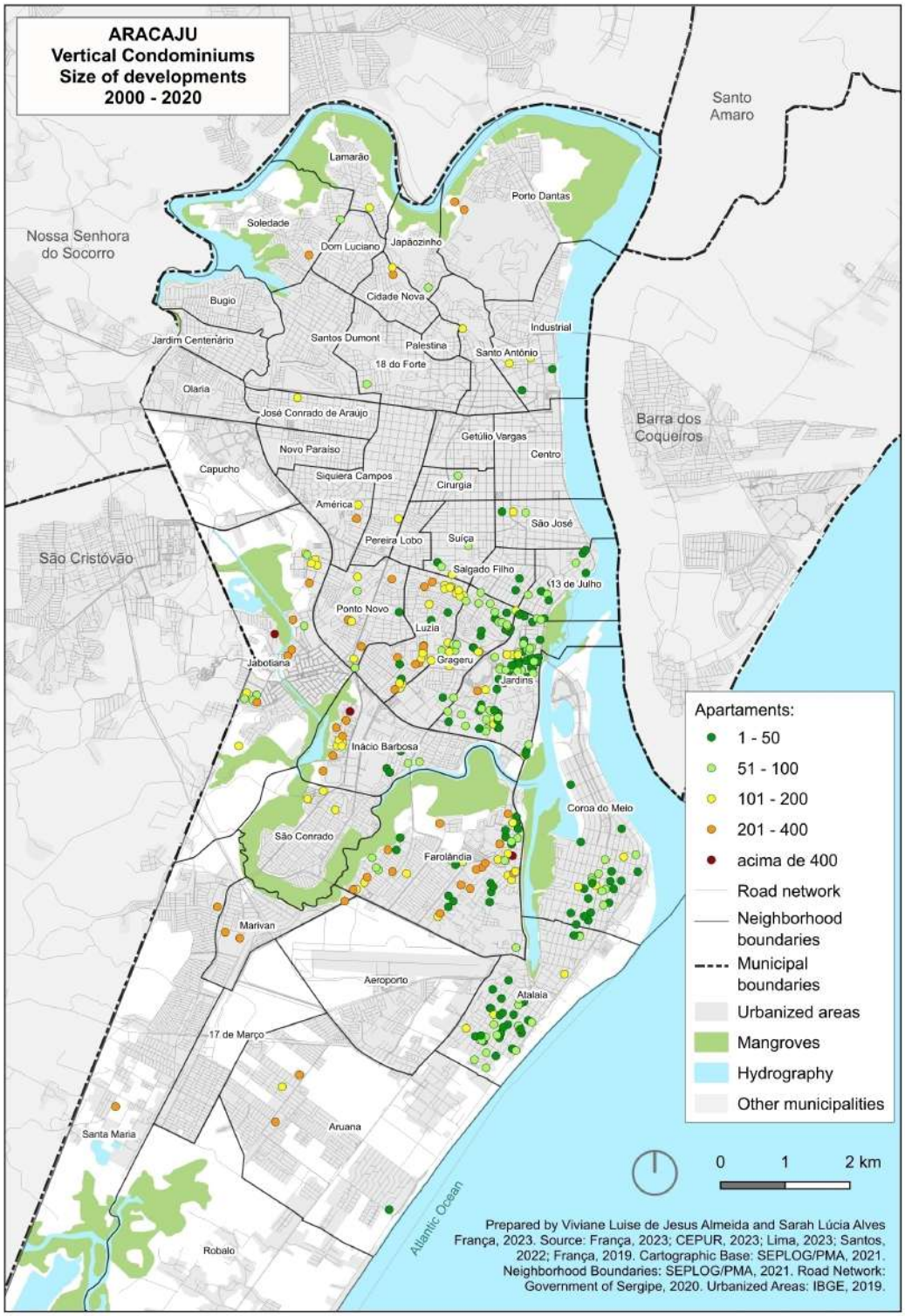
Based on information from the Building Permits issued by the Municipal Works and Urbanization Company (EMURB), some relevant points for analysis were found. The first is the doubling of the number of vertical condominiums between 2005 and 2015 compared to the previous (2000-2004) and subsequent (2010-2014) periods, totaling 242 developments out of a total of 364 licensed in the 20 years (Map 3 and Table 2).

Area	Neighborhood	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2020	Total
East	13 de Julho	4	5	2	1	**12**
	Cirurgia	-	-	1	-	**1**
	Jardins	20	21	22	17	**80**
	Grageru	11	7	6	1	**25**
	Luzia	5	9	13	2	**29**
	Salgado Filho	3	3	1	1	**8**
	São José	-	3	-	-	**3**
	Suíça	-	2	-	1	**3**
North	Bugio	-	-	-	1	**1**
	Cidade Nova	1	-	1	1	**3**
	Industrial	1	2	1	-	**4**
	Porto D'Anta	-	-	-	2	**2**
	Santo Antônio	-	1	-	-	**1**
	Santos Dumont	1	1	-	-	**2**
	Soledade	1	-	-	1	**2**
West	América	-		1	1	**2**
	Jabotiana	-	8	7	3	**18**
	José Conrado de Araújo	1	-	-	-	**1**
	Ponto Novo	1	4	2	2	**9**
	Siqueira Campos	-	-	-	1	**1**
South	Aruana	-	2	2	1	**5**
	Atalaia	9	4	25	4	**42**
	Coroa do Meio	-	12	15	3	**30**
	Farolândia	7	14	27	4	**52**
	São Conrado	-	4	-	-	**4**
	Inácio Barbosa	1	10	3	5	**19**
	Marivan	-	-	-	3	**3**
	Santa Maria	-	-	1	1	**2**
Grand Total		**66**	**112**	**130**	**56**	**364**

Table 2 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Developments, and Licensing Period, 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.

The hypothesis for this fact is the interference of the first revision of the Aracaju Master Plan (2005) and the expansion of federal resources for financing construction and housing, especially through the financialization of real estate capital. This is further emphasized between 2009 and 2012, when França highlights three important events:

> the first refers to the incentive for real estate credit and also federal action, with the injection of resources through programs aimed at implementing infrastructure, such as the PAC, which led to the opening of new fronts for urban expansion. The second, at the local level, refers to discussions regarding the revision of the Master Plan and complementary codes in the City Council. Finally, the third relates to the real estate boom that the country experienced, with a decline in these figures in the following years due to the onset of the economic crisis that was looming (2019, pp. 101-102).



Map 3 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Periodization, 2000-2014.

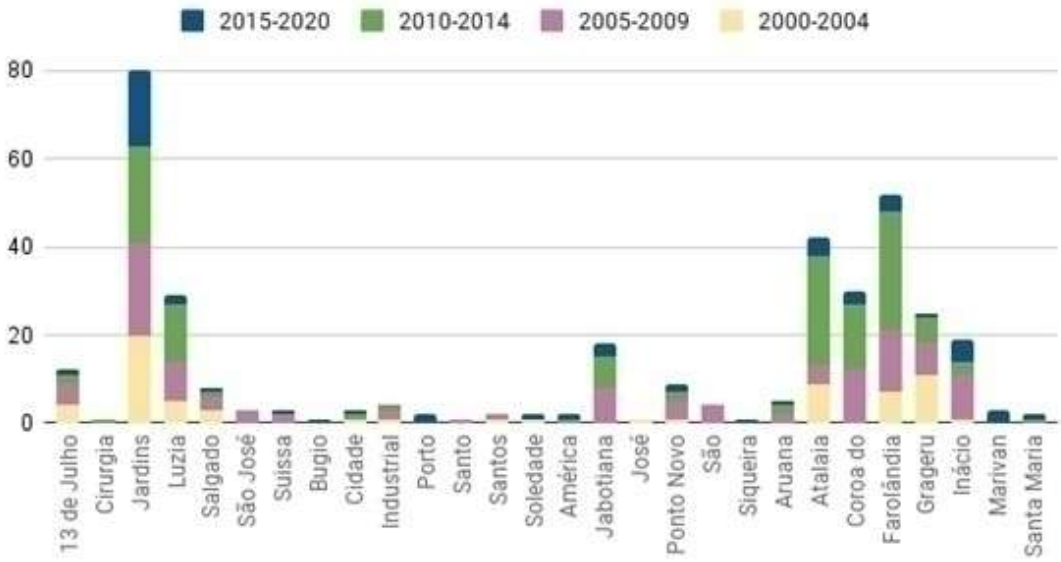


Figure 1: Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Approval Period, 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.

The concentration of verticalization in these two periods (2005–2009 and 2010–2014) can be seen in the Jardins and Grageru neighborhoods, serving the middle and upper classes, Luzia, Farolândia, Coroa do Meio, and Atalaia, aimed at middle- and upper-middle-income families, and Inácio Barbosa and Jabotiana, focused on middle-income families. On the other hand, there is a notable reduction or stabilization in the number of developments in neighborhoods with consolidated verticalization, such as São José, Salgado Filho, and 13 de Julho (Table 2, Map 3, and Figure 1).

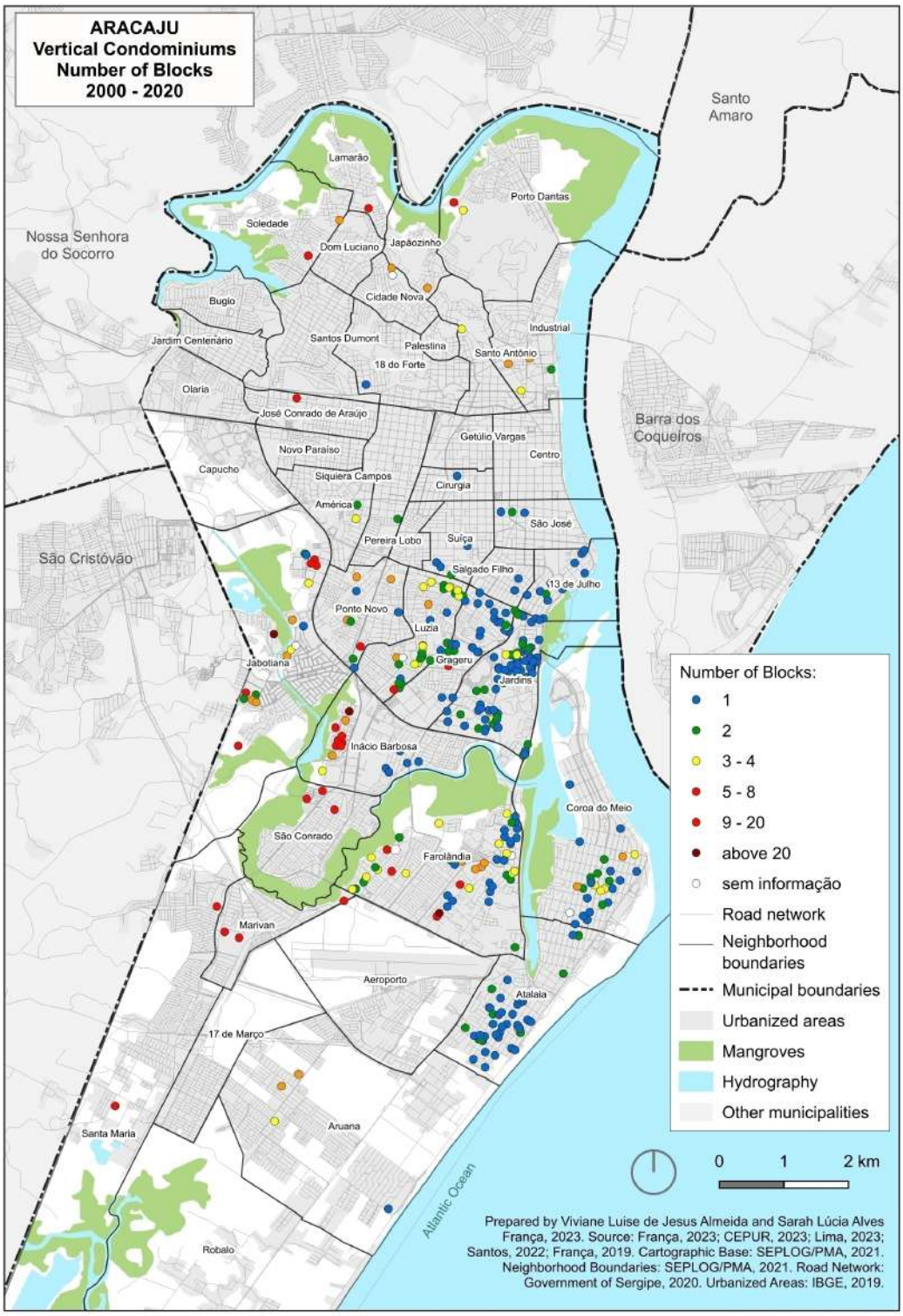
França (2019, p. 106) outlines that "in the period from 2005 to 2009, sprawl is strongly indicated by the emergence of new vectors of expansion/densification." In the north, verticalization was embryonic in the neighborhoods of Santo Antônio and Industrial, characterized by horizontal-vertical transformation, as well as in the west, in the neighborhoods of Ponto Novo, São Conrado, and Jabotiana. In the Luzia neighborhood, new buildings with several blocks emerged, as well as in the south, in the neighborhoods of Farolândia, Inácio Barbosa, Coroa do Meio, and Aruana.

In 2009, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Federal Court of Sergipe stood out for their actions in the urban space, blocking the licensing of developments in the former Urban Expansion Zone (ZEU) and the Jabotiana neighborhood (in 2014), due to the lack of drainage systems and intensified land occupation, which resulted in socio-environmental conflicts, especially during the rainy season (Map 3). Thus, the new vertical condominiums licensed after these determinations were authorized by the Federal Court of Sergipe, complying with the procedures and conditions imposed in the case files, with five in the Jabotiana neighborhood (Almeida, 2022b) and three in the Aruana neighborhood.

The fourth period (2015 to 2020) was marked by a reduction in the licensing of vertical developments throughout the city, by almost half, due to national factors such as the fall of the Dilma government, the financial crisis, and reduced investment in the real estate market, compounded by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The economic crisis in the urban space of Aracaju was reflected in the forms of capital reproduction through verticalization, with a drop from 130 permits issued between 2010 and 2014 to 56 in the period in question. Especially in the west and south zones, there was a reduction in the neighborhoods of Jabotiana, Atalaia, Coroa do Meio, Farolândia, and Grageru, which were identified in the previous period as those with the highest levels of verticalization (Table 2, Map 3, and Figure 1).

In terms of the size of the developments, those with fewer apartments, aimed at the high-income class, are close to natural amenities, such as in the neighborhoods of 13 de Julho and Jardins, Grageru and Farolândia, Coroa do Meio, and Atalaia. In contrast, larger condominiums are located in the western (Ponto Novo, Jabotiana), northern, and southern (Marivan, Aruana, and Santa Maria) areas. However, there are some exceptions, such as developments with four towers and 364 apartments in the Luzia

neighborhood; in the Porto D'Antas neighborhood, with 13 six-story buildings and 390 units; in the Santa Maria neighborhood, with 11 six-story towers and 396 apartments; and finally, the largest, Alamedas do Jabotiana, which has 480 units distributed across 30 four-story towers (Tables 3 and 4 and Map 4).



Map 4 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Size of developments, 2000–2020

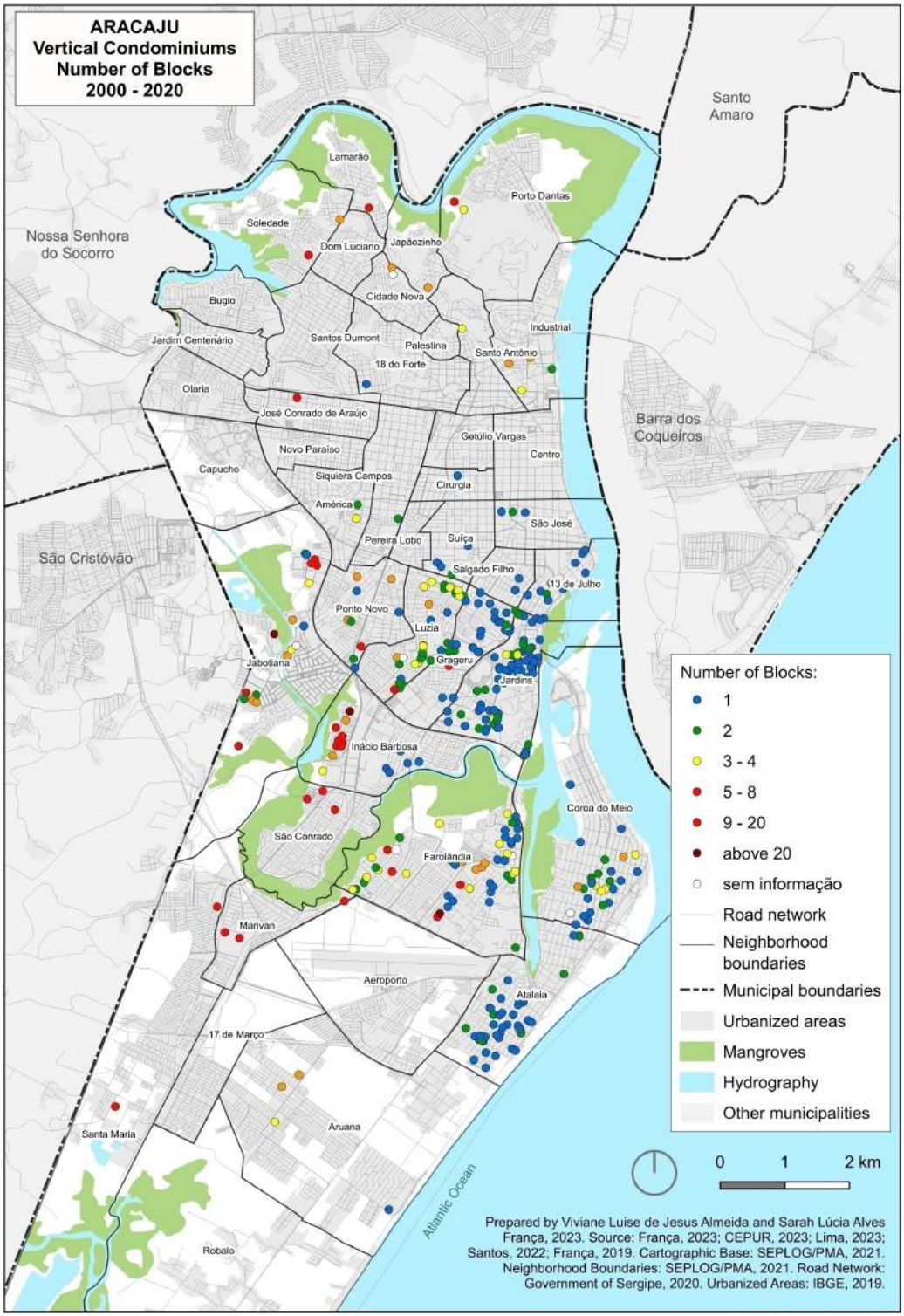
Area	Neighborhood	0-19	20-50	51-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-1032	Total
East	13 de Julho*	-	7	4	-	-	-	-	**12**
	Cirurgia	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	**1**
	Jardins*	3	38	28	9	1	-	-	**80**
	Grageru	1	5	14	4	1	-	-	**25**
	Luzia	1	2	-	19	3	4	-	**29**
	Salgado Filho	1	5	1	1	-	-	-	**8**
	São José	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	**3**
	Suissa	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	**3**
North	Bugio	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	**1**
	Cidade Nova	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	**3**
	Industrial	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	**4**
	Porto D'antas	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	**2**
	Santo Antônio	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	**1**
	Santos Dumont	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	**2**
	Soledade	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	**2**
West	América	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	**2**
	Jabotiana*	1		5	5	2	3	1	**18**
	José Conrado de Araújo	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	**1**
	Ponto Novo		1	2	3	2	1	-	**9**
	Siqueira Campos	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	**1**
South	Aruana	-	1	-	1	3	-	-	**5**
	Atalaia*	5	19	13	2	2	-	-	**42**
	Coroa do Meio	6	12	9	3	-	-	-	**30**
	Farolândia	4	13	7	12	6	9	1	**52**
	São Conrado	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	**4**
	Inácio Barbosa	4	-	3	4	4	3	1	**19**
	Marivan	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	**3**
	Santa Maria	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	**2**
Grand Total		**28**	**106**	**92**	**76**	**29**	**26**	**3**	**364**

*In these neighborhoods, there is one development with no information, totaling four developments.

Table 3 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Number of Apartments, 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.

The Aracaju Urban Development Master Plan (2000) establishes a limit of 400 housing units, without the preparation of a Neighborhood Impact Report (RIV) (item III, art. 208 - PDDU 2000). As a result, there is a practice of licensing developments in stages, as occurred in the case of Spazio Aqua Condomínio Club I and II (with 344 apartments in each stage), located in Luzia, despite being a condominium with a single guardhouse. Another example is the Alamedas Aracaju Condomínio Clube, in the Inácio Barbosa neighborhood, licensed in two stages, with 320 and 1,032 apartments, totaling 1,352 units (Map 4).

When analyzing the number of building blocks, there is a concentration of 189 condominiums with one tower in neighborhoods such as 13 de Julho and Jardins, Grageru, Atalaia, Coroa do Meio, and Farolândia, while most of the 69 developments with 3 to 8 blocks are in the neighborhoods of Luzia, Farolândia, Coroa do Meio, and Jabotiana. Of the 33 developments with more than 8 blocks, 31 have between 4 and 6 floors, with 17 in the south zone, in the neighborhoods of Farolândia (10 and 14 blocks), Inácio Barbosa (12 and 13 blocks), Santa Maria (9 blocks), and Marivan (14, 19, and 20 blocks); and 9 in the western zone, in Jabotiana and São Conrado, most of which have 10 and 11 blocks. Among these, the three with the highest number of blocks have 24, 26, and 30, in the neighborhoods of Farolândia, Inácio Barbosa, and Jabotiana (Map 5 and Table 4).



Map 5 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Number of Blocks, 2000–2020

Area	Neighborhood	1	2	3 e 4	5 a 8	9 a 20	Over 20	w/o I*	Total
East	13 de Julho	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	12
	Cirurgia	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Jardins	64	13	3	-	-	-	-	80
	Grageru	18	5	1	-	1	-	-	25
	Luzia	3	13	11	2	-	-	-	29
	Salgado Filho	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	8
	São José	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
	Suissa	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
North	Bugio	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	Cidade Nova*	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	3
	Industrial	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	4
	Porto D'antas	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
	Santo Antônio	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Santos Dumont	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
	Soledade	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
West	América	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
	Jabotiana*	3	3	2	4	4	1	1	18
	José Conrado de Araújo	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
	Ponto Novo	3	2	-	3	1	-	-	9
	Siqueira Campos	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
South	Aruana	1	-	1	3	-	-	-	5
	Atalaia*	33	6	2	-	-	-	1	42
	Coroa do Meio*	15	8	4	2	-	-	1	30
	Farolândia*	18	10	13	4	4	1	2	52
	São Conrado	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4
	Inácio Barbosa	7		1	3	7	1	-	19
	Marivan	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
	Santa Maria	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Grand Total		**189**	**67**	**42**	**27**	**30**	**3**	**6**	**364**

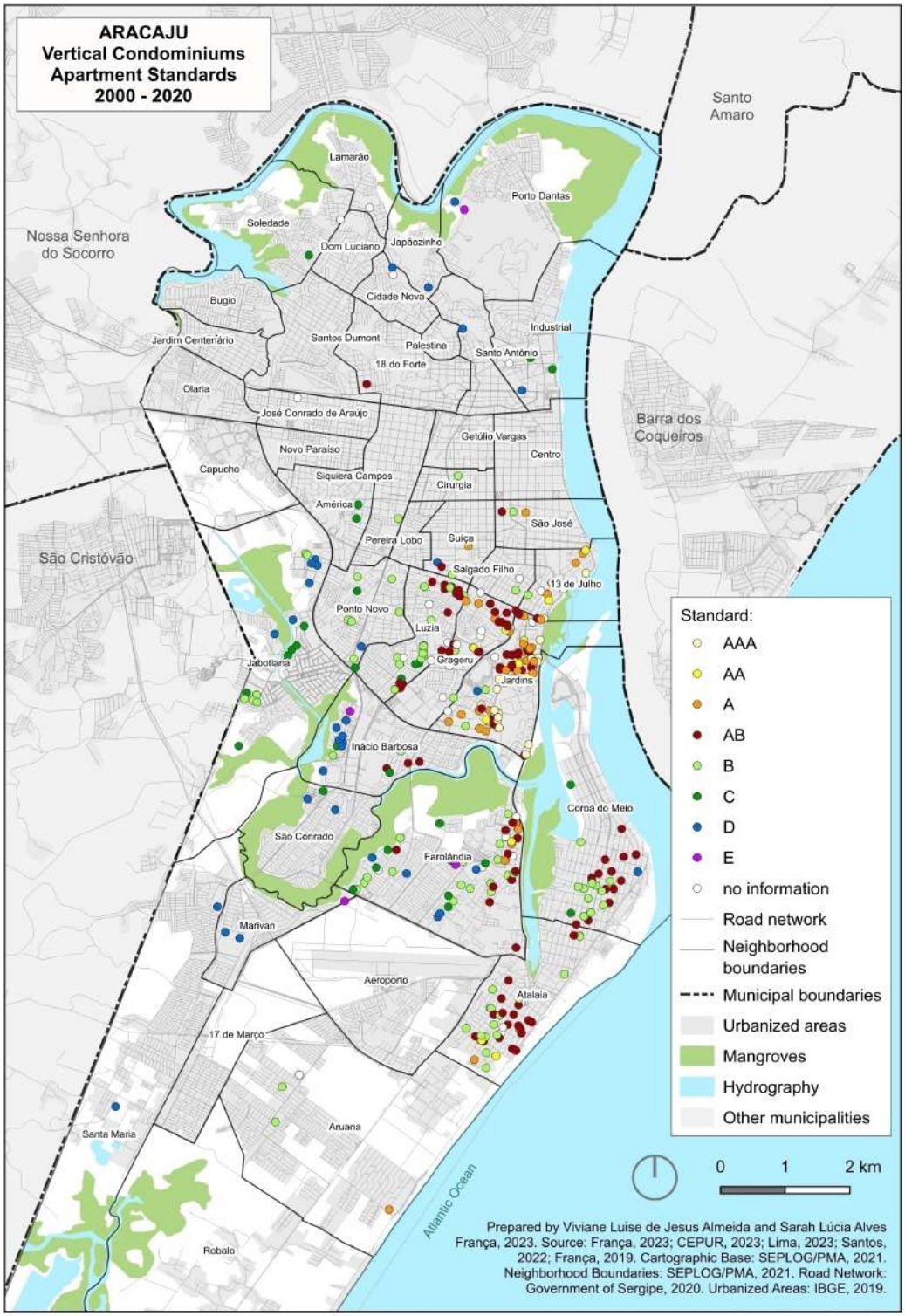
*In these neighborhoods, there are developments without information, totaling 6 developments.

Table 4 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Size of Development by Number of Blocks, 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.

Finally, regarding apartment standards[1], we suggest classification based on unit area, with AAA, AA, and A developments comprising apartments larger than 200 m² (1,765 ft²), 160 to 199 m² (1,765 to 2,150 ft²), and 120 to 159 m² (1,300 to 1,670 ft²), respectively, located in the 13 de Julho and Jardins neighborhoods (Map 6). These are exclusive condominiums

> exclusive, with layouts ranging from three to four suites, offices, and complete maid's quarters, varying from 200 m² to 500 m² of floor space, and options for duplex and triplex penthouses reaching up to 700 m², in addition to two to five parking spaces. The materials and finishes are of a high standard of construction, and the unique features offered encourage a safe and secluded lifestyle, with options for staying in your apartment, such as home movies and a private pool on the balcony (França, 2019, p. 99).

In the coastal strip, in the Coroa do Meio and Atalaia neighborhoods, AB (80 to 120 m²- 861 to 1,292 ft²) and B (60 to 79 m² - 646 to 850 ft²) standard apartment condominiums predominate in the vicinity of road interventions, while a diversity of standards was found in the Farolândia neighborhood. In other words, on the banks of Beira Mar Avenue and near the old Estuarine Lighthouse and UNIT, there are those classified as AA, A, AB, and even B. Near Poxim Park, there is a predominance of apartments classified as B, C (50 to 59m² - 538 to 634 ft²), D (40 to 49m² - 430 to 527 ft²) and E (less than 40m² - 430 ft²), as in the neighborhoods of São Conrado, Inácio Barbosa, and Jabotiana (Map 6).



Map 6 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Apartment Standards, 2000–2020

These "new" forms of capital appropriation alter the dynamics of the city, with emphasis, since 2009, on the resurgence of club condominiums that were widespread in the 1980s and 1990s (Diniz, 2003). França (2019) explores that this strategy consists of offering

> smaller private areas in apartments, with leisure areas offering some services that would be inside the apartment, combined with a security system. The coincidence between the decrease in the usable area of units for the middle class and the growth in real estate production is due to the increase in construction costs and land prices, on the one hand, and, on the other, a positive variation, in nominal terms, in the price of apartments. To this end, they have 2 to 11 towers and a larger number of apartments, which allows for lower condominium fees (p. 111).

Another concept that is still in its infancy in Aracaju is mixed-use, which combines housing, commerce, services, shopping centers, and convenience stores, as seen in the NeoJardins and Horizonte Jardins Offices & Hotel developments in the Jardins neighborhood, near the mall. The former combines residential and service use, with separate entrances, and the latter combines hotels and offices, which the construction company emphasized at the launch as being "a well-planned project for integrated living and working in a revolutionary real estate complex" (França, 2019).

URBAN LEGISLATION AS AN INCENTIVE FOR VERTICALIZATION?

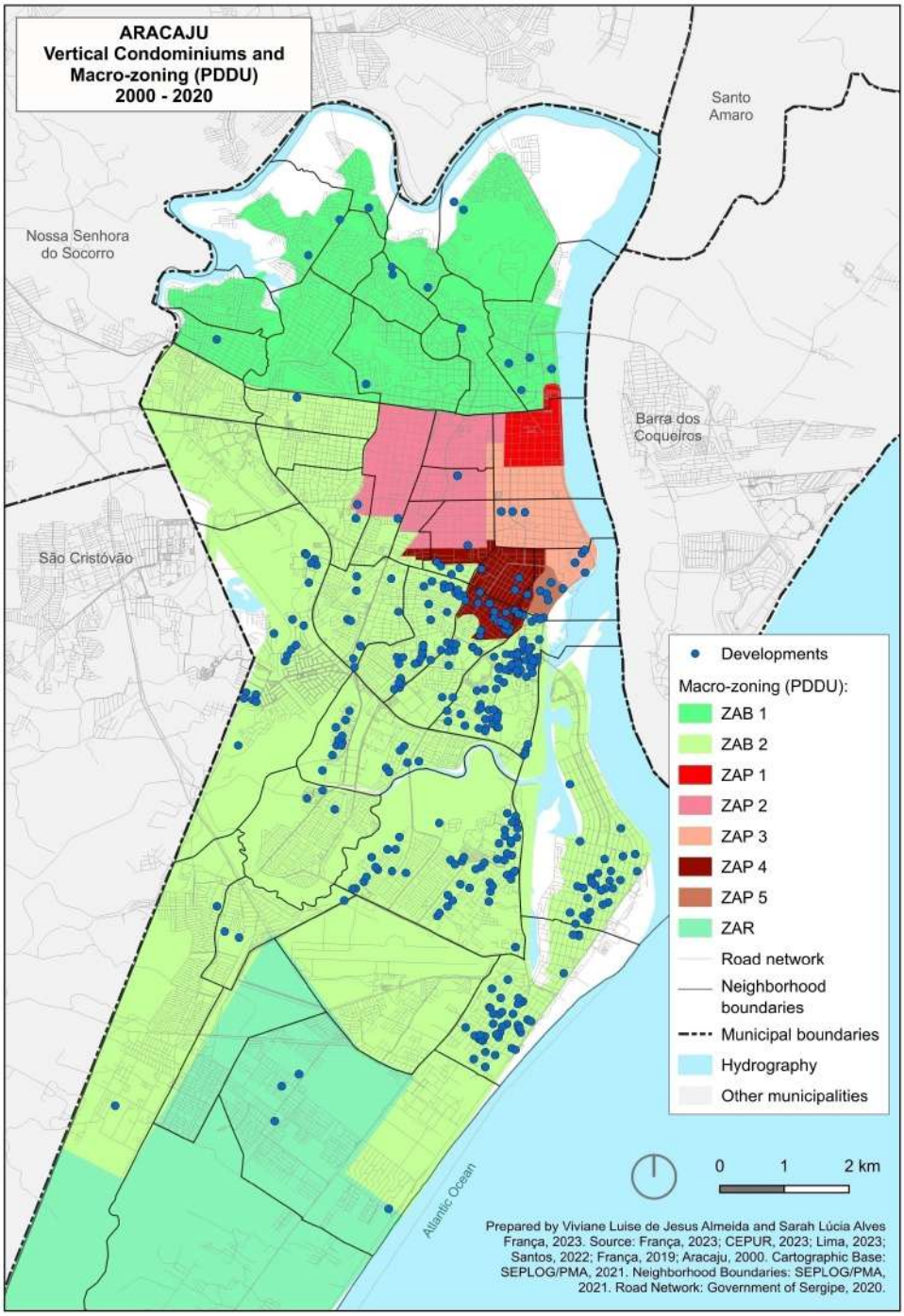
In fact, some aspects have influenced verticalization, such as land use and occupation regulations, which define the areas to be appropriated by the real estate market. One of these is the Aracaju Urban Development Master Plan (PDDU) - Law No. 42/2000 -, which establishes guidelines and instruments, such as macro-zoning, which in turn defines "areas where urban occupation can be intensified and others where it should be restricted" (Aracaju, 2000, p.12), through indices such as the utilization coefficient (UC) and height restrictions.

The overlap of this macro-zoning with the production of vertical condominiums showed that, although these instruments serve to direct and/or control occupation, the single UC of 3, with an exemption of up to 4, resulted in the non-implementation of this control, stimulating occupation in neighborhoods that arouse market interest (França, 2020).

The Basic Densification Zones (ZAB) (ZAB1 and ZAB2) have potential for urbanization, but suffer from a "deficit" in infrastructure, road systems, transportation, commerce, and services. With divergent scenarios, ZAB 1 exhibits more homogeneous occupation, housing lower-income classes in neighborhoods in the northern zone, such as Porto D'Antas, Cidade Nova, and Industrial, which received 9 of the 15 licensed developments. ZAB 2 shows dualities: in the eastern portion, verticalization began in the 1970s, and in the west and south, there is diversity in the population's income and vertical condominiums, as well as in the provision of basic sanitation, public services, and collective facilities. However, it is in ZAB 2 that 299 developments are concentrated, corresponding to 82.14% of the total produced between 2000 and 2020, reaffirming that “the differentiation that should have existed between ZAB 1 and ZAB 2 did not work in practice” (França, 2020, p. 100) (Table 5 and Map 7).

Areas		Area (km²)	%	Developments	%	Apartments	%
ZAP		8,89	5,46	40	10,99	2.108	5,42
ZAB	ZAB-1	21,81	13,34	15	4,12	2.463	6,33
	ZAB-2	53,96	32,46	299	82,14	32.754	84,26
ZAR		79,67	48,74	4	1,09	748	1,92
Total		**163,45**	**100,00**	**364**	**100**	**38.872**	**100**

Table 5 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums X Macro-zoning (PDDU, 2000), 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.



Map 7 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums and Macro-zoning (PDDU), 2000–2020

The Preferential Densification Zones (ZAPs) (ZAP 1 to ZAP5) correspond to the oldest and most consolidated areas of central occupation, with available infrastructure and proximity to shops and services, although it is possible to occupy vacant lots or replace properties (with consolidation, due to the restricted dimensions of the lots). Thus, although the maximum CA varies between 4.00 and 6.00, ensuring possibilities for land multiplication, only 40 developments were licensed, especially in the neighborhoods of São José, 13 de Julho, and Salgado Filho, where residential verticalization began in the 1970s (Diniz, 2003; França, 2019; 2020).

In the Restricted Densification Zone (ZAR) (equivalent to most of the former Urban Expansion Zone), whose concept refers to urban dispersion and discontinuity, the presence of rural characteristics, a deficit or absence of infrastructure, and environmental fragility due to the presence of lagoons, dunes,

sandbanks, rivers, and mangroves, verticalization is sporadic, with buildings of up to 8 floors in the Aruana neighborhood, subsidized by the PMCMV (Almeida, 2022a). The horizontal predominance is the result of a set of factors such as the insertion of housing complexes (PAR) and the trend towards the implementation of horizontal condominiums and gated communities, especially for second homes, particularly close to natural amenities such as the seafront (França, Almeida, and Cruz, 2022), in addition to the determination of the Public Civil Action that restricted the granting of building permits. The result was the licensing of only four vertical condominiums by the real estate market (1.09% of the total), a quantity lower than ZAB 1 and ZAP (Table 5 and Map 7).

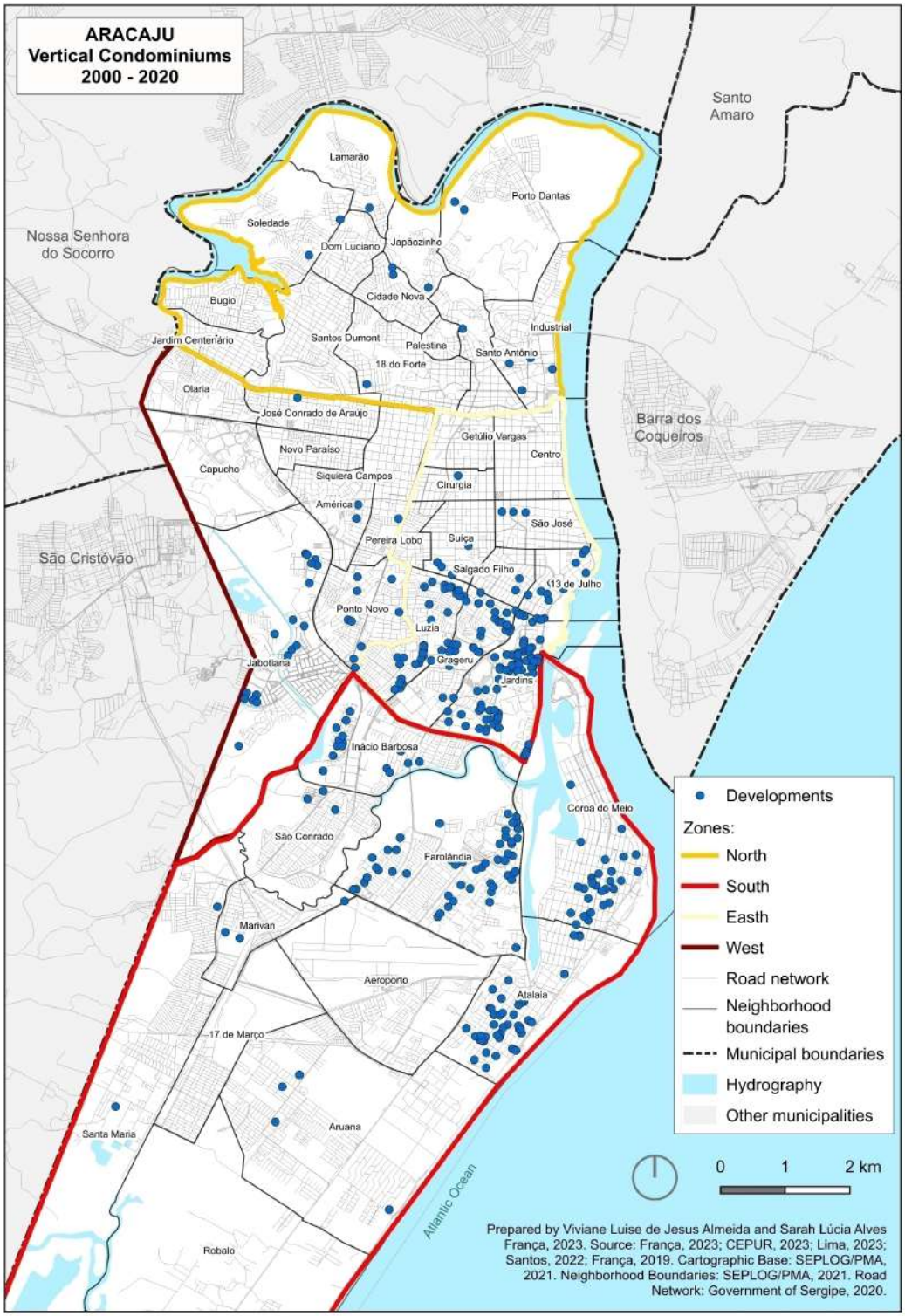
Thus, it was found that the high UC sponsored the reproduction of capital in ZAP 3, 4, 5, and ZAB 2, which correspond to verticalized neighborhoods (Map 7). França (2019, p.151), when comparing the expansion vectors from 1999 to 2014, proved that macro-zoning “continued the trend of the city’s growth towards the west and south, which had been adopted until then.”

Another relevant urban index was the height restriction, which, based on the detailed study by Santos (2022), proved to be a succession of regulatory changes, especially with Complementary Laws No. 62/2003, No. 74/2008, and No. 132/2014, whose distortions began in the 1970s with Law No. 466, Resolution No. 38/1977, and Decree No. 154/1999, creating a “patchwork quilt” in urban legislation and making it difficult for licensing agencies to comply (Diniz, 2003; França, 2020). However, these changes provided opportunities for the reproduction of real estate capital by increasing the number of floors allowed for construction (Santos, 2022).

Two years after the enactment of the Master Plan (2000), whose construction limit was defined by the UC, Complementary Law No. 058/2002 revoked the Building and Urban Planning Codes (plementary Laws No. 43 and 44/2000) due to inconsistencies. As a result, the 1966 Building and Urban Planning Codes and related decrees came back into force, even though they were at odds with the current reality, triggering obstacles to their application (França, 2020). In view of this, Law No. 466/1976 was reinstated, limiting the height of buildings to 12 stories. In 2003, the approval of Complementary Law No. 62 "did not clarify the limitation on floors, and for this reason, there was a high incidence of verticalization," especially in the Jardins, Grageru, and Farolândia neighborhoods (Santos, 2022, p.85).

After five years of this period of "uncertainty in height limits," as Santos (2022) calls it, Complementary Law No.74/2008 expanded the height limit to 16 floors[2] for buildings that used the ground floor and first floor for leisure, services, commerce, and common areas, with the remaining floors being standard floors for residential units, services, or hotels. Complementary Law No. 132/2014 (in force until November 26, 2018) was approved in an attempt to resolve these impasses, combining in one law the height restrictions for the neighborhoods of Coroa do Meio (four stories on the waterfront and eight stories on the other blocks), Atalaia (8 floors on the waterfront and 12 and 16 floors on other blocks), ZEU (2 floors), and other neighborhoods (16 floors), in accordance with Complementary Law No. 74/2008. Finally, Decree No. 5,821/2018 repeals the previous laws, reinstating the Building and Urban Planning Codes (Complementary Laws No. 43 and 44/2000) and giving precedence to the UC as the height limit for buildings (Santos, 2022).

In fact, these determinations mark contrasts in verticalization. Smaller developments, with up to 4 floors (52 condominiums) and 8 floors, are concentrated in neighborhoods that are home to middle-income families in the north (Porto D'Antas, Industrial, Santo Antônio, Soledade), west (Ponto Novo, Jabotiana), and south (Coroa do Meio, Farolândia, Inácio Barbosa, São Conrado, Marivan, and Aruana). Vertical condominiums with more than 12 floors are located in neighborhoods close to facilities such as the Riomar and Jardins shopping malls and natural amenities such as the Sergipe River and the oceanfront: 13 de Julho, Jardins, Grageru, Luzia, Farolândia, and Atalaia. Undoubtedly, Complementary Law No. 74/2008 strengthened the real estate market, increasing the number of floors and, consequently, the number of residential units in most of the 196 developments with 13 to 16 floors in these neighborhoods (Map 8 and Table 6).



Map 8 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Number of Floors, 2000–2020.

Area	Neighborhood	0 a 4	5 a 8	9 a 12	13 a 16	Over 16	w/o I*	Total
East	13 de Julho	-	-	-	10	2	-	12
	Cirurgia	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
	Jardins	-	1	-	65	14	-	80
	Grageru	2	-	-	19	4	-	25
	Luzia	-	1	2	21	4	1	29
	Salgado Filho*	-	1	-	5	2	-	8
	São José	-		-	3	-	-	3
	Suíça	1		-	2	-	-	3
North	Bugio	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Cidade Nova	3		-	-	-	-	3
	Industrial	2	2	-	-	-	-	4
	Porto D'Antas	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
	Santo Antônio	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Santos Dumont	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
	Soledade	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
West	América	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
	Jabotiana	7	2	4	5	-	-	18
	José Conrado de Araújo	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Ponto Novo	-	4	-	5	-	-	9
	Siqueira Campos	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
South	Aruana	-	3		2	-	-	5
	Atalaia	1	13	1	27	-	-	42
	Coroa do Meio*	4	24		1	-	1	30
	Farolândia*	9	8	7	26	-	2	52
	Inácio Barbosa*	10	4	2	2	-	1	19
	São Conrado	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
	Marivan	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
	Santa Maria	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Grand Total		**52**	**68**	**17**	**196**	**26**	**5**	**364**

*In these neighborhoods, there are developments without information, totaling 5 developments.
Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.

Table 6 - Aracaju, Vertical Condominiums, Size of Development by Height, 2000–2020. Source: CEPUR, 2023; 2024; Santos, 2022; França, 2019. Own elaboration.

Thus, urban planning regulations, which should control urban densification and expansion, have served to exacerbate socio-spatial segregation, promoting verticalization in areas without infrastructure and public services, such as Jabotiana. In this sense, it is urgent to enact legislation that considers population density and infrastructure capacity, environmental sanitation, and mobility to ensure quality of life for all.

CONCLUSION

Since 2000, Aracaju has experienced a mode of growth that has led to urban implosion-explosion, which has deepened social segregation, resulting in difficulties for the poorest in accessing public services and infrastructure. On the other hand, the strengthening of self-segregation among the higher-income population, in gated communities equipped with security, marks a heterogeneous city, with diverse forms of housing depending on income levels.

The selection of areas for real estate investment is related to the prior concentration of higher-income populations and greater availability of infrastructure, commerce, and services, as occurs in neighborhoods located on the coast and along the banks of the Sergipe and Poxim rivers (13 de Julho, Jardins, Coroa do Meio, and Atalaia), due to the exploitation of the landscape's potential. In these neighborhoods, the construction of large towers allowed for greater profitability, due to the increase in the number of housing units on a given plot of land. This land fragmentation, brought about by the establishment of condominiums, became fundamental in the advancement of capitalist relations of production in the space.

On the other hand, the real estate sector showed little interest in operating in neighborhoods in the northern zone, marked by popular occupation and precarious settlements, due to "reduced profitability," as these agents point out, although this sector does participate in housing production subsidized by the PAR and PMCMV programs.

In the capital of Sergipe, some medium and large local construction companies have partnered with national and regional companies, or with other local and regional firms, expanding the range of products offered to different social classes in various neighborhoods. Small companies target their products at lower-income audiences in peripheral areas to the north and west, without infrastructure and accessibility, using strategies to capture land income after the installation of the first developments. In these cases, maximizing income by appropriating the benefits incorporated by the state consists of implementing closed developments in neighborhoods far from central areas and waiting for appreciation (Harvey, 1980).

Vertical condominiums for higher income classes are concentrated in the eastern part, especially between the neighborhoods of 13 de Julho, Jardins, and Grageru, and in the south, Farolândia and Atalaia. In areas close to the city center and the banks of the Sergipe River, apartments are AAA and AA standard, and as they move away from these neighborhoods, the apartments are smaller in size and are therefore intended for middle-income groups. In addition to the different characteristics of location and target audiences, the diversity of developers and construction standards resulted in differences in the quality of materials, size, and internal attributes: floor space, room size, number of bedrooms, and number of bathrooms.

Thus, in Aracaju, verticalization occurs heterogeneously in the following areas: 13 de Julho/Jardins/Grageru, Inácio Barbosa/São Conrado, Farolândia/Atalaia, Luzia/Ponto Novo, Jabotiana, Industrial/Santo Antônio. Some of these, such as Jabotiana, Luzia, Ponto Novo, São Conrado, and Atalaia, were marked by a change in the horizontal landscape dominated by single-family homes, which, over the course of these 20 years, were replaced by high-rise buildings.

However, the impasses and contradictions of urban legislation influenced the process of verticalization in the capital of Sergipe, whose land use and occupation control indices allowed access to and appropriation of certain areas, in addition to the implementation of public works and interventions, especially with regard to the road system and the installation of collective facilities. These elements were undoubtedly decisive in the choice of areas appropriated by the real estate market for the construction of vertical condominiums, expanding the possibilities for capital reproduction, but undermining the fulfillment of the city's social function and, especially, the democratization of access to urbanized land.

NOTES

1- Methodology adopted in studies by França (2019), whose classification was adopted based on an interview given by the entrepreneur/owner of a real estate brokerage firm in the capital.

2- This determination should be applied throughout the city, except along the seafront, on the banks of Santos Dumont Avenue, where Law No. 604/1978 established that buildings there should have a maximum of four floors.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Not applicable.

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França, S.L.A. - The author contributed to the elaboration, realization and manipulation of the data.

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