

# The Plains, Georgia Charette

The town of Plains, Georgia was recently the recipient of design services courtesy of the University of Georgia's School of Environmental Design. These services addressed such issues as downtown cohesion, future building development, and recreation. Suggestions were made for facade changes, such as the addition of awnings, to increase the connected feel of downtown buildings. The use of current vacant buildings was suggested to encourage downtown shopping. A bike lane was suggested to integrate the historic and cultural sites of the town with the National Park Service points of interest as an eco-friendly way to accommodate tourists. These suggestions will make the community a more inviting place. The University of Georgia welcomes future opportunities to expand the learning experience of its students, as well as to help make surrounding communities more enjoyable places in which to live.



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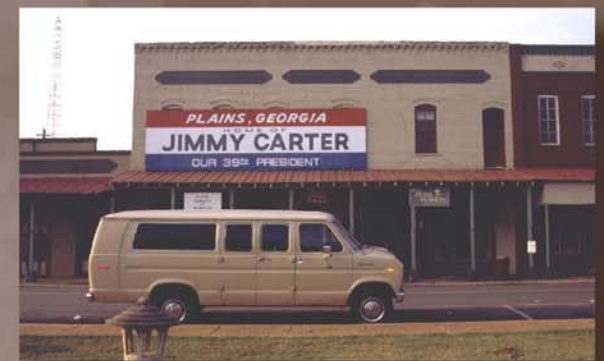
# Community Continuity



By encouraging the adaptive re-use of existing structures in Plains much needed businesses and services can be introduced. The community is missing such services as doctors, restaurants, gas stations, and grocery stores. The demand for these services exists with both residents and tourists, and Plains has a large stock of underutilized commercial buildings that these services can fill.

Steps toward better communication can lead to more community interaction. Some options for enhancing community interaction are: establishing a council of ministers for the city, appointing a liaison resident to assist in the coordination of National Park Service activities, and establishing a community newsletter.

Tourism is a driving force in Plains and should be managed for the benefit of all involved. By encouraging the National Park Service to continue with the plan to interpret Plains as a small, rural southern town, tourism can grow into a full industry. For this to happen, Plains must establish more of the services needed by visitors such as restaurants and inns and consider locating the visitors' center in a prominent location in the city. Other improvements such as streetscapes, extended sidewalks, and bike paths can enhance the tourists' and residents' experiences as well. Developing signage to direct visitors to the existing parking and lead them to points of interest will help to control the presence of tourism in Plains.





# Design Implementation

Some possibilities for ways to implement these suggestions are to create stronger design guidelines and city plans guiding the growth of Plains. To help finance these improvements explore options such as revolving fund loans, tax incentive and abatement programs, and the Community Reinvestment Act. Involve the RDC preservation planners, the Better Hometown Program, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Office of Preservation Services, and the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation in the planning and implementation processes.



Avoid new construction until opportunities presented by existing resources are utilized. For example, use prominently located historic buildings for attractions such as a visitors' center or rural electrification museum.



Design improvements to the streetscape would improve the Plains experience for residents, visitors, and business owners alike. A tree planting initiative with lighting and sidewalk improvements would serve to greatly enhance the character of Plains.



# Downtown Cohesion

One of the main design issues in Plains was the lack of cohesiveness in the Downtown area. The areas adjacent to the main block Downtown were not held to the same design standards and had fallen by the wayside. The design team sought to bring the area across Church Street "into" the rest of the Downtown area by enhancing the area with streetlamps, street trees and facade rehabilitations.



The street lamps, street trees and sidewalk improvements should extend into the surrounding neighborhood to improve pedestrian access to Downtown.

Modern bank is given a more compatible roofline and paint scheme.



Curb cuts can be added to identify parking and add much needed street trees.

Peanut Festival mural adds color and advertising to the blank side facade.

Awnings will add color to the building while shading customers and merchandise.

Larger signage and a recognizable logo clearly identifies the Pharmacy.





# Fire and Police Station

The city of Plains had outgrown its Fire and Police Station and needed a larger facility to keep up with the growth of the town. The city recognized that this presented a unique opportunity to remove an eyesore and contribute a more compatible design to the historic fabric of the community.

The new station building is modeled after City Hall, in a historic gas station across the street, and the brick agricultural warehouses found in Plains.

Any new station design should incorporate a brick facade that faces the street, historically compatible wooden-framed windows, a gabled roof and non interior-illuminated signage.

Include shrubs and other landscaping to soften the asphalt parking area.



The engine garage is modeled after the historic warehouses in Plains. If a brick facade with arched openings is not feasible, a metal addition may be substituted, provided it has a front-gabled metal roof as shown.

If a metal building is used, paint the facade to best match the color of the brick station building. Garage openings may be on either or both sides. Mask any large, blank expanses of wall with tall shrubs.