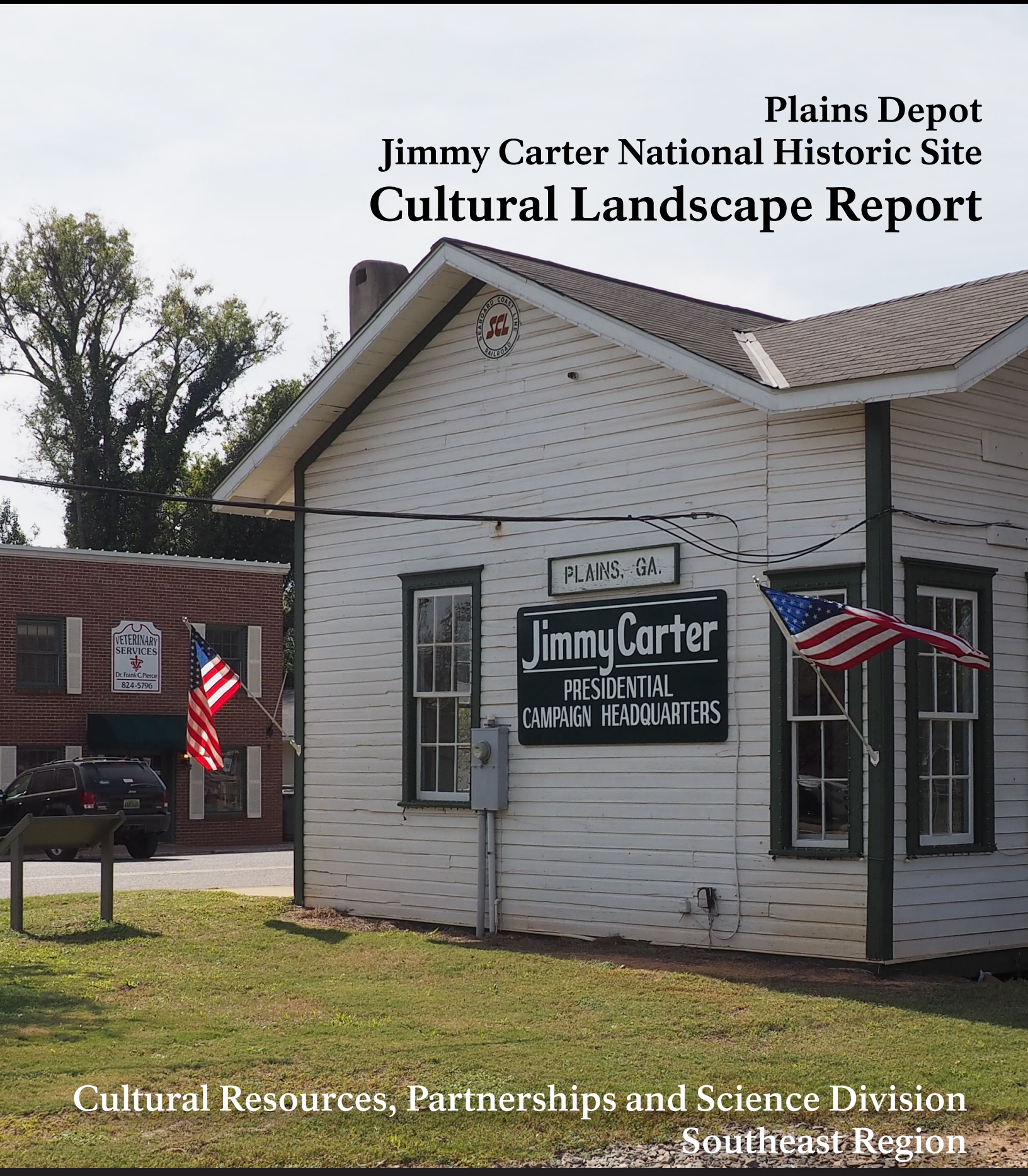
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Plains, Georgia

Plains Depot
Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Cultural Landscape Report



Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division
Southeast Region

Plains Depot

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

Cultural Landscape Report

December 2019

Prepared by
WLA Studio

Under the direction of
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About the cover: Plains Depot, 2018. (Source: WLA Studio).

The report presented here exists in two formats. A printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the National Park Service, and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, this report also exists in a web-based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit www.nps.gov for more information.

Plains Depot

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

Cultural Landscape Report

Approved by : 1/23/20

Superintendent, Jimmy Carter National Historic Site — Date

Recommended by : 2/5/2020

Chief, Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division, Southeast Region — Date

Recommended by : 3/3/2020

Deputy Regional Director, Southeast Region — Date

Approved by : 3/3/2020

Regional Director, Southeast Region — Date

Table of Contents

Foreword xv

Introduction 1

Management Summary 1
Historical Overview 1
Scope of Work and Methodology 3
Description of Study Boundaries 3
Summary of Findings 4

Site History 5

Introduction 5
American Indian History Prior to 1828 5
European and African American Settlement of Southwest Georgia (1828-1865) 11
The Plains of Dura 11
Antebellum Agricultural and Social Traditions 12
The Carter Family in Sumter County 13
The Civil War in Sumter County 13
Early Development of Plains, Georgia (1865-1890) 15
Southeastern Railroad System 15
Post-War Agriculture and Society 18
The Carters in Sumter County 19
Landscape Summary (1865-Early 1890) 19
Growth of Plains, Georgia (1890-1951) 21
Segregation and Race Relations 22
The Depot and the Railroad 23
Modernization of the Agricultural Economy 28
The Carters of Sumter County and Jimmy Carter's Childhood 30
Landscape Summary (1890-1951) 31
Mid-Century Plains and the Carter Campaign (1952-1976) 35
Changing Racial Attitudes and Desegregation 35
Agricultural Change 37
Jimmy Carter Leaves Plains 37
The Carters Return to Plains 38
The 1976 Presidential Campaign 39
Landscape Summary (1976) 43
The Presidency and Plains (1977-2018) 47
Jimmy Carter National Historic Site 52
Landscape Summary (1977-2018) 54

Existing Conditions 59

Introduction 59
Natural Systems and Features 60
Climate 60
Soils 60
Topography 60
Spatial Organization 61
Cluster Arrangement 62
Vegetation 62
Natural Vegetation 62
Cultural Vegetation 63
Buildings and Structures 63
The Plains Depot (CRIS # 91350) 63
Universal Access Ramp 66
Utilities 66
Land Use 67
Cultural Traditions 67
Circulation 67
Vehicular 67
Pedestrian 68
Small-Scale Features 69
Signs 69
Other 72
Views and Vistas 72

Analysis and Evaluation 77

Introduction 77
National Register Status 78
Statement of Significance 79
Period of Significance 80
Treatment Period 80
Analysis of Landscape Characteristics 81
Natural Systems and Features 81
Topography 81
Land Use 82
Cultural Traditions 82
Buildings and Structures 83
Spatial Organization 85
Cluster Arrangement 85
Vegetation 90
Circulation 91
Small-Scale Features 92
Views and Vistas 95
Evaluation of Landscape Integrity 95
Location 96
Setting 96
Design 96

Materials 96
Workmanship 97
Feeling 97
Association 97
Summary 97

Treatment Recommendations 101

Introduction 101
The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment 101
Standards for Preservation: 101
Standards for Rehabilitation: 102
Standards for Restoration: 102
Standards for Reconstruction: 103
Management Philosophy 103
Treatment Period 105
Treatment Recommendations 105
Primary Treatment 106
Treatment Goals 106
General Treatment Issues 106
Interpretation Recommendations 106
Buildings and Structures 107
Spatial Organization 109
Vegetation 109
Views and Vistas 112
Circulation 112
Small Scale Features 114
Archeology 118
Resilience to Natural Hazards 118
Recommendations for Further Research 119

Site Furnishings Appendix 123

Introduction 123
Materials 123
Wood 124
Metal 124
Concrete 125
Stone (Gravel) 125
Brick 126
Colors 126
Site Features 127
Trash & Recycling Receptacles 127
Drinking Fountain 127
Safety Barriers 128
Bike Rack 129
Park Identification Sign 129
Waysides 130

Bibliography 131

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List of Figures

Figure 1.1: JICA park map, modified from original to highlight Plains Depot location 2
Figure 1.2: Enlarged JICA park map, modified from original to highlight Plains Depot location 3
Figure 2.1: The historic environment of southwest Georgia was characterized by long leaf pine savannahs as illustrated here in a painting by Philip Juras. 6
Figure 2.2: Portion of map showing the tribes, cultures, and languages of the United States, prior to colonization 7
Figure 2.3: 1823 map of Georgia and Alabama showing American Indian lands after a period of cessations 9
Figure 2.4: The Burr, David H. Map of Georgia & Alabama exhibiting the post offices, post roads, canals, rail roads & canals 11
Figure 2.5: 1855 map showing Sumter County, and the Plains of Dura on the road between Americus and Lumpkin 12
Figure 2.6: Illustration titled Picking cotton on a Georgia plantation., dated to 1858. Unknown artist. 12
Figure 2.7: Plan of Andersonville Prison. 13
Figure 2.8: 1864 map of Georgia, with the Plains of Dura and nearby railroad clearly indicated 16
Figure 2.9: Depiction of the capitalist control of the booming railroad industry 17
Figure 2.10: 13-year-old sharecropper from nearby Americus 18
Figure 2.11: 1905 photograph of downtown Plains. Note the well in middle of image 22
Figure 2.12: Portion of 1910 Hudgins map of Sumter County. Note the presence of the high school, churches, depot, stables, and railroad line 23
Figure 2.13: Proposal for the improvement of the Plains Depot date July 30, 1910 24
Figure 2.14: Proposal for the improvement of the Plains Depot dated January 10, 1911, with revisions noted as being made in March and April 24
Figure 2.15: Proposal for additions to the Plains Depot dated September 29, 1911 25
Figure 2.16: 1937 aerial photograph, with depot location indicated by arrow 27
Figure 2.17: Section crew of African American railroad workers, sometimes referred to as Gandy Dancers 28
Figure 2.18: Savannah was a major destination for cotton grown in Sumter County 28
Figure 2.19: Early image of peanut cultivation, showing stacking method and African American worker, perhaps named "Polly." Location unknown 29
Figure 2.20: April 1948 aerial photograph of downtown Plains 32
Figure 2.21: February 1951 aerial photograph of downtown Plains. The 1911 depot addition is still intact 35
Figure 2.22: April 1953 aerial photograph of downtown Plains. By this time the 1911 depot addition had been removed 36
Figure 2.23: The mule soon became obsolete on many Georgia farms 37
Figure 2.24: "Jimmy Carter down on the farm in the 1970s." 38

Figure 2.25: Jimmy Carter at a campaign event at the depot in 1976 39
Figure 2.26: A group of the Peanut Brigade marching in the inauguration parade, as shown on a period postcard 40
Figure 2.27: Depot in 1975, prior to campaign use 40
Figure 2.28: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation 41
Figure 2.29: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation 41
Figure 2.30: 1976 photograph of Rosalynn and Amy at the depot. Note extent of gravel and landscaping in background of image 42
Figure 2.31: The Peanut Special pulling up to the Depot in January 1977 47
Figure 2.32: 1977 postcard of the Depot showing landscape improvements related to the tourism operation. Note the "Elect Jimmy Carter" sign atop the signal pole had been removed after the election 48
Figure 2.33: 1977 photograph of the east side of the depot 48
Figure 2.34: Circa 1988 photograph of the depot, showing new NPS signage along South M. L. Hudson Street. Note the absence of the railroad tracks closest to the depot 49
Figure 2.35: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, taken in July 1989 49
Figure 2.36: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, taken in July 1989 49
Figure 2.37: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, taken in July 1989 50
Figure 2.38: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, which was taken in July 1989 50
Figure 2.39: Proposed landscape plan for the depot dated 1999. This plan was never installed, and instead a simpler design—mostly through the addition of a walkway—was installed . 51
Figure 2.40: Proposed landscape plan for the depot dated March 1999. This plan replaced an earlier version and was implemented soon thereafter 51
Figure 2.41: 2006 photograph showing landscape improvements 52
Figure 2.42: Utility work at depot, April 2007. Note uprooted crape myrtle 53
Figure 2.43: Updated interior display, 2018 53
Figure 2.44: The depot and east lawn area in Fall 2018 55
Figure 3.1: Map depicting the extent of the ACF basin 60
Figure 3.2: The landscape subtlety slopes south, shedding water away from the depot building .. 61
Figure 3.3: A slight swale exists between the depot landscape and the adjacent railroad tracks ... 61
Figure 3.4: The adjacent railroad tracks serve as a key spatial organizing feature for the site 61
Figure 3.5: The parking lot serves as a distinct space within the depot landscape 61
Figure 3.6: The depot building serves as the primary organizing feature of the site 61
Figure 3.7: The lawn area east of the depot is another distinct space within the landscape 62
Figure 3.8: Detail of patchy lawn area 62
Figure 3.9: The lawn area east of the depot has a swath of turfgrass and a single crape myrtle tree 62
Figure 3.10: The lawn area east of the depot has a swath of turfgrass and a single crape myrtle tree 63

Figure 3.11: A narrow band of turfgrass is located on the north side of the depot and arcs around the parking lot's west end 63
Figure 3.12: A strip of turfgrass is located near the entrance door 63
Figure 3.13: The depot is located at the intersection of M. L. Hudson Street and Main Street in downtown Plains 63
Figure 3.14: South facade of the depot 64
Figure 3.15: Modern glass entrance door 64
Figure 3.16: West facade of depot 64
Figure 3.17: West facade of depot showing roof overhang 64
Figure 3.18: North facade of depot 65
Figure 3.19: North facade of depot showing projection on east side 65
Figure 3.20: East facade of the depot 65
Figure 3.21: Wide roof overhang 65
Figure 3.22: Roof covering loading platform 66
Figure 3.23: Wood access ramp 66
Figure 3.24: Above ground utilities lines enter into the site from the east 66
Figure 3.25: French drain system along base of south facade 66
Figure 3.26: Interior use of depot reflects interpretive land use 67
Figure 3.27: Tourists and locals alike use parking lot at site 67
Figure 3.28: Former location of railroad tracks and existing adjacent railroad tracks 68
Figure 3.29: A concrete sidewalk runs from the eastern portion of the parking area to the front entrance on the south facade 68
Figure 3.30: Northern platform walkway extension with handrail 68
Figure 3.31: Southern platform walkway extension and associated stairs and handrail. 68
Figure 3.32: Wood access ramp 69
Figure 3.33: Georgia Historic Marker east of depot building 69
Figure 3.34: Locational sign on west facade. Sign is identical to one on east facade 70
Figure 3.35: One of four SCL signs. Pictured sign is located above the doorway on north facade 70
Figure 3.36: Cluster of signs in the southeast corner of the site 70
Figure 3.37: ADA parking sign in parking lot 71
Figure 3.38: Interpretive wayside near southeast corner of the depot 71
Figure 3.39: Detail of concrete curb 71
Figure 3.40: Concrete curbing around the parking lot. 71
Figure 3.41: View of depot looking northwest from downtown Plains 73
Figure 3.42: View of depot from M. L. Hudson Street, looking southwest 73
Figure 3.43: View west along the railroad tracks 73
Figure 3.44: View east along the railroad tracks 73
Figure 3.45: View toward downtown Plains, looking southeast 73
Figure 4.1: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation 86
Figure 4.2: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation 86

Figure 4.3: "Old Railroad Depot, Plains, Georgia, Built in 1890" [postcard] Photo by Carolyn Carter for Hugh Carter's Antiques, Plains, Ga. 31780. No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1975 or early 1976 date of documentation. 87
Figure 4.4: "Old Railroad Depot, Plains, Georgia, Built in 1890" [postcard] Photo by Carolyn Carter for Hugh Carter's Antiques, Plains, Ga. 31780. No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1975 or early 1976 date of documentation..... 87
Figure 4.5: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. 88
Figure 4.6: Plains Depot, looking northwest..... 88
Figure 4.7: 1977 photograph of the east side of the depot 89
Figure 4.8: The depot and east lawn area in Fall 2018..... 89
Figure 4.9: 1975 aerial photograph of the Plains Depot landscape with parking lot indicated. Note the unpaved and undefined parking area..... 93
Figure 4.10: Aerial view of the Plains Depot landscape with parking lot indicated. Note that the parking lot striping has been updated since this image was taken. Also not the presence of the modern walkway edging the depot on the west and south 93
Figure 5.1: Plains Depot Management Zones site plan, extracted from the 1993 General Management Plan for JICA 104
Figure 5.2: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation..... 108
Figure 5.3: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation..... 109
Figure 5.4: Red clay colored sidewalk at Jimmy Carter Boyhood Home, JICA 112
Figure 5.5: Facsimile of a railroad bed along a park walkway using stamped concrete..... 114
Figure 5.6: Rendering of rails and ties embedded inconcrete walkway..... 114
Figure 5.7: Plains Depot site looking east with underutilized crosswalk indicated. 115
Figure 5.8: 1976 photograph of Rosalynn and Amy at the depot. Note extent of gravel and landscaping in background of image..... 115
Figure 5.9: Existing wayside. Note its location away from the walkway, which limits universal access. 116
Figure 5.10: Circa 1988 photograph of the depot, showing new NPS signage along South M. L. Hudson Street. Note the absence of the railroad tracks closest to the depot..... 117
Figure 5.11: Enlargement of site furnishings zone. 120

List of Illustrations

Illustration 2.1 1890-1951 33

Illustration 2.2 1952-1976 45

Illustration 2.3 1977-2017 57

Illustration 3.1 Existing Conditions 75

Illustration 5.1 Treatment 121

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this cultural landscape report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the landscapes and historic structures of National Park Service units in the Southeast Region. A number of individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at Jimmy Carter National Historic Site for their assistance throughout the process. We hope this study will be a useful tool for park management in continuing efforts to preserve the cultural landscape and to others interested in the significance of the park's many cultural resources.

Barbara Judy, Branch Chief
Cultural Resources Planning and Stewardship
Southeast Regional Office
December 2019

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Introduction

Management Summary

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is for the Plains Depot, a 0.32-acre component landscape of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (JICA) in Sumter County, Georgia. On December 23, 1987, Public Law 100-206 established Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, a discontinuous district that included several sites related to Jimmy Carter's life in the Plains area, including the Plains Depot, the Boyhood Home, the Plains High School, and the Carter Home and Garden. The 1993 *General Management Plan* (GMP) for JICA outlines the guiding treatment for the Plains Depot, proposing "to restore the depot so that the visitor can experience and understand the depot as it was in the 1976 campaign period."[1] Specific proposals for interpretation the site include the use of "message repeaters, exhibits, short talks, and videos will allow visitors to experience the excitement of the campaign and see the people who were involved."[2] The GMP also called for the construction of a formal parking area and walkway system to accommodate visitors.

The NPS has since fulfilled these goals through its interpretive programming inside the depot and the construction of the envisioned circulation features. However, the surrounding cultural landscape remains uninterpreted and has not been restored to 1976 conditions. To help guide this process, the GMP proposed the completion of a cultural landscape report for the depot. Therefore, this report aims to provide the NPS direction in the successful restoration of the Plains Depot cultural landscape in keeping with the goals of the GMP and 2013 *Foundation Document*.[3]

In 2015, the National Register accepted the supporting documentation for Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. The property is significant under Criterion A (Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and Criterion B (Association with significant people of the American past). The primary contributing resource to the period of significance within the Plains Depot cultural landscape is the 1890 Plains Depot building, which served as Jimmy Carter's 1976 campaign headquarters. Additional contributing cultural landscape features at the site include spatial organization, historic views, and cultural vegetation.

Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 illustrate the location of the site and of JICA.

Historical Overview

For many generations, American Indians, most recently the Creeks, lived in and around the lands upon which the depot was built. The United States government, in conjunction with the state government of Georgia, forced the ceding of this land through a series of armed conflicts, treaties, and removal policies. By 1828, the land was available for settlement. Sumter County was subsequently formed in 1831 with Americus serving as the county seat. Soon, several small agricultural-based settlements developed, including the Plains of Dura.[4] Over the next several decades, the area evolved to reflect the general political, economic, and social character of the antebellum South, with a plantation system based

1. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District / General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan" (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, September 1993), 11.

2. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, iii.

3. Note that the 2013 JICA Foundation Document does not propose the completion of a cultural landscape report for the depot, and instead proposed that a cultural landscape inventory be undertaken.

4. The settlement known as "the Plains of Dura" first developed in the 1830s north of the present depot site. The settlement's name was derived from a passage in the Bible. After the AP&L constructed the first railroad in the county, residents of the Plains of Dura relocated to the railroad line in order to establish a new town. By April of 1890, to appease business interests, the local post office shortened the new settlement's name to "Plains." The town was officially incorporated in 1896. This document uses to "the Plains of Dura" to refer to the time period before construction of the depot.



Figure 1.1: JICA park map, modified from original to highlight Plains Depot location. (Source: NPS, Harpers Ferry Center).

on the enslavement of African Americans and support of "states' rights" serving as cornerstones of political and economic life. Adherence to these societal lynchpins resulted in the outbreak of Civil War in the 1860s. Jimmy Carter's ancestors were present during and took part in various aspects of this history.

After the Civil War, a railroad construction boom occurred, and soon tracks crisscrossed the state of Georgia. In 1884, the Americus, Lumpkin, and Preston Railroad (AP&L) was chartered, and by 1886, its tracks reached the town of Lumpkin roughly 30 miles west of Plains. At this time, several of Sumter County's small settlements, including the Plains of Dura, Magnolia Springs, Lebanon, and Bottsford, relocated to the new railroad line to take part in the economic possibilities it offered. These communities collectively merged into the town of Plains. In 1888, the AP&L designated Plains as a goods transfer station. This important role necessitated the construction of a new depot in the town, evidently replacing an older one. Workers completed the new depot in May 1890. From this point forward, the depot served as the geographic center and symbolic heart of the town.

Jimmy Carter's life was intertwined with the historical development of Plains, specifically its role in agriculture and community affairs. After spending his childhood on a nearby farm in the predominantly-African American community of Archery, Carter left Plains to continue his education on the way to a career in the military. After his father died, Carter, his wife Rosalynn, and their children returned to Plains to run the family business, which by this time focused on farming peanuts. From here, Carter began his political career. In 1974, after serving in the Georgia State Senate and as Governor, Carter launched a campaign for President of the United States. The campaign used the Plains Depot, which had sat mostly unused since the 1950s, as its hometown headquarters. With his successful Democratic nomination in summer of 1976, the Plains Depot became a national symbol of the campaign press photo ops and campaign events regularly featured the building. With Carter's election to the presidency, the depot became a primary feature of the local tourist industry centered on the life of Jimmy Carter.

Tourism declined while Carter served as president, but the historic importance of the Plains Depot was clearly established by its association with

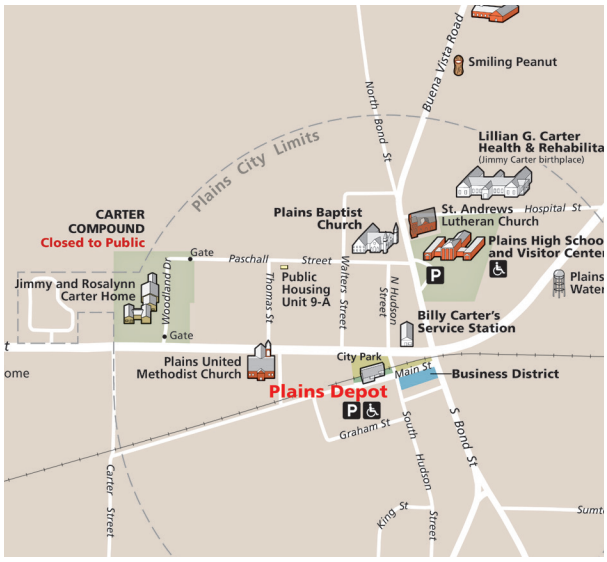


Figure 1.2: Enlarged JICA park map, modified from original to highlight Plains Depot location. (Source: NPS Harpers Ferry Center).

Carter's political ascension. Along with other physical touchstones of Carter's life, the National Park Service (NPS) acquired the Plains Depot to be a component of Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, established in December of 1987. This cultural landscape report aims to fill in the gaps in our understanding of the historic Plains Depot and produce treatment recommendations to guide its future use.

The site history section of this report organizes the site into periods of development. These periods reflect changes in ownership and management of the site.

These periods are:

- American Indian History Prior to 1828
- European and African American Settlement of Southwest Georgia (1828-1865)
- Early Development of Plains, Georgia (1865-1890)
- Growth of Plains, Georgia (1890-1951)
- Mid-Century Plains and the Carter Campaign (1952-1976)
- The Presidency and Plains (1977-2018)

Scope of Work and Methodology

As stated in the project's statement of work, the CLR will (1) describe the historical development of the area; (2) document the existing site conditions; (3) provide analysis of the landscape's potential National Register significance; (4) identify character defining features; (5) determine appropriate treatment strategies; and (6) develop treatment recommendations that facilitate preservation of these resources, address park management concerns, and inform ongoing and proposed management decisions.

The site history included in this report gives an overview of the Plains Depot cultural landscape. Research for the site history included consultation of both primary and secondary sources of information, including documents gathered from JICA archives, Lake Blackshear Regional Library, and the Sumter County, Georgia, courthouse. The existing conditions section provides a comprehensive description of cultural landscape features at the Plains Depot site, including natural and cultural resources. The inventory includes information gathered during site visits by project team members in October 2018. The analysis of integrity section uses criteria developed by The National Register of Historic Places and *The Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* to evaluate the historic integrity of existing landscape resources. The section on treatment recommendations provides guidance for future management decisions related to the site's historic landscape resources.

Primary and secondary sources used in this report include William Patrick O'Brien's 1991 "Special History Study: Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District," Elizabeth Barthold's 1989 Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documentation of the site, and Jimmy Carter's 2001 book *An Hour Before Daylight: Memories of a Rural Boyhood*. Research relied heavily on historical newspapers both digitized online and located in the Lake Blackshear Regional Library in Americus. Information pertaining to the development history, determination of the periods of development, and historical analysis of the resources draws heavily from these sources.

Using information gathered during site documentation field work, this CLR identifies landscape characteristics and associated features that contribute to the historic significance of the site. This CLR compares the historic condition of

a particular resource with its current condition to evaluate its historic integrity.

Description of Study Boundaries

The Plains Depot is located on a rectangular tract of land at the northwest corner of the intersection of South M. L. Hudson Street and West Main Street. This tract is immediately adjacent to and south of the local railroad line. The property is composed of two parcels. The first (Tract 101-02) reflects the footprint of the building itself, while the second (Tract 101-18) consists of the entire site containing the depot building, a parking lot, and open space. The entire property measures 0.32 acres.

The property contains the remaining landscape features associated with use of the depot during the 1976 presidential campaign. Existing features include the depot building, a single crape myrtle tree, and elements of historic spatial organization. Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 show the location and context of the site.

Summary of Findings

The National Park Service acquired the Plains Depot property in 1988 in an effort to preserve and interpret the site for the public as a unit of Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. Now several decades into its ownership, this goal still guides the agency's management of the property. While addressed by various park planning documents, a comprehensive management plan for the Plains Depot's historic landscape had yet to be developed. As such, this CLR serves to guide the NPS in decision making concerning the ongoing stewardship of the Plains Depot cultural landscape.

This CLR assessed the Plains Depot historic landscape in terms of its past and present use. This assessment informed treatment recommendations that aim to guide future management decisions related to the stewardship of the site's historic landscape resources. Focusing on the site's most significant date—1976—this report recommends rehabilitation as the most appropriate choice for the site's overall treatment. A rehabilitation treatment approach preserves historic features, improves features that are in decline, and permits compatible changes at the Plains Depot site. As such, a rehabilitation treatment option allows the park to continue safeguarding the historic character of the site, while allowing changes that increase public use and appreciation of the landscape.

Site History

Introduction

The Plains Depot cultural landscape reflects two areas of United States history: the growth of community planning and development in southwest Georgia and the life of President Jimmy Carter. The history of Plains is closely tied to the railroad, and the depot—the oldest remaining building in Plains—is located in the center of the community. Jimmy Carter has had a lifelong association with the depot and famously used the building as his 1976 presidential campaign headquarters.

Established in the 1830s within recently colonized lands, the Plains of Dura (a biblical place name referencing an area near Babylon) developed as a small agricultural outpost in the western portion of Sumter County, Georgia. Soon, settlers increased in population, starting several other communities in the vicinity. When the AP&L constructed a railroad line that connected the county seat to the Chattahoochee River to the west, several small communities merged and relocated to the route. Here, community members founded the town of Plains by April 1890. The depot was one of the first buildings constructed in the town. Built in 1890 on land donated by a community founder, the depot served as a regional hub and transfer station for people and products alike.

Jimmy Carter knew the depot well, as he often played at the station and caught rides on trains to Americus to visit the movie theater. After a stellar political ascent, in 1974, Jimmy Carter announced his candidacy for President of the United States. The Plains Depot would serve as the campaign's headquarters. Volunteers rehabilitated the depot building and landscape, painting the depot with campaign colors, adding ornamental plantings, and renovating the depot's interior for campaign use. After the campaign, with Carter in the White House, the depot functioned as the office for a local tourism company. In this capacity, the building served the throngs of visitors coming into Plains to visit Carter's hometown. By 1980 however, tourism had dwindled, and soon Jimmy Carter would lose his bid for reelection. The Carter family returned to Plains in 1981.

In 1986, the CSX Corporation (formerly Seaboard Railroad), which still owned the depot, donated the building to the Plains Historical Preservation Trust. Then in 1988, the Plains Historical Preservation Trust donated the depot to the National Park Service, which soon took over maintenance of the building. The stewardship of the depot by the National Park Service over the last 30 years has helped maintain the building's integrity. Today, the depot continues to reflect Plains' developmental history and its association with Jimmy Carter. The following site history outlines the development of Plains and Jimmy Carter's life, focusing on the themes of agriculture, railroad development, race, and politics.

American Indian History Prior to 1828

For thousands of years prior to European colonization of southeastern North America, American Indians inhabited the area now known as southwest Georgia. Here, within the broad Coastal Plain between two large river systems, a dynamic and ecologically-abundant landscape supplied generations of American Indians a place to develop extensive cultural traditions related to kinship, religion, trade, warfare, and use of natural resources. Over millennia, these traditions evolved, adapting to both environmental and societal changes.

Archeologists trace the region's American Indian history back 15,000 years, to the Paleoindian period.[5] Throughout this period, climate fluctuations resulting in varying wet and dry periods influenced the natural environment of the Coastal Plain, especially through compositional

5. William Patrick O'Brien, "Special History Study: Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District" (National Park Service, 1991), 11.

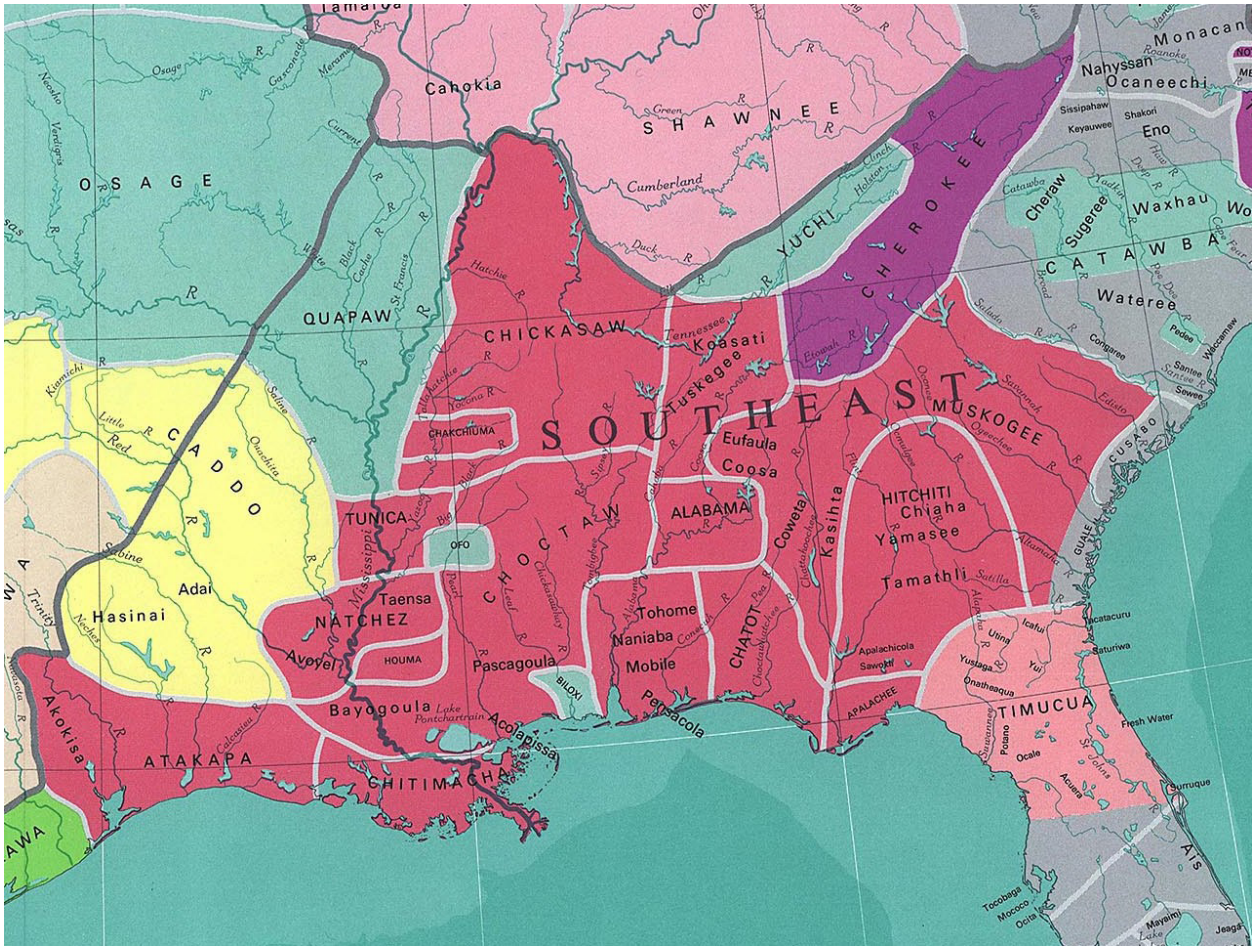


Figure 2.1: The historic environment of southwest Georgia was characterized by long leaf pine savannahs as illustrated here in a painting by Philip Juras. (Source: Backing Fire Wade Tract, Arcadia, Thomasville, Georgia, November 2013, Oil on canvas, 48" x 72"https://www.philipjuras.com/2013/201311backingfire.htm).

changes to flora and fauna communities.[6] In addition to climate, sea level variability affected the flow of inland river systems, "though it seems doubtful that fluvial systems would have been affected to the extent that flowing water was not available in the numerous creeks and river channels of the region."[7] During the Late Archaic period, around 4,000 BCE, the region reflected present-day seasonality, "with high summer precipitation from thunderstorms with frequent lightning strikes."[8] Over time, a landscape characterized as longleaf pine wiregrass savanna developed across much of south Georgia and north-central Florida.[9] This ecosystem was characterized by an "open canopy structure and rich understory of grasses and herbs" and contained "some of the world's most diverse plant communities, along with a unique complement of wildlife."[10]

In conjunction with topography, geology, and the presence of water, seasonal fires served as a "determining factor" in the historical presence of the longleaf ecosystem (Figure 2.1).[11] Though archeological data shows that lightning ignited the majority of the fires, southeastern American Indians also intentionally lit fires in an effort to maintain, and, in some areas, expand patches of grassland.[12] In doing so, they created desired habitat for wildlife while also clearing land for the establishment of agricultural fields.[13] In this way, American Indians of southwest Georgia worked in conjunction with natural cycles to create

6. Daniel T. Elliot and Kenneth Sassaman, "Georgia Archaeological Research Design Paper No. 11: Archaic Period Archaeology of the Georgia Coastal Plain and Coastal Zone," University of Georgia Laboratory of Archaeology Series (Athens, GA, 1995), 18-19.
7. Ibid., 17.
8. Ibid.
9. Reed F. Noss, *Forgotten Grasslands of the South: Natural History and Conservation* (Washington DC: Island Press, 2013), 16.
10. Noreen Parks, "Restoring a Disappearing Ecosystem: The Longleaf Pine Savanna," PNW Science Findings (Portland, Oregon: Pacific Northwest Research Station, US Department of Agriculture, May 2013), 1.
11. Elliot and Sassaman, "Archaic Period Archaeology," 11.; Noss, *Forgotten Grasslands of the South*, 63.
12. Elliot and Sassaman, "Archaic Period Archaeology," 11.; Noss, *Forgotten Grasslands of the South*, 63.
13. Noss, *Forgotten Grasslands of the South*, 67; Charles Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South's Ancient Chiefdoms* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 92.


Cahokia
SHAWNEE
OSAGE
QUAPAW
CHICKASAW
CHEROKEE
YUCHI
CATAWBA
SOUTHEAST
MUSKOGEE
CADDO
TUNICA
CHAKCHIUMA
Koasati
Tuskegee
Eufaula
Coosa
ALABAMA
HITCHITI
Chiaha
Yamasee
Tamathli
Cowetа
Kasihta
CHOCTAW
Taensa
NATCHEZ
Adai
Hasinai
HOUMA
Pascagoula
BILOXI
Tohome
Naniaba
Mobile
CHATOT
Apalachicola
Sawokli
APALACHEE
TIMUCUA
Icafui
Saturiwa
Yustaga
Onatheaqua
Fresh Water
Ocale
Acuera
Gurruque
Tocobaga
Mococo
Ocita
Mayaimi
Jeaga
Ais
Nahyssan
Ocaneechi
Monacan
Sissipahaw
Keyauwee
Shakori
Eno
Cheraw
Sugeree
Waxhau
Wateree
Congaree
Pedee
Santee
Sewee
Cusabo
GUALE
Edisto
Savannah
Ogeechee
Altamaha
Satilla
Cumberland
Tennessee
Duck R.
Hatchie
Yazoo
Big
Ofo
Sabine
Trinity
Neches
Red
Little
Ouachita
Black
White
Arkansas
St Francis
Current
Osage
Gasconade
Meramec
Kiamichi
Akokisa
ATAKAPA
CHITIMACHA
Bayogoula
Acolapissa
Lake Pontchartrain
Pensacola
Escambia
Perdido
Alabama
Tombigbee
Coosa
Tallapoosa
Chattahoochee
Flint
Ocmulgee
Oconee
Savannah
Santee
Congaree
Pee Dee
Yadkin
Dan
Roanoke
Clinch
Holston
French Broad
Catawba
Saluda
Wateree
Wateree
Wateree

pillage.[20] No matter the type of engagement, all interactions resulted in the Spanish exposing American Indians to European diseases for which they had no immunity. The diseases swept through American Indian settlements, decimating local populations and shattering social cohesion. By the time Britain and France expanded their own colonial projects in North America during the seventieth century, the recently reorganized Late Mississippian chiefdoms had collapsed, "leaving the survivors to organize themselves along simpler lines."[21] The fallout resulted in an "incalculable loss of knowledge and traditional practices. Old ways of minimizing the level of violence between and within chiefdoms undoubtedly broke down. Life in the Southeast must have become less predictable and palpably more hazardous. Assailed by Old World diseases and chaotic political and military finagling, the southeastern chiefdoms began their final decline, and the survivors found themselves facing unprecedented challenges."[22]

Southern American Indians who survived the first wave of European colonization then formed what are known as "coalescent societies."[23] Several coalescent societies developed in the region, including the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Catawbas, and, in the deep South, the survivors "integrated into what became known as the Creek" Confederacy.[24] Rather than being a monolithic group, people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds formed the Creek Confederacy, though many spoke variants of the Muskogean language.[25] While the British had assigned the name "Creek" to the group, adding "Lower" or "Upper" depending on the settlement's location, the Creek initially organized themselves differently. As Robbie Ethridge explains, "three protohistoric provinces formed the nuclei for people emigrating from their fallen chiefdoms. One was the Abihka province on the middle Coosa River in present-day northern Alabama; the second was the Tallapoosa province on the Tallapoosa River in present-day central Alabama; and the third was the Apalachicola province on the lower Chattahoochee River in present-day western Georgia. The Abihka and Tallapoosa provinces eventually formed the Upper Creeks, and the Apalachicola province was the nexus of the Lower Creeks."[26]

Totaling around 8,000 in 1730, the Creek population rose over the course of the 1700s. By the late eighteenth century, "73 towns, ranging in size from as few as 10 to 20 families to more than 200 families, comprised the Creek Confederacy—48 Upper Creek towns and 25 Lower Creek towns, in total about 15,000-20,000 people."[27] These towns spread across an expansive swath of territory, encompassing large parts of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.[28]

Throughout the colonization process, relations between Europeans and the Creek varied and

20. Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun*, 30; O'Brien, "Special History Study," 11.
21. Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun,* 30.
22. Robbie Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 22.
23. Ibid., 24.
24. Beth Wheeler Byrd, "Horseshoe Bend National Military Park Cultural Landscape Report" (National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 2013), 7.
25. The federally recognized tribe is the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. According to the national website, "In 1867, the Muscogee people adopted a written constitution that provided for a Principal Chief and a Second Chief, a judicial branch and a bicameral legislature composed of a House of Kings and a House of Warriors. Tribal towns determined representation in both houses of this Legislative assembly. This "constitutional" period lasted for the remainder of the 19th century. A new capital was established in 1867 on the Deep Fork of the Canadian at Okmulgee. In 1878, the Nation constructed a familiar native stone Council House, which remains at the center of the modern city of Okmulgee." "Culture/History – Muscogee (Creek) Nation," accessed August 7, 2019, https://www.mcn-nsn.gov/culturehistory/. According to the tribe's constitution, "The name of this Tribe of Muscogee (Creek) people shall be 'The Muscogee (Creek) Nation', and is hereby organized under Section 3 of the Act of June 26, 1936 (48 Stat. 1967)." "Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek)Nation," accessed August 7, 2019, http://thorpe.ou.edu/constitution/muscogee/index.html.
26. Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*, 24.
27. Ibid., 31.
28. Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1999), 12.

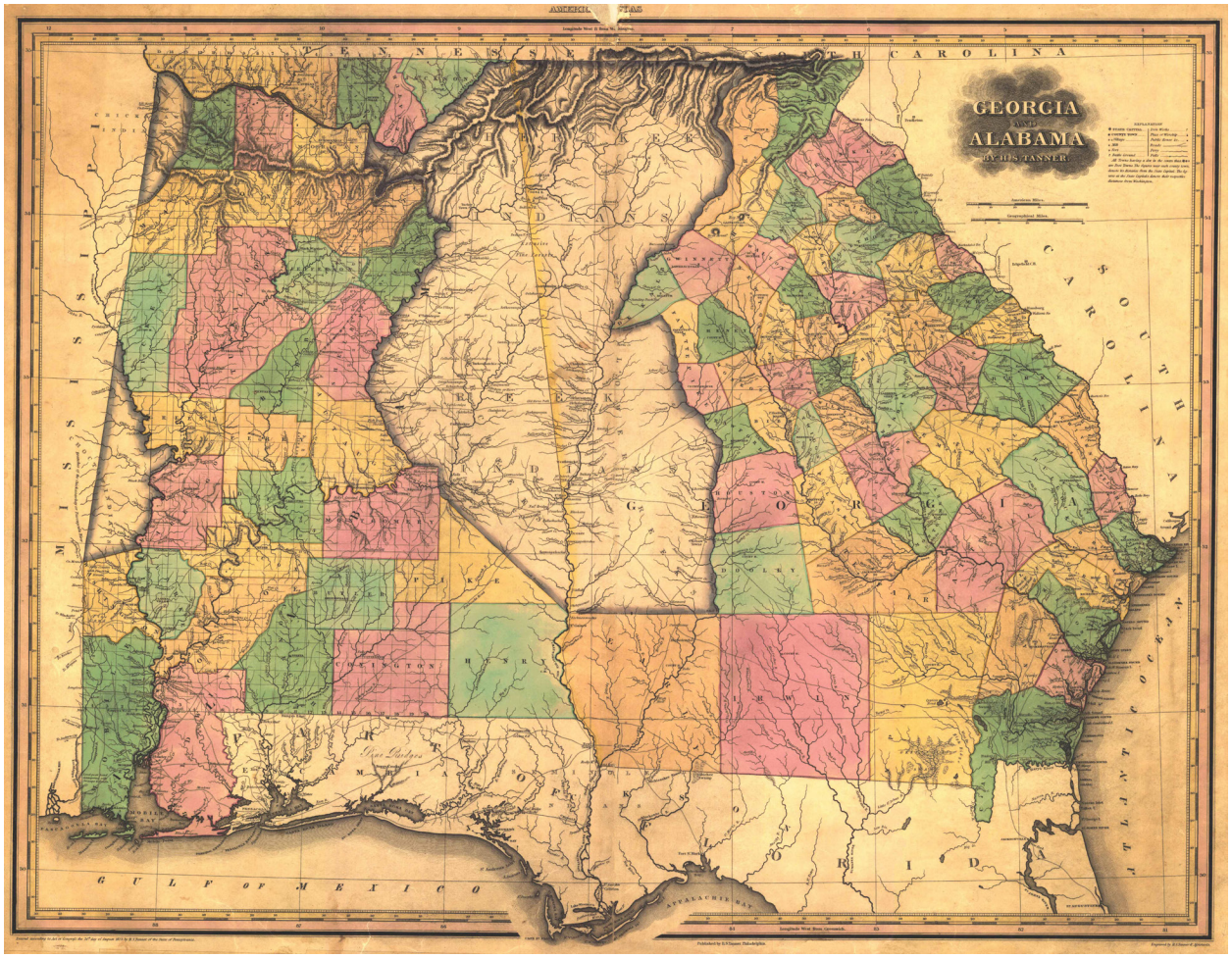


Figure 2.3: 1823 map of Georgia and Alabama showing American Indian lands after a period of cessations. (Source: Georgia and Alabama By H.S. Tanner. Published by H.S. Tanner, Philadelphia. Engraved by H.S. Tanner & Assistants. Entered 20th day of August 1823, by H.S. Tanner Pennsylvania. American Atlas).

evolved. In general, some Creek groups aligned closer with the Europeans and adopted Western forms of political structure, marriage, land ownership, and economy, including chattel slavery.[29] Others sought to retain their traditional culture and homelands and rebelled against assimilation.[30] As part of a continuum of hostilities since European invasion, the division resulted in the outbreak of civil war between the two factions in 1813.[31] While the reasons for the conflict were numerous and complex, "in broad terms, the Creek Civil War was a clash between those building a capitalist nation-state and those fighting against it."[32] Soon, the United States, which the Creek had generally supported during the American Revolution, became involved, waging war on the traditionalists and their black allies.[33] With the support of the United States military, the war ended with the defeat of the traditionalist faction at Horseshoe Bend.

Afterward, the 1814 Treaty of Fort Jackson forced both groups of Creek peoples to cede an immense piece of land containing much of central and southern Alabama and Georgia to the United States, 23 million acres in total.[34] As a result of this treaty and others signed in subsequent years, by 1827, the Creek occupied only a fraction of their former territory—a small area straddling the

29. "Creeks in Alabama," Encyclopedia of Alabama, accessed September 19, 2018, http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1088; O'Brien, "Special History Study," 12.
30. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 13.
31. Byrd, "Horseshoe Bend National Military Park Cultural Landscape Report," 13.
32. Cameron Shriver, "Reflecting on Justice 200 Years after the Creek Civil War," Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective, accessed September 21, 2018, https://origins.osu.edu/milestones/september-2013-reflecting-justice-200-years-after-creek-civil-war.
33. Saunt, *A New Order of Things*, 270.
34. Ibid., 272.

Alabama-Georgia border, including the area that would soon become Sumter County (Figure 2.3). These treaties marked the end of the Creek control of the region; a region occupied by American Indians for over 10,000 years.

In 1830, the United States government passed the Indian Removal Act. Though the federal government offered land and money to the Creek people in exchange for the land, it also maintained the right to forcibly remove any American Indian unwilling to leave the area. Many Creek resisted, but ultimately federal authorities forced those who remained to leave their homeland along the Trail of Tears for reservations west of the Mississippi.

European and African American Settlement of Southwest Georgia (1828-1865)

After the Treaty of Fort Jackson in 1814, American settlers began streaming into southwest Georgia, establishing farms, communities, towns, and counties. Then, following the 1828 Treaty of Washington, "six whites and a free black couple crossed the Flint River at Shelby's Ferry, thus becoming the first non-native peoples of record to settle in the Creek territory that would later become Sumter County."[35] In 1831, an act of the Georgia legislature dedicated a portion of Lee County for the creation of Sumter County (Figure 2.4).[36] Settlers then established a new town, Americus, to serve as the county seat. Most of the initial settlers acquired land through the 1827 state land lottery and "like many of those moving into southwest Georgia at the time, quickly turned their property into cotton farms and plantations."[37]

The Flint River formed Sumter County's eastern border. Concurrent with the settling of the county, the use of steamboats for transporting goods and people along and across the river developed. Though a network of wagon roads crisscrossed the region, steamboats allowed for both faster travel over long distances and the ability to transport a greater volume of goods such as cotton. The Flint River thus connected the Gulf Coast of Florida with the interior of Georgia, facilitating long-distance commerce in the region. Pioneer farmers valued the increased access to markets and situated their nascent agricultural communities in relation to these transportation routes. Soon the population of Sumter County grew exponentially, but "Although the population increased tenfold between 1830 and 1840, with farms making up 80 percent of the countryside, three-fourths of the region remained uncleared for cultivation."[38]

The Plains of Dura

By the mid-1830s, early settlers established a community called the Plains of Dura in the western portion of Sumter County.[39] Though research does not reveal much information about the founding years of the settlement, its location fit within the preexisting cultural landscape. As John H. Goff explains, the "crossroads at Plains of Dura was the intersecting point for two early traces:" Bond's Trail and a former Creek path now known as the Old Americus-Preston Road.[40] Settlers used these routes to traverse the newly-acquired landscape of southwest Georgia.

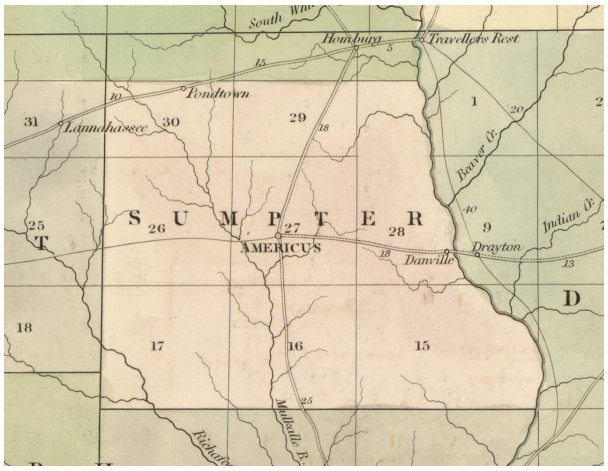


Figure 2.4: The Burr, David H. Map of Georgia & Alabama exhibiting the post offices, post roads, canals, rail roads etc.; by David H. Burr Late topographer to the Post Office, Geographer to the House of Representatives of the U.S. [London, 1839] Map. (Source: https://www.loc.gov/item/98688462/).

The establishment of the Plains of Dura occurred during a period of rapid population growth in the county, resulting in the establishment of several other nearby communities, including Magnolia Springs.[41] The gently rolling topography of the area lent itself to farming, and settlers transformed the preexisting environment into an extensively cultivated and peopled landscape. Though relatively close to the county seat and the Flint River to the east, the Plains of Dura nevertheless "operated as a small agricultural center, isolated and self-sufficient."[42] By 1839, the small community grew large enough to have a post office—one of the first in the region.[43] By the mid-1840s, the community offered "educational facilities of a high order," including a women's boarding school, "where literature, ornamental needle work, and drawing and painting and music were taught by an

35. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 13.
36. John C. Inscoe, "Sumter County," New Georgia Encyclopedia, accessed September 21, 2018, https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/sumter-county.
37. Ibid.
38. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 16.
39. Ibid., 15.
40. John H. Goff, *Placenames of Georgia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 32.
41. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 16.
42. Ibid., 16.
43. Goff, *Placenames of Georgia*, 35.

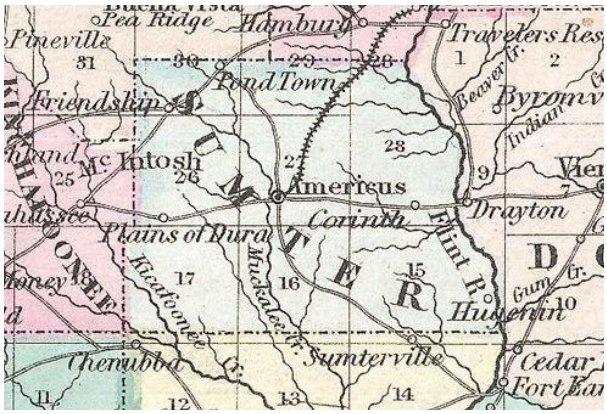


Figure 2.5: 1855 map showing Sumter County, and the Plains of Dura on the road between Americus and Lumpkin. (Source: Cartography Associates, http://www.davidrumsey.com/maps3568.html, "Georgia." Published by J.H. Colton & Co. No. 172 William St. New York. Entered 1855 by J.H. Colton & Co. New York. No. 29).



Figure 2.6: Illustration titled Picking cotton on a Georgia plantation., dated to 1858. Unknown artist. (Source: https://www.loc.gov/item/2002698525/).

accomplished young lady."[44] A 1857 letter to the editor published in a local newspaper celebrated the "lovely," "agreeable," and "healthy" location of the settlement, stating that amidst the collection of homes and buildings of the community, "health, happiness, and true contentment can be found" (Figure 2.5).[45]

Antebellum Agricultural and Social Traditions

The first half of the nineteenth century saw the explosion of cotton production throughout the South. Cotton fetched high prices, and as a result, many farmers in the region grew the crop.[46] As the cotton-based agricultural economy expanded, so did class distinctions between types of farmers, principally between the planter classes and the yeoman farmer class. The planter classes, characterized by their ownership of vast plantations, "by means of social position and money, controlled the political systems of the county and established those social norms subscribed to by the rest of society."[47] The small-scale market or subsistence farmer however, looked at the planter classes as "models to aspire to."[48] Often, these small-scale farmers fell into deep financial hardship attempting to pay off debt incurred by purchasing property or scaling up production. The nature of the credit system, which a period newspaper described as designed to "make the Rich, richer and the Poor, poorer," simply did not allow for widespread upward mobility.[49] Despite these financial prospects, small-scale farmers nevertheless participated in cultural traditions and economic systems that maintained the planter classes' preferred social order, which was one that profited off the enslavement of African Americans.[50]

Like many areas throughout the South at this time, enslaved labor accounted for Sumter County's agricultural prosperity (Figure 2.6). By 1850, nearly 4,000 enslaved African Americans lived in Sumter County, working in the fields and homes of around 400 white land owners, planters, and yeoman farmers alike. By 1860, the enslaved population was around 5,000. Records indicate the presence of several free blacks in the county. At this time, of the principal means of generating and inheriting wealth—and thus socio-political power—was through the institution of slavery.[51] As a result, dozens of Sumter County's small farmers, including the ancestors of Jimmy Carter, who may have not had much wealth in terms of acreage or cash finances, invested what little capital they had in enslaved people and the productivity of their farms.[52]

44. M.B. Pickett, "Reminiscences of the Schools at the Plains of Dura from 1842 to 1860, No. IX," *The Weekly Sumter Republican*, August 8, 1884, Vol. 31, No. 25 edition.
45. "Letter to the Editor," *Weekly Sumter Republican*, May 21, 1857.
46. James C. Bonner, *A History of Georgia Agriculture, 1732-1860* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 53.
47. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 16.
48. Ibid., 16.
49. Bonner, *A History of Georgia Agriculture, 1732-1860*, 57.
50. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 16.
51. Bonner, *A History of Georgia Agriculture, 1732-1860*, 196.
52. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 17.

The Carter Family in Sumter County

Jimmy Carter's matrilineal (Gordy) and patrilineal (Carter) ancestors both came to Georgia between the late eighteenth and early ninetieth centuries.[53] The Gordy Family moved to the area in 1803, and the Carters moved there in 1787. In 1851, Jimmy Carter's patrilineal great-great-grandfather, Wiley Carter, moved from East Georgia to a property 10 miles north of present-day Plains.[54] While the family "may not have become rich, but for the economic standards of the time, they were extremely well off."[55] As Douglas Brinkley explains, by 1861, "Wiley Carter had a thriving plantation complete with six hundred acres of improved land, sixteen hundred acres of unimproved land, two horses, eleven mules, ten head of cattle, 165 slaves, and two graceful two-story houses—one for himself and one for his daughters. Extra money was even generated by opening a slave market only two hundred yards from his home."[56] In this way, the Carters became entrenched within the "social and economic milieu of southwest Georgia."[57]

As part of the Southern slaveholding class, the prospect of slavery's abolition threatened the family's status. For his part, when the Civil War began, Wiley Carter "spent the Civil War growing food for the Confederate Army" and died in 1864, near its end.[58] Three of Carter's children, including Jimmy's great grandfather Littleberry Walker Carter, enlisted to fight for the Confederacy. After the war ended, the boys returned home, with Littleberry taking over operations of the family farm.

The Civil War in Sumter County

While Sumter County did not serve as the stage for any Civil War battles, "with the establishment of Andersonville prison some 20 miles to the northeast of the Plains of Dura, the war took on a new, grisly reality for the residents of the Flint River region."[59] Here, the horrors of the Civil War were concentrated and distilled into a terrible scene that impacted later remembrances of the war

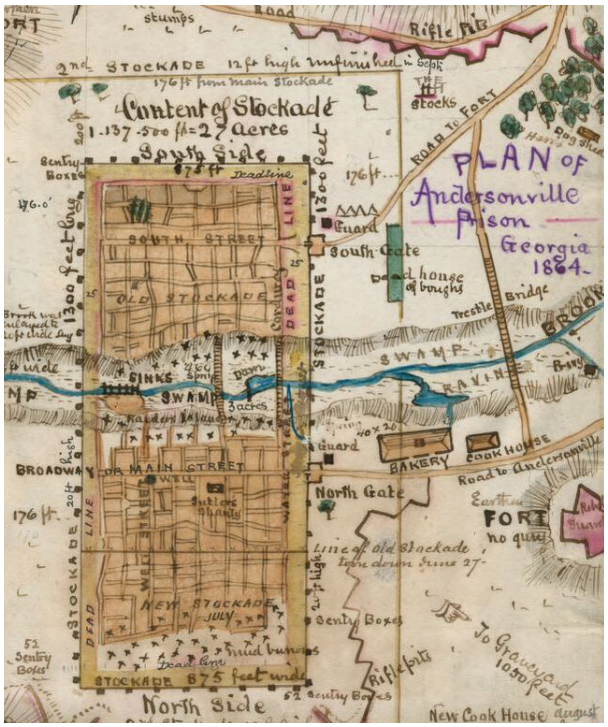


Figure 2.7: Plan of Andersonville Prison. (Source: Robert Knox Sneden. Plan of Andersonville Prison, Georgia. [S.l., to 1865, 1864] Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00179/).

and complicated recollections of the war's ultimate purpose (Figure 2.7). As the National Park Service summarizes,

> Andersonville, or Camp Sumter as it was officially known, was one of the largest of many Confederate military prisons established during the Civil War. It was built early in 1864 after Confederate officials decided to move the large number of Federal prisoners kept in and around Richmond, Virginia, to a place of greater security and a more abundant food supply. During the 14 months the prison existed, more than 45,000 Union soldiers were confined here. Nearly 13,000 died from disease, poor sanitation, malnutrition, overcrowding, and exposure to the elements.[60]

It is probable that Sumter County farmers produced crops for the military prison. In this way, the prison was not an isolated outpost but linked to the daily lives of those who lived nearby. After the war ended and word spread about the conditions of the camp, a moral outrage among Northerners coalesced, prompting a spirited Southern defense

53. Ibid., 14.
54. Douglas Brinkley, "A Time for Reckoning: Jimmy Carter and the Cult of Kinfolk," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29, No. 4 (1999): 786, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27552049.
55. Ibid., 786.
56. Ibid., 787.
57. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 17.
58. Brinkley, "A Time for Reckoning: Jimmy Carter and the Cult of Kinfolk," 787.
59. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 18.
60. National Park Service, "Andersonville National Historic Site Foundation Document" (National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 2014), 3.

of the prison. While the prison came to serve as a "blot on Southern honor" for some, for others, the attitude was that the "Yankee prisoners got what they deserved" or simply that the allegations of mistreatment were greatly exaggerated.[61] Such debates over the Civil War, its events, heroes, villains, and causes continued well after the war's end and shaped how Reconstruction transpired at both national and local levels.

61. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 20; Brinkley, "A Time for Reckoning: Jimmy Carter and the Cult of Kinfolk," 790.

Early Development of Plains, Georgia (1865-1890)

In the Flint River region, as elsewhere in the South, the upheaval caused by the Civil War presented an opportunity for sweeping economic, political, and social change. Millions of freed African Americans envisioned a future where they could work, raise families, and socialize, fully taking part in American society. Poor white farmers looked to climb out of the debt and insecurity that accompanied their agricultural operations. However, the wishes of both working class blacks and whites faced major obstacles as attempts to institute equality met fierce resistance. Throughout the recently reunified country, the passage of racially discriminatory laws, often enforced with violence, curtailed African American's rights of assembly, voting, and employment. The intensification of a capitalist economic system that did not include equitable use and allocation of resources further undermined progressive change.[62] Though producing some notable achievements, the Reconstruction era proved to offer only limited advances in creating equity across class and race.[63] Regardless of its social and environmental costs, the period ushered in revolutionary advancements in industrial technology and agricultural science that not only influenced the development of cities and farms but also provided new opportunities for wage work and massive economic gains for investors.[64]

In the Flint River region, the expansion of the railroad network and a new agricultural system based on sharecropping and crop diversification served as the catalyst for the region's economic recovery, although both relied on the continued exploitation of human labor.[65] The manufacturing industry also came to the region, as demonstrated by the post-war establishment of a steam-powered shoe factory located in the Plains of Dura that employed hundreds of workers.[66] Despite the unequal distribution of the benefits of the economic transformation, the Reconstruction era nevertheless profoundly affected the development of southwest Georgia and the growth of the Plains of Dura.

Southeastern Railroad System

In 1833, workers for the South Carolina Canal and Rail Road Company completed the first railroad in the Southeast.[67] Running 136 miles from Charleston to Hamburg, South Carolina, its construction initiated a series of other railroad projects as entrepreneurs, bankers, industrialists invested in the creation of a railroad network throughout the South. Railroads first appeared on the Georgia landscape in 1835, with the construction of the Central Rail Road of Georgia, which later became the Central of Georgia Railway.[68] The line eventually extended from Savannah to Macon, enabling the transport of cotton and other goods to both domestic and foreign markets. Even though the economic panic of 1837 slowed construction for a time, by the 1850s, railroads began to "cover much of the South," including substantial portions of Georgia.[69]

In 1845, railroad executives conceived of a railroad connecting Macon, the economic hub of Middle Georgia, with the agricultural communities of southwest Georgia. The appropriately named Southwestern Railroad was one of the first railroads to cross into southwest Georgia.[70] Construction on the line started in 1848, with the Southwestern's enslaved workers laying miles of track over the next several years.[71] By 1852, "rails had been laid from Macon only as far as the Flint River at Oglethorpe. The next year the line was extended to Americus, aided by a $75,000 investment by Americus citizens."[72] By this time, Georgia contained more miles of rail track—643—than any other southeastern state.

62. William J. Cooper Jr., Thomas E. Terrill, and Christopher Childers, *The American South: A History*, Fifth Edition, vol. II (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), 492; William D. Bryan, *Price of Permanence: Nature and Business in the New South*, Environmental History and the American South (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 179.
63. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, II:439–40.
64. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 21.
65. O'Brien, 21; Bryan, *Price of Permanence: Nature and Business in the New South*, 175.
66. M.B. Pickett, "Reminiscences of the School at the Plains of Dura."
67. William J. Cooper Jr., Thomas E. Terrill, and Christopher Childers, *The American South: A History*, Fifth Edition, vol. I (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), 345.
68. Steve Storey, "Railroads," New Georgia Encyclopedia, accessed September 27, 2018, https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/business-economy/railroads.
69. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, 2017, I:345.
70. "Southwestern Railroad," accessed September 27, 2018, https://railga.com/souwest.html.
71. The Southwestern Company "was the third largest slaveholder in the state." "Southwestern Railroad."
72. "Southwestern Railroad."



Figure 2.8: 1864 map of Georgia, with the Plains of Dura and nearby railroad clearly indicated. (Source: Lloyd, James T. Lloyd's topographical map of Georgia from state surveys before the war showing railways, stations, villages, mills, &c. New York, J. T. Lloyd, 1864. Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/99447154/).

The Civil War interrupted this initial period of railroad development and resulted in the destruction of much of the railroad network in the South.[73] After the war, "investors began building new lines and acquiring existing railroads, consolidating them into larger systems."[74] Many of the new lines extended into previously unserviced areas such as western Sumter County.

Plains and the Railroad

Several years after the war, the Southwestern Railroad leased the line to the Central Railroad and Banking Company.[75] By this time, the line stretched from Macon to Eufaula, Alabama (Figure 2.8).[76] The leased line remained the only railroad in the area for over a decade. The virtual monopoly meant that "the South Western, and its lessee, the Central Railroad, were able to charge what Sumter County residents believed to be 'unjust tariffs,' thus causing a decline in business," especially for citizens of Americus.[77] A dispute between Americus' business community and the railroad resulted in the railroad excluding Americus on the train's printed timetable, further impacting business. Frustrated by these actions, a wealthy lawyer and banker from Americus, Samuel Hugh Hawkins, financed the creation of a narrow-gauge short line railroad to connect Americus with transportation options on the Chattahoochee

73. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, 2017, II:455.
74. Storey, "Railroads."
75. Lee Kinnamon, "History Of The Historic SAM Shortline Railroad," *Historic SAM Shortline Railroad* (blog), accessed September 28, 2018, https://samshortline.com/history/.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.



Figure 2.9: Depiction of the capitalist control of the booming railroad industry. (Source: Keppler, Joseph Ferdinand, Artist. The modern colossus of rail roads / J. Keppler., 1879. New York: Published by Keppler & Schwarzmann. https://www.loc.gov/item/2014645351/).

River.[78] Residents of Americus also contributed to the cause, raising $42,000.[79] In 1884, the Americus, Lumpkin, and Preston Railroad (AP&L) was chartered, and by 1886, its tracks reached the town of Lumpkin across Sumter County's western border. The AP&L line expanded eastward over the next several years, connecting to the Ocmulgee River in 1887.[80]

The railroad presented new opportunities for the residents of Sumter County. After the construction of the railroad south of the Plains of Dura, the community, along with nearby Magnolia Springs, Lebanon, and Bottsford, decided to relocate to the line the following year, purchasing land owned by Milton Leander Hudson and Carey Cox.[81] Though research does not reveal much about the landscape of the new settlement location, it reportedly featured some amount of woods, which was preserved as a local park named "The Grove."[82] As railroad historian Steve Storey explains, the move reflected a common trend in settlement at this time:

> The growth in the number of towns engendered by the railroads was due in part to the steam trains' need to stop frequently for water (to be converted into steam) and fuel (first wood, later coal). Once the railroads came through an area, towns grew up along them, frequently at points where trains would stop for water and fuel. A depot would be built and businesses would locate nearby to take advantage of the concentration of potential customers. Other businesses would be established to provide such services as lodging, saloons, livery stables, blacksmiths, warehouses, and milling. Eventually a town or city would develop. Often a city would be incorporated with its boundaries legally defined as a circle with the railroad depot in the center.[83]

This period marks the beginning of a railroad "golden era," during which "lines expanded, railroad technology improved, and revenues grew."[84] Throughout, investors and executives established new lines, consolidated older ones, and merged rival companies (Figure 2.9). As part of this trend, in 1888, AP&L executives established a route between Savannah and Montgomery, Alabama. As a result, the company changed its to the Savannah, Americus & Montgomery Railway (SA&M). As Edward A. Johnson explains, the expansion "involved upgrading the original narrow gauge (3' - 0") track to standard gauge (4' - 8.5"), construction of a bridge over the Chattahoochee River, construction of additional trackage, and arranging for trackage rights into Savannah. When completed the railroad covered 340 miles. The railroad's economic impact was quickly felt in the rural areas east and west of Americus."[85]

78. Lucian Lamar Knight, *A Standard History of Georgia and Georgians*, vol. 6 (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1917), 3246.
79. Elizabeth Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data" (Washington, D.C.: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), National Park Service, 1989), 2.
80. "Americus, Preston & Lumpkin Railroad," accessed October 1, 2018, https://railga.com/apl.html.
81. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 20–21; Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 2.
82. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 121.
83. Storey, "Railroads."
84. Kinnamon, "History Of The Historic SAM Shortline Railroad."
85. Edward A. Johnson, "Samuel H. Hawkins Diary, January - July 1877: Historical Note," accessed October 4, 2018, http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/hawkins/history.php.



Figure 2.10: 13-year-old sharecropper from nearby Americus. (Source: Lange, Dorothea, photographer. Thirteen-year old sharecropper boy near Americus, Georgia. Americus. Georgia Sumter County United States, 1937. July. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017770438/).

In this way, the introduction of a railroad into an area was often mutually beneficial to both communities and railroads. This was especially the case for the Plains of Dura, as in 1888, "the [SA&M] announced that Plains would become a transfer station for all goods being shipped west," a major economic boon for the community.[86]

Post-War Agriculture and Society

That the SA&M selected the Plains of Dura to serve as a transfer station highlights its agricultural prosperity following the Civil War. Much of this prosperity resulted from cotton production. At this time, "[c]otton lay at the nucleus of Southern social, political, and economic life: the ownership and use of land, obtaining and controlling labor, the rise and fall of individual fortunes as measured by pocketbooks and place in society, and how far the South would distance itself from its antebellum roots and the destruction of war and defeat."[87] In order to maintain "King Cotton," a new agricultural system based on tenancy and sharecropping developed on the farms and plantations throughout the South (Figure 2.10). Though many African Americans left the fields for work in cities, many others returned to (or stayed on) the same plantations that had previously enslaved them, switching to tenancy or sharecropping.

Tenant farming meant that a prospective farmer rented a piece of land, often along with a house, from a landowner in order to grow crops for market. The tenant then paid rent to the landowner upon selling their crop. Tenant farmers often owned their own means of production, such as animals, seed, and plows, which allowed tenants to better negotiate prices with the landowner. Because of this autonomy, tenant farmers preferred this arrangement to sharecropping, which developed at the same time. Sharecropping left smaller farmers in a more precarious position, as in

86. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 3.

87. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, 2017, II:456.

exchange for their labor, the farmer received some portion of the crop. This portion was typically half, but this varied depending on the availability of labor.[88] Black sharecroppers still favored sharecropping to being paid in cash, as they "believed it allowed them a place in the decision making on the farm and hence greater personal freedom."[89] As a Sumter County sharecropper John Lundy relayed, with sharecropping "you wouldn't make more money but you'd have more pleasure."[90] Lundy continued, "Yeah, see wages, you'd farm every day. And a sharecropper, along this time of year, we'd be gathered up and we didn't have anything to do but fish and hunt. . .On them rainy days and cold days, we'd be in the house. But wages—you've got to be there, you know, you're straight time."[91] However, even with (limited) participation in decision making and having the flexible the social, political, and economic power remained with white landowners, who exerted control over farm laborers through various legal and extralegal means.[92] For this reason, some recently freed African Americans opted to not participate in this new system altogether, purchasing land and establishing autonomous farmsteads.

An 1870 newspaper article highlighted the acrimony between the black sharecroppers and the white owners of the farms they worked on in the Plains of Dura, stating:

> [A]t a meeting of colored people held at the Plains of Dura, on Wednesday last, several of the speakers advised their race not to work on the farms of any of the whites, for less than one-half the crops, and the proprietors to pay the entire expense of the farm and furnish their rations. They also said that they would not vote for any white man for office, and if any of their color did, and could be found, they would kill them.[93]

As African Americans worked to secure their own prosperity, many white landowners saw such changes related to the agricultural system as "threatening to the established systems of society and government."[94] Fear of change led to the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, which as early as 1884, had a presence in the Plains area.[95]

The Carters in Sumter County

After the Civil War, the Carters of Sumter County attempted to adjust to the new social and economic order. The transition did not come easy, not simply because of a changing world, but because of family tragedy. Littleberry Walker Carter was shot to death over a business dispute in 1873.[96] Littleberry's wife, Diligence, in shock of her husband's death, died on the day of Littleberry's funeral.[97] The deaths of Littleberry and Diligence meant that their four children, including Jimmy Carter's grandfather William (Billy) Archibald, became orphans left to take care of themselves. William Carter was 15 years old. In the late 1880s, William moved from the family farm, purchasing a property in Early County, southwest of Plains. Here, he and his wife Nina Pratt established a family of five, which included James Earl, who would eventually become the father of the future president.[98]

Landscape Summary (1865-Early 1890)

Little is known about the character of the depot landscape between 1865 and 1890. Prior to its acquisition by the AP&L, wealthy land-owner and town founder M. L. Hudson owned the property. Deed records do not contain reference to any improvements made to the property, nor is there an accompanying plat map. However, it is possible, though unconfirmed, that after the completion of the railroad in 1886, the railroad company constructed a first depot on the lot. Railroad timetables listed the Plains of Dura as a stop by March 1886.[99] The following year, a local newspaper notes the presence of a "depot" existing in Plains.[100] In 1888, the SA&M selected the Plains of Dura as a goods transfer station, elevating the

88. Ibid., II:459.
89. Ibid.
90. John Lundy, interview by Ed Bearss, December 18, 1985, 4, JICA Archives.
91. Lundy, interview, 5.
92. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, II:456-459.
93. "Bad Advisors," *The Weekly Sumter Republican*, December 16, 1870, Vol. 17, No. 43 edition.
94. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 22.
95. "Kuklux in Limbo," *The Weekly Sumter Republican*, February 29, 1884.
96. Brinkley, "A Time for Reckoning: Jimmy Carter and the Cult of Kinfolk," 793.
97. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 21.
98. Ibid., 21.
99. "A.P.& L Railroad Schedule," *Americus Weekly Recorder*, March 4, 1886.
100. "Special Schedule," *Americus Daily Recorder*, August 24, 1887.

status of the town.[101] This role likely necessitated the presence of a physical depot building or a loading platform of some size. It is possible that this building or structure was located on the present-day depot lot. By the end of this period, owing in large part to the presence of the railroad, the town now known simply as "Plains" underwent rapid growth, adding a small downtown center, featuring businesses, churches, and warehouses.

101. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 3.

Growth of Plains, Georgia (1890-1951)

By April of 1890, a local newspaper noted that "our post office at this place is no longer Plains of Dura, but simply Plains."[102] Dropping the biblical reference from the town's name was reportedly for "the convenience of the new businesses in the town."[103] Plains proceeded to grow rapidly, adding a "row of single-gabled white [*sic*] frame structures on the south side of the track, that in time, would be replaced by more substantial, two storied brick buildings."[104] Contemporaneously, "residential neighborhoods developed to the north and south of the railroad tracks."[105] In May of 1890, workers completed the construction of a new depot in Plains, possibly replacing an older depot. With the town growing and population increasing, Plains incorporated in 1896.[106] Residential and commercial growth continued into the twentieth century.[107]

Like other small railroad towns, Plains' limits radiated outward from the depot, placing the building at the center of the town. As historian John Stilgoe explains, "in the years after 1880, railroad depots became the hubs of small-town life; around them developed businesses dependent on train transportation, and in them converged people anxious to learn the latest telegraphic news, to greet travelers from the corridor, and to depart from traditional life to the mysteries of the Pullman sleepers and underground terminals. No longer did the general store, barber shop, and post office focus small-town life."[108]

By 1910, Plains contained a number of new establishments, including the depot and row of commercial buildings, as well as a hotel, stable, warehouse, tannery, bank, shoe factory, telegraph office, high school, post office, and several churches (Figure 2.11 and Figure 2.12).[109] A 1913 newspaper article notes that "the ring of the hammer is heard here every day…Taken altogether this is one of the busiest building seasons that has been known here in some time."[110] By the end of the decade, the city added a water works and electrical plant.[111] Wise Sanitarium, constructed in 1921, was a modern health facility. While the commercial enterprises served as the physical representative of the town, agriculture remained its foundation, though its resilience in this position was repeatedly tested, most dramatically by the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The Great Depression hit the growing agricultural community hard, as cotton prices plummeted while the costs of the means of production remained the same. Many of those who left the farms the previous decade to work in the industrializing cities returned to Plains. Jimmy Carter recalled that he "didn't know of anyone actually starving, but malnutrition and other ravages of poverty were prevalent in our community. Our shared concern brought us closer together while, paradoxically, the intensity of our competition for jobs and income increased the suffering of the weaker and more helpless among us."[112] Many area farmers lost their land to foreclosure, resulting in absentee ownership of "most of the land surrounding Plains."[113] Government interventions through New Deal programs reduced the amount of crops farmers could produce, further changing Sumter County's agricultural landscape. "For the former day laborers, tenant farmers, merchants, equipment dealers, cotton ginners, warehousemen, and local bankers, it was almost as though a substantial portion of our community had been wiped off the map."[114] World War II led to additional hardships through shortages and the disruption of daily life. While Plains and the rest of the South eventually recovered from the ravages of the economic depression and the challenges of wartime, by 1950, the region emerged significantly transformed through both economic and societal changes.

102. "From Plains," *Americus Weekly Recorder*, April 18, 1890.
103. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 3.
104. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 22.
105. Andrea Niles, "Plains Historic District" (National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, 1984), 3.
106. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 22.
107. "New Homes Are Going Up At Plains," *Americus Daily Times Recorder*, March 20, 1912.
108. John R. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 193.
109. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 22.
110. "Building Boom Is Now On At Plains," *Americus Daily Times Recorder*, May 14, 1913.
111. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 22.
112. Jimmy Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight: Memories of a Rural Boyhood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 63.
113. Ibid., 66.
114. Ibid., 67.



Figure 2.11: 1905 photograph of downtown Plains. Note the well in middle of image. (Source: JICA Archives, Carter Family Photograph Album; Accession No. JICA-19; Catalog No. JICA-935; Date of Photograph: 1905; Photographer: Unknown).

Segregation and Race Relations

Throughout the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, white business owners operated the majority of downtown commercial businesses—the brick row lining Main Street—and these businesses mostly catered to white patrons. Further, town politics remained the sole province of white men. Though the town's business and politics were dominated by the white community, this did not inhibit the development of African American businesses however, and black proprietors established a "cluster of four small segregated stores just south of the intersection of Main and South Hudson Streets," one block south of the town depot.[115] Not only were these businesses segregated, but so were the town's churches, schools, medical facilities, and funeral services.[116] Thus, African American life in Plains developed "separate and culturally estranged from the dominant white society," though interactions between black and white people in a small rural town were a constant of daily life, especially on the area's farms such as the Carter's.[117]

Daily interactions between white and black people in Plains and Archery generally followed established societal norms and customs, which were typically enforced by social pressure as opposed to outright violence. As Jimmy Carter recalled, racial segregation was "accepted like breathing or waking up in Archery every morning," with both white and black residents, with few exceptions, following the "rules."[118] Still, repeated flare ups of violence and intimidation in nearby towns served as a reminder of the costs of challenging the existing racial hierarchy. This period marks the height of the lynching epidemic

115. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 24.
116. Ibid., 24.
117. Ibid., 24.
118. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 96.

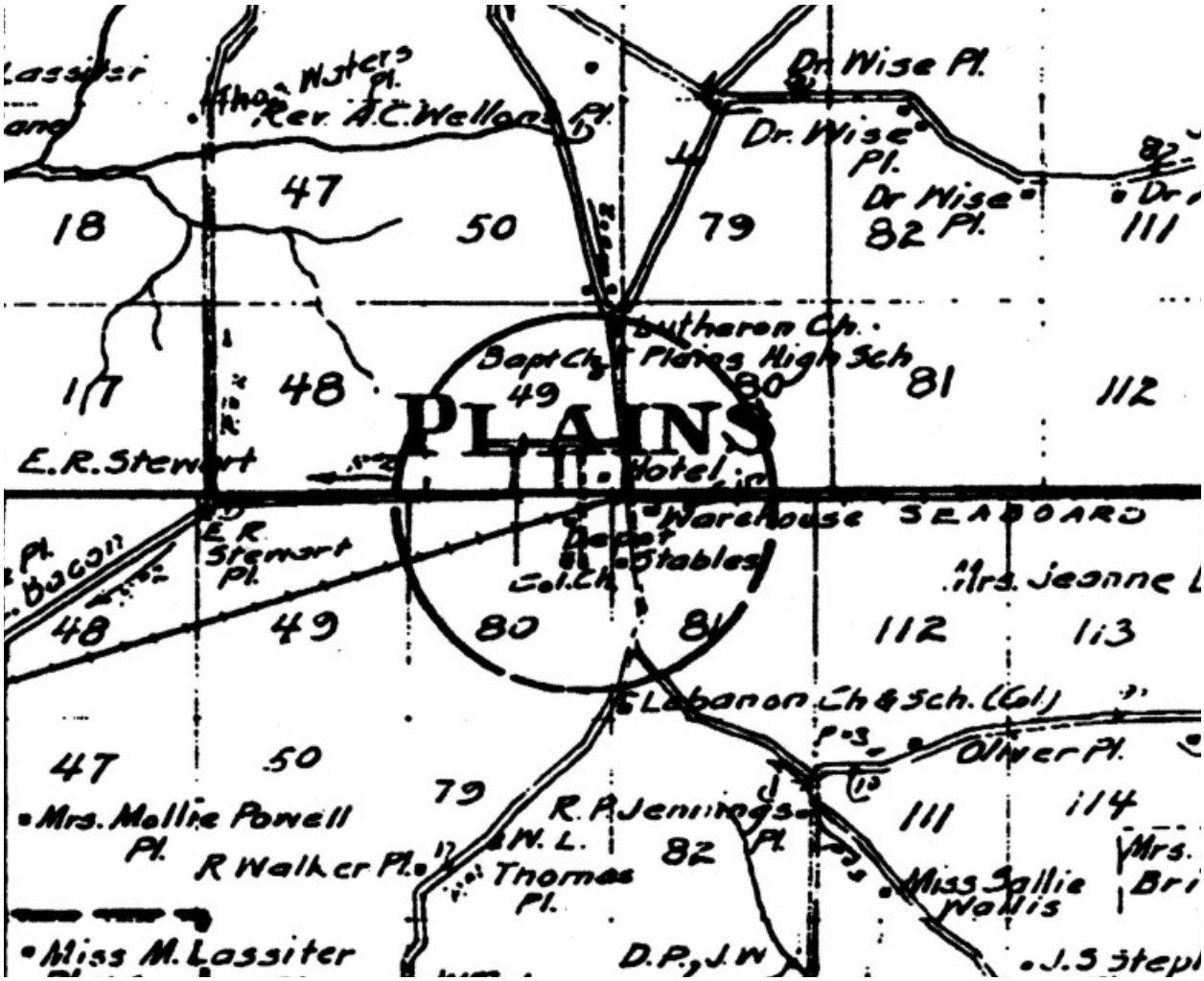


Figure 2.12: Portion of 1910 Hudgins map of Sumter County. Note the presence of the high school, churches, depot, stables, and railroad line. (Source: "Sumter County Maps," http://www.sumtercountyhistory.com/maps/SumterMap/map.htm).

that plagued the South, and the 1913 lynching of Will Redding by a mob of hundreds of white residents of nearby Americus served as an example of this form of racial terrorism.[119]

The Depot and the Railroad

As soon as workers finished the AP&L in 1886, railroad timetables listed the Plains of Dura as a stop on the line. The first mention of a "depot" near the town dates to 1887 when a local newspaper briefly noted its existence.[120] It is unknown whether this original depot was a fully enclosed building or a simple loading platform structure. It is also unknown for certain where the original depot was located. However, the AP&L received the current depot lot in July 1884 from M. L. Hudson, a wealthy landowner and town founder who donated the land. Given the 1884 date of donation, it is probable that this lot contained the original depot and served as the location for a subsequent depot.

In 1888, the SA&M chose Plains to serve as a goods transfer station. The decision likely initiated the construction of a new depot, as two years later, the May 23, 1890, edition of the *Americus Weekly-Recorder* noted that "the new depot is now completed and helps the look of the town considerably."[121] The article did not provide a description of the new depot, and no original plans for the depot are known to exist. It is also unknown when construction began on the building. Based on architectural drawings of the depot from 1911, as well as its current condition, it can be presumed that the 1890 depot

119. "Chief Barrow Was Shot By Negro Will Redding," *Americus Weekly-Times Recorder*, June 26, 1913.
120. "Special Schedule."
121. "From Plains," *Americus Weekly Recorder*, May 23, 1890.

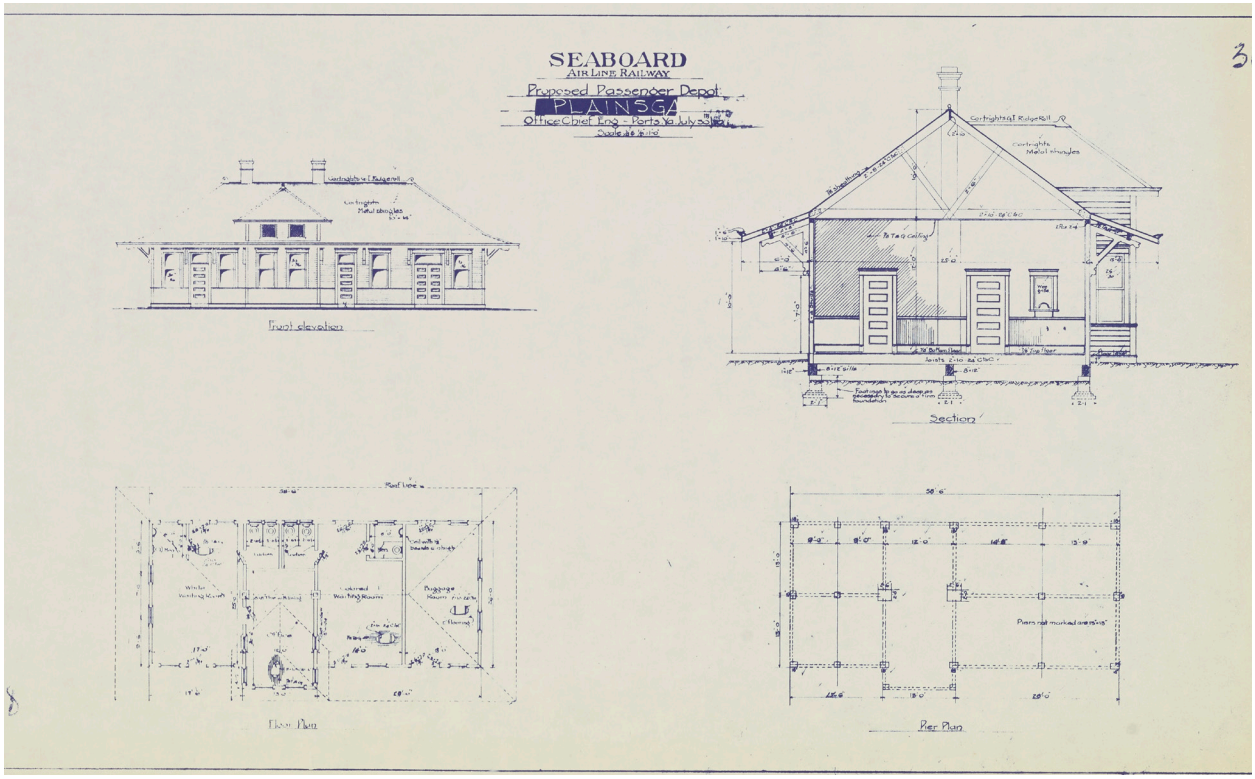


Figure 2.13: Proposal for the improvement of the Plains Depot date July 30, 1910. (Source: "Seaboard Air Line Railway, Proposed Passenger Depot, Plains, GA" Office of the Chief Engineer, Portsmouth, Virginia. Scale 1/8" = 1'. JICA Archives, ICA-269 JICA 9239 Series VI: Oversized Map; Subseries A: Maps & Drawings).

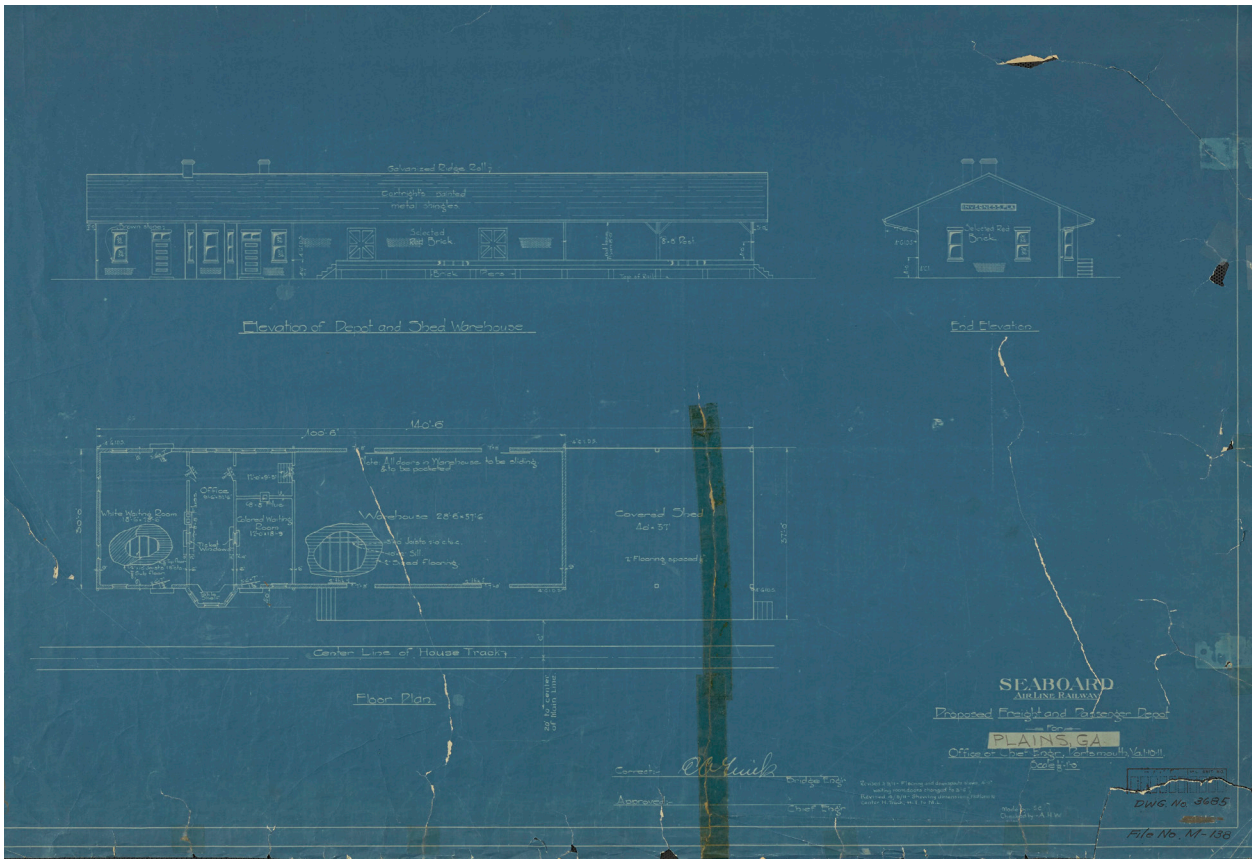


Figure 2.14: Proposal for the improvement of the Plains Depot dated January 10, 1911, with revisions noted as being made in March and April. (Source: "Seaboard Air Line Railway, Proposed Freight and Passenger Depot for Plains, GA" Office of the Chief Engineer, Portsmouth, Virginia. Scale 1/8" = 1'. JICA Archives, JICA-269 JICA 9239 Series VI: Oversized Map; Subseries A: Maps & Drawings).

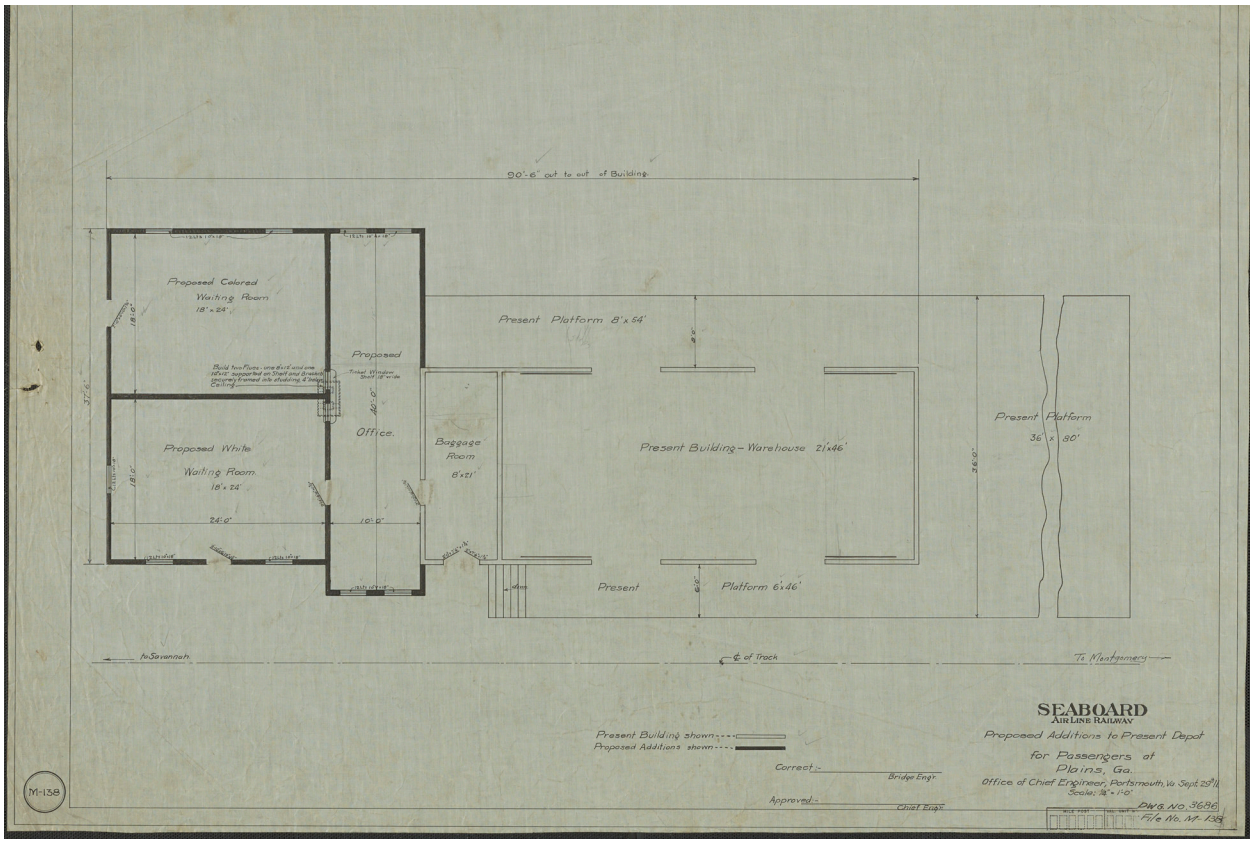


Figure 2.15: Proposal for additions to the Plains Depot dated September 29, 1911. (Source: "Seaboard Air Line Railway, Proposed Additions for Present Depot" Office of the Chief Engineer, Portsmouth, Virginia. Scale 1/4" = 1'. JICA Archives, JICA-269 JICA 9239 Series VI: Oversized Map; Subseries A: Maps & Drawings).

was constructed as a typical vernacular one-story train station, rectangular in form and clad in wood.[122] Stilgoe notes that during this period of railroad expansion, railroad companies sought to ensure efficient and safe operations through the standardization of depot buildings.[123] As original plans for the depot have not been located, it is unknown what prototype the depot building in Plains was based on. It is also unknown if the new depot reused any of the first depot's materials. The depot was located at the corner of present-day South M. L. Hudson Street and West Main Street and oriented at a slight angle, extending northeast to southwest along the south side of the railroad track. No details concerning the depot's surrounding landscape from this time are known.

Ownership and Physical Changes

In 1895, the Georgia and Alabama Railway (GA&A) acquired the SA&M company and its holdings, including "all track, equipment, and structures for the railway that went from Abbeville through Wilcox, Dooly, Sumter, Webster, and Stewart counties to Savannah."[124] No known changes to the rail line or depot in Plains resulted from the acquisition. Several years later, the Seaboard Air Line railway "gained control of GA&A through stock ownership and the railroad property and franchises were sold to Seaboard on February 20, 1902."[125] Again, the sale did not produce any known alterations to Plains Depot. In 1910 however, Seaboard Air Line engineers drafted a series of architectural plans proposing alterations to the depot (Figure 2.13 - Figure 2.15). Two drawings, dating between July 1910 and January 1911, with April 1911 revisions, depict a proposed 24'-0" × 36'-0" passenger-waiting area expansion of the depot. A final proposal dated September 29, 1911, further refines the proposal. As the HABS *Written Historical and Descriptive Data* details,

122. Office of Chief Engineer, *Proposed Additions to Present Depot for Passengers of Plains, Ga.*, 1/4" = 1' (Portsmouth, VA: Seaboard Air Line Railway, September 29, 1911), JICA Archives, JICA-269_9239_446.
123. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene*, 198–203.
124. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 3.
125. Ibid.

> The plan shows the original depot with the proposed additions. Before the addition, it consisted of the loading dock, warehouse, and an 8'-0" × 21'-0" baggage room on the east side. The additions were to include a 40'-0" × l0'-0" office east of the baggage room and two segregated waiting rooms; a 18'-0" × 24'-0" "colored" section on the south side with two windows on the south and an exterior door on the east and a "white" section with one window on the east, two on the north, an exterior door on the north, and a door on the west wall to the office. Two ticket windows on the east wall of the office open into each of the waiting areas.[126]

The segregated waiting rooms matched the trains, which featured separate black and white seating sections.[127] In August of 1911, as recorded by the local *Weekly Times Recorder*, Plains residents petitioned for a new depot in the town. The article does not specify any specific issues with the 1890 depot, but states: "Plaines [*sic*] has been wanting a better depot for some time and recently the railway company set in to build an addition to the present small structure there. This was not satisfactory to the people of Plains it seems, and as a final solution of the case an appeal to the Railway Commission was made by citizens. Plains is a growing little city, and needs utilities, she thinks, commensurate with her growth."[128]

Based on the dates of the meeting compared with the architectural drawings, it is likely that Seaboard proposed the modest additions to the depot, but it left the town's residents wanting more. The company revised the plans, resulting in the September 1911 drawing. Seaboard then proceeded with construction of the addition as described above. There is no indication that the Seaboard Air Line made any additional improvements to the structure after 1911, and it appears Plains kept its modest, though expanded, depot as it was until mid-century. Though no photographs of the depot itself from this period are known to exist, an aerial image from 1937 provides a partial understanding of the depot landscape and surrounding context (Figure 2.16). The aerial image shows a building or structure on the west side of the depot building that was large enough to cast a shadow. The road intersection to the east of the depot remained unpaved at this time, as indicated by non-uniform road edging. No vegetation is apparent in the photograph.

126. Barthold, 2.
127. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 95.
128. "New Depot at Plains Is Asked by Citizens - Members of Railway Commission There," *Weekly Times-Recorder*, August 24, 1911.

Gandy Dancers

During this period, a work crew of six African American men, supervised by a white foreman, E. H. Watson, maintained the Seaboard Airline Railroad.[129] Jimmy Carter recalled that these workers lived in nearby Archery and set out from there each morning to conduct routine repairs and upkeep on the line. Ruth Godwin Carter, wife of Jimmy Carter's first cousin Hugh A. Carter, remembered that the crew kept their eight miles of track "in good repair" and "never allowed a wreck."[130] While they worked, the men sung songs synchronized to the rhythm of their labor. Carter recalled that it was "a pleasure to be near them as they sang and worked in perfect harmony."[131] Based on this portrayal, these men represented the "Gandy Dancer" tradition of railroad folk life (Figure 2.17). Gandy Dancers, "a nickname for railroad section gangs in the days before modern mechanized track upkeep…were called dancers for their synchronized movements when repairing track under the direction of a lead workman known as the 'caller' or 'call man.'"[132] Historian Jim Brown provides this description of the work and song of the Gandy Dancers:

> Lining track was difficult, tedious work, and the timing or coordination of the pull was more important than the brute force put forth by any single man. It was the job of the caller to maintain this coordination. He simultaneously motivated and entertained the men and set the timing through work songs that derived distantly from sea chanteys and more recently from cotton-chopping songs, blues, and African-American church music. Typical songs featured a two-line, four-beat couplet to which members of the gang would tap their lining bars against the rails…A good caller could call all day and never repeat the same phrase twice. Veteran section gangs

129. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 15.
130. Mrs. Hugh A. (Ruth) Carter, "A History of the Railroad in Plains, Georgia," 1986, 4, Special Collections Room, Lake Blackshear Regional Library.
131. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 62.
132. Jim Brown, "Gandy Dancer Work Song Tradition," Encyclopedia of Alabama, accessed September 27, 2018, http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1220.



Figure 2.16: 1937 aerial photograph, with depot location indicated by arrow. (Source: University of Georgia Libraries, Map & Government Information Library).

> lining track, especially with an audience, often embellished their work.[133]

Jimmy Carter's description of the local section crew as proud of their work and a "pleasure to listen to" may indicate the crew also embellished their songs and movements for the entertainment of a crowd.[134] Working for wages on the railroad offered an alternative to the farm jobs that many other African Americans held. It is unknown how long the crew worked for the Seaboard Air Railroad, but the crew was likely eventually replaced by the mechanization of railroad labor.

More Railroad Changes and the Decline of Passenger Use

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, the Plains Depot was a hub of activity, with both passenger and freight trains passing through the town daily. Agricultural products were a regular sight at the depot, and depending on the season, a person could see "watermelons, corn, peanuts, grain, beans, hay, tobacco, sugarcane, peaches, pecans, cotton and livestock" leave out on the train to go to markets throughout the South (Figure 2.18). In 1919, "seventy-six cars of hogs and cows were shipped from Plains, the largest number from any U.S. city that year, and in 1920-21, cotton receipts showed that 6,000 to 10,000 bales of cotton were shipped from Plains."[135] Plains' downtown merchants also relied on the train to ship their wares and merchandise. A special diesel-powered train known as the "Butthead" delivered mail to Plains twice a day. All this activity was in

133. Ibid.
134. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 62.
135. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 3.



Figure 2.17: Section crew of African American railroad workers, sometimes referred to as Gandy Dancers. (Source: Laying railroad track for airport construction in Jacksonville. 1934. Black & white photonegative, 4 x 5 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/142339>, accessed 2 May 2019).



Figure 2.18: Savannah was a major destination for cotton grown in Sumter County. (Source: Detroit Publishing Co., Copyright Claimant, and Publisher Detroit Publishing Co. Cotton at railway terminus, Savannah, Ga. Georgia Savannah. United States, None. [Between 1890 and 1901] Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2016797862/).

addition to regular passenger use, which served local workers and travelers alike. As Steve Storey explains, by the 1920s, "railroads covered almost all of Georgia," with the era representing "the high point of railroad service in the state."[136] Ruth G. Carter, Jimmy Carter's cousin's wife, reminisced that "the train was the highlight of almost every day."[137] She also recalled that one of the "favorite pastimes" of the local children, including Jimmy and her husband Hugh, was placing "pennies on the track and let the train mash them."[138]

136. Storey, "Railroads."
137. Carter, "A History of the Railroad in Plains, Georgia," 2–3.
138. Ibid., 3.

After the 1920s, across the United States, passenger train use declined significantly due to the increasing availability of personal automobiles.[139] Plains was not immune to such change, and in 1951, after a series of mergers with other companies, the railroad discontinued passenger service to the town. That year, the railroad removed the segregated waiting rooms from the depot. It is unknown why this demolition occurred. The railroad also removed the southern one-third of the office addition but left the northern two-thirds of the office addition in place.[140] While passenger use ended, use of the railroad for freight commerce continued, which served the modernization of the agricultural industry in the region.

Modernization of the Agricultural Economy

While many localities in the South industrialized around the turn of the century, Sumter County's economy, like much of the surrounding region, remained predominately agricultural-based, with cotton production serving as the primary cash crop. A 1917 agricultural report on the county noted that "one-third of all farm lands in the county [were] in cotton, one-third in woods, and the remainder in other crops and pasture."[141] Secondary crops grown at this time included corn, cowpeas, and oats. While cotton remained the principal commodity crop grown in the region, farming this crop proved increasingly difficult and the thousands of cotton farmers in the region did not have easy or secure lives. Cotton farmers, whether white or black, "worked hard and often earned little more than subsistence. Effort did not lead to success. Instead, cotton prices fell, debts mounted, and tenancy grew. By contrast, the railroads, the banks, and the army of middlemen who serviced agriculture seem to thrive. Even the weather appeared to conspire against men and women of the soil."[142] Such prospects were not made any easier by arrival of the cotton boll weevil in 1915. While the boll weevil disrupted cotton production in the county, it did not have the same

139. Storey, "Railroads."
140. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 2.
141. H.M. Dixon and H.W. Hawthorne, "An Economic Study of Farming in Sumter County, Georgia," U.S. Department of Agriculture Bulletin Number 492 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1917), 1.
142. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, II:557.



Figure 2.19: Early image of peanut cultivation, showing stacking method and African American worker, perhaps named "Polly." Location unknown. (Source: Detroit Publishing Co., Publisher. Polly in the Peanut Patch., None. [Between 1900 and 1905] Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2016813060/).

devastating effect on Sumter County as it had on other areas.[143] Still, its arrival forced farmers to diversify their crops and resulted in a decline in production. Between 1913 and 1918, cotton acreage per white-owned farm decreased one third, while corn and peanuts increased.[144] Peanuts soon became the foundation of Plains' agricultural economy as well as its cultural identity.

Crop Diversification

Before twentieth-century farmers came to see peanuts as an alternative to cotton, enslaved Africans, who likely brought the crop with them to North America, had long grown peanuts in Georgia.[145] Peanuts served as a "staple of household gardens" of the enslaved, with European Americans not recognizing the economic possibilities of the plant.[146] By the mid-nineteenth century, some south Georgia farmers saw potential for peanuts as a feed crop, but it was not until the turn of the century that farmers began planting peanuts in any sizable acreage (Figure 2.19).[147] Soon thereafter, "improvements in machinery for growing and handling peanuts as well as increased knowledge about their food value to humans and animals allowed peanuts to develop into an important commercial crop by World War I."[148]

Around 1910, as an "agricultural experiment," a northern farmer planted peanuts on a Sumter County farm.[149] Initially, no stable market for peanuts existed in the region. Further, at this time, farm workers picked peanuts by hand, making peanut production a labor-intensive process. Thus, Plains area farmers were slow to adopt the crop. By 1916 however, a market for the crop materialized and area farmers began planting the peanut as a side crop to cotton, selling the peanuts for peanut oil manufacturing as well as for candy.[150] That year, a peanut mill opened in a neighboring county. By 1918, peanuts represented 10 percent of total crop acreage on white-owned farms in Sumter County, up from 2 percent in 1913.[151] Over the next several decades, peanut production continued to grow alongside cotton. While farmers planted 1,500,000 acres of peanuts in 1942, peanuts did not overtake cotton as the area's principal crop until after World War II.[152] While the growth of the peanut industry benefited many area farmers, the combined effect of advancements in peanut harvesting machinery and the decline of cotton production "left many blacks in southwest Georgia and elsewhere unemployed."[153]

Diversification also introduced soybean production to Sumter County. Tree crops including pecans, peaches, and pine furthered the diversity of the county's agricultural output. Labor adjusted to these changes, and at this time, truck farming—the term for market-oriented farming of diverse crops— "began to replace the old tenancy and sharecropping system. Migrant workers now showed up in June and left in the fall, taking the place on the rural landscape of the former black

143. H.W. Hawthorne, H.M. Dixon, and Frank Montgomery, "Farm Management and Farm Organization in Sumter County, Ga.: An Analysis of the Business of 534 Farms in 1913 and 550 Farms in 1918," U.S. Department of Agriculture Bulletin Number 1034 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1922), 2.
144. Ibid., 3.
145. Denise P. Messick, J. W. Joseph, and Natalie P. Adams, "Tilling the Earth: Georgia's Historic Agricultural Heritage - A Context" (Stone Mountain, Georgia: New South Associates, Inc., 2001), 42.
146. Ibid., 42.
147. "Peanuts Have Found Ready Market Here," *Americus Daily Times Recorder*, March 20, 1912.
148. Messick, Joseph, and Adams, "Tilling the Earth," 42.
149. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 23. The author did not provide a name or citation for this information.
150. Ibid., 23.
151. Hawthorne, Dixon, and Montgomery, "Farm Management and Farm Organization in Sumter County," 3.
152. Messick, Joseph, and Adams, "Tilling the Earth," 42; O'Brien, "Special History Study," 43.
153. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 43.

sharecroppers, but without the complication of residency or extended community conflicts."[154] These changes represented a new way of life for many Sumter County residents.

The Carters of Sumter County and Jimmy Carter's Childhood

The Carter's businesses and farming operation in Early County proved successful. William (Billy) Carter owned several buildings, becoming a commercial property owner in the town of Rowena.[155] Tragedy again struck the Carters in 1903 when one of Billy's tenants shot and killed Billy during a violent argument concerning the supposed theft of a wooden desk. The following year, Billy's survivors sold off the family assets and moved to Plains. James Earl Carter Sr. was ten years old at the time. Soon, the Carters rose to prominence yet again, becoming "well established in the prevalent regional social and economic orders" through their involvement in local business, their ownership of property, and status as a middle-class white family in the south.[156]

Jimmy Carter's early life serves as a window through which to personalize the evolution in race relations, agricultural production, and politics in the South and Plains. His parents married in Plains in 1923 and proceeded to live in a house close to the railroad, fully involving themselves in the daily life of Plains. Lillian joined the ranks of progressive women across the country who eschewed traditional gender roles pertaining to labor. Independently minded, Lillian became well-educated and entered the nursing profession working at the local Wise Sanitarium.[157] She was also relatively progressive in terms of her attitudes about race, adopting the more liberal views of her father, Jim Jack Gordy. James Earl Carter (who went by "Earl"), on the other hand, "did not share his prospective wife's progressive views. He was a product of the Old South and supported the established social and economic structures."[158] His agreement with the status quo manifested in the family's business dealings and operations which included hundreds of acres of crop land.

While Lillian worked as a nurse, Earl Carter became involved with a variety of businesses. His investments paid off, and the household soon became solidly middle class. Between 1924 and 1937, Earl and Lillian had four children. Jimmy Carter was the first-born, delivered at the Wise Sanitarium on October 1, 1924. After a series of moves to different houses in Plains, in 1928, the family moved to a 360-acre farmstead in nearby Archery, a historically African American community about two-and-a-half miles west of Plains. Through their farm in Archery, the Carters' lives centered on with the agricultural economy and reflected regional customs related to race, gender, and labor relations.

The Carter Farm in Archery

The Carter Farm in Archery serves as a representative of a traditional white-owned middle-class farm operation in the rural south. Here, a community within a community developed: one dependent on people to work together towards common goals, though the rewards were meted out unevenly.[159] Jimmy Carter described the farm's operation as "a huge clock, with each of its many parts depending on all the rest. Daddy was the one who designed, owned, and operated the complicated mechanism, and Jack Clark wound it daily and kept it on time."[160] Clark was one of the many black farmers who worked for Earl Carter in Archery, all of whom "lived in five small clapboard houses, three right on the highway, one set further back from the road, and another across the railroad tracks directly in front of [Carter's] house."[161]

While the exact number of workers at the Carter farm likely varied across growing seasons, Earl Carter employed approximately 200 African American men and women to work his 4,000 acres of farmland spread out across the region. During the Depression years, Carter paid the Archery farm workers "$1.25 for men, .75 for women and .25 a day for children."[162] The laborers not only worked in the farm's fields, they also performed essential functions of the farmstead including cooking, cleaning, maintenance, and other tasks. Like the Gandy Dancers, the workers "still sang the work songs of their fathers and grandfathers as they

154. Ibid., 54.
155. Ibid., 21.
156. Ibid., 25, 34.
157. Ibid., 26.
158. Ibid., 27.
159. Ibid., 34–35.
160. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 38.
161. Ibid.
162. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 32.

labored in the fields."[163] An on-farm commissary sold food and goods to the workers on credit. Carter recalled that his childhood was "shaped by black women."[164] He befriended their children, ate at their dinner tables, and learned many life skills, lessons, and morals through working alongside them and their husbands. The Clarks, integral members of the farm community, left a lasting impression on young Jimmy. He recounted that aside from his parents, Rachel Clark in particular "was the person closest to me."[165] Such relationships influenced Carter's future politics.

Though better off than the black farm hands, in the early years of the farm operation, the Carters did not live a luxurious life. Their house did not have indoor plumbing, Jimmy Carter's bedroom did not have a heat source, and it was not until 1937 that the house had electricity. The surrounding landscape contained a number of outbuildings and yard and work spaces common to vernacular farmsteads in the area, including "an outhouse, smoke house, mule barn, chicken house, hog lot and blacksmithing shed," amidst a backdrop of all the sights, sounds, and smells of a working farm.[166]

The food and cash crops grown on the farm reflected the diversification of the agricultural economy after the arrival of the boll weevil. Principal crops included corn, peanuts, and cotton.[167]Additionally, the farm featured "everything that there was a market for at the time - watermelons, sweet potatoes, black-eyed peas, cotton, corn, tomatoes, peanuts. The vegetable patch yielded squash, peas, cabbage, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes and beans."[168] Ducks, chickens, guinea hens, horse, dogs, cows, geese, and pigs comprised the livestock and animals of the farmstead.

Jimmy Carter worked alongside the sharecroppers on the farm, asking numerous questions in order to get an understanding of how to run a successful farm. However, after hard lessons learned during the Depression about poverty, government intervention, and the modernization of farming, the young Carter set his sights on a career outside of the farm and Plains. After 14 years on the farm in Archery, Jimmy Carter left the farm to pursue a college education.[169]

The Carters' Political Influence

In addition to growing up within an agricultural context, Jimmy Carter's childhood also included lessons in Plains-area politics. As O'Brien explains, "Carter's family was heavily involved in the operation of the town, its politics and its community. His father's brother, Alton, had business and political interests there, including a mule barn. Alton Carter served as mayor of Plains for 28 years during his lifetime and also served as a city councilman and county commissioner. Earl Carter also had business interests in town and was active in politics, serving on the school board and as one of the first area directors of the federal Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1937."[170] As elsewhere in the segregated South, white males dominated the political arena in Plains, largely excluding women and African Americans from the public decision-making process. In addition to certain individuals like the Carters, the church also held political and social influence in the town. As such, the Carters were actively involved as church deacons at the Plains Baptist Church. The expectation to serve the public in leadership roles, both secular and sacred, greatly informed the personality of Jimmy Carter, paving the way for his political career.[171]

Landscape Summary (1890-1951)

The completion of the Plains Depot in 1890 marks the beginning of this period, with the end of passenger service and the removal of the 1911 building additions in 1951 marking the end of the period. Because of the removal of the 1911 additions, the 1951 character of the site itself likely reflected landscape conditions of the late 1800s. Unfortunately, research reveals little documentation of the appearance of the depot building and landscape during this period except for the building as a one-story vernacular train station, rectangular in form.

Aerial photographs of the site for the years 1937, 1948, and 1951 are not of a scale that allows for

163. Ibid., 33.
164. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight,* 75.
165. Jimmy Carter, *A Full Life: Reflections at Ninety* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016), 26.
166. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 29.
167. Ibid., 28.
168. Ibid., 30.
169. Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight,* 72.
170. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 42.
171. Ibid., 44.

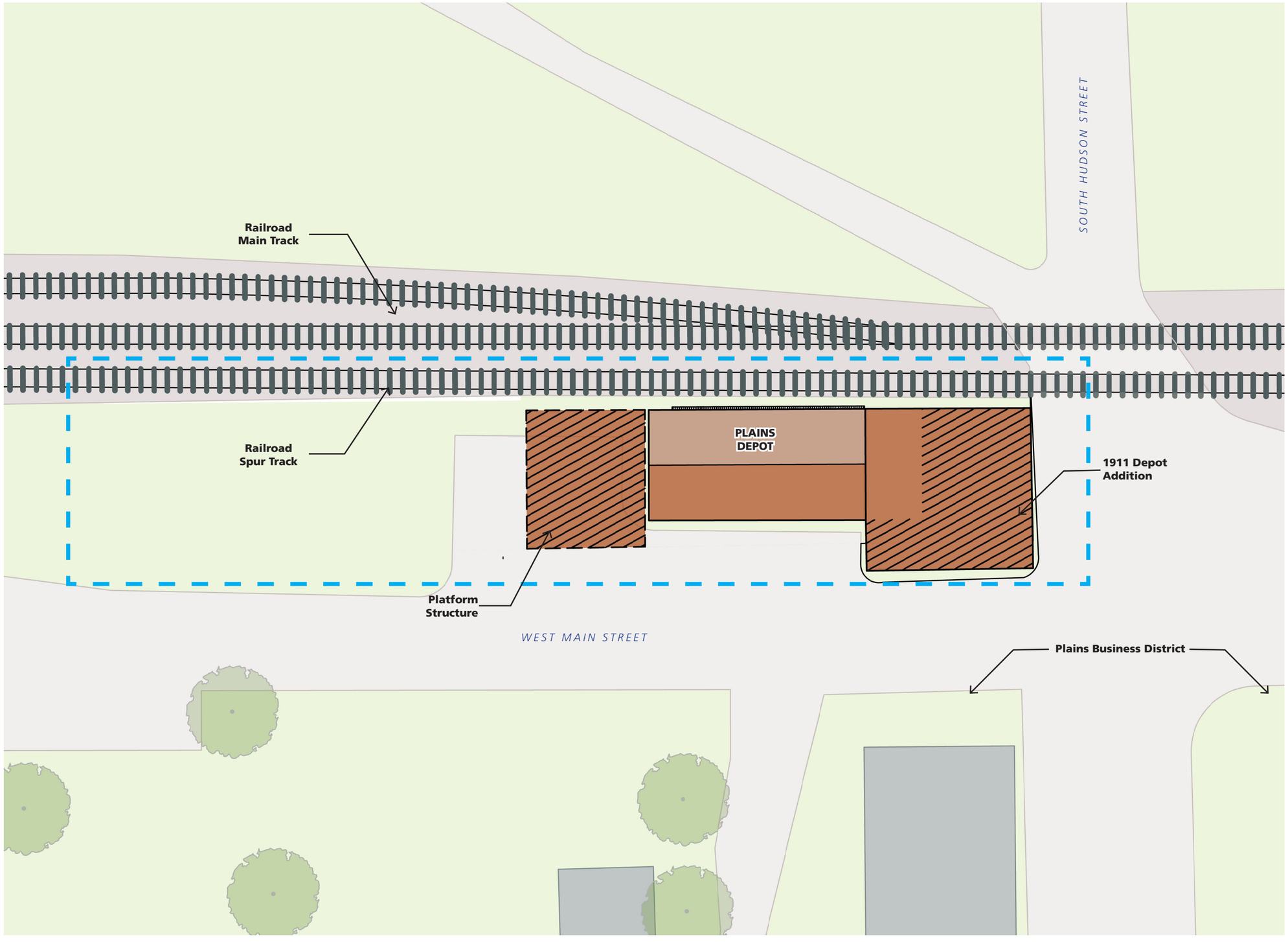


Figure 2.20: April 1948 aerial photograph of downtown Plains. (Source: University of Georgia Libraries, Map & Government Information Library).

detailed assessment of the historic condition of the site but do supply some limited information. Sometime between 1937 and 1948, owners reroofed the depot building, switching from tin to a darker roofing material. Ruth Godwin Carter stated that these were likely slate shingles (Figure 2.20).[172] At this time, the surrounding landscape of the depot reflected its utilitarian use, with no apparent vegetation features—ornamental or otherwise—or other visual intrusions that would pose safety risks to the railroad operation. The open character resulted in clear views towards downtown, and from downtown to towards the depot. The bounding roadways along the site's south and east sides of the property appear to have remained unpaved throughout this period but became more well-delineated as time went on. No circulation features are known to have existed within the depot landscape, though informal paths likely existed. The HABS documentation for the depot building notes that in 1951, with the cessation of passenger service, owners removed the segregated waiting rooms on the west side of the depot and a part of the office addition. These changes are visible in a comparison between a February 1951 aerial and an April 1953 aerial (Figure 2.21 - Figure 2.22).[173]

172. Carter, "A History of the Railroad in Plains, Georgia."

173. USGS, "1951 Aerial Photograph," February 1951, https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/; Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), "1953 Aerial Photograph," April 1953, University of Georgia Map and Government Information Library.



Key

- TURF
- ADJACENT BUILDINGS
- CLR BOUNDARY

Notes

1. Plains Depot constructed May 1890.
2. Roof line configuration of 1911 addition is unknown.
3. Function of platform structure seen in historical aerial photographs is unknown.
4. Aerial photographs show that the area west of depot did not feature a consistent delineation between turf and bare ground, reflecting a utilitarian land use.

Credits

1. 1937 aerial
2. 1911 addition plans

Illustration 2.1
1890-1951
Plains Depot

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Cultural Landscape Report
December 2019



Figure 2.21: February 1951 aerial photograph of downtown Plains. The 1911 depot addition is still intact. (Source: University of Georgia Libraries, Map & Government Information Library).

Mid-Century Plains and the Carter Campaign (1952-1976)

By the 1950s, Plains continued to serve as a small agricultural center in rural southwest Georgia. While this overarching role remained steadfast, both economic and societal changes influenced the daily lives of Plains residents. Economic changes ushered in by the increasing mechanization of agriculture resulted in decreased work opportunities for the farm laboring black population. The civil rights movement that led to desegregation proved even more transformative. Both the economy and race relations influenced the direction that politics took in the mid-twentieth century. The Democratic Party, once dominant in the South, gave way to the growing conservatism of the Republican Party. Sumter County and Plains serve as a microcosm of these national trends in agricultural economics, race relations and civil rights, and political transformations.

Changing Racial Attitudes and Desegregation

The demolition of the segregated waiting rooms at the Plains Depot in 1951 may not have been in response to the growing civil rights movement, but their removal foreshadowed the coming radical transformation in civil rights throughout the country. Historians mark the early 1950s as the beginning of the modern civil rights movement. By this time, out of necessity, southern African Americans carved out distinct communities of their own, complete with their own schools, churches, and businesses. Yet African Americans, nearly 100 years after emancipation, still lacked equal rights and protections under the law. While the Reconstruction era, and subsequent women's rights and labor rights movements, ushered in a number of reforms, civil rights for African Americans were still few or absent in much of the South. As a result, building on the solidary techniques employed by earlier protest campaigns, African Americans began a series of



Figure 2.22: April 1953 aerial photograph of downtown Plains. By this time the 1911 depot addition had been removed. (Source: University of Georgia Libraries, Map & Government Information Library).

civil disobedience actions that included sit-ins, boycotts, and demonstrations, aimed at system-wide desegregation and the enfranchisement of their communities. Such activities took place in big cities and small towns, including places like nearby Americus and Albany, Georgia. The US Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared the segregation of public schools in Georgia and other states unconstitutional. The decision, along with a number of other court rulings in favor of desegregation, ushered in the modern civil rights movement.

Albany, Georgia, police arrested Martin Luther King Jr. for protesting segregation in the city in 1961. Police held King in the Sumter County courthouse jail, bringing the national spotlight on racial desegregation to the area. National attention on southwest Georgia intensified in 1963 with the case of the "Stolen Girls." The Stolen Girls were a group of 35 black female teenagers and girls who Americus police officers arrested for protesting segregation. As part of a tactic used by other Southern police stations trying to limit the publicity and spread of the protest movement, Americus police transported the group away from Americus to Leesburg, Georgia, 27 miles to the south. Police detained the group in a deteriorating public works building for 45 days, before public outcry secured their release.

Koinonia Farms, located nine miles southeast of Plains, served as another source of racial tension in the area. A local Baptist preacher, Clarence Jordan, founded Koinonia in the early 1940s as an agrarian commune based in a "message of love and the brotherhood of all men and women. . .and racial equality was part of that message."[174] As the civil

174. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 39.



Figure 2.23: The mule soon became obsolete on many Georgia farms. (Source: Lange, Dorothea, photographer. The cotton sharecropper's unit is one mule and the land he can cultivate with a one-horse plow. Greene County, Georgia. Georgia Greene County Greene County. United States, 1937. July. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017770461/).

rights movement intensified, this message of racial equality did not sit well with many in the local community and the farm became a regular target of racist backlash. Jimmy Carter and his family, though at this time not associated with Koinonia, identified with the ideals of the commune, and when in 1966 they "opposed a resolution prohibiting attendance of 'Negroes and Civil Rights agitators' at Plains Baptist [the Carter Family church], they also met with anger and hostility."[175]

Over the next several tumultuous years, the participants of modern civil rights movement secured victories that added to the advances made by earlier social movements, principally the desegregation of public spaces and the right to vote. After the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November 1963, Lyndon Johnson became president. He continued Kennedy's push for equal rights for black citizens, and less than a year later he was able to gain enough support for the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act. Despite lingering acts of violence, unequal economic opportunity, and resentment among white southerners, as O'Brien notes, "in less than 20 years a 400-year legacy of racial oppression and inequality in the American South would be substantially altered. Jimmy Carter would play an important role in this change."[176]

175. Ibid., 39.
176. Ibid., 47.

Agricultural Change

Technological innovation in agricultural production continued after WWII, producing a notable impact on traditional livelihoods (Figure 2.23). Coupled with the civil rights movement, these changes transformed the social structure of rural communities, especially as it related to labor. As O'Brien explains,

> The number of black tenants and sharecroppers, dwindling ever since World War II, continued to drop as blacks moved to cities in search of better lives and opportunities. New crops, such as soybeans, began to augment the agricultural base of Sumter County. Tree farming became important. Peaches and pecans, always available, also increased in demand. Truck farming began to replace the old tenancy and sharecropping system. Migrant workers now showed up in June and left in the fall, taking the place on the rural landscape of the former black sharecroppers, but without the complication of residency or extended community conflicts.[177]

In 1951, institutional influence on agriculture increased in Sumter County when the University of Georgia established an agricultural experiment station in Plains, part of a new era of agricultural research in the state. Local citizens purchased the 450 acres of land for the facility. This station joined those in Athens, Griffin, and Tifton. The facility remains in place and conducts studies in peanuts, peaches, pecans, and a variety of other crops that southwest Georgia farmers specialized in.

Jimmy Carter Leaves Plains

The Carters knew that the old ways of farming were changing and that their children should seek out other opportunities for work and service. For Jimmy Carter, the first step was the continuation of his education beyond high school. Building on the education he received at Plains High School under Julia Coleman's tutelage, Jimmy enrolled at Georgia Southwestern Junior College (now Georgia Southwestern State University) in nearby Americus, where he studied science and engineering. He then joined the United States Navy's ROTC program and transferred to the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. In 1942, he successfully applied to the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, where he began his studies

177. Ibid., 54.

in the summer of 1943. A stand-out academic, Carter graduated from the Naval Academy in 1946 near the top of his class. The summer following graduation, Carter married a childhood neighbor, Rosalynn Smith. The two had rekindled a friendship while he was away in school. Rosalynn's family also held deep ties to the Plains area.

After these two life milestones, Carter officially joined the Navy, where he served in a submarine program. The position necessitated several moves, taking him and Rosalynn from Virginia to Hawaii, Connecticut, California, Washington D.C., and lastly, New York, all within a six-year span. Despite the constant moving, Jimmy and Rosalynn had three children during this time, each in a different state. Life outside of Plains offered Rosalynn a sense of freedom that few women possessed at home, and she enjoyed a life outside of housework.[178] This life took a significant turn when in 1953, Jimmy's father died, leaving the family farm and other business operations in limbo. Jimmy and Rosalynn debated what to do, and despite Rosalynn's hesitancy in moving back, they decided to return to Plains.

The Carters Return to Plains

When they returned, the Carter family settled back into life in their hometown. Jimmy Carter took over the peanut farm and warehouse operation, and Rosalynn Carter soon became a full partner in the business (Figure 2.24).[179] The family initially lived in a public housing complex just north of the Plains Depot. In 1956, they then moved to a property locally identified as the "Haunted House," which is between Plains and Carter's boyhood home. One final move to a house the Carters designed—a modest ranch style house—occurred in 1961. Now settled, from this point forward Carter developed a political career that eventually put Plains, Georgia, on the map.

Political Aspirations

In 1956, Carter entered the political world by gaining a seat on the Sumter County Board of Education.[180] Carter soon served as the Board's chair. His leadership of the Board came at a period of intense conflict and transition in the US education system with the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. For his part, inspired by the civil rights movement sweeping through major cities and small towns alike, Carter did not fall under the persuasion of the more conservative Southern Democrats. On account of the national Democratic Party Platform steering toward equal rights, these traditionalists broke away to form the States Rights Party (aka the Dixiecrats), which ginned up support among both rural and urban members of the party. Despite his progressive attitude, Carter had to politic in a manner that could pull in white rural voters as well as those of the transforming Democratic Party. Initially, he attempted to skirt the "volatile question" of race relations.[181]

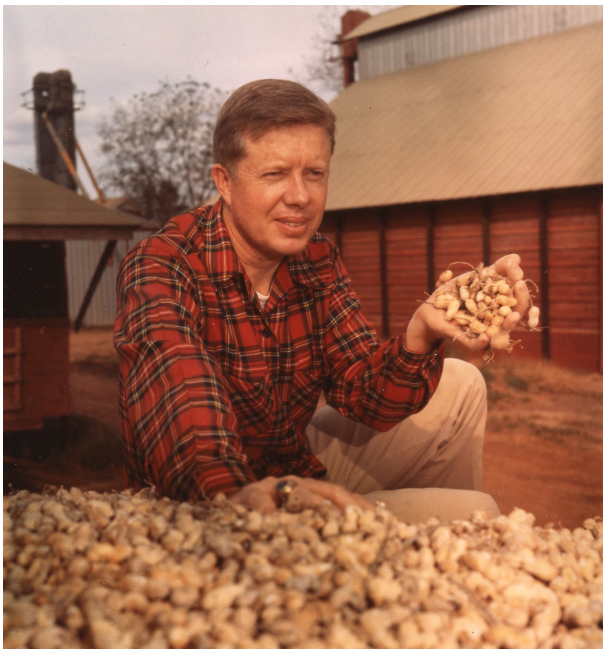


Figure 2.24: "Jimmy Carter down on the farm in the 1970s." (Source: Lawrence Smith Negative Collection; Accession No. JICA-255; Catalog No. 6923; Photographer: Lawrence Smith; Photo Courtesy of the Columbus Ledger Enquirer).

Carter successfully ran for a Georgia State Senate seat in 1962, in an election that was marred by vote rigging by his opponent. He served as senator between 1963 and 1967. While in office, Carter made civil rights, education, and government efficiency his primary issues. Concerning civil rights, Carter's "first speech in the senate supported the abolition of the 'thirty questions' required of black voters, with Carter stating that it was only a ruse to keep blacks from voting. The rule remained on the books, however."[182] Still, Carter ran unopposed for the seat in 1964 and won.

178. Ibid., 45.
179. Ibid., 46.
180. Ibid., 49.
181. Ibid., 50.
182. Ibid., 51.

As his second term in the Georgia Senate came to an end, instead of seeking an almost assured reelection, Carter decided to run for governor. His progressive position of race in a deeply conservative state politically dominated by segregationists resulted in him losing the primary race to avowed segregationist Lester Maddox. The defeat did not dissuade Carter of his political ambitions, and he launched a campaign for governor again. This time, Carter won the election, becoming governor of Georgia in 1970. His tenure in office was marked by political undermining by his Lieutenant Governor, Maddox, who had run for the position after his term-limited governorship ended.[183] Despite the difficulties, Carter focused on his bread-and-butter issues during his tenure, including improving government efficiency.

The 1976 Presidential Campaign

In 1974, Carter decided to run for President of the United States. The election would take place during the Bicentennial of the country, a country that had undergone radical transformation since its creation. This was especially true for the South, which in 1976 "bore only faint resemblance to the South of 1876. The overwhelmingly impoverished agrarian world of the 1870s had given way to a prosperous modern South of metropolitan complexes and cities, of diverse manufacturing and growing service industries, of agribusiness, retirement centers, and tourism."[184] Nationally, American voters were reeling from the Watergate scandal of the early- and mid-1970s and the abuse of power by President Richard Nixon and his close aides. The events around Watergate forced Nixon to resign from the presidency in 1974, with Gerald Ford assuming the presidency. This scandal was fresh on the American voter's mind.

The 1976 presidential election touched on many of the themes that over two centuries had become part of the national identity, particularly agrarian and familial traditions. As Brinkley explains, "when Carter left the governorship to campaign for president during America's bicentennial year, he brought this message of roots, heritage, and kinship to the campaign trail" (Figure 2.25).[185] Carter matched this message with the forward-looking optimism that asked, "Why not the best?" Many locals identified with the message, and "Plains residents, black and white together, worked for their candidate's dream, and as they worked, their candidate's dream became their own."[186] The campaign built upon the transformations in race relations occurring in their town and in the country as a whole. In terms of political strategy, this entailed Southern Democrats working closely with their black neighbors, moving the party from the "politics of white supremacy to desegregation, even integration."[187] Carter organized and gave life to this message of inclusivity and small town neighborliness through his campaign's dedicated group of volunteers—Carter's "secret weapon," the Peanut Brigade.[188]



Figure 2.25: Jimmy Carter at a campaign event at the depot in 1976. (Source: JICA Archives, JICA255_6923_00673ee).

Peanut Brigade and the Primary Season

Established in the fall of 1975, the Peanut Brigade served a vital role in Carter's presidential campaign (Figure 2.26). Fanning out across the country,

183. Ibid., 53.
184. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, II:829.
185. Brinkley, "A Time for Reckoning: Jimmy Carter and the Cult of Kinfolk," 780.
186. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 56.
187. Cooper Jr., Terrill, and Childers, *The American South: A History*, II:829.
188. Vicki Pearlman, "Carter's Absence Turns Plains Into Ghost Town Again," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, May 18, 1980, Jimmy Carter Collection, Lake Blackshear Regional Library.



Figure 2.26: A group of the Peanut Brigade marching in the inauguration parade, as shown on a period postcard. (Source: https://carlanthonyonline.com/floating-a-giant-helium-peanut-balloon-the-peanut-brigade-of-plains-marched-in-carters-inaugural-parade/).

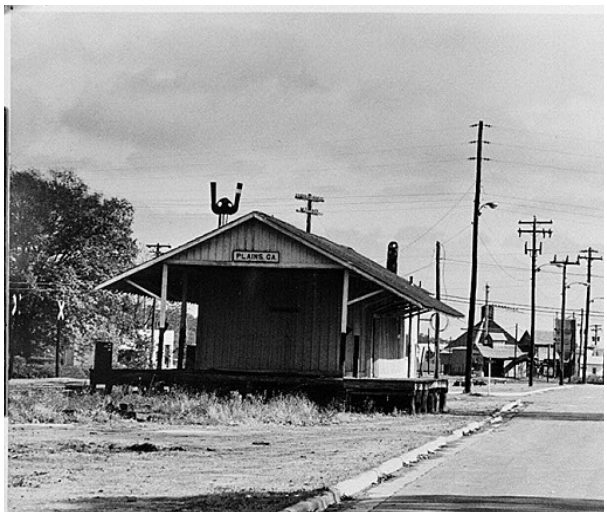


Figure 2.27: Depot in 1975, prior to campaign use. (Source: Digital Library of Georgia).

using their own money and time, the Brigadiers stumped for a person they saw as one of their own—a pious peanut farmer, rooted in tradition but also projecting a progressive vision for the future. The Peanut Brigade had more than 600 members, and the "organization was composed of citizens who were middle class on the economic scale, with smatterings of higher and lower income participants. They ranged in ages from 15 to 78 and were drawn from a diversity of occupations including businessmen, professionals, farmers, students, and housewives. Also among the group of volunteers were retired Georgians and one rehabilitated drug addict."[189] Most of the Peanut Brigade hailed from southwest Georgia with many coming from Sumter County. During the first half of 1976, the Peanut Brigade flocked into primary states, sharing the message of good governance and southern hospitality to all who would listen. In both formal and informal settings, the Peanut Brigade with their thick Southern accents and propensity for salt-of-the-earth humor endeared them to many voters who were all asking, "Jimmy Who?"[190]

Even with the Peanut Brigade's help, the primary campaign for the Democratic nomination proved difficult at first. The crowded field—14 candidates at one point—meant Jimmy had to separate himself from the others. Again, relying on the message of small-town community conviviality and American progress, Carter made his case for the nomination. After securing major victories in Florida and Ohio, Carter's principal challenger George Wallace called him at the Plains Depot to concede the race, all but ensuring Carter's nomination. Carter would later acknowledge the pivot role the Peanut Brigade played in securing the nomination.[191] In July, Carter chose Walter Mondale as his running mate.

The Use of the Plains Depot

Back home in Plains, Maxine Reese, Carter's campaign director for the southwest Georgia area, no doubt recognized the success the Peanut Brigade was having with their messaging. It made sense that the campaign headquarters should reflect the small-town-America symbolism employed by the Carter campaign. As such, the Plains Depot, the town's oldest building, became the presidential campaign headquarters (Figure 2.27). The depot, with its rustic charm, embodied an America that remained relatable to many and idealized by many others now removed from small town life. It was the "singular symbol of the Plains community," belonging "emotionally to the townspeople it served."[192] Another important feature was that it was one of the few buildings in Plains large enough for public assembly and also having a functioning restroom.[193] The depot

189. Harold Isaacs, *Jimmy Carter's Peanut Brigade*, ed. Doris Mack Isaacs (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1977), viii.
190. Ibid., 47, 134.
191. Ibid., 53.
192. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 76; Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene*, 195.
193. Maxine Reese, interview by Ed Bearss, December 17, 1985, 19.



Figure 2.28: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).



Figure 2.29: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).



Figure 2.30: 1976 photograph of Rosalynn and Amy at the depot. Note extent of gravel and landscaping in background of image. (Source: Courtesy of Kim Fuller, photographer unknown).

became the staging ground for news conferences and other campaign functions. "Every time Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter would return to Plains from the campaign trail, the townspeople would gather at the station [depot], no matter what hour, to greet their native son. Reese admitted that the main reason for these planned events was to capture the attention of the media."[194]

After passenger train service ended in 1951, the depot alternated between vacancy and being used for storage. According to Loren Blanton, the son of a former Depot Agent, the depot was closed to public use by 1969.[195] Sometime in the early 1970s, the Carters rented the building using it to store "fertilizer, and feed and farm stuff" related to the family peanut business.[196] By this time, the building was in a state of disrepair. To ready the depot for use as its local headquarters, the campaign enlisted the help of Plains citizens along with Jimmy Carter's brother, Billy, and John Pope of Americus. Together, they "cleaned out the old depot and painted it white with 'Carter' green trim."[197] Because the campaign did not have the time to mow the lawn, the volunteers covered a large portion of the grounds surrounding the depot building with gravel.[198] Photographs taken in 1976 show that in addition to the gravel treatment, campaign workers had installed an ornamental planting bed between a band of gravel and South M. L. Hudson Street. The planting area contained approximately 10 evergreen shrubs of what appears to have been two different types, potentially azalea and holly. Photographs suggest that the easternmost row of shrubs was

194. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 4.
195. Loren Blanton, interview by Ed Bearss, December 21, 1985, 14.
196. P.J. Wise, interview by Jim Small, June 29, 1989, 14.
197. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 4. Research did not reveal the origin of the term "Carter green."
198. Barthold, 4.

comprised of azaleas, while the row closer to the depot were Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) or Japanese holly (*Ilex crenada*). Two crape myrtles (*Lagerstroemia indica*) bordered the north and south extents of the bed (Figure 2.28 - Figure 2.30). The campaign mounted two United States flags to the southeast and southwest corners of the building. They also mounted a large green sign with the text "elect Jimmy Carter President" at the top of the signal pole on the north side of the depot building, clearly visible to traffic along the adjacent roadways. The campaign altered the interior of the depot to facilitate the new use; and beyond basic cleaning and repairs, workers partitioned the warehouse section of the depot into offices. On Easter Sunday, April 18, 1976, the Plains Depot officially opened as Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign headquarters. Carter also had a campaign office in Atlanta, but the Plains office served as home base. Staff worked the depot from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm daily.[199] Maxine Reese recounted that Carter's mother, Miss Lillian, sat in a rocking chair at the depot nearly every day talking with the throngs of visitors streaming into Plains.[200]

Reese's vision for using the depot as a part of the campaign's message proved effective. Ruth Godwin Carter, wife of Jimmy Carter's first cousin Hugh A. Carter, notes that "so many pictures were taken at this spot the [Railroad] superintendent called from Jacksonville giving instructions for (1) to put a Railroad Decal on every side of the station so there would be one in every picture taken, and (2) to get a Southern Railway car off the side track—it was in too many pictures at a Seaboard station, and (3) to get a wreck out of the way because it was being shown too much."[201] Not only reporters descended on the town but also hordes of tourists from all over who had come to visit Plains. As Carter's celebrity grew, traffic in the town increased so much as to generate colorful newspaper article headlines, such as "A Hound Dog Can't Sleep on Plains' Road Nowadays."[202]

199. "Carter Plains Headquarters Opened," *Stewart Webster Journal Patriot Citizen*, April 22, 1976, Jimmy Carter Collection, Lake Blackshear Regional Library.
200. Reese, interview, 32.
201. Carter, "A History of the Railroad in Plains, Georgia," 7.
202. Fay S. Joyce, "A Hound Dog Can't Sleep on Plains' Road Nowadays," The Atlanta Constitution, August 2, 1976, sec. 1-C.

Presidential Victory

On November 2, 1976, the night of the election, the depot served as the gathering spot for Carter's family, supporters, and media outlets. A large number of volunteers got the town ready for the event. As Ida English recounted, "we got every broom we could find in Plains and we swept every street in Plains by hand that night to make sure the world didn't see us dirty."[203] The campaign set up television sets at the depot to watch the results. It was a chilly night, and people wrapped in coats gathered around bonfires in cans to keep warm. The race proved to be a tight contest, and it was not until 3:30 am on the morning of November 3 that media outlets declared Carter the winner. The crowd at the depot "broke into pandemonium upon announcement of Carter's victory."[204] The victory enshrined the Plains Depot as the tangible manifestation of the 1976 campaign and Carter's victory, forever linking small town Plains with the highest political office in the country.

Landscape Summary (1976)

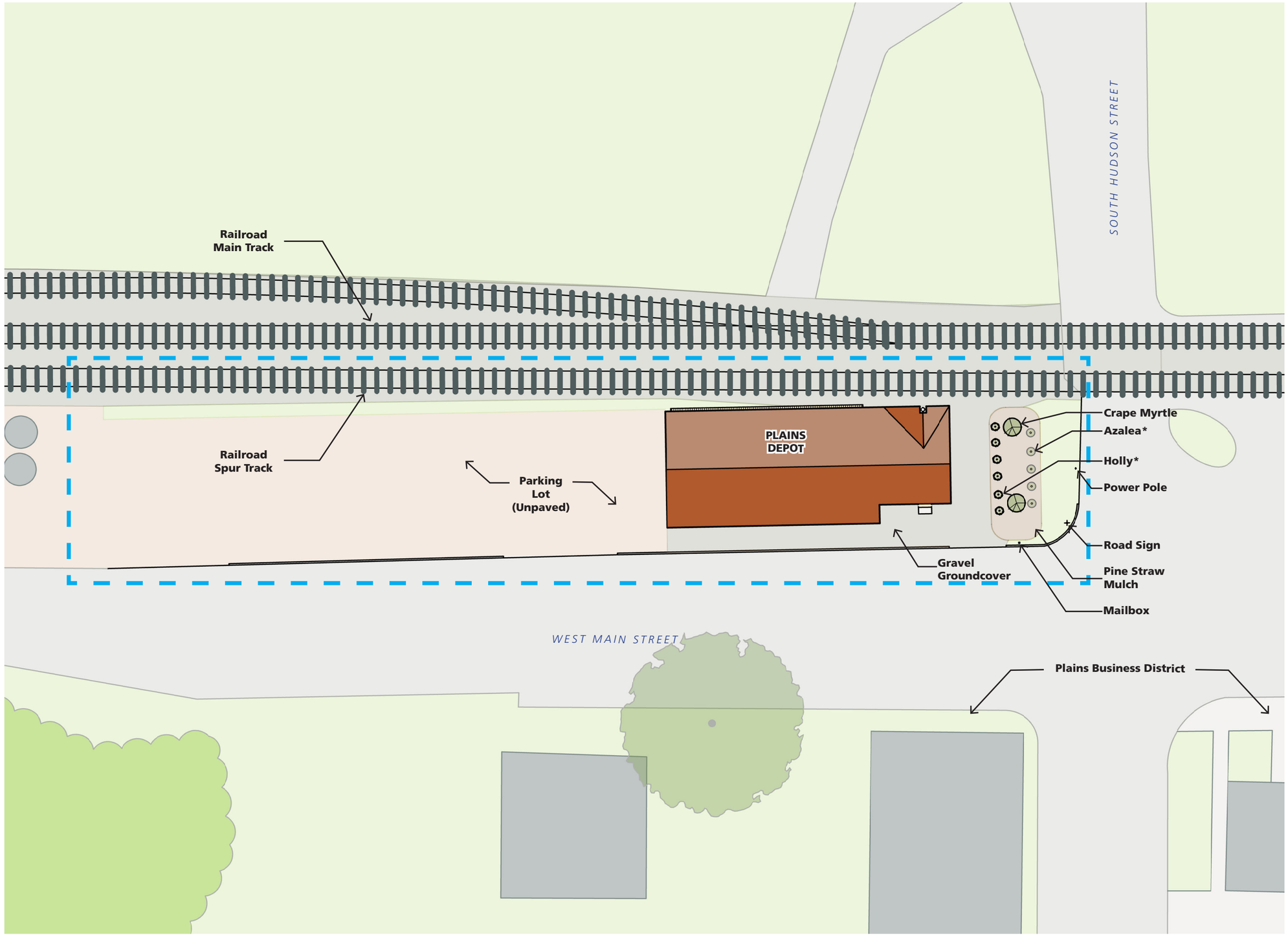
At the end of 1976, the depot landscape reflected the changes made during the 1976 presidential campaign. Despite its new use, the depot's landscape remained predominately utilitarian in appearance, consistent with its historic character when used as a passenger and freight depot.

Carter's supporters had improved the depot building, altering both its interior and exterior appearance. The campaign also made changes to the cultural landscape by adding gravel as a groundcover and installing ornamental vegetation. The gravel extended from the parking area west of the depot building, east towards South M. L. Hudson Street. The gravel terminated roughly halfway through the open space east of the depot where it abutted the ornamental planting space. A connected strip of gravel extended east-west between the depot building and West Main Street. The planting area east of the depot featured approximately eight rounded-form (evergreen) shrubs and two small crape myrtles. A pine straw mulch covered the planting area.

Circulation patterns at the site featured an unpaved parking lot and two rail lines running immediately

203. Ida English, interview by Ed Bearss, December 21, 1985, 15.
204. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 75.

north of the depot building. The southernmost line was a spur track for loading on and off railcars at the depot. Small-scale landscape features included a mailbox and curbing along the road. View and vistas were predominately to and from adjacent properties.



Key

- TURF
- ADJACENT BUILDINGS
- CLR BOUNDARY

Notes

1. 1911 depot addition removed 1951. A portion of the office was retained, as reflected by the different siding and roof line.
2. Campaign workers improved the landscape in 1976 with the addition of a gravel ground cover and ornamental planting bed.
3. The exact type of shrubs currently remains unknown. Based on analysis of photographs, it appears two types of shrubs were present: a holly and an azalea. Two crape myrtles framed the bed on the north and south.

Credits

1. Postcards
2. Kim Fuller photograph
3. JICA archives

Illustration 2.2
1952-1976
Plains Depot
Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Cultural Landscape Report
December 2019

The Presidency and Plains (1977-2018)

Post-Campaign Depot Use

The end of the 1976 presidential campaign did not immediately sever the link between the Carter campaign and the depot, as Barthold explains, "On 19 January 1977, the day before Carter's inauguration, the depot was used once again for its intended use, as more than 100 campaigners and fans boarded an eighteen-car Amtrak train bound for Washington, D.C.'s Union Station; it was the first time the tracks had been used for passenger transport since 1951. So certain was she that Carter would win, Reese called Amtrak to arrange for the $80,000 lease of the train in summer 1976."[205] The "Peanut Special" took Carter and many supporters on a train ride from Plains to Washington D.C. (Figure 2.31).



Figure 2.31: The Peanut Special pulling up to the Depot in January 1977. (Source: AMTRAK'S "PEANUT SPECIAL" TRAIN TO WASHINGTON, D.C. FOR INAUGURATION. NEWSMEN AND PEOPLE BOARDING TRAIN; Lawrence Smith Negative Collection; Accession No. JICA-36; Catalog No. JICA-620; Date of Photograph 11/18/1977; Photographer: Lawrence Smith; Photo Courtesy of the Columbus Ledger Enquirer).

With Jimmy Carter now president, Plains continued to serve as America's unofficial home town. As O'Brien notes, "As Carter the individual had become the symbol and leader of the American people, so had his home town become a symbol and gathering place for the nation's people, good and bad, rich and poor, all races, all creeds. As he attempted to mold the destiny of the nation, so did the nation affect and change his life and his hometown."[206] The most noticeable change pertained to the steady influx of tourists into Plains. By early 1977, an estimated 5,000 tourists a day traveled to Plains; the town's population at this time was only 683.[207]

The Plains Depot became a highlight on the routes of the several new tour operators. In fact, one operation—the Carter Country Tour company—appears to have been based in the depot. Hugh Carter elaborates on the use of the depot at this time, recounting that it "was used as a gift shop except one room of it was maintained as kind of a museum-like with pictures of Jimmy on the wall and different members of the family and a few museum items in there. And then the back portion of it was operated by the Plains Civic Project incorporated as a gift shop, you know, in the big end of it."[208] Not everyone thought the commercialization of the town was a good thing. As former city councilperson Mill Simmons opined, "I really think that the years during President Carter's presidency were not good years for Plains because the local greed opened up," with "everybody" seeking various ways to make money off Carter's presidency.[209] Simmons also noted how it was not just locals trying to cash in, but also an "awful lot of people come in from outside that bought or rented buildings and setup these souvenir shops."[210]

Photographs depict the character of the depot landscape immediately after Carter's inauguration. Generally, many of the landscape features added to the site during the candidacy period remained in the years immediately following the election. For example, the gravel ground cover remained on site and continued to stretch out from the east side of the depot towards a planting bed. The ornamental plants also survived for several years. For a time, the shrubs and two crape myrtles installed during the campaign remained located along the dividing line between the grass and the gravel in the center of the area. Other site features from this initial tourism period included a wooden bench located adjacent to the planting bed, a "Carter Country" tour sign at the south side of the planting bed, a stand-alone ticket booth in the northeast corner

205. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 5.
206. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 57.
207. Wayne King, "Plains, Ga.: Merchandising the Presidency," *The New York Times*, March 4, 1977.
208. Hugh Carter, interview by Ed Bearss, December 18, 1985, 24.
209. Mill Simmons, interview by Jennifer Cohen-Jordan, May 15, 2007, 13.
210. Ibid.



Figure 2.32: 1977 postcard of the Depot showing landscape improvements related to the tourism operation. Note the "Elect Jimmy Carter" sign atop the signal pole had been removed after the election. (Source: Photo by R.E. Drew, published by MWM Dexter).



Figure 2.33: 1977 photograph of the east side of the depot. (Source: Robert Buccellato, "Presidential History Lover" [blog] http://floridahistorylover.blogspot.com/2015/08/).

of the site, and a wooden step stool to assist loading passengers into the tourist vans (Figure 2.32 - Figure 2.33).[211] On the north side of the depot building, an area of gravel, patchy lawn, and weedy plants existed between the depot and the railroad tracks. West of the depot, a worn gravel parking area provided spaces for the numerous automobiles coming into downtown Plains. After the election, someone removed the "Elect Jimmy Carter" sign atop the signal pole on the north side of the depot. In early 1977, the owners installed a railing south of the railroad tracks on the east side of the property.

On the eve of the next presidential election, tourism to Plains declined significantly. With the absence of tourists, Plains reverted to "ghost town" conditions according to one newspaper article from this time.[212] The article also notes the depot was "empty except for two or three tourists, pictures of the first family, and lots of peanut-shaped souvenirs."[213] It is unknown how long the Carter Country Tour Company remained in the depot, but it appears that the building was being used as a gift shop during the end of his presidency. The newspaper article hints at the resentment amongst locals concerning Carter's job performance and signaled a general feeling of being left behind by the man they helped elect.[214] Still, Carter was one of their own, and his celebrity endeared him to locals despite the political difficulties Carter experienced.

The 1980 Presidential Race

Because Jimmy Carter was an incumbent and lived in Washington D.C., Carter's reelection campaign did not employ the Plains Depot as a backdrop for campaign activities. Though incumbent, due to dissatisfaction within his own party, Carter had a Democratic challenger for the 1980 election—Ted Kennedy. Carter successfully fended off Kennedy's primary challenge, securing the nomination in August 1980. The month prior, the Republican Party nominated Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush for their ticket. The election in November proved to be a referendum on Carter's job



Figure 2.34: Circa 1988 photograph of the depot, showing new NPS signage along South M. L. Hudson Street. Note the absence of the railroad tracks closest to the depot. (Source: JICA Archives, Box 18, Folder 21).



Figure 2.35: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, taken in July 1989. (Source: Library of Congress. Call No. HABS GA,131-PLAIN,15--1; Photograph No. GA-2209-1; Photograph Title: "SOUTH FRONT, EAST OFFICE PORTION;" Photographer: Mark Harrell).



Figure 2.36: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, taken in July 1989. (Source: Library of Congress. Call No. HABS GA,131-PLAIN,15--2; Photograph No. GA-2209-2; Photograph Title: "SOUTH FRONT AND EAST SIDE;" Photographer: Mark Harrell).

211. The one photograph located during research that shows the toll booth is still under copyright, and permission for its use could not be obtained. This image is now part of JICA archives.
212. Pearlman, "Carter's Absence Turns Plains Into Ghost Town Again."
213. Ibid.
214. Ibid.



Figure 2.37: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, taken in July 1989. (Source: Library of Congress. Call No. HABS GA,131-PLAIN,15--3; Photograph No. GA-2209-3; Photograph Title: "EAST SIDE;" Photographer: Mark Harrell).



Figure 2.38: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Photograph, which was taken in July 1989. (Source: Library of Congress. Call No. HABS GA,131-PLAIN,15--5; Photograph No. GA-2209-5; Photograph Title: "NORTH REAR AND PLATFORM, LOOKING SOUTHEAST;" Photographer: Mark Harrell).

performance in the face of several domestic and international crises, as well as on a new style of conservative politics embodied by Reagan. On the night of November 4, Reagan defeated Carter in a landslide. The following January, the Carters left the White House for their home in Plains.

Post-Presidency

Carter's homecoming took place on a cold and rainy January day at the Plains Depot, which "seemed to symbolize the disappointment felt by the President and his supporters."[215] Despite the sting of loss and cold rain, over 2,500 people turned out to welcome their homegrown president, throwing a massive potluck feast.[216] While the Carters surely appreciated the welcome, unfortunately, they "returned to a region that in some ways remained openly hostile to much of what he had come to stand for," namely Carter's liberal politics.[217]

Ignoring the distractions, upon return to their home on Woodland Drive, the Carters threw themselves into humanitarian work, publishing books, and small town living that centered on active church membership. In 1982, the Carters established the Carter Center, a nonprofit organization that "seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and improve health," throughout the world.[218] They are also known for their work with locally-founded Habitat for Humanity, the nonprofit housing organization started by Millard Fuller and Clarence Jordan of Koinonia Farms in the late 1960s.[219] Through the organization, the Carters provided celebrity to the cause of providing housing for all people, in the US and abroad.

Use of the Depot

After the tour company left the depot building at some point in the early 1980s, it appears the Seaboard Air Railroad had little use for the old building. Around this time, the Chessie Seaboard Corporation merged with the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, forming the CSX Transportation Corporation. In recognition of the building's significance, on May 6, 1986, CSX donated the Plains Depot to the Plains Historical Preservation Trust, Inc.[220] That year, the Georgia Historical Society installed a state historical marker east of the depot noting the significance of the depot building and site. These actions laid the groundwork for the creation of Jimmy Carter National Historic Site the following year.

215. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 60.

216. Art Harris, "Jimmy Carter Ends His Presidency With a Flurry and a Flourish," *The Washington Post*, January 21, 1981, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1981/01/21/jimmy-carter-ends-his-presidency-with-a-flurry-and-a-flourish/366b109e-01b3-4d72-9d85-c0451583f06a/?utm_term=.859c591d0d70.

217. O'Brien, "Special History Study," 60.

218. The Carter Center, "Our Mission," The Carter Center, accessed November 26, 2018, https://www.cartercenter.org/about/index.html.

219. Ibid., 61.

220. Barthold, "Plains Depot Written Historical and Descriptive Data," 2.

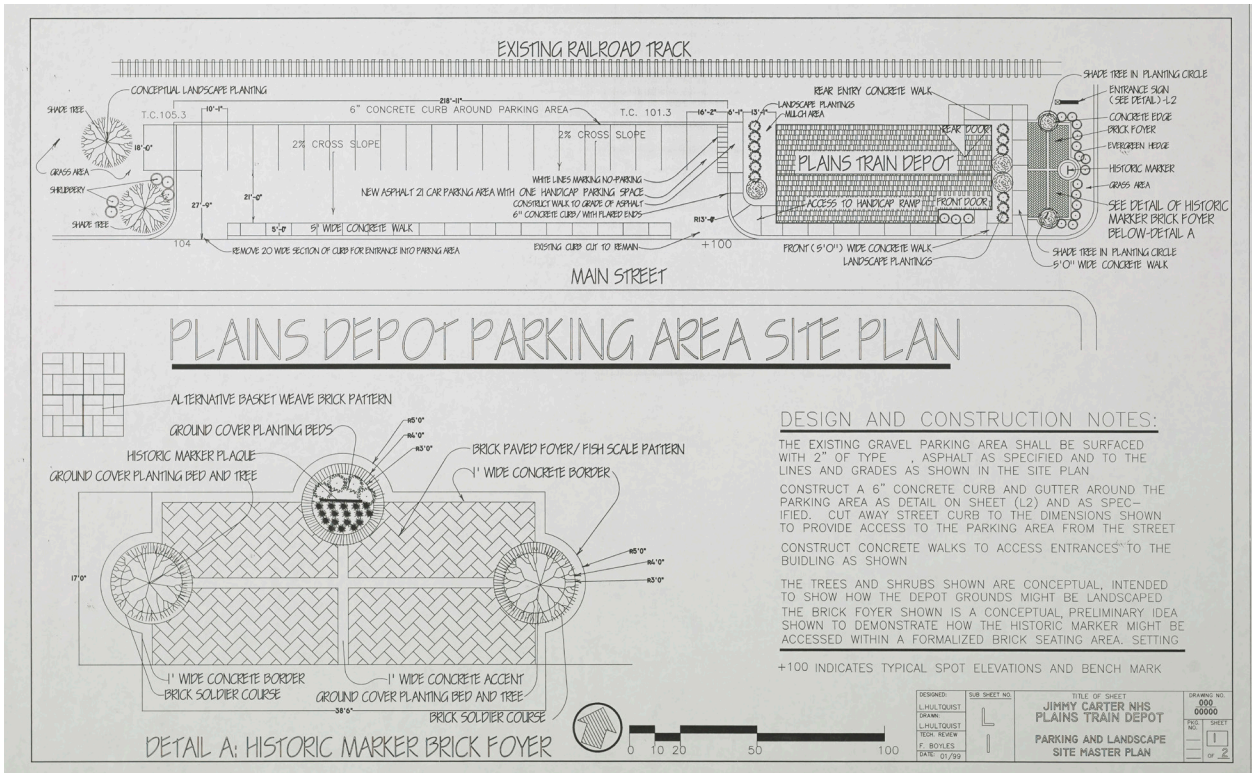


Figure 2.39: Proposed landscape plan for the depot dated 1999. This plan was never installed, and instead a simpler design—mostly through the addition of a walkway—was installed. (Source: JICA Archives 44_JICA-269_9239_979_ ParkingAreaPlan1990s).

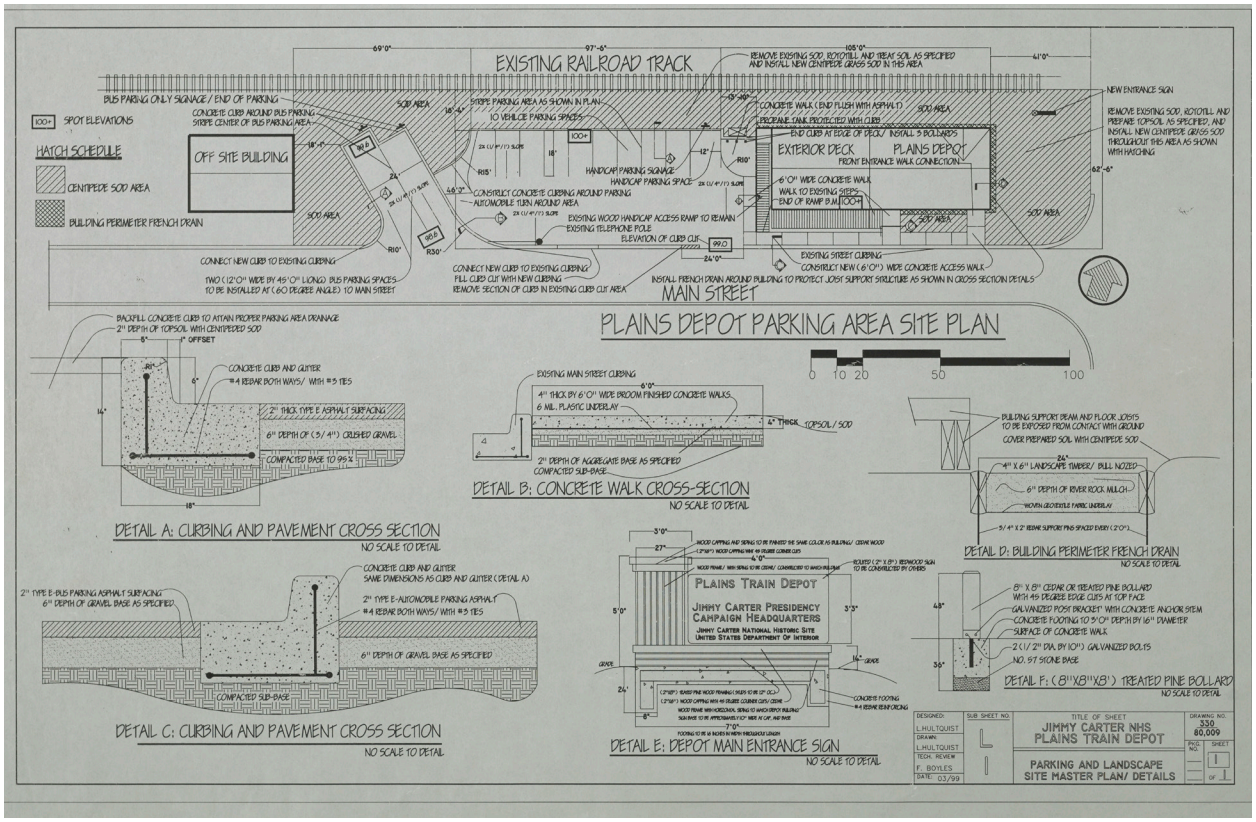


Figure 2.40: Proposed landscape plan for the depot dated March 1999. This plan replaced an earlier version and was implemented soon thereafter. (Source: JICA Archives, 46_41999_JICA-269_9239_978_SitePlan1989).

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

On December 23, 1987, the 100th Congress of the United States passed Public Law 100-206, a bill to establish Jimmy Carter National Historic Site.[221] As it was originally passed, the enabling legislation allowed for the acquisition of four properties: Jimmy Carter's Boyhood Home, the Plains High School property, the Carter House and Garden, and the Plains Depot (Figure 2.34). The legislation required all but the boyhood farm to be donated; the boyhood farm could be purchased with federal money.

NPS use of the Depot

In 1988, the Plains Historical Preservation Trust donated the depot to the National Park Service (NPS). Its transfer initiated an unexpected fifteen-year-long process of acquisition. The issue stemmed from a clause in the original deed between M. L. Hudson and the railroad, which stated that "the conveyance from M. L. Hudson to the Railroad dated July 29, 1884, conveys an easement only for railroad purposes to the railroad," with "no conveyance of the underlying fee."[222] Further, the deed stipulated that if the railroad's use of the property ended, the property should be transferred to Hudson's heirs. Hudson could not have foreseen that a President of the United States would one day come from the small town he helped to found, nor that the depot would be the subject of dedicated preservation efforts. Regardless, the NPS looked into various other means of acquisition as it tracked down Hudson's descendants, of which the NPS identified 30 persons. After exploring their options, the easiest approach to acquiring the depot was by crafting an amendment to the enabling legislation allowing the federal government to acquire the property through outright purchase. The law passed, and the NPS financially compensated decedents for the property. Throughout this lengthy process, the NPS made many alterations to the site for interpretive, visitor service, and maintenance purposes. The NPS also commissioned a Historic American Buildings Survey for the historic site, providing a record of the depot at this time of transition (Figure 2.35 - Figure 2.38).



Figure 2.41: 2006 photograph showing landscape improvements. (Source: Jimmy Carter National Historic Site Interpretation Digital Files; Photograph Date: 1/13/2006; Photographer: Unknown., 47_2006_CRW_0484_RT16).

A number of documents and images located in Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (JICA) archives allow for an understanding of the landscape changes at the site over the last several decades. The following provides an overview of significant alterations to the site.

The NPS added a new wooden stoop outside the main entrance door into the depot in 1990. In 1992, contractors installed a new roof on the depot using shingles that match campaign-era asbestos shingles. In 1997, the NPS added benches to the site. By this time, park management began to conceive of a complete landscape overhaul at the site.

In 1999, the NPS rendered a plan for a new depot landscape (Figure 2.39). Highly ornamental, the plan included a paved brick plaza and planting area east of the depot building and several other improvements not in keeping with the site's historic character. JICA personnel rejected the plan, and the NPS drafted a new plan (Figure 2.40). This second plan proposed the installation of a French drain surrounding the base of the building and the construction of a sidewalk along the south side of the lot, connecting the parking area to the entrance of the depot. Additionally, the area east of the depot, formerly covered in gravel was to be replanted with sod. The NPS installed another strip of lawn between the depot and the railroad tracks. Research does not reveal when the revised plan was implemented.

In 2000, building upon regional tourism initiatives, including the development of JICA, a coalition of partners worked to reestablish the SA&M

221. Jill K. Hanson, Dale Jaeger, and Brian LaBrie, "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site" (National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, 2015), 3.
222. "Acquisition of Plains Depot Property," November 4, 1993, Box 8, Folder 23, JICA Archives.



Figure 2.42: Utility work at depot, April 2007. Note uprooted crape myrtle. (Source: Jimmy Carter National Historic Site Cultural Resources Digital Files; Photograph Date: 2/1/1997; Photographer: Unknown).



Figure 2.43: Updated interior display, 2018. (Source: WLA Studio).

Shortline Railroad. Then, "after more than two years of careful planning, track rehabilitation, and equipment acquisition, passenger trains began rolling once again down the historic mainline."[223] The completed route spanned from Cordele in Crisp County to Archery in Sumter County. Managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and staffed by both experienced railroad engineers and volunteers, its reestablishment brought the conspicuous blue and yellow engine to Plains, serving as a welcome tourism initiative in the region. In Plains, instead of disembarking at the depot, passengers used a platform at the city park located northwest of the depot building, on the opposite side of the tracks.

As the new millennium began, the NPS readied a growing list of necessary repair projects at the depot, including the stabilization of the depot building (FY2004) and the removal of a septic tank in FY2002. Most importantly, in 2002, "after 15 years of what has been one of the most complicated land acquisition initiatives," the NPS legally acquired the Plains Depot.[224] The process necessitated "legal action, negotiation, and even an Act of Congress."[225] Before the park could formally dedicate the site however, the NPS discovered that a DDT spill occurred on site "perhaps 50 or 60 years ago," which would date the spill to the 1940s or 1950s.[226] In July 2002, cleanup of the contaminated soil began, requiring the removal and replacement of the depot platform. In October 2002, the NPS held a public dedication ceremony for the depot. Jimmy Carter National Historic Site was now complete. From this point forward, the NPS carried out various repairs and upgrades to the site.

In 2003, the NPS painted the depot. The following year, a contractor performed a condition assessment on the building, noting various issues to the material integrity of the building in the lead up to the stabilization of the depot. The stabilization process entailed replacing rotten beams and the application of Boracare preservative treatment to exposed wooden material. Contractors modified the pitch of the wooden platform at this time to improve water drainage off the structure. That year, a record 71,293 people visited Jimmy Carter National Historic Site.[227]

By 2006, the NPS had improved the depot landscape in keeping the revised 1999 landscape plan (Figure 2.41). The NPS installed the concrete sidewalk in the area south of the depot building. The sidewalk connected the front door of the depot to the asphalt parking lot. The NPS installed a small rectangular area of turf edged by a narrow band of pea-gravel between the front door and the wooden platform on the west side of the building, covering the French drain. Wood timbers

223. Kinnamon, "History Of The Historic SAM Shortline Railroad."
224. Fred Boyles, "Letter to Bob Linzey," May 20, 2002, Box 8, Folder 23, JICA Archives.
225. National Park Service, "Transfer of the Plains Depot Property, Jimmy Carter National Historic Site," October 11, 2002, Box 3, Folder 38, JICA Archives.
226. Boyles, "Letter to Bob Linzey."
227. "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site Annual Narrative Report, 2004," 2004, JICA Archives, JICA_330_D39.

edged the pea-gravel bed on its north and south sides. A standard NPS interpretive panel existed off the southeast corner of the building at this time and may have been installed during the site rehabilitation.

Several notable alterations occurred in 2007. First, contractors again replaced the roof with in-kind mineral-fiber shingles. In April, to the surprise of park staff, contractors for a utility company began digging on the depot property without permit (Figure 2.42). A concerned local resident called Jimmy Carter, and Carter arrived on his bicycle to assess the situation. Carter directed the workers "where to dig" and okayed the removal of one of the crape myrtle trees.[228] The hole measured 4 feet wide, 11 feet long, and 6 feet deep.

In 2008, more trenching occurred, this time related to the installation of new water lines. The NPS Planning, Environmental and Public Comment (PEPC) entry for the project stated that the trench would be "approximately 300 feet long, 3.5 feet deep and 2 feet wide within two feet of the curb on W. Main Street beginning at the southeast corner of the [depot] property. 300 feet of 6" PVC water line will be installed, the ditch filled, sidewalk replaced, parking lot [patched] and sod replaced."

In 2010, the NPS installed what may be a replacement seat swing in the platform area of the depot. The swing appears to be located in the same spot that a similar swing shown in a photograph taken between 1976 and 1980. Contractors also repainted the depot again this year. In 2013, the NPS installed a new interior interpretation exhibit, updating the collection that had been in place for a decade (Figure 2.43). In 2015, the NPS removed the outdoor swing over safety concerns. In 2017, the NPS also removed a large shrub that had grown at northeast corner since shortly after the campaign. Its removal marks the last significant alteration to the site to date.

In 2018, two important JICA documents were produced. In October 2017, Bennett Preservation Engineering PC conducted a conditions assessment on the Plains Depot. The 2018 findings report describes the project as focusing on "structural issues that might affect the longevity of the building and to convey those issues and repair scenarios, briefly, back to the owners, through a report and cost estimate. The work would focus, in particular, on the brick pier deterioration, wood floor framing member rot and damage, insect damage and drainage-related damage."[229] The report included a number of recommendations, including rebuilding historic building piers, replacing deteriorating wooden stairs, and replacing deteriorated roof framing in several locations.

In December, SEAC Supervisory Archeologist John Cornelison and Archeological Technician Josh Guerrero conducted an archeological investigation of the Plains Depot landscape. The crew dug to test pits—one in the open area east of the depot building and one in the lawn off the northwest corner of the depot building. Neither test revealed any cultural artifacts. The report concluded, "no additional testing is deemed required" before the park implements physical improvements to the landscape.[230]

Landscape Summary (1977-2018)

Between 1977 and 2018, the depot landscape underwent both subtle and significant changes. At the beginning of the period, the depot functioned as a key symbolic representation of the Jimmy Carter presidency as well as a primary stop along the Plains tourism circuit. The depot and the surrounding landscape were well-maintained, featuring the improvements made for the campaign in 1976 as well as new site features related to the tourism business that operated inside the depot. By 1980, tourist activity in Plains declined, and the depot was mostly unused. Jimmy Carter lost reelection that year, and in 1981, the Carter Family returned to Plains. With his historic significance established, the process of developing Jimmy Carter National Historic Site began. An act of Congress in 1987 created the historic site, a discontinuous district that included Carter's Boyhood Farm, the Plains High School, his present-day home, and the depot.

228. Sarah Robinson, "Memorandum: Underground Electricity Installation - Plains Train Depot," April 14, 2007, 1, Box 2, Folder 44, JICA Archives.

229. Bennett Preservation Engineering PC, "A Report on Structural Issues at Plains Depot, Plains, Georgia" (Charleston, SC, March 15, 2018), 3.

230. Joshua Guerrero, "Trip Report on Shovel Testing at the Plains Depot at Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (JICA), Georgia, November 28, 2018, SEAC Accession 3030" (National Park Service, Southeast Archeological Center, December 4, 2018), 1.

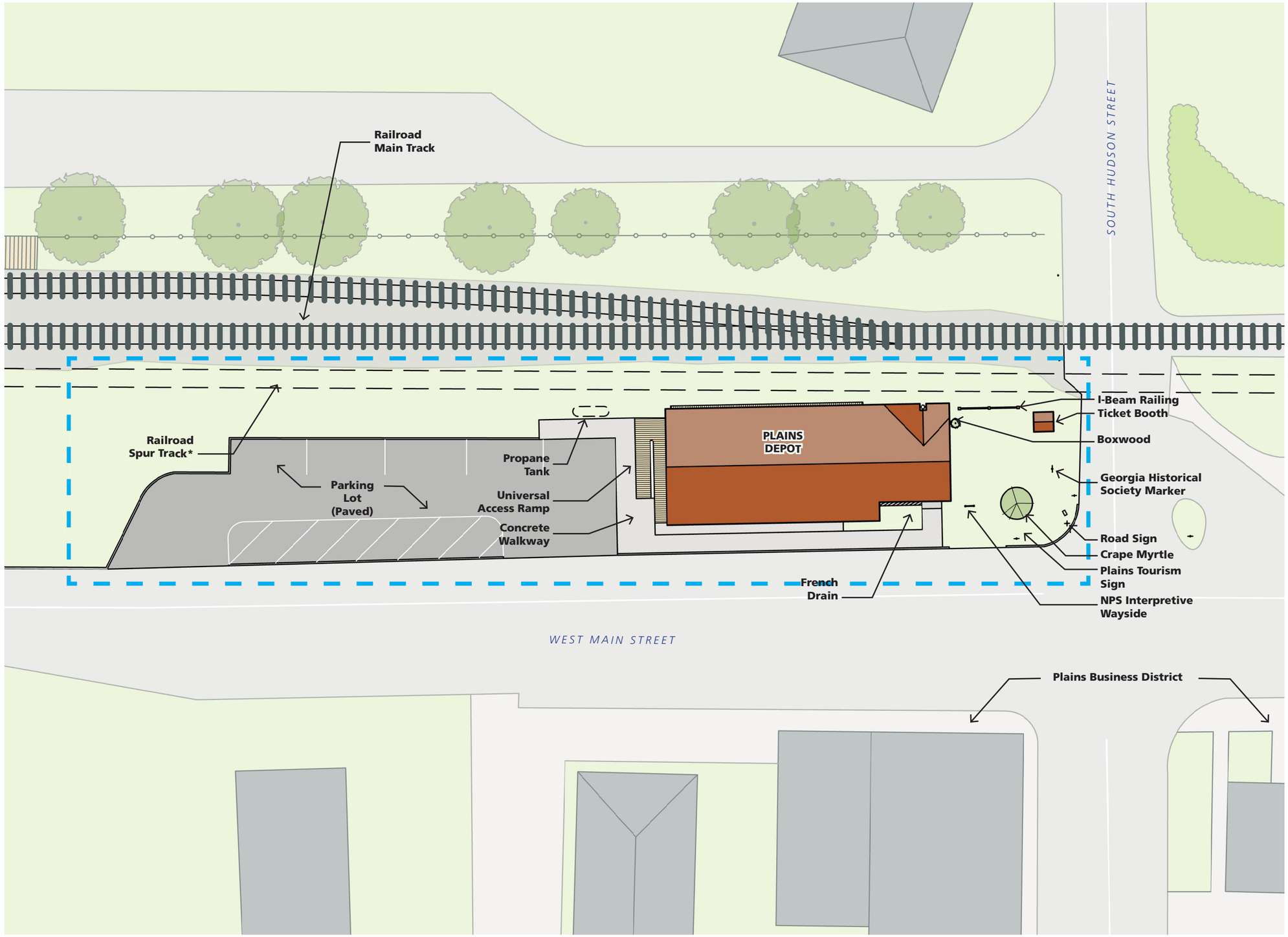


Figure 2.44: The depot and east lawn area in Fall 2018. (Source: WLA Studio).

Over the next three decades, the NPS made a number of repairs, alterations, and improvements to the site. While mostly in keeping with the depot's primary year of significance—1976—the NPS improved the depot landscape in order to increase public accessibility within the site. Changes to the circulation system included the addition of a walkway from the parking area to the entrance of the depot and a wooden universal access ramp in 1998. Another significant change was the removal of the railroad spur line closest to the depot building sometime between 1980 and 1987. Over the course of this period, the ornamental vegetation east of the depot gradually diminished. Likely as part of the improvements to site circulation, the NPS installed an area of lawn in the area, retaining the two crape myrtles. In 2007, a contractor removed the northernmost crape myrtle as part of utility work. Other significant changes included the removal of the railroad track spur line closest to the depot building sometime between 1980 and 1987. Informational signs and displays increased the number of small-scale features.

Despite these alterations, the character of the depot landscape, and surrounding context, is still reflective of the 1976 presidential campaign period (Figure 2.44).

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Key

- TURF
- ADJACENT BUILDINGS
- CLR BOUNDARY

Notes

1. Temporary tourism-related signs, small-scale features, and structures existed in the landscape for several years, but were removed prior to NPS acquisition.
2. Ornamental planting bed removed in the late 1980s or early 1990s.
3. Railroad spur track removed between 1980 and 1987.
4. The NPS added a number of visitor service improvements to the site between 1988 and 2018.

Credits

1. Google Earth
2. JICA Archives
3. Historic Aerials and Photographs

Illustration 2.3
1977-2017
Plains Depot
Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Cultural Landscape Report
December 2019

Existing Conditions

Introduction

The focus of this study is the Plains Depot, a component landscape within Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (JICA). The .32-acre depot site is located in the small town of Plains, Georgia, in rural Sumter County. The National Park Service (NPS) has managed the property since its acquisition in December 1987. The site is roughly 9 miles west of Americus, the county seat, 45 miles southeast of Columbus, Georgia, and 115 miles south of Atlanta. The property is bounded on the north by the rail right of way, on the east by South M. L. Hudson Street, on the south by West Main Street, and on the west by a parcel containing two warehouse buildings located within the rail right-of-way. While once functioning as the symbolic and functional center of Plains, the Plains Depot is now principally associated with Jimmy Carter and his 1976 presidential campaign. The surviving resources of the site that reflect this association include the depot building, overall spatial organization, and preserved utilitarian character. Adjacent properties support the historic character of the site. Illustration 3.1 depicts the existing conditions of the site.

This section of the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) inventories the existing conditions of the site using a combination of contemporary photographs, plan view graphics, and narrative description. This inventory organizes site features by landscape characteristic, which are the "tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products of its development, respectively."[231] Further, "these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance."[232] The NPS identifies thirteen landscape characteristics. These landscape characteristics are defined as follows:[233]

- Natural Systems and Features: Natural aspects that often influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.
- Spatial Organization: Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.
- Land Use: Organization, form, and shape of the landscape in response to land use.
- Cultural Traditions: Practices that influence land use, patterns of division, building forms, and the use of materials.
- Cluster Arrangement: The location of buildings and structures in the landscape.
- Circulation: Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.
- Topography: Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.
- Vegetation: Indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.
- Buildings and Structures: Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.
- Views and Vistas: Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.
- Constructed Water Features: The built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions.
- Small-Scale Features: Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.
- Archeological Sites: Sites containing surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.

While most sites contain at least several of the thirteen characteristics, "[n]ot all characteristics

231. Robert R. Page, National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7-4.
232. Ibid., 53.
233. Ibid.

are always present in any one landscape."[234] It total, the existing Plains Depot landscape contains 10 of the 13 landscape characteristics, with *constructed water features* and known or identified *archeological sites* not represented in the landscape.

Natural Systems and Features

Though part of a downtown setting, the Plains Depot property is situated within a broad riverine environment called the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin (ACF Basin). In addition to portions of east Alabama, west-central Georgia, and the panhandle of Florida, the ACF Basin encompasses the majority of present-day southwest Georgia, including the city of Plains and Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (Figure 3.1). The project area is associated with the Kinchafoonee-Muckalee Watershed and the Flint River Basin, both of which are sub-regions within the ACF Basin. Given the urban setting of the depot, no obvious natural systems and features are apparent.

Climate

The climate of Plains and the surrounding area is characterized by hot and humid summers and mild winters, referred to as a humid subtropical climate. Spring is the wettest season, with March being the wettest month, when over 5 inches of precipitation on average is recorded in Plains. The driest month is October, which registers 2.4 inches of precipitation on average. Annual precipitation for the area is roughly 50 inches. Due to the effects of El Nino, the annual temperatures in the southeastern United States have not risen like they have in the rest of the country. Climate models predict that temperatures will rise in the future.[235] As of 2012, no consensus exists concerning potential precipitation changes at the park; some models project a wetter climate, while others forecast a drier environment.[236]

Soils

The Plains Depot property has soils typical of the surrounding area, which enticed settlers to establish farms in the region. The soil at the depot site is characterized as Greenville sandy loam, and 0 to 2 percent slopes. Located across the upland Coastal Plain, this soil type features well-draining red clayey material initially formed by marine deposits. The soil at the depot site has been disturbed on several occasions.

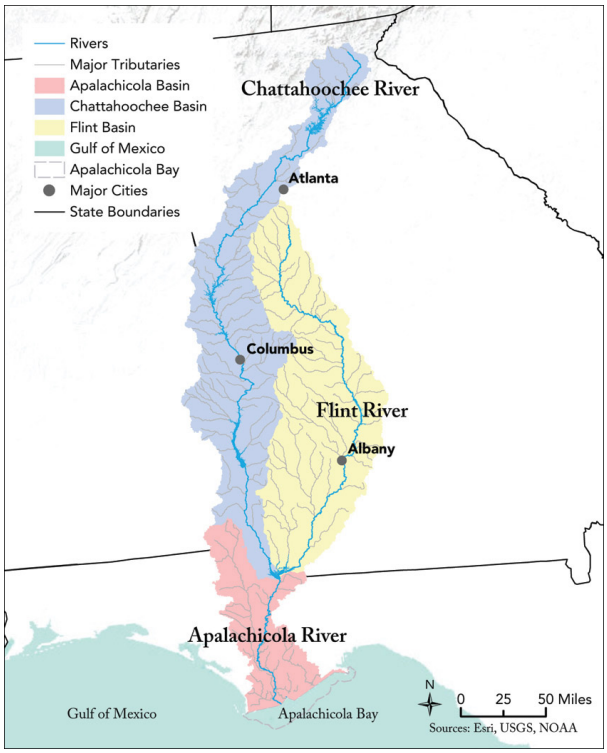


Figure 3.1: Map depicting the extent of the ACF basin. (Source: Jonathan Skaggs / River Basin Center).

Features:

- Humid subtropical climate
- Soils

Topography

There is little topographic variation at the depot site. What variation exists is subtle and serves to divert water away from the depot building. As a result, the circulation features on the south and west sides of the building feature few grade changes (Figure 3.2). On the north, a shallow swale between the depot building and the railroad tracks collects water, shedding water away from the depot building and toward West Main Street (Figure 3.3).

Features:

- Topography (flat terrain)
- Drainage swale
- Grade of circulation features

234. Ibid.
235. Patrick Gonzalez, "Climate Change Trends for Park Planning at Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, Georgia" (National Park Service, December 19, 2012), 1.
236. Gonzalez, "Climate Change Trends," 1.



Figure 3.2: The landscape subtlety slopes south, shedding water away from the depot building. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.4: The adjacent railroad tracks serve as a key spatial organizing feature for the site. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.3: A slight swale exists between the depot landscape and the adjacent railroad tracks. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.5: The parking lot serves as a distinct space within the depot landscape. (Source: WLA Studio).

Spatial Organization

The spatial organization of the Plains Depot site is defined in two ways: first by adjacent properties and second by the three-part organization within the property boundaries. Though not within the National Park Service-owned parcel, the railroad tracks that run east-west just outside of the site's northern property line organize the space north of the building. The depot building is oriented toward the tracks (Figure 3.4). This location provides a sense of the property's original use and its link to the city's history.

Within the site boundaries, three distinct spaces exist: a parking area, the depot building, and a small lawn area. Located in the western portion of the site, the parking lot separates the depot building from adjacent properties (Figure 3.5). The depot building occupies the middle, central area within the site (Figure 3.6). A wood ramp and



Figure 3.6: The depot building serves as the primary organizing feature of the site. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.7: The lawn area east of the depot is another distinct space within the landscape. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.8: Detail of patchy lawn area. (Source: WLA Studio).

sidewalk connect the building to the parking lot. The lawn area east of the depot building serves as the third space within the property (Figure 3.7). The area functions as a buffer between the depot building and the roadway immediately adjacent to the site.

The overhead plane is clear of any spatially-defining features such as trees, buildings, or other organizing features. This allows for open views to and from the site.

Features:

- Organization by adjacent properties
- Three-part organization at the ground level (parking, depot building, lawn area)
- Open visual plane above and through the site

Cluster Arrangement

The existing Plains Depot building is arranged linearly northeast to southwest in relatively close proximity to the railroad track. Roughly 20 feet separates the building from the track. The long facade of the building parallels the track. The building also sits parallel to the road and is oriented northeast to southwest like other downtown buildings, which are located south of West Main Street on both sides of South M. L. Hudson Street.

Features:

- Depot building's relationship to the railroad
- Depot building's relationship to the town



Figure 3.9: The lawn area east of the depot has a swath of turfgrass and a single crape myrtle tree. (Source: WLA Studio).

Vegetation

Natural Vegetation

The Plains Depot site is mostly devoid of natural vegetation. Currently, only intermittent communities of spontaneous "weedy" flora grow within the site, mostly along disturbed edges such as the depot building footprint (Figure 3.8).



Figure 3.10: The lawn area east of the depot has a swath of turfgrass and a single crape myrtle tree. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.11: A narrow band of turfgrass is located on the north side of the depot and arcs around the parking lot's west end. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.12: A strip of turfgrass is located near the entrance door. (Source: WLA Studio).

Cultural Vegetation

The Plains Depot site contains limited cultural vegetation. Existing vegetation features include turf grass (*Cynodon* spp.) and weedy-species groundcover in several areas of the site and a mature crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) east of the depot building (Figure 3.9 and Figure 3.10). The turf grass is mostly contained within the lawn area east of the depot building, with long strips of grass along the northern and western edges of the property (Figure 3.11). A small island of turf also exists near the front door of the depot on the south side of the building (Figure 3.12).



Figure 3.13: The depot is located at the intersection of M. L. Hudson Street and Main Street in downtown Plains. (Source: WLA Studio).

Features:

- Turf grass (*Cynodon* spp.)
- Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)

Buildings and Structures

One building and one structure are present at the Plains Depot site: the Plains Depot and a universal access ramp. Various utilities are also located on site.

The Plains Depot (CRIS # 91350)

The Plains Depot building, constructed in 1890, is the dominant feature at the site (Figure 3.13). The building is a one-story rectangular wood framed structure. There is an addition on the east side of the building. The side-gable roof has a large overhang and there are wood decked platforms on the north and south facades. There is a large open platform on the west facade. The building sits on brick pier foundations with additional concrete masonry unit (CMU) and timber piers.

Within the lot, the building is oriented northeast to southwest on the south side of the railroad tracks that run through the town. The depot building's



Figure 3.14: South facade of the depot. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.16: West facade of depot. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.15: Modern glass entrance door. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.17: West facade of depot showing roof overhang. (Source: WLA Studio).

west facade is 20' - 5" wide. The east facade measures 24' - 1/2" wide due to a short el off the northern facade. The building is 80' - 2" long and 19' - 7" tall. It is painted white with "Carter Green" trim.[237] The building has little architectural ornamentation. Visual variation on the facade includes differences in paint color, building siding, doorway access, and window placement along the depot's facades. Except for the western facade, all the depot's facades are asymmetrical.

The south facade of the depot serves as the front of the building (Figure 3.14). On the eastern end of the building, a modern glass doorway provides pedestrian access into the building at grade (Figure 3.15). This section of the building features lap siding. A sliding door for the warehouse section of the depot is located on western end of the south facade. It is accessed from the outside by a short flight of wood stairs and the landing is connected to the large loading platform extending from and wrapping around building's west facade. The majority of the south facade features board and batten siding. There are three windows on the eastern end of the south facade.

The west facade of the main building block does not have any doors. This facade has a simple, hand painted locational sign typical of rural depots, containing the text "Plains, GA." A building vent is located above the sign (Figure 3.16). The large open-air wood loading platform wraps around the base of the west facade, with a narrow section of decking extending along the north facade. The gable end roof extends across the entire platform (Figure 3.17).

237. "Carter Green" refers to the hunter green color used by the 1976 Carter campaign for promotional materials. Research did not reveal the origin of the color or nomenclature.



Figure 3.18: North facade of depot. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.19: North facade of depot showing projection on east side. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.20: East facade of the depot. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.21: Wide roof overhang. (Source: WLA Studio).

The north facade of the depot building faces the railroad tracks (Figure 3.18). This side of the depot has a narrow, gabled projection at the northeast corner of the building (Figure 3.19). The projection has three windows and a door for pedestrian access at grade. Lapped siding covers this portion of the north facade. A narrow extension of the loading platform exists across the facade, terminating in a small flight of stairs. This area provides access to a loading bay door.

The east facade faces downtown Plains (Figure 3.20). This side of the building features a large green sign with the text "Jimmy Carter PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS," and a "Plains, GA." sign similar to the one on the west facade. These signs are described in the Small-scale Features section below. Two windows are located on this side of the building as well as a standard modern utility meter. Two United States flags on poles are mounted to the corners of the facade. The east facade has lapped siding.

One of the primary characteristics of the depot is the oversized side gable roof, which overhangs the building block on the north and south facades



Figure 3.22: Roof covering loading platform. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.24: Above ground utilities lines enter into the site from the east. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.23: Wood access ramp. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.25: French drain system along base of south facade. (Source: WLA Studio).

(Figure 3.21). The roof covers the large open-air wooden loading platform extending from the west facade of the building (Figure 3.22). The rafters and truss system are visible on the underside of the roof. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

Universal Access Ramp

A wooden ramp is attached to the west side of the loading platform (Figure 3.23). The ramp is flush with the edge of the platform and includes two ramped runs with a middle landing. There are handrails on both sides of the ramp. Access to the ramp is provided by the concrete walkway along the southern edge of the property boundary. The total structure measures 25 feet wide by 56 feet long. The grade change is 2' – 8" over the length of the ramp.

Utilities

There are several utilities at the site. An above-head utility line enters the site from the southeast, connecting to a meter box on the east facade of

the depot (Figure 3.24). The line delivers power and phone utilities to the building. A below-grade water meter is located at the southeast corner of the property. There is a French drain located along the foundation of the depot building's south side (Figure 3.25). Marked on the surface by a bed of pea gravel bordered by wood timbers, the drain is located west of the entrance door.

Features:

- Plains Depot
- Universal access ramp
- Water meter
- Electric line with utility boxes
- French drain

Land Use

Currently, the land use of the site relates to its function as a component of Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. Tourism and historic interpretation are the site's primary land uses (Figure 3.26). The proximity of the site to downtown means that downtown patrons occasionally use the parking lot when on-street parking is not available.

Features:

- Heritage tourism
- Historic interpretation
- Parking

Cultural Traditions

Current cultural traditions at the site include heritage tourism, political tourism, and heritage preservation. The continued maintenance of the Plains Depot in keeping with the 1976 presidential campaign period reflects a historic preservation tradition engrained in both the National Park Service and the United States in general. This tradition allows for a sustained heritage and political tourism related to the founding of Plains and the 1976 campaign.

Features:

- Heritage/political tourism
- Historic preservation



Figure 3.26: Interior use of depot reflects interpretive land use. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.27: Tourists and locals alike use parking lot at site. (Source: WLA Studio).

Circulation

The circulation features at the site facilitate vehicular and pedestrian access within the site and also to adjacent properties.

Vehicular

Two vehicular circulation features exist within the site: the parking lot and trace of railroad tracks. The active railroad tracks outside the park boundary also contribute to the cultural landscape.

Parking Lot

An asphalt-paved parking lot is located in the western portion of the site (Figure 3.27). The irregular shaped lot spans 150' – 0" along its southern edge and 114' – 0" along its northern edge. The eastern edge of the lot is straight, and the western edge is curved. The parking lot contains seven angled parking spaces, with one (easternmost) universally accessible space. The



Figure 3.28: Former location of railroad tracks and existing adjacent railroad tracks. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.29: A concrete sidewalk runs from the eastern portion of the parking area to the front entrance on the south facade. (Source: WLA Studio).

lot is striped for one-way traffic, with automobiles entering in from the eastern curb cut and exiting from the western curb cut. The lot has curbing along its entire perimeter, except for three curb cuts along the roadside; the middle cut does not appear to serve a vehicular purpose due to modern striping. An angular access aisle associated with the universal access parking space is indicated with striping at the northeast corner of the parking lot.

Railroad Trace

The faint trace of where a spur track once entered the depot landscape is located in the small strip of land between the north side of the depot building and the still-active railroad tracks (Figure 3.28). The metal track and wooden timbers are missing, but the grading remains evident.

Railroad Tracks (adjacent)

Though not located within the depot site, the association between the still-active railroad tracks and the depot landscape remains strong, meriting its inclusion in this documentation of existing conditions (Figure 3.28). The tracks extend northeast to southwest across the north side of the depot landscape. The track includes typical features including a gravel ballast, rails, fasteners, and large wooden railroad ties.

Pedestrian

Two formal pedestrian circulation features exist within the site: a modern concrete walkway and the wooden platform and associated walkways.

Concrete Walkway

An L-shaped concrete walkway connects the parking area to the entrance of the depot building



Figure 3.30: Northern platform walkway extension with handrail. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.31: Southern platform walkway extension and associated stairs and handrail. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.32: Wood access ramp. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.33: Georgia Historic Marker east of depot building. (Source: WLA Studio).

and the universal access ramp (Figure 3.29). The walkway begins at the northeast corner of the parking lot, where it aligns with the access aisle. From there, it runs south along the outer edge of the universal access ramp, to which it provides access. The walkway then turns east, parallel with and between the road and depot building. Outside of the entrance door on the east end of the depot, a short section of walkway connects the main walk with the entrance door. The walkway is not connected to any other adjacent walkways.

Loading Platform, Platform Walks and Stairs

The main section of elevated wooden platform occupies a 20' – 5" × 23' – 5" space west of the main depot building block. Two wooden walkways extend across portions of the north and south elevations; these walkways terminate in a short flight of stairs with a section of handrail (Figure 3.30 and Figure 3.31). The south walkway is 42' – 7" long and the north walkway is 58' – 8" long. They are both roughly 7' – 7" wide.

Universal Access Ramp

A two-section wood universal access ramp located between the parking lot and the elevated platform provides access to the depot building.

The structure is described in the Buildings and Structures section above (Figure 3.32).

Features:

- Parking lot
- Railroad tracks (adjacent)
- Railroad track trace
- Concrete walkway
- Loading platform decking
- Universal access ramp

Small-Scale Features

Few small-scale features presently exist within the depot landscape.

Signs

A number of signs are located within the depot landscape, mostly concentrated in the lawn area east of the depot and attached to the depot itself.

Jimmy Carter Signage

Two large replica signs related to Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign are located on the depot building (Figure 3.20 and Figure 3.31). The



Figure 3.34: Locational sign on west facade. Sign is identical to one on east facade. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.35: One of four SCL signs. Pictured sign is located above the doorway on north facade. (Source: WLA Studio).

one located on the east facade contains the text "Jimmy Carter PRESIDENTAL CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS" in white lettering atop a green background. The other, located on the west side of the south facade contains the text "Jimmy Carter! For President" in white lettering atop a green background.

Georgia Historic Marker

A metal Georgia Historic Marker stands within the lawn area east of the depot (Figure 3.33). The marker contains text describing the significance



Figure 3.36: Cluster of signs in the southeast corner of the site. (Source: WLA Studio).

of Jimmy Carter, Plains, and the depot. The brass sign features raised gold lettering atop a dark brown backdrop and is supported by a light gray freestanding chamfered pole. Note, in April 2019 this sign was damaged and removed to JICA storage.

"Plains, GA" Depot Signage

Two identical signs identifying the town of Plains are attached to the depot building's east and west facades (Figure 3.34). The narrow rectangular signs contain the text "Plains, GA." in green stenciled text is painted on a white background. The signs have a narrow wood frame painted green.

Seaboard Coast Line Railroad (SCL) Signage

Four identical signs identifying the depot's association with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad are attached to the depot in different locations: one above the door on the north facade, one attached to the gable end of roof on the west, one attached to the south facade above the entrance door, and one attached at the gable end of the east facade. The signs are circular, with two layers of text: unstylized black lettering wrapping around the outside edge of the sign with the text "Seaboard Coast Line Railroad" and the abbreviation "SCL"



Figure 3.37: ADA parking sign in parking lot. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.38: Interpretive wayside near southeast corner of the depot. (Source: WLA Studio).

in italicized red lettering in the center of the circle (Figure 3.35).

Plains Tourism Sign

A small sign denoting the depot as feature one on the "Plains Historic Tour" is located near the southeast corner of the lawn area (Figure 3.36). The small white metal sign is attached to a black metal post.



Figure 3.39: Detail of concrete curb. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.40: Concrete curbing around the parking lot. (Source: WLA Studio).

Traffic Signs

The site contains three traffic-related signs: a stop sign, a road sign, and a universal access parking sign. The stop sign and standard road sign (South M. L. Hudson and West Main Streets) are located in the southeast corner of the lawn area east of the depot (Figure 3.36). Both are mounted on standard metal poles. The accessible parking sign is located in the parking lot west of the depot (Figure 3.37).

Interpretive Panel

A standard 36" × 24" NPS low-profile wayside interpretive panel is located off the southeast corner of the depot building (Figure 3.38). Titled "Plains Depot," the panel presents information about the site, and includes a map of the entire Jimmy Carter Preservation District. The wayside is mounted on two posts.

Other

Other small-scale features at the site include curbing along the road and parking lot edges, visitor amenities, depot-associated features, and decorations that include benches, rocking chairs, United States flags, and decorative barrels.

The concrete curb spans from the southeast corner of the site west across the south edge of the parking lot (Figure 3.39). Its span is interrupted by four curb cuts, three at the parking lot and one on the south side of the lawn area. An additional curb runs from the southwest edge of the parking lot toward the depot building, ending at the universal access parking space (Figure 3.40).

Depot-associated features include a telephone box on the north facade of the depot and a signal pole with an associated ladder. The telephone box is a small wooden box mounted to the face of the depot several feet above the elevated walkway. It is painted green. The signal pole is located just north of the office portion of the depot on the north. It is ground-mounted and rises up above the roof line. The roof of the depot has a section cutout to allow the pole to extend upward. The pole is painted white with green details, and the ladder that extends up the north side of the pole is painted green as well.

Two simple wooden benches stand with their backs against the west facade of the depot building (Figure 3.34). The benches are positioned side-by-side and on center with the sign and ventilation window above. Flanking the set of benches are two decorative barrels. Additionally, two wicker-backed rocking chairs are located on the loading platform but are placed inside the depot during closed hours. Two United States flags on poles are mounted to the corners of the east facade, with the poles extending eastward.

A standard plastic brochure box is located adjacent to the depot's front door.

Features:

- Georgia historical marker
- Plains tour sign
- United States flags
- Stop sign
- Road sign
- Jimmy Carter signs
- Plains, GA depot signs
- Accessible parking sign
- Interpretive panel
- Signal Pole
- Signal Pole Ladder
- Depot Telephone Box
- Curbing
- Benches
- Rocking chairs
- Barrels
- Brochure Box

Views and Vistas

Given its small size, the principal views pertaining to the depot landscape extend to and from adjacent properties as opposed to being contained within the property boundaries. Notable views toward the depot landscape include: (1) the views from multiple points in downtown Plains, generally northwest toward the depot; (2) the view of the depot as approached along South M. L. Hudson Street; and (3) the view from the railroad tracks in both directions (Figure 3.41, Figure 3.42, Figure 3.43, Figure 3.44).

Notable views from the depot include:

1. the open view of downtown Plains from various points in the landscape, and
2. the views east and west along the railroad tracks (Figure 3.45).

Features:

- Views of downtown Plains from depot landscape / Views of depot from downtown
- View toward depot from South M. L. Hudson Street
- East and west views along railroad tracks to and from the depot



Figure 3.41: View of depot looking northwest from downtown Plains. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.43: View west along the railroad tracks. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.42: View of depot from M. L. Hudson Street, looking southwest. (Source: WLA Studio).

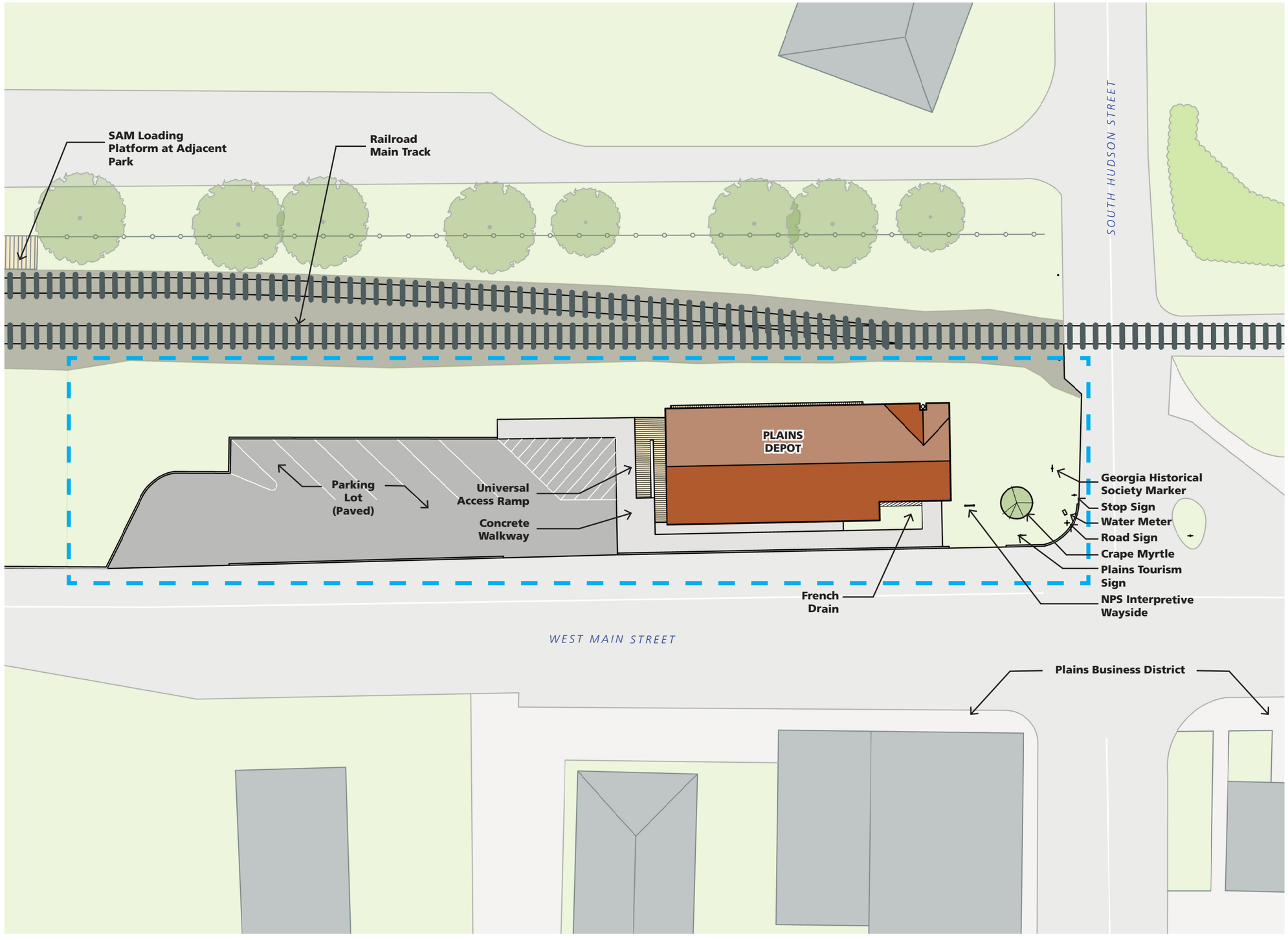


Figure 3.44: View east along the railroad tracks. (Source: WLA Studio).



Figure 3.45: View toward downtown Plains, looking southeast. (Source: WLA Studio).

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Key

- TURF
- ADJACENT BUILDINGS
- CLR BOUNDARY

Credits

1. Google Earth
2. JICA Archives
3. Site investigation, October 2018

Illustration 3.1
Existing Conditions
Plains Depot
Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Cultural Landscape Report

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Analysis and Evaluation

Introduction

For cultural landscapes such as the Plains Depot property, documenting existing conditions and analyzing and evaluating natural and human-made historic resources is critical in the development of a strategy for their management and treatment. Cultural landscape analysis involves two primary activities: evaluating historic significance and assessing historic integrity. Both use criteria determined by the National Register of Historic Places, which has developed nationally-recognized methods for evaluating the significance and integrity of historic buildings and landscapes. The evaluation of historic significance identifies the important historical associations of the property, as well as its architectural, archeological, and social value. The property's significance is tied to a discrete period of time (period of significance) in which its important contributions were made and the broader historic contexts (historic context themes) within which the activities that occurred on the property may be placed. The analysis and evaluation section considers the site's history within recognized historic contexts to determine its contribution to the broad patterns of American history. It is important to note that historic resources, particularly cultural landscapes, change over time. As a result, a cultural landscape may have several areas of historic significance and multiple periods of significance. In order to determine whether a landscape feature contributes to the historic significance of the landscape at the Plains Depot site, this chapter compares the existing conditions of landscape features to its understood historic state. The objective of this analysis is to identify the specific features associated with the historic periods and assess to what degree they continue to convey their historic significance.

To aid in this assessment, landscape features are categorized based on their contribution to the understanding of the historic character of the landscape during the period or periods of significance. These categories are:

Contributing
Noncontributing
Missing

Contributing landscape features survive from the period of significance and continue to reflect their historic appearance and function. Noncontributing landscape features include those added to the site since the period of significance or that no longer retain enough physical integrity to convey their historic appearance or function. Missing features existed during the period of significance but have been removed, destroyed, or cannot be recognized in their current condition. Undetermined include features whose age cannot be determined or whose contribution to the historic landscape is unknown. Please refer to the table at the end of this chapter for a summary of this information.

The process to identify landscape elements follows a National Park Service methodology that categorizes all landscape elements as one of thirteen landscape characteristics:

Archeological Sites
Buildings and Structures
Circulation
Arrangement of Buildings
Constructed Water Features
Cultural Traditions
Land Use
Natural Systems and Features
Other
Small-Scale Features
Spatial Organization
Cluster Arrangement
Topography
Vegetation
Views and Vistas

Landscape characteristics are the "tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products of its development, respectively." Further, "these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its

historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance."[238] Based on this understanding of the landscape, National Register of Historic Places methodology aids in establishing a site's significance.

National Register Status

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorized the creation of the National Register of Historic Places as the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The National Park Service is responsible for maintaining the list and coordinating with public and private entities to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The National Park Service has developed criteria for evaluating historic resources to determine their eligibility for listing in the National Register. The National Register Criteria for Evaluation examine a property's age, integrity, and significance.

To be considered historic, a property typically needs to be at least 50 years old, though exceptions can be made for certain properties. In terms of integrity, as *A Guide for Cultural Landscape Reports* explains, "historic integrity of a cultural landscape relates to the ability of the landscape to convey its significance. The National Register defines seven aspects of integrity that address the cohesiveness, setting, and character of a landscape, as well as the material, composition, and workmanship of associated features. Historic integrity is assessed to determine if the landscape characteristics and associated features, and the spatial qualities that shaped the landscape during the historic period, are present in much the same way as they were historically."[239] Accounting for change in a landscape—a natural occurrence—is integral to the evaluation process. As the *Guide* notes, "[i] t is important not only to consider changes to the individual [landscape] feature, but how such changes affect the landscape as a whole."[240]

The property must also be associated with historic events, activities, or developments that were important in the past. The National Register identifies the type of significance of a property based on the following criteria:

A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
B. Association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
C. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D. Yielding or potential to yield information in history or prehistory.

A site may be significant in any or all of these four criteria. Based on these criteria, a statement of significance can be drafted for a site.

The Plains Depot is included within the boundary of several local and national historic preservation overlays. The Plains Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in June 1984 with a period of significance only identified as late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The nomination mentions Plains Depot but does not identify contributing and noncontributing resources. Three years later, on December 23, 1987, Public Law 100-206 established Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, a discontinuous district that included several sites related to Jimmy Carter's life in the Plains area, including the depot building. The local historic district was amended in 1990 to include all of downtown Plains.[241] In 2015, the National Register accepted the supporting documentation for Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, which provided "documentation for the park by establishing historic contexts and defining a

238. Robert R. Page, *National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7-4; 53.
239. Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, "A Guide To Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques" (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998), 71.
240. Page, Gilbert, and Dolan, 72.
241. William Patrick O'Brien, "Special History Study: Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District" (National Park Service, 1991), 69–70.

period of significance [and] the boundaries for the National Historic Site."[242]

Concerning the Plains Depot site, the 2015 National Register documentation describes the depot building and landscape and establishes its historic significance through the statement of significance. The nomination lists one contributing resource at the site: the Plains Depot (CRIS #091350).[243] Though several landscape features present in 2015 date to the period of significance, the nomination lists neither the depot landscape, nor any of its features as contributing resources.

Statement of Significance

The following is the Statement of Significance from the 2015 National Register nomination for Jimmy Carter National Historic Site:

> The resources within the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site (NHS) are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and B. Though geographically separate and linked by spaces that do not meet National Register criteria, these collective resources are significant for their associations with broad patterns of history and the life of Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States. Under criterion A, the Plains High School and the Plains Depot are significant at the local level in the area of community planning and development. At the state level, the NHS is important in the areas of agriculture, exploration/settlement, and community planning and development as representative of rural development patterns. The Boyhood Farm is also significant at the state level under National Register criterion A as a representative example of the tenant/sharecropping system of agriculture that largely disappeared from the region with the advent of World War II. The NHS possesses national and local significance under Criterion B. It is nationally significant in the area of government/politics due to its association with President Jimmy Carter.
>
> The Plains Depot and Plains High School are locally significant under criterion A for their association with the community planning and development of Plains. Leaders of Plains made a conscious decision to move the town to be near the railroad line extending from Americus. The presence of the railroad influenced the creation of a vernacular development plan for the town, with stores, houses, churches, and other buildings constructed near the depot. The high school provided the town with its largest educational facility. The auditorium and sports venues provided by the school also created a central location for community events. Together these resources reflect development patterns of small rural communities in the South from the 19th and 20th centuries. The noncontiguous district is significant at the state level as a rural historic landscape in the areas of agriculture, settlement, and community planning and development for the period 1885 to 1945. Settled as an agriculture-based community, Plains represents the rural development patterns of the American South. The majority of the town's residents worked as farmers up to the 1940s. In addition to transportation, the railroad provided a location for the development of a central core of stores, businesses, homes, churches, and other establishments to support the agricultural community. The Boyhood Farm is important as it embodies structures and landscape features that continue to reflect the tenant/sharecropping system of agriculture that was in place here as well as other locations throughout the South.

Note that Criteria Considerations E and G also apply to JICA. Criteria Consideration E addresses reconstructed resources, such as those present at the Boyhood Home: A reconstructed property is eligible when it is accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan and when no other building or structure with the same associations has survived. All three of these requirements must be met. Criteria Consideration G addresses properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years, which applies to various resources within JICA, notably the present-day home of the Carters. The National Register nomination notes that these considerations apply to the site but does not elaborate within the Statement of Significance.

242. Jill K. Hanson, Dale Jaeger, and Brian LaBrie, "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site" (National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, 2015), 3.
243. Following previous documentation, the 2015 National Register nomination erroneously states the depot's construction date as 1888. Newspaper accounts show that the final date of construction to be 1890.

As the statement of significance details, the development of Plains reflects a common, but significant, period in American settlement history, one that "illustrates the way in which railroads have influenced the growth and development of small towns in Georgia," as well as how agriculture served as an economic and societal foundation Plains historical development.[244] Further, the depot's past and present association with Jimmy Carter and the 1976 Presidential Campaign establishes its national significance. These areas of significance directly relate to the established period of significance for the site.

Period of Significance

The 2015 National Register nomination lists the period of significance for Jimmy Carter National Historic Site as 1921-2014.[245] This period of significance does not include the construction of Plains Depot. However, the period of significance in the 1984 National Register nomination for the Plains Historic District covers Plains Depot as a late nineteenth-century building. The following is the description of the Period of Significance as contained with the within the 2015 nomination:

> The Period of Significance for the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site begins in 1924 with the birth of Jimmy Carter and extends to the present time, reflecting the continued contributions of our nation's 39th President and his wife, Rosalynn. Born in Plains, Georgia, Carter moved to the nearby agricultural community of Archery, Georgia, at age four where he resided for the remainder of his childhood. Plains continued to play an important role in Carter's childhood, as this is where he attended school and church. He left Plains to attend college and eventually served in the US Navy, which took him and his wife, Rosalynn, to several other locations in the United States. With the death of his father, Carter returned to Plains in 1953 to manage the family's agriculture business. He became involved in politics first at the local level, and later as a Georgia state senator, and eventually Governor of Georgia in 1971-1975. He was elected President of the United States, serving from 1976-1980. After losing the election in 1980, he and Rosalynn returned to Plains, where they continue to reside today.
>
> This period includes alterations to his residential property, made to retrofit his residential home and site for use by a former presidential family. With the creation of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, restoration, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts were undertaken throughout the historic site to interpret the locations that were important in Carter's life. Collectively, these non-contiguous sites forming the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site allow visitors to explore the historic resources and rural southern culture that had an influence in molding the character and political policies of Jimmy Carter. This period of significance will be amended when there are significant changes to park operations or boundaries.

As the 1921-2014 Period of Significance is too broad for a useful analysis and evaluation of historic character at the depot site, this section uses the date 1976, as identified in the 1993 General Management Plan (GMP).

Treatment Period

While a broad period of significance is useful for collectively addressing multiple properties, it limits the usefulness of a comparative analysis of features at a specific site. Typically, the Analysis and Evaluation section delineates periods ("historic" and "post-historic" periods). Features dating to the historic period reflect the site's significance. Features dating to the post-historic period do not reflect the site's significance. In this case, as established by the National Register nomination, the end date between historic and post-historic periods at Jimmy Carter National Historic Site is 2014. As 2014 does not relate to the depot's most significant event (the 1976 presidential campaign) nor relate to the ultimate Treatment Period proposed for the site, the following Analysis of Landscape Characteristics section uses a proposed November 2, 1976, date based on guidance in the 1993 GMP for its organization, with features present on November 2, 1976,

244. Andrea Niles, "Plains Historic District" (National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, 1984), 3.

245. The narrative section of the National Register nomination identifies the Period of Significance for JICA as 1924-2014, although the correct dates are 1921-2014. The nomination does not provide an explanation as to the discrepancy, though it appears that the date was changed to include the construction date of Plains High School, but it was not changed in the narrative, which focuses on the life of Jimmy Carter.

and earlier considered *historic*, and those from November 3, 1976, to the present considered *non-historic*. Further, the individual features are noted as contributing or noncontributing based on the Treatment Period date and not the Period of Significance.

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

Natural Systems and Features

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

During the historic period, the natural systems of the region did not overtly influence the development of the depot landscape. These features included the humid subtropical climate, regional terrain, and the related underground soils. The climate, characterized by warm to hot summers and cool winters and an average of nearly 50 inches of annual precipitation, was likely a factor in how the depot was constructed. Specifically, the depot featured generous roof overhang that shielded both the depot building and people who were at the depot from the effects of sun and rain.

The regional terrain and soils were amenable to farming and town development. At the depot, the gentle topography of the site allowed for easier construction conditions. The soils, which were characterized by their fertility, allowed for the widespread adoption of agriculture in the region. The goods and products of this agricultural system passed through this depot on their way to wider markets. Though influencing the development of the region and depot landscape in terms of agriculture, commerce, and transportation, the soils, terrain, and climate appear to have had minimal effect on the 1976 presidential campaign.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the historic period, the natural systems and features present at the depot largely remained the same. Though disturbed, the soils and generally level terrain at the depot and the surrounding region remain the same as they did in 1976. Though daily temperatures during the summer months have risen since 1976, amounting to an additional 16 days of 90 degree temperatures on average, the overall climate of the region has cooled slightly due to colder winter temperatures.

Summary

In summary, the natural systems and features that influenced the development of the landscape remain intact. Further, the development of the landscape in reaction to these systems and features are also still present in the landscape.

Landscape Features

- Humid subtropical climate
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Soils
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Terrain
    - Contribution Status: Contributing

Topography

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

The topography of the depot landscape is reflective of the changes required during the construction of the depot and its associated features and spaces. Located on a piece of land with relatively little topographical variation, the depot landscape was likely lightly graded to create a level building surface. Overall, the site sloped north to south on a subtle grade. During this period, a railroad track ran through the northern portion of the site. Its construction resulted in an elevated railroad bed and a swale between it and the other railroad track to its north.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the historic period, little topographic change occurred. The NPS made improvements to the site that slightly altered its topographic condition. Specifically, the NPS graded the parking area and sidewalk to shed water away from the property. Additionally, the removal of the railroad track through the northern portion of the site altered the subtle topographic variation in that area, though a shallow swale is still present.

Summary

The overall topography of the site is similar to the historic period. Modifications to the topography of the site after the historic period include the construction of a paved parking area designed to shed water. Similarly, the modern sidewalk along the south side of the site slopes away from the site. The site maintains its general slope from north to south across its length.

Landscape Features

- Flat terrain with little topographic variation
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Drainage swale north of depot building
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Grade of circulation features
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

Land Use

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

During the historic period, land use at the site related to two primary uses: transportation via the railroad, and, at the end of the period, the political activity associated with the 1976 presidential campaign.

The construction of the AP&L railroad enticed the settlers of Sumter County to move from their disparate communities to establish a new town—Plains. M. L. Hudson donated land to the railroad so that the company could construct a depot for the town. By 1887, a depot was reportedly in use in Plains, though it is unknown if it was located on the donated land. In 1890, the railroad built a new depot on the donated land. The depot served the local community for the next 60 years, until passenger service ended in 1951. Owners of the depot then periodically used it for storage.

In 1976, the depot site served as the campaign headquarters for Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign. Campaign workers updated the building and surrounding landscape, painting the depot, adding ornamental vegetation, and renovating the depot's interior. These changes remained in place until the end of the historic period.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the campaign, owners used the depot for tourism purposes, as it became a symbol for Jimmy Carter and his successful election. After a peak in popularity in the late-1970s, tourism to Plains subsided and the depot became relatively unused. In 1987, the Plains Historical Preservation Trust donated the building to the National Park Service. The agency manages the depot as a historic resource, thus establishing federally-sanctioned historic interpretation and heritage tourism land use at the site. These uses continue today. Lastly, locals and tourists both use the paved parking area for matters nonrelated to the depot, such as parking for nearby downtown businesses, though this use is not sanctioned by JICA.

Summary

The current land use of the site continues the interpretive and historical tourism activities first begun by tourism companies and later officially established by the National Park Service. Trains, though still using the tracks to the depot's north, no longer stop at the depot. Though Jimmy Carter is still associated with the depot, the political campaign that elevated the building to national significance ended in 1976.

Landscape Features

- Tourism
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Parking
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Historic interpretation
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

Cultural Traditions

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

Cultural traditions that influenced the development of the depot landscape during the historic period include travel customs, commerce, leisure, segregation, heritage/political tourism, interpretation, and historic preservation.

The Plains Depot, through its role in facilitating travel and commerce in and out of Plains, held a key role in the development of the town. As such, the depot became the community center of Plains. Such activity related to travel and commerce via the railroad. In keeping with the tradition of public use of community common spaces, leisure traditions present at the site during the historic period included children playing at the depot as well as locals congregating at the site. The cultural tradition of racial segregation was made tangible through the construction of segregated waiting rooms at the depot in 1911. Forty years later, the railroad company removed the addition and discontinued passenger service, effectively ending spatial segregation at the depot.

When the depot stopped serving the commercial and transportation needs of the town in the 1950s, no other distinct cultural tradition developed on site until 1976. That year, Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign designated the depot as its

headquarters. United States political campaigns have both generated and drawn upon cultural traditions. Using the depot, the campaign exploited the depot's symbolic value in United States culture, namely as a representation of the look and feel of a small-town community and "old-fashioned" values. As a result, the Carter campaign linked Jimmy Carter's down-to-earth messaging with its physical representation—the Plains Depot.

The organization of volunteers, delivering of speeches, and holding other public events are part of political campaign cultural traditions and activity. The "Peanut Brigade," which helped Carter win crucial primary contests, is also representative of this political cultural tradition. Physical developments linked to these traditions include the repairs, alterations, and improvements made to the depot and depot landscape in 1976.

After securing the Democratic Party nomination, tourists began flocking to Plains through the second half of 1976. The depot with its "Carter Green" trim and large signs became an easily recognizable and popular destination for tourists interested in the president's home town. Tourism thus became another cultural tradition tied to the depot.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

By the end of the historic period, cultural traditions related to political activity, commerce, travel, racial segregation had all ended. Tourism to the depot continued, though with time, the numbers of visitors to the town and depot declined. An act of Congress established Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in 1987. Its creation, along with the subsequent acquisition of the depot by the NPS, derives from the tradition of historic preservation, park creation, and heritage interpretation by the federal government.

Summary

Since 1987, the NPS has continued the cultural traditions of interpretation and historic preservation at the depot. Heritage/political tourism to the site also continues due to the agency's actions. These cultural traditions guide the management of the site, with decision making concerning alterations to the property based on such traditions.

Landscape Features

- Depot role in community development
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Depot role in presidential politics
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Heritage/political tourism
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Heritage interpretation
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Historic preservation
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

Throughout the historic period, the depot served as the principal constructed feature at the site. Research indicates the presence of a depot in Plains that predated the construction of the current depot on site. It is unknown if this depot was constructed on the same lot as the present depot. In May of 1890, a new depot was built on the lot donated to the railroad by M. L. Hudson. It is assumed the AP&L paid for its construction. Based on earlier architectural drawings of the depot from 1911, as well as its current condition, it can be presumed that the 1890 depot was constructed as a typical vernacular one-story train station, rectangular in form and clad in wood. As original plans for the depot have not been located, it is unknown if the depot's construction was based on an established protype. It is also unknown if the new depot reused any of the first depot's materials.[246] The depot was built at the corner of present-day South M. L. Hudson Street and Main Street and oriented at a slight angle, extending northeast to southwest along the southside of the railroad track. In 1911, the Seaboard Air Line Railroad proposed the construction of an addition on the east side of the depot, occupying what is presumed to have been an open area between the depot and the road. Plans for the addition provide valuable information about the original section of the depot. The plans reveal that the depot consisted of an 8' × 21' baggage room, a 46' × 21' warehouse room, and an open-air platform that measured 80' × 36'. Two sections of walkway ran along the north

246. A dendrochronology study could aid in determining the date of the materials used in the construction of the depot.

and south facades of the depot. These walkways both terminated in a short flight of stairs.

The 1911 addition added three rooms: two racially segregated waiting rooms and an office. The addition was positioned asymmetrically on the east side of the depot. The two waiting rooms measured 18' × 24' and contained a ticket window served by the adjacent office. The office measured 10' × 40' and contained two doors—one into the whites-only waiting room and one into the baggage room. The drawing does not indicate access between the blacks-only room and the office.

A 1937 aerial of the site shows an unknown structure west of depot building. The structure was elevated high enough to cast a shadow in the image, but it does not appear to have a roof line, suggesting it was a flat platform of some type. The structure remained in place until the railroad removed it, along with a majority of the 1911 addition, in 1951. The demolition completely removed the segregated waiting rooms, and roughly 16 feet of the office. The northernmost 24 feet of the office was retained, with the southern portion made flush with the baggage room and warehouse sections. There is no known reason for the removal of these additions, nor is it known why the owners retained a portion of the office block. Between 1951 and 1976, the depot building sat mostly unused.

In 1976, campaign workers for Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign rehabilitated the depot to serve as the campaign headquarters. Workers painted and installed campaign signs on the exterior of the building and repartitioned the interior. The depot became recognizable throughout the country for its association with the Carter campaign.

Other buildings and structures present during the historic period relate to utilities on site, which were limited to a timber power pole located on the eastern edge of the property between the road and the ornamental planting area.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the historic period, at least two additional structures were added to the landscape and others removed. By June 1977, a ticket booth for the Carter Country Tours company existed near the northeast corner of the property. The stand-alone structure was approximately the size of a phonebooth and featured a gabled roof and at least one large window. The clapboard-sided structure was painted white and potentially featured green trim in keeping with the depot building to its west. Research identified only one photo of the ticket booth, but based on historic images from several years later, the booth was at the site for two or three years.

After the depot property became a historic site, accessibility into the depot building to view exhibits became a concern for the NPS. To aid visitor access, the NPS constructed a large universal access ramp on the west end of the platform, immediately adjacent to the designated accessible parking space. The wooden ramp featured two ramp sections, a landing, and handrails. Around this time, the NPS installed a French drain along the base of the depot's south facade. The drain is surfaced with a large landscape gravel and edged with a wood timbers.

At an unknown point, utility works relocated the utility pole in the eastern portion of the site north of the depot property. A utility pole across the street supplied power to the site after its removal. Other utilities presently at the site include a subsurface water meter and potentially subgrade infrastructure related to a propane tank that is seen west of the depot in post-historic photos.

Summary

Though various structures were once present, the Plains Depot is the only historic building remaining on site. The building has undergone significant alterations several times since its construction in 1890. The present configuration of the depot is reflective of the 1976 campaign period. The universal access ramp attached to the west end of the depot building is a modern addition.

Figure 4.1 - Figure 4.8 compares the treatment period condition of the depot to existing conditions.

Landscape Features

- Plains Depot
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Universal access ramp
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

- Water meter
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Electric line with utility boxes
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- French drain
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Unknown structure (platform)
    - Contribution Status: Missing

Spatial Organization

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

Though plans for the depot's initial construction have not been located (if they ever existed), based on plans from 1911, early aerial images, and descriptions of the depot, it appears that during the historic period the property alternated between containing three and two distinct spaces on the site. When first built, it is presumed that the depot was situated 40 feet east of the road now known as South M. L. Hudson Street. This placement resulted in the creation of three spaces: an open area east of the building, the depot building in the middle, and an open area west of the depot. In 1911, the railroad company constructed an addition onto the depot that extended east into the space between the depot and the road. As a result, between 1911 and 1951, only two spaces existed: the depot building and the open area to its west. In 1951, the three-part spatial organization of the property was restored with the removal of the 1911 addition. In 1976, as part of site improvements related to the presidential campaign, workers landscaped the eastern space with a linear planting bed adjacent to a wide band of gravel.

Throughout the historic period, the overhead plane remained open due to the lack of vegetation on the site. The surrounding small town context and the adjacent railroad tracks contribute to the spatial organization of the site. A cluster of warehouses and silos bounded the site on the west, limiting expansive views in that direction.

Post-historic and Existing Condition

After the historic period, the three-part spatial organization of the site remained. After the building sat vacant for a period of several years, the NPS made improvements to the site, such as paving the parking area and sodding the open area east of the depot. These improvements altered the character of the spaces, but the organization of the site remains the same. Similarly, both the overhead plane and the adjacent bounding properties remain as they existed in the historic period.

Summary

Presently, the three-part spatial organization of the site reflects the historic period, with an open lawn area east of the depot, the depot occupying the middle space, and the parking area west of the depot. The absence of historic site features such as cultural vegetation diminish the integrity of the historic character of the spaces, but the overarching organization of the site remains intact.

- Organization by adjacent properties
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Three-part organization at the ground level (parking area, depot building, lawn area)
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Open visual plane above and through the site
    - Contribution Status: Contributing

Cluster Arrangement

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

Workers constructed the 1890 Plains Depot building approximately 20 feet from the main rail line with the long edge of the building parallel to the rail alignment. It is unknown if the railroad spur dates to the construction of the depot building, but as the spur appears on a 1937 aerial photograph, it is known it was constructed sometime during the early historic period. The proximity of the two rail lines with the depot building formed a cluster of built features in the eastern half of the site.

Prior to 1937, adjacent property owners constructed a cluster of warehouses and silos to the west of the property boundary. These buildings located just outside the site's western edge helped frame what would become a parking area between the warehouses and the depot building.

By the late nineteenth century, property owners in the downtown area had begun to construct buildings along West Main Street, across from the railroad. These buildings had the same northeast to southwest orientation as the Plains Depot



Figure 4.1: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).



Figure 4.2: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).



Figure 4.3: "Old Railroad Depot, Plains, Georgia, Built in 1890" [postcard] Photo by Carolyn Carter for Hugh Carter's Antiques, Plains, Ga. 31780. No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1975 or early 1976 date of documentation. (Source: Lake Blackshear Regional Library).



Figure 4.4: "Old Railroad Depot, Plains, Georgia, Built in 1890" [postcard] Photo by Carolyn Carter for Hugh Carter's Antiques, Plains, Ga. 31780. No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1975 or early 1976 date of documentation. (Source: Lake Blackshear Regional Library).



Figure 4.5: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" No date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).



Figure 4.6: Plains Depot, looking northwest. (Source: WLA Studio, 2018).



Figure 4.7: 1977 photograph of the east side of the depot. (Source: Robert Buccellato, "Presidential History Lover" [blog] http://floridahistorylover.blogspot.com/2015/08/).



Figure 4.8: The depot and east lawn area in Fall 2018. (Source: WLA Studio).

Building and the rail line. Another set of buildings were located on both sides of South M. L. Hudson Street, across West Main Street from the depot site.

Post-historic and Existing Condition

After the historic period, the cluster arrangement formed by the railroad tracks and the depot building remained the same. The building's orientation to the railroad and its relationship to the downtown buildings across West Main Street also remained unchanged. Sometime between 1980 and 1987 workers removed the railroad spur line between the depot building and the main railroad line.

Summary

Presently, with the exception of the missing railroad spur line, the cluster arrangement at the site reflects the historic period, with the depot building paralleling the railroad tracks and located across the street from Plains' downtown buildings. The overall cluster arrangement of the site remains intact.

- Relationship to downtown buildings
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Relationship to railroad tracks
    - Contribution Status: Contributing

Vegetation

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

Research does not reveal sufficient information to understand the vegetative character of the site during the early historic period. While period accounts mention the presence of a wooded "grove" in the vicinity of the new settlement of Plains, there is no mention of vegetation at the depot site. Aerial images from the 1930s through the early 1970 do not show any distinct vegetation growing at the site. A 1970s photograph of the site shows weedy vegetation growing in the parking lot west of the depot (Figure 4.3).

In 1976, campaign workers installed ornamental plants in the open space east of the depot. Here, in a bed of pine straw, workers planted approximately ten small shrubs in two rows oriented north-south. Though it is unclear what type of shrubs the workers planted, they appear to have been two different types. Photographs suggest that the easternmost row of shrubs was comprised of azaleas, while the row closer to the depot were Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) or Japanese holly (*Ilex crenada*). Workers also planted two crape myrtles (*Lagerstroemia indica*) in the space, one on the north end of the row of shrubs and one on the south. A narrow band of turf grass covered the ground on the south and east edges of the area and scattered grasses grew in the areas unpaved in gravel.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

For several years after 1976, the landscape created by the campaign workers remained in place. At some point, potentially around the time of the depot's acquisition by the NPS in late 1987, someone removed all the shrubs for unknown reasons. The owner retained the two crape myrtles. At this time, either intentionally or spontaneously, a turf groundcover took over the area east of the depot, which formerly featured gravel and pine straw. With the formalization of the landscape by the NPS around 2006, defined areas of turf covered portions of the site including the area east of the depot, a narrow area north of the depot and parking lot, and an area on the western edge of the property. In 2007, utility contractors removed the northern crape myrtle. Around 1980, an evergreen shrub—likely a boxwood—was planted at the northeast corner of the depot, which grew into maturity. In 2017, the NPS removed this shrub. The NPS periodically plants seasonal ornamental vegetation at the site in decorative barrels located at various locations in the depot landscape and elevated platform.

Summary

For much of its history the depot site did not contain many plants, either cultural or natural. It was not until 1976 that the site featured any known ornamental vegetation. That year, campaign workers installed a bed of shrubs and crape myrtles east of the depot building. All ornamental vegetation but one of the crape myrtles were removed after the historic period. Presently, the site contains several areas of turf grass, one crape myrtle, and spontaneous vegetation common to the region.

Figure 4.5 through Figure 4.8 show historic vegetation compared to present day vegetation at the site.

Landscape Features

- Turf grass (*Cynodon* spp.): Historic extent
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Weedy vegetation
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Turf grass (*Cynodon* spp.): Post-historic extent
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Shrubs (presumed Chinese privet, *Ligustrum sinense*, or Japanese holly, *Ilex crenada*)
  - Contribution Status: Missing
- Shrubs (presumed azalea)
  - Contribution Status: Missing
- Shrub (presumed boxwood)
  - Contribution Status: Missing
- Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)
  - Contribution Status: Missing

Circulation

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

The historical development of the depot property directly relates to circulation features within and immediately adjacent to the site. Prior to the construction of the depot, the AP&L railroad right-of-way abutted the northern site boundary. After the construction of the depot, a short spur line branched off the main railroad track and ran across the northern edge of the property. The spur line, constructed of metal rails and wood railroad ties, facilitated the loading and unloading of goods and people at the depot.

As constructed, the depot building featured a covered open-air loading platform to the west of the enclosed portion of the building. Two walkway-width platforms extended across the north and south facades of the depot building. These wooden walkways both terminated in short flights of stairs that led to ground level.

An aerial image from 1937 shows roadways bounding the site on the south and east. No other circulation features appear to be present in the landscape, though desire paths may have existed. After 1951 and the removal of the unidentified structure west of the depot, the driving of cars into and out of the site created an unpaved parking lot in this area. As seen in photographs at the end of the historic period, the parking area was unpaved and mostly undefined. This condition remained the same through the end of the historic period, with a red clay parking area clearly seen in period photographs.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

For several years after 1976, circulation within the site remained as it had at the end of the historic period. However, at some point between 1980 and 1987, potentially in conjunction with the NPS acquiring the site, the owners removed the spur railroad track and associated wood railroad ties on the north side of the property. Research does not reveal a reason for their removal. The removal of the track produced a trace where the tracks used to be, which is still visible today.

In 2006, the NPS made significant improvements to the site in terms of circulation. At this time, the NPS formalized the parking lot west of the depot with paving, striping, and a concrete curb with curb cuts for ingress and egress. This action reduced the size of the parking area. The NPS also installed a walkway to provide pedestrian access from the parking lot to the entrance of the depot. The walkway extended south from the east side of the parking lot, bending 90 degrees to the east and extending along the south side of the depot. The concrete walkway measured 6 feet wide and featured regularly-spaced score joints.

Around this time, the NPS constructed a universal access ramp on the west side of the elevated loading platform to provide access to the depot from the parking lot. The wood ramp featured two sections and measured 56 linear feet. The ramp is described in more detail under the “Buildings and Structures” heading.

Summary

In summary, circulation at the site played a major role in the historical development of the property. In particular, the railroad tracks provided the reason for the initial construction of the depot. The removal of the spur tracks removed some of the evidence of this history, but a trace of the spur track and the adjacent primary track alignment remains in place. Elevated wooden walkways along the north and south sides of the depot provide pedestrian access to the elevated loading platform. A parking area developed in the western portion of the property, which the NPS later formalized.

Concurrent with the construction of the parking lot, the NPS established a walkway to connect the parking lot with the entrance into the depot.

Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10 compare the historic parking conditions to present-day conditions.

Landscape Features

- Loading platform decking
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Parking lot
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Railroad tracks (adjacent)
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Concrete sidewalk
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Universal access ramp
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Railroad spur track trace
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Railroad spur track
  - Contribution Status: Missing

Small-Scale Features

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

As photo documentation of the depot site is limited, little is known about small-scale features present at the site during the historic period prior to 1976. It is assumed that a variety of small-scale features were present to serve transportation and commerce-related needs. Photographs of the site taken during the 1976 presidential campaign show a collection of small-scale features that relate more to the campaign than to the historic use. These features included: various signs, bollards, rolling dumpster bins, several 55-gallon metal drum bins, United States flags, a newspaper mailbox, a porch swing, rocking chairs, and a 13-foot-tall peanut statue.

A photograph of the east side of the site taken prior to campaign-initiated improvements shows campaign signage attached to the east facade of the depot as well as another sign mounted on two posts and erected on the eastern edge of the property facing to the east (Figure 4.1). The large post-mounted sign contained the text "Jimmy Carter PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS" on a green background. The sign attached to the east facade contained the text "elect Jimmy Carter President" and also featured a green background. At least six bollards of an unknown material bordered the open space east of the depot in an "L" arrangement.

Campaign workers continued to make improvements to the landscape throughout 1976. In addition to creating a planting bed and installing gravel over large portions of the site, workers moved the previously described signs. They relocated the "elect Jimmy Carter President" sign to the top of the signal pole on the north side of the depot building, clearly visible to traffic along the adjacent roadways. In its place, workers moved the post-mounted sign with text "Jimmy Carter PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS" to the east facade of the depot. Workers placed a third large green sign with the text "Jimmy Carter! For President" to the east of the sliding door on the south facade of the depot.

There were the two town identification markers located on the east and west facades of the depot building. The simple signs contained the text "Plains, GA" in stenciled lettering on a white background. Additionally, at least four identical signs identifying the depot's association with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad were attached to the depot in different locations: one above the office projection on the north facade, one attached to a roof support beam on the west side of the loading platform, one attached to the south facade above the entrance door, and two attached to the east facade. The signs were circular with two layers of text: unstylized black lettering wrapping around the outside edge of the sign read "Seaboard Coast Line Railroad" and the abbreviation "SCL" is written in italicized red lettering in the center of the circle.

The only traffic sign present at the site during the historic period was the road sign marking the intersection of Main Street and South Hudson Street. The green road signs were mounted to a metal pole located at the southeast corner of the depot property. A white newspaper mailbox was located by the road signs.

Various seating arrangements existed at the site during the campaign period, including several rocking chairs and a bench swing on the loading platform. The rocking chairs were not fixed to any



Figure 4.9: 1975 aerial photograph of the Plains Depot landscape with parking lot indicated. Note the unpaved and undefined parking area. (Source: University of Georgia Libraries, Map & Government Information Library).



Figure 4.10: Aerial view of the Plains Depot landscape with parking lot indicated. Note that the parking lot striping has been updated since this image was taken. Also not the presence of the modern walkway edging the depot on the west and south. (Source: Google Earth).

one place on the platform, whereas the swing was chain-mounted and suspended from the depot roof. Other small-scale features included trash bins, which did not stay in any one place at the site. Two United States flags were mounted to the southeast and northeast corners of the depot, with the flags extending straight off the building to the east.

Lastly, also related to the campaign, was the 13-foot-tall peanut statue that was located both inside and outside the depot during the campaign. Designed in Indiana for a campaign parade, the statue was then transported to the depot in September 1976. Photographs show the large peanut with its iconic grin inside the warehouse section of the depot as well as positioned on the covered loading platform. The peanut was constructed of wooden hoops, chicken wire, and aluminum foil and painted in life-like colors.[247]

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

Immediately after the historic period, the depot began incorporating tourism-related activities, which resulted in the presence of new small-scale features in the landscape. A January 1977 photograph shows that by this time, a metal I-beam railing was located south of the railroad tracks on the east side of the property, separating the landscape area from the railroad tracks. Related to the tourism company that rented the depot after the campaign ended, a small wooden handmade sign with the text "Carter Country Tours Bus Stop" was located on the edge of the gravel bed abutting the planting area. A larger, more elevated white sign appears to have been mounted to a post near the entrance door to the depot. A pew-like wooden bench was situated in various places within the open area east of the depot. A wooden stepstool is shown in period photographs in the same area. For an unknown period of time, two soda machines were positioned against the west facade of the depot building.

Tourism to the site declined as Carter settled into the presidency. By 1980, the Carter Country Tour company vacated the depot. Afterward, the owners removed signs and other features related to the tourism operation, including the 13-foot-tall smiling peanut, which was relocated to a local gas station. The large green campaign signs were kept in place until NPS acquisition.

After the depot property became a historic site, park staff and other officials altered the existing small-scale features within the landscape and added new features to aid visitors. Such features included informational signage, directional signage, replica campaign and depot signage, and decorative features. In terms of informational signage, in 1986, the Georgia Historical Society installed a historical marker in the undeveloped area east of the depot. The marker's text explains the significance of Jimmy Carter and the small town that served as his home. In 2006, the NPS installed a standard 36" × 24" NPS low-profile interpretive panel near the southeast corner of the depot. Titled "Plains Depot," the panel presents information about the site and includes a map of the entire Jimmy Carter Historic District.

After the NPS acquired the site, park staff removed all signs from the exterior of the depot, placing them in storage. The park then replaced these signs with replicas. The replicas are in general keeping with the originals, except for the Carter sign on the south facade of the depot. The original sign was made of a nylon or fabric material and featured grommets along the sign edge. The replica sign is constructed of metal and lacks the grommets.

In 2015, the NPS removed the swinging bench from the loading platform due to safety concerns. The NPS also added benches for seating and rustic barrels for decoration and added replica rocking chairs at the loading platform. The park also installed a concrete curb around the north side of the parking lot.

Summary

In summary, the small-scale features of the site have undergone various changes over the course of the property's developmental history, with many features removed and others removed and replaced in-kind. The majority of small-scale features present today primarily serve interpretive needs of the historic site.

Landscape Features

- United States flags
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Road sign
    - Contribution Status: Contributing

247. "Jimmy Carter Smiling Peanut," Atlas Obscura, accessed December 27, 2018, http://www.atlasobscura.com/places/jimmy-carter-smiling-peanut.

- Jimmy Carter signs
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Plains, GA depot signs
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Seaboard Coast Line Railroad signs
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Benches
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Rocking chairs
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Stop sign
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Georgia Historical marker
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Plains tour sign
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Accessible parking sign
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Interpretive panel
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Curbing
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Decorative barrels
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

Views and Vistas

Historic Condition (1890-1976)

Given the small size of the site and its spatial organization, during the historic period, the principal views pertaining to the depot landscape extended to and from adjacent properties as opposed to being contained within the property boundaries. Notable views toward the depot landscape included: (1) the views from multiple points in downtown Plains, generally northwest towards the depot; (2) the view of the depot as approached along South M. L. Hudson Street; and (3) the view from the railroad tracks in both directions.

Notable views from the depot included: (1) the open view of downtown Plains from various points in the landscape; and (2) the views east and west along the railroad tracks.

These views included the depot within the larger context of downtown Plains and served to reinforce its central importance to the development of the town.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After 1976, the views to and from the depot landscape remained essentially the same. Aerial photographs show some minor changes to the buildings and streetscape of downtown Plains, but these changes did not overly affect historic period views.

Summary

In summary, views to and from the depot site remain the same as they were in the historic period. Principal views continue to be those to and from the depot site from the Plains business district, the railroad tracks, and along adjacent roadways. These open views allow for clear recognition of the depot and its placement within the context of downtown Plains.

Landscape Features

- Views of downtown Plains from depot landscape / Views of depot from downtown
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- View toward depot from South M. L. Hudson Street
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
- East and west views along railroad tracks to and from the depot
    - Contribution Status: Contributing

Evaluation of Landscape Integrity

Landscape integrity refers to a cultural landscape's ability to convey its historic significance. *National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 16A* defines historic integrity as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period." In *National Register Bulletin 15*, the National Register defines seven aspects of integrity to use when evaluating a historic property:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred;
Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property;
Design is the combination of elements that

create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property;
Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property;
Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;
Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and
Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

In order to retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, of these seven aspects. Evaluating historic integrity involves first determining the historic significance of a property and then identifying the existing features that contribute to our ability to recognize and understand this significance. Character defining features are those distinctive features or qualities that make a property unique. They are the individual parts that make the whole place special and worthy of our recognition as a historic property.

Location

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Plains Depot served as the headquarters for Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign. While several landscape features dating to the historic period have been removed or altered, the existing historic resources remain in their original location. Though modified from its initial condition, the depot remains in the same location of its construction and accurately reflects the 1976 campaign. Landscape improvements made during the campaign period—gravel paving and ornamental vegetation—are mostly missing, with only one crape myrtle remaining. Despite these alterations, overall, the Plains Depot cultural landscape retains integrity of location to the treatment period.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property. Throughout its developmental history, the setting of the depot site has been in direct relation to adjacent properties, particularly the railroad tracks and the Plains commercial district. Located in the center of Plains, Georgia, the depot site is situated in a small town setting. Its spatial organization is such that the site is visually and physically open to the surrounding context. Within the site, a utilitarian setting free of large vegetation and ornamentation characterized the property. Though land use within the site boundary has changed, the setting within and adjacent to the depot site still reflects the historic period. As such, the Plains Depot cultural landscape retains integrity of setting to the treatment period.

Design

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The general form of the Plains Depot site is still discernable despite alterations to some site features and spaces. The depot building still reflects design aspects of both its period of construction as well as the Carter campaign period. After the historic period however, while the overall spatial organization of the property was retained, the spaces themselves were altered, impacting integrity of design. Such alterations include the loss of the ornamental planting area and gravel ground treatment present during the 1976 campaign. Other changes include the paving of the parking area and installation of a modern walkway. Despite the loss of designed features, the overall form of the property—its plan, space, structure, and style—still generally reflects the historic period. The Plains Depot cultural landscape retains integrity of design to the treatment period.

Materials

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. During the historic period, the depot site included a variety of materials. The historic depot building itself is constructed from wood. Additional materials at the site include metal, wood, and gravel related to the spur railroad track. Vegetation materials during the historic period included spontaneous vegetation, ornamental plantings, and areas of turf grass. A gravel ground cover treatment was also present during the historic period. After the historic period however, much of the landscape material

was altered. The owner removed railroad tracks, most of the cultural vegetation, and the gravel groundcover. The depot building has retained its original materials through the preservation actions of the NPS. Although loss of cultural vegetation, the railroad spur tracks, and other landscape features has affected integrity of materials, since the property historically maintained a minimal amount of vegetation and the spur track trace remains, overall the cultural landscape retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. Workmanship at the Plains Depot site during the historic period related to two primary features: the depot and the railroad. For the depot, its construction technique reflected the building traditions of the community and time in which it was constructed. Historically, a group of local African American men, known as "Gandy Dancers" maintained the railroad spur track and adjacent main track. Contemporary accounts speak of their skill in maintaining the tracks in the area. With the removal of the spur track, this connection within the property has been lost. The connection to regional construction workmanship has been retained through the preservation of the depot building. As the depot is the primary feature that reflects workmanship of the historic period, its retention results in the Plains Depot cultural landscape retaining integrity of workmanship to the period of treatment.

Feeling

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. While the period of significance for the site is broad, its Treatment Period relates to the Carter presidential campaign. Recognizing the significance of this particular event and time period, the NPS manages and interprets the site to emphasize the campaign period (1976). As such, the NPS has not altered the site in a way that diminishes this historic sense of the Plains Depot site. While visitor service amenities have been added to the site, their addition do not alter the property's overall connection with the historic period, and the Plains Depot cultural landscape retains integrity of feeling to the period of treatment.

Association

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The NPS preserves and interprets the Plains Depot, highlighting the association between the site and the historically-significant 1976 presidential campaign. Further, the NPS also highlights the association between the depot and the historical development of Plains, to which the site is of central importance. As the property still reflects both these associations, the Plains Depot cultural landscape retains integrity of association to the period of treatment.

Summary

The Plains Depot cultural landscape continues to reflect the character of the site as it existed in 1976. Though JICA staff have upgraded the site to allow for its use as a public historic site, the changes have been sensitive to the historic integrity of the landscape and the cultural resources therein. The most significant impact to the integrity of the site relates to the loss of materials. The site is missing several important features that existed during the presidential campaign, specifically its cultural vegetation and the gravel groundcover. However, the primary contributing resource of the site—the Plains Depot—largely reflects 1976 conditions. As alterations have been minimal, the feeling and association of the site with Jimmy Carter's life and the historical development of Plains remain intact to the period of treatment.

Cultural Landscape Features Table

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Condition
Natural Systems and Features				
Humid subtropical climate	N/A	X		
Soils	N/A	X		
Terrain	N/A	X		
Topography				
Flat terrain with little topographic variation	N/A	X		
Drainage swale north of depot building	1890	X		
Grade of circulation features	2006		X	
Land Use				
Tourism	1976	X		
Parking	Pre-1976	X		
Historic interpretation	1988		X	
Cultural Traditions				
Depot role in community development	1890	X		
Depot role in presidential politics	1976	X		
Heritage/political tourism	1976	X		
Heritage interpretation	1988		X	
Heritage preservation	1987		X	
Buildings and Structures				
Plains Depot	1890	X		Good
Universal access ramp	c. 1990		X	Good
Water Meter	Unknown		X	
Electric line with utility boxes	post-1976		X	
French drain	2006		X	
Missing Buildings and Structures				
Unknown structure (platform)	pre-1937			
Spatial Organization				
Organization by adjacent properties	1890	X		
Three-part organization at the ground level (parking area, depot building, lawn area)	1890	X		
Open visual plane above and through the site	1890	X		
Cluster Arrangement				
Relationship to town buildings	1890	X		
Relationship to railroad tracks	1890	X		
Missing Vegetation				
Shrubs (presumed Chinese privet, *Ligustrum sinense*, or Japanese holly, *Ilex crenata*)	1976			
Shrubs (presumed azalea)	1976			
Shrub (presumed boxwood)	1980			
Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)	1976			

Cultural Landscape Features Table

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Condition
Circulation				
Loading platform decking	1890	X		Good
Parking lot (space)	1890	X		
Railroad tracks (adjacent)	1885	X		
Railroad spur track trace	1980	X		
Concrete sidewalk	2006		X	
Universal access ramp	1990		X	
Missing Circulation Features				
Railroad spur track	1888			
Views and Vistas				
Views of downtown Plains from depot landscape / Views of Depot from downtown	1890	X		
View towards depot from South M. L. Hudson Street	1890	X		
East and west views along railroad tracks to and from the depot	1890	X		
Small Scale Features				
United States flags	1976	X		
Stop sign	Unknown	X		
Road sign	Unknown	X		
Jimmy Carter signs	1976	X		
Plains, GA Depot sign	Pre-1975	X		
Seaboard Coast Line Railroad signs	1976	X		
Rocking chair	1976	X		
Benches	1976	X		
Georgia Historical marker	1986		X	
Plains Tour sign	Unknown		X	
Accessible parking sign	2018		X	
Interpretive panel	2006		X	
Curbing	2006		X	
Decorative barrels	Unknown		X	

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Treatment Recommendations

Introduction

The treatment recommendations for this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) propose a strategy for long-term management of the cultural landscape based on research, inventory, and analysis. The appropriate preservation approach considers the evolution of the landscape alongside significance, existing conditions, and current use. The CLR combines the site history and analysis with input from the current site managers to formulate an appropriate treatment and management philosophy.

Recommendations follow National Park Service policy, including the Director's Orders No. 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines* and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. These documents identify four types of treatment: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each treatment ranges by level of physical intervention and includes specific guidelines and standards.

> Preservation is the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the on-going maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.
>
> Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible a compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.
>
> Restoration is the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other historic periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make the property functional is appropriate within a restoration project.
>
> Reconstruction is the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and details of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, or objects for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time in its historic location.[248]

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment

Standards for Preservation:

- A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. Where treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.
- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

248. Charles A. Birnbaum, ed. *The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1996, 9, 18, 48, 90, 128.)

- Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
- Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
- Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Standards for Rehabilitation:

- A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
- Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be supported by documentary and physical evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Standards for Restoration:

- A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that reflects the property's restoration period.
- Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.

- Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
- Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.
- Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.
- Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.
- Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Standards for Reconstruction:

- Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions of a property when sufficient documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture and when such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.
- Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure, or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts which are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships.
- Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements supported by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.
- A reconstruction is clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Management Philosophy

On December 23, 1987, *Public Law 102-206, 101 Stat. 1436* authorized Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. The designated area included Plains Depot. The enabling legislation focused on several interrelated themes, such as Jimmy Carter's life, his politics, and the (agricultural) history of Plains. The legislation established Jimmy Carter National Historic Site "for the benefit, inspiration, and education of the American people. It directs The Secretary of the Interior…to preserve the key sites and structures associated with Jimmy Carter during his lifespan, to provide for the interpretation of his life and Presidency, and to present the history of a small rural southern town," and further "in order to preserve and interpret [Carter's] life, and the rural southern town of Plains, including the 20th century south and the roles of agriculture and the agricultural economy."[249]

The 1993 *General Management Plan* for JICA outlines a management vision for the Plains Depot site. Specifically, the GMP notes the depot

249. National Park Service, "Foundation Document: Jimmy Carter National Historic Site" (National Park Service, March 2013), 23.

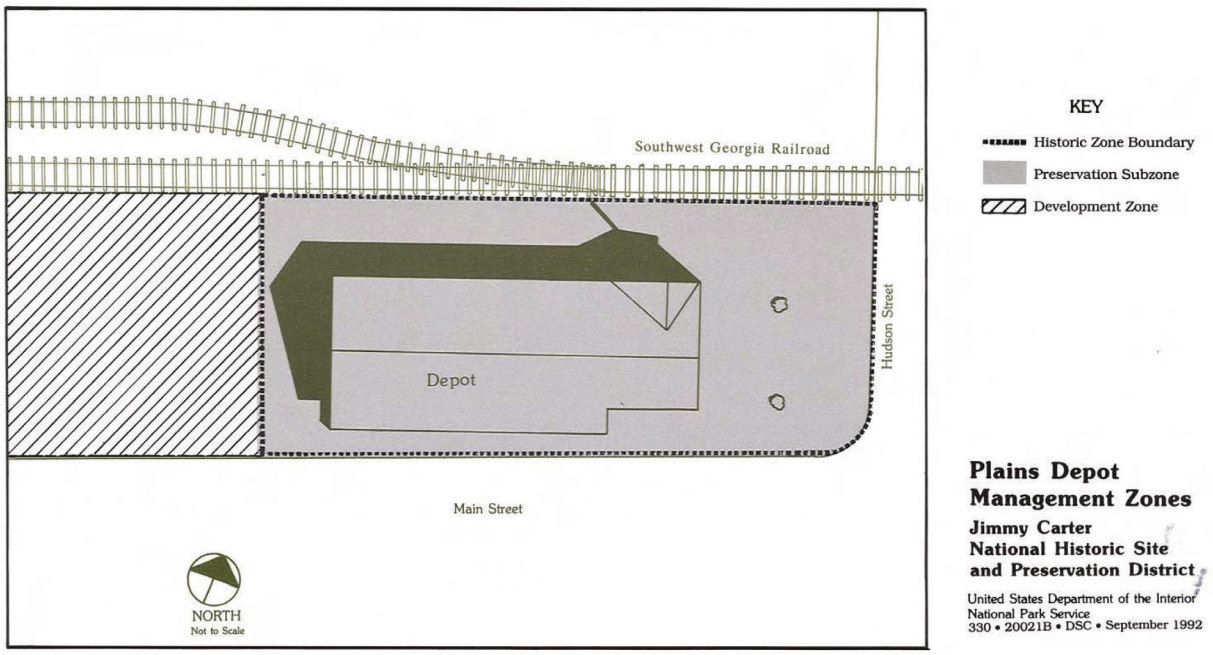


Figure 5.1: Plains Depot Management Zones site plan, extracted from the 1993 General Management Plan for JICA (Source: National Park Service, 1993).

"will be restored to its unfinished 1976 election appearance; message repeaters, exhibits, short talks, and videos will allow visitors to experience the excitement of the campaign and see the people who were involved."[250] Later in the document, it states:

> Visitors will tour the restored and refurnished depot, appearing much as it did during the 1976 campaign. Through exhibits and wayside exhibits visitors will learn the story of the presidential campaign, and through videotapes they can experience the excitement of the campaign and see some of the people involved. Short interpretive talks and informal contacts will also be available.[251]

The Plains Depot Management Zones site plan, divides the property into two areas: a Preservation Subzone within a Historic Zone boundary and a Development Zone (Figure 5.1). The Preservation Zone extends from South M. L. Hudson Street to the eastern edge of the present parking lot. The entire present parking lot area is classified as the Development Zone. Following this zoning, the GMP proposed the addition of a paved parking lot west of the depot building to accommodate 8-12 cars, with access into the lot from Main Street. The plan also proposes the installation of a pedestrian sidewalk across the south of the landscape. Lastly, the plan shows bus staging area along the north side of West Main Street, south of the parking lot. As of 2019, the park has completed much of this work through the completion of an indoor museum and exhibit display and construction of a parking lot and paved sidewalk.

The 2013 *Foundation Document for the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site* provides justification of the Plains Depot site's significance as well as interpretive themes to be highlighted by the park. The document's significance statement provides several justifications for the significance of the site:[252]

- Jimmy Carter of Plains, Georgia, was the 39th President of the United States;
- Jimmy Carter was the first president elected from the Deep South since before the Civil War;

250. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District / General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan" (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, September 1993), iii.
251. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District / General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan," 25.
252. National Park Service, "Foundation Document," 4, 11.

- President Carter's policies and presidential achievements continue to have an impact on American and international life;
- President and Mrs. Carter have a profound and enduring connection with Plains, Georgia, and Sumter County; they have drawn upon their experience with the people, land, and community to advocate for local, national, and international issues; and
- The relationship between the community and President and Mrs. Carter has successfully preserved the historic structures and landscapes within the community, park, and preservation district, reflecting every chapter of the Carters' lives, careers, and continuing legacy.

The *Foundation Document* identifies a number of interpretive themes that pertain to the diversity of resources within the park. Those that pertain directly to the depot include:

- Life in rural Georgia during the 1930s shaped Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter's attitudes, work ethic, family, spiritual, and community viewpoints;
- The life stories of President and Mrs. Carter can inspire and motivate visitors to positively contribute to society in their own unique ways;
- The frenzy and complexity of the 1976 presidential campaign transformed Plains, Georgia, into a political boom town; and
- The environment and community of Plains, Georgia, represent the history of a small southern town in relation to transportation trends and the growth of the railroad in southwest Georgia.

In the depot landscape, the *Foundation Document* focuses on the restoration of the spur track that used to span across the northern portion of the depot landscape. This interpretive goal has been incorporated into the treatment recommendations to follow.

NPS staff and hired contractors perform landscape maintenance at the depot site. Typical and ongoing duties include mowing, event preparation, removal of refuse and trash, and building maintenance tasks such as painting and reroofing. Through the NPS's preservation and rehabilitation activities, the Plains Depot cultural landscape reflects the change from a well-used utilitarian landscape, to a hub of political activity, to an integral part of Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. This latter role has resulted in the completion of several recordation and stabilization projects at the site.

The Plains Depot site is currently open daily from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm with the exception of three Federal holiday closures per year—Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. The depot is typically unstaffed during operational hours. The site has universally-accessible parking and ramp access into the depot building.

The goal of the recommendations in this report is to provide a framework for NPS managers to use when making decisions about how best to protect historic resources at the site, how to provide a range of visitor experience opportunities, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of additional facilities to develop at the site.

Treatment Period

The period of significance for Jimmy Carter National Historic site is 1921-2014, as stated in the 2015 National Register nomination for the park. This date covers the developmental histories of JICA properties as they relate to President Carter. While the period of significance is useful in its inclusivity for JICA as a whole, the primary significance of the Plains Depot site relates to the 1976 presidential campaign. As such, January 1976 – November 2, 1976, serves as the treatment period for the Plains Depot cultural landscape. This date is also identified by the 1993 GMP for the park.

Treatment Recommendations

Since the NPS acquired the property, the agency has focused efforts on resource stabilization, maintenance, and interpretation of the site. Treatment recommendations for the Plains Depot site align with these objectives and make recommendations concerning the ongoing preservation of the site balanced against interpretive and visitor services requirements. Illustration 5.1 shows the recommended treatment for the site for placement of small-scale features.

Primary Treatment

The primary goal of treatment is to retain and reinforce the historic character of the site consistent with the 1993 GMP. The 1993 GMP identifies two management zones: a Preservation Zone and a Development Zone. Since the depot is no longer a functioning train station, and its adaptive use is to support the park, the implied treatment, although not explicitly stated in the 1993 GMP, is rehabilitation. Although treatment recommendations closely track these two zones, a formal adoption of the rehabilitation treatment standard may be needed in a future decision document.

Rehabilitation protects the significant historic features that contribute to the integrity of the property while allowing for necessary improvements. Like preservation, rehabilitation involves identifying, retaining, and preserving character-defining features. Additionally, when the landscape's historic character is diminished because an important landscape feature is missing, rehabilitation provides strategies to accurately and faithfully return the missing feature to the landscape. Rehabilitation provides for the continued use of the property through alterations and additions that do not damage the character-defining features. Additions are sometimes necessary to facilitate a new use of a historic landscape, but the rehabilitation guidelines emphasize that new additions should only occur when there is no viable alternative.

Treatment Goals

The overall goal of treatment is to improve the interpretation of the Plains Depot cultural landscape by recommendations that reinforce period character, support the modern use of the site, or recommend further research.[253] The primary characteristics of the cultural landscape pertained to:

- A landscape designed to support the needs of the presidential campaign. Specific campaign-related features included a gravel ground cover, a planting area containing ornamental vegetation, and remnants of the former site land use, specifically the spur railroad track and the depot building itself; and
- A symbolic landscape utilized by the Carter campaign to generate associations with a nostalgic United States history, as the campaign took place during the Bicentennial period.

The treatment recommendations also look to improve visitor orientation, access, and circulation. Rehabilitating the Plains Depot cultural landscape involves preserving the existing features that contribute to the historic significance of the site. Rehabilitation also reestablishes select documented features to facilitate interpretation and adds new features for visitor access to the site.

The treatment goals should:

- Maintain and enhance the overall aesthetic of the 1976 campaign period set in the context of downtown Plains by rehabilitating the historic composition of the landscape. The primary features currently contributing to the historic character of the site include the remaining depot, spatial organization, and overall setting;
- Use interpretive signage and replace documented features where possible to make the historic landscape more legible to visitors. Strengthen the interpretive opportunities for making the historic landscape more legible and accessible for visitors; and
- Follow *The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines* as well as the recommendations provided by the specialized reports and studies discussed at the end of this chapter.

General Treatment Issues

General treatment issues concerning the site include the effects of weather on historic materials and missing historic features. The following treatment tasks address methods for improving the site's ability to convey the historic landscape to the public.

Interpretation Recommendations

Interpretation at the Plains Depot site focuses on interior exhibits, with the depot landscape left

253. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District / General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan," 11.

uninterpreted and generally unreflective of the treatment period. Interpretation recommendations therefore focus on landscape interpretation. Specific themes to address via landscape improvements include:

- The role of the railroad in town development: the 1984 National Register nomination for the Plains Historic District notes the importance of the depot in the development of the town. Current interpretation, both inside and outside of the depot building, addresses this theme. There is opportunity through additional signage to more fully interpret this history at the site with updated information.
- The role of local agriculture in town development: As noted by the enabling legislation for JICA, the park is significant for its reflection of rural Georgia's agricultural history. The depot played a key role in Plains' agricultural history, as it served as a transfer station for goods coming in and out of the area. New signage and other interpretive avenues can more fully highlight this history for the public. Additional themes to interpret include women farmers, African American farmers, market economics (i.e. The Great Depression, decline of King Cotton, etc.), the role of cooperatives, and the rise of peanut agriculture.
- Segregation: As discussed in the site history of this report, the depot served as the functional and symbolic heart of Plains since its construction in 1890. The depot reflected the social and political status quo of the Jim Crow South, and in 1911, the railroad constructed segregated waiting rooms. While the owners removed the segregated depot waiting rooms in 1951, this aspect of the depot's history should be interpreted to tell a more comprehensive history of the site.
- Labor history: In his memoirs, Jimmy Carter celebrated the work—and singing—of the African American railroad workers who maintained the tracks around Archery and Plains. Known as "Gandy Dancers" the work crews synchronized their movements to their works songs, developing a robust folk tradition that reflected the musical and labor traditions of their enslaved ancestors. Though the railroad tracks that existed within the CLR boundary are missing, this theme can be interpreted through signage, video, and demonstrations. This report recommends interpreting the railroad spur track.
- The 1976 presidential campaign: the primary area of significance for the Plains Depot site pertains to the 1976 presidential campaign. The park already interprets this theme through a well-developed exhibit inside the depot building. Through the recommendations to follow, the park can expand on interpreting this theme within the landscape.

The realization of these interpretive themes through landscape improvements are discussed below.

Buildings and Structures

The site has one building and one structure—the depot and a universal access ramp. The depot is a historic feature, and the ramp is a modern addition to the site. Each has its own maintenance needs and developmental history that inform treatment recommendations.

Plains Depot (CRIS # 91350)

The current ultimate treatment and use identified in the 1993 GMP for the depot building is restoration (Figure 5.1). During FY 2019, the park will be starting a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for Plains Depot to help guide the restoration process. This HSR will likely be completed by late FY 2020.

Universal Access Ramp

As of 2019, JICA is in the planning process to replace the universal access ramp with a new structure of similar form and function. The proposed design reverses the orientation of the ramp so that the ground entrance/exit faces north toward the sidewalk north of the parking lot. The ramp provides universal access to the depot and should be maintained once rebuilt. The ramp should be constructed of wood in keeping with the recommended materials specified in the Site Furnishing Appendix.



Figure 5.2: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).

Utilities

Several utility features exist on site, with a potential for more to be added via the City of Plains Streetscape Improvement Project, which is in the planning stages. Recommendations concerning the site's utilities are as follows:

Lighting

Currently, the Plains Depot cultural landscape does not feature any site lighting. Research did not reveal the presence of lighting in the project boundary during the period of significance. This CLR recommends that no new lighting be added to the site as part of the pending City of Plains Streetscape Improvement Project. As the park closes at 4:30 pm, no night lighting is needed.

Utility Pole

A utility pole was located on the eastern edge of the site during the treatment period and was removed at some point after 1989. Electrical power is now located underground.

Alternative One – Do Not Replace (Recommended):

- While a missing feature of the treatment period, this report recommends the park not replace this large feature to the site due to costs, location conflict with proposed sidewalk in this area, and potential vehicular hazard with siting a pole as close to the road as it was in 1976.

Alternative Two- Replace Utility Pole and Re-route Cables:

- Should the park want to rehabilitate the full extent of the eastern portion of the site to 1976 conditions (as opposed to just the ground cover and planting bed) it could consider adding a utility pole on the eastern edge of the property. The wires and cables currently running to the depot build would need to be rerouted to this new location.



Figure 5.3: Undated image of depot site, no date, but signage and landscaping indicate a 1976 date of documentation. (Source: "Old Railroad Depot (Carter Headquarters)" [postcard] Published by the Sandcraft, photograph by Charles W. Plant).

Water

Park staff desire spigot locations for hose connections at the site. The existing water line enters the site near the intersection of South M. L. Hudson and West Main Streets. The NPS should locate a valve box with a hose connection between the landscape bed and the building. The NPS should locate another valve box with a hose connection in the landscape area west of the depot building. This hose connection will require running water service to the western portion of the site. These valve box locations are noted on Illustration 5.1.

Spatial Organization

The Plains Depot site features a three-part spatial organization. The zones include the landscape area between South M. L. Hudson Street and the depot building, the zone containing the Plains Depot, and the parking lot area. It is recommended that the park retain the three-part spatial organization of the site in keeping with treatment period conditions. The NPS should not erect barriers or plant vegetation that creates additional spaces within the site or that disrupts the visual plane above and through the site, especially in the eastern section. Within the western portion of the site, any new features should be sensitively located to maintain the overall three-part spatial organization. For example, any added vegetation should not extend from the parking lot area into the zone containing the Plains Depot. Site managers should maintain recommended vegetation to keep it within the parking area zone and not allow it to involuntarily spread or grow into the depot building portion of the site.

Recommendations concerning access control and potential impacts on spatial organization are addressed in the Circulation section below.

Vegetation

Prior to 1976, site vegetation was limited to voluntary vegetation and the campaign-associated planting bed, which featured a small area of turf grass, two types of shrubs, and two crape myrtles.

Scientific Name	Common Name
Aster laevis	Smooth Aster
Asclepias speciosa	Showy Milkweed
Aesclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Weed
Andropogon ternarius	Splitbeard Bluestem
Coreopsis lanceolata	Lanceleaf coreopsis
Liatris spicata	Blazingstar
Echinecea spectabilis	Purple Coneflower
Eragrostis spectabilis	Purple Lovegrass
Monarda fistulosa	Bee Balm
Rudbeckia fulgida	Black-eyed Coneflower
Symphiotruchum georgianum	Georgia Aster

Table 5.1: Proposed plant list for butterfly garden. (Source: WLA Studio).

The treatment recommendations that follow offer alternatives for rehabilitating the vegetation at the site to both better reflect the historic character of the site and to add new vegetation as part of a popular community initiative.

1976 Planting Bed

The ornamental planting bed east of the Plains Depot served as the primary vegetation feature during the 1976 treatment period (Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3). Two alternatives for the treatment of the area are outlined below.

Alternative One: Maintain Area As-Is

- Maintain the turf groundcover, mowing as needed. Allow the remaining crape myrtle to grow naturally, pruning as necessary and replacing in-kind when tree health declines.

Alternative Two: Rehabilitate Planting Bed to Approximate 1976 Conditions (Recommended)

- As historic photographs supply sufficient information, this report recommends the park rehabilitate the 1976 planting bed to treatment period conditions (Illustration 5.1, Note 1). Because research has not identified the exact species of ornamental vegetation installed during the 1976 campaign, a true restoration of the space cannot be completed. It is recommended that the NPS preserve the existing crape myrtle and rehabilitate the planting bed with ten shrubs and one additional crape myrtle. Though a small area of turf was present in the southeast corner and eastern edge of the landscape, due to the alignment of the proposed pedestrian improvements in this area, this report does not recommend reinstalling this small patch of turf as it will be difficult to maintain.
- Though the exact types of shrubs used in the planting bed remain unknown, based on the form, color, and habit of the plants as seen in period photographs as well as regional availability/popularity of shrubs at this time, only a few options are likely. Photographs suggest that the easternmost row of shrubs was comprised of azaleas (*Rhododendron* spp.) while the row closer to the depot were Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) or Japanese holly (*Ilex crenada*). This report recommends planting a compact hardy variety of azalea such as *Rhododendron* 'Roblev' PP25046 (Autumn Ivory) and plant Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) instead of Chinese privet or Japanese holly. The later species can be invasive and Yaupon holly has a similar form, but it is a native species to the region.
- Though the exact variety of the existing crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) is unknown, it features large pink blooms. As such, the additional crape myrtle should be a pink-blooming variety such as "Catawba" or "Carolina Beauty."
- In 1976, the two crape myrtles were newly planted and low to the ground. This allowed open views of the east side of the depot building during the treatment period. As the existing crape myrtle has matured, impacting this view. The NPS

maintains this crape myrtle in a way that allows for views to the depot building from downtown to remain intact, and the same pruning and care program should be applied to the additional crape myrtle. In order to preserve views of the depot building from the east, it is recommended that as the two crape myrtles mature, the NPS should limit their horizontal crown spread to force a more tight and upward growth through pruning. Doing so will maintain a sizable gap between the two trees and allow for framed views of the depot building.

- Further research including a call for public assistance to locate additional photographs of the space may better identify historic plant material, exact plant spacing, and other detailed characteristics of the planting bed (see Recommendations for Further Study below).

Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Garden

The NPS has requested guidance on the installation of a Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail garden on site. The Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail is an initiative spearheaded by Rosalynn Carter to promote the planting of milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) to support the declining populations of monarch butterflies in the region. In Plains, several butterfly-supporting gardens exist, including the strip of garden that runs through downtown adjacent to the site. There may be opportunities for installing a small butterfly friendly planting at the Plains Depot site.

Related to the railroad context at the site, research has shown that railroad rights-of-way play host to various pollinator-supporting plants, where conditions are conducive for their growth.[254] Often these heavily disturbed areas are the only places that still feature certain plant species, especially those dependent on fire or other reoccurring disturbance events. As such, a pollinator-friendly garden may link the historic function of the Plains Depot to the ecological concerns of the present day. Some of these associated plants are particularly showy, such as asters and rosinweed. By favoring showier plants to include in the garden, the planting can showcase both the ornamental and ecological aspects of the garden. Refer to Table 5.1 for a proposed plant list.

Given the small size of the property and its irregular boundary as well as the proposed treatment actions recommended by this CLR, limited options exist for siting the garden. This report identifies two possible locations for the installation of a Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail garden on site: (1) along the northern edge of the parking lot, or (2) in the open turf area in the northwest corner of the site.

Alternative One: North of Parking Lot

- This option entails siting the butterfly garden between the north edge of the parking lot and the property boundary (Illustration 5.1, Note 2). This is the only reasonable location should the park decide to expand the parking lot to accommodate buses on site. The bed would extend east-west approximately 140 feet and be 4 feet wide.
- The garden would not be serviced by any pedestrian circulation but would be visible and accessible via the parking lot. Low profile signage can indicate the project purpose.

Alternative Two: Northwest Corner of Parking Area

- A small open area of turf exists in the northwest corner of the site, adjacent to Alternative One, and serves as an alternative location for the butterfly garden (Illustration 5.1, Note 2). The area, which is separated from the core of the historic landscape by a strip of turf and the parking lot, measures roughly 500 square feet.
- A potential disadvantage of placing the garden here is that it would temporarily prevent the expansion of the parking lot (see Circulation treatment section).

Alternative Three: Continuous Garden Area

- A third alternative, should the park not expand the parking lot's footprint, is to install a garden to cover the entirety of the

254. For further information on this topic, see Thomas Eddy, "A Vascular Flora Of The Swaledale Railroad Prairie In North Central Iowa," *Journal of the Iowa Academy* of Science 95, no. 2 (January 1, 1988): 47–54; J Eric Davis et al., "Vascular Flora of Piedmont Prairies: Evidence from Several Prairie Remnants" 67 (January 1, 2002).



Figure 5.4: Red clay colored sidewalk at Jimmy Carter Boyhood Home, JICA (Source: WLA Studio, 2018).

open space across the north side of the parking area (Illustration 5.1, Note 2).

- The large size of the garden would be a benefit to the pollinators and would visually enhance an area devoid of other site amenities.

Views and Vistas

The historic views to and from the site remain intact. The NPS should not install any site feature or furnishing that would interfere with these views. Any additional signs for the site should be sited in a way that preserves views and overall spatial organization, while at the same time serving the purpose of site identification. Views to consider include those to/from downtown Plains to/from the depot landscape, the view southwest towards depot from South M. L. Hudson Street, and views along railroad tracks to and from the depot.

In order to ensure continuity of views, the NPS can study the potential acquisition of scenic easements or fee simple purchase of adjacent properties. Key parcels to study as part of a viewshed protection plan include: the lot immediately to the west of the site, which contains the storage buildings that were present during the 1976 campaign and the row of downtown businesses southeast of the site. These buildings are privately owned, but they are located within the railroad right-of-way.

Circulation

Currently, three circulation features exist within the site: a sidewalk, a recently paved parking lot, and a universal access ramp (discussed in Buildings and Structures treatment section). The sidewalk and ramp are modern additions, while the parking lot is in keeping with historic use, though the materials and layout of the parking area have changed.

Parking Lot

During the 1976 treatment period, the parking lot served the same purpose as it does today, though its configuration and materials have been altered. Before the 1976 campaign, the parking area was informally defined and likely served a utilitarian purpose, whether that be parking, loading/unloading, or other depot-related activity. During the campaign, photos show the area functioned as a large unpaved parking lot without any visible improvements (signs, curb stops, paving, etc.). When the NPS formalized the parking area, it reduced the lot's overall footprint. At this time, the NPS paved the lot. Workers have recently resurfaced the parking lot, striping it with white paint to create seven angled parking spaces and a one-way traffic flow. Potential modifications for the parking lot are addressed below:

Paving Color

Should the park want to represent a more historic character in the parking area, the NPS could repave the lot with a colored concrete ("red clay" color). This recommendation facilitates vehicular use and accessibility while returning the color of the parking surface to treatment period conditions evidenced in historic postcards and aerial photographs. Some of the pedestrian circulation paving at the Jimmy Carter Boyhood Home is constructed with colored concrete (Figure 5.4). See Illustration 5.1 and the Site Furnishings Appendix for detail.

Parking Lot Expansion

The current configuration of the parking lot does not accommodate bus parking.

Alternative One: Leave As-Is (Recommended)

- Though small and not accommodating buses, the current parking lot footprint allows for the presence of several open areas that serve as flexible space at the site or potential areas for interpretive programming. Expanding the parking lot removes these spaces. Currently, tour buses must drop off visitors by stopping on West Main Street and disembark passengers onto the sidewalk in front of the depot building.

Alternative Two: Consult with City of Plains and Adjacent Property Owners for Off-Site Use

- As the site is limited by its small size and the constraints of the railroad right-of-way, it may benefit the NPS to consult with the City of Plains and adjacent property owners for the use of nearby underutilized property for either temporary or permanent parking. A lot across Main Street might better accommodate larger tour buses and additional parking. There is a large parcel located across West Main Street owned by the Carter Family Foundation that could possibly accommodate a larger parking area should visitation and use require additional parking facilities.

Access Control

This report does not recommend the installation of gates, bollards, or other vehicle access control features at the site. Concerning the parking, users of the parking area can be notified of its visitor-only use via signage to curtail unauthorized parking, which is currently lacking at the site. JICA staff noted that people sometimes use the parking lot while they visit the post office (across the street). Staff did not note any problems associated with people parking in the lot after hours.

Safety Barriers

NPS staff recommends adding a low post and chain fence between the proposed pedestrian circulation and the active railroad line. The post should not stand any taller than 18 inches in order to maintain the historic sense of spatial organization at the site. See Site Furnishings Appendix for detail.

Existing Sidewalk

The sidewalk that runs from the parking lot to the south entrance of the depot building is a post-1976 addition to the site. However, the walkway provides universal access to the depot building and therefore should be retained and maintained as needed. An opportunity exists to expand the walkway system through the site to better facilitate visitor movement and interpretive experiences.

Additional Pedestrian Circulation

Presently, the Plains Depot cultural landscape has a sidewalk from the parking lot to the east entrance into the building. In order to better connect the site with the adjacent downtown as well as to provide an opportunity for interpretation of the landscape, this report recommends adding additional sections of sidewalks around the perimeter of the site. JICA staff should notify railroad operators and owners during the design phase of any construction project to prevent conflicts with rail operation and for the safety of employees and the public. The following entities should be notified:

- Genesee and Wyoming General Manager and Real Estate Department.
- Georgia Department of Transportation – Rail Division

North Section – Interpretive Walkway

The opportunity exists to install an interpretive walkway on the north side of the property that would follow the historic alignment of the previously removed railroad spur track (Illustration 5.1, Note 3).

Construction

The pedestrian circulation itself could be constructed in a manner that interprets the former rail bed, through stamped and colored concrete (Figure 5.5) or actual rails and timbers embedded in the concrete (Figure 5.6).

A six-foot-wide walk would accommodate both ABA access as well as the railroad track interpretation. See the Site Furnishings Appendix for details.

Another alternative would be to install an interpretive railroad spur with timbers and track along the original track alignment without a walkway in this area (This alternative eliminates visitor circulation around the entire site.)



Figure 5.5: Facsimile of a railroad bed along a park walkway using stamped concrete. (Source: Steve VandeWater, https://www.concreteconstruction.net/projects/infrastructure/on-track-with-stamped-concrete_o).

Alignment

The proposed interpretive walkway would extend from South M. L. Hudson Street on the east to the existing walkway on the west side of the depot building (Illustration 5.1). This alignment allows for a connection between the site and the sidewalk system in downtown Plains via a crosswalk. The crosswalk currently exists; however, it does not connect to any circulation feature on site (Figure 5.7). The crosswalk is faded, and may be restriped or enhanced in a future streetscape project.

South and East Section

In 2019, there was a proposal by the city of Plains to plan for expanded and improved pedestrian connectivity within the downtown area. Suggested materials included stamped colored concrete for the sidewalks and additional site lighting. These materials are considered inappropriate for the historic setting. This project could expand the existing sidewalk east toward South M. L. Hudson Street, where it would turn north to connect with the proposed interpretive walkway (Illustration 5.1, Note 4). This sidewalk would allow for pedestrian circulation around the perimeter of the site.



Figure 5.6: Rendering of rails and ties embedded inconcrete walkway. (Source: WLA Studio).

Should improvements occur on the block containing the Plains Depot, this additional sidewalk would increase pedestrian circulation at the site and facilitate pedestrian traffic in downtown without affecting the integrity of the landscape. The proposed sidewalk should match the existing concrete walkway in color and width. See the Site Furnishings Appendix for detail. This report does not recommend lighting or site furnishings along the south or east edges of the property.

Small Scale Features

Ground Treatment for East Area

The area east of the depot does not currently reflect 1976 conditions. During the 1976 presidential campaign, the majority of the area was surfaced with gravel, bordering an ornamental planting bed with shrubs, trees, and pine straw (Figure 5.2). Three options for the treatment of the ground cover are as follows:

Alternative One, Maintain As-Is:

- This alternative preserves the area "as is." Though not reflective of the treatment period, the existing turf groundcover and single crape myrtle tree are easy to maintain by NPS staff and has been in place for over two decades.



Figure 5.7: Plains Depot site looking east with underutilized crosswalk indicated. (Source: WLA Studio, 2018).



Figure 5.8: 1976 photograph of Rosalynn and Amy at the depot. Note extent of gravel and landscaping in background of image (Source: Courtesy of Kim Fuller, photographer unknown).

Alternative Two, Rehabilitate Area to Treatment Period Conditions (Recommended):

- Historic photographs supply sufficient information to rehabilitate the area to its 1976 condition, which in addition to rehabilitating the planting bed as described in the Vegetation section above, entails the reintroduction of a gravel groundcover and pine straw-mulched planting bed (Figure 5.2, Figure 5.8, Illustration 5.1, Note 5).

Materials

Though it is unknown the exact type of gravel that campaign workers installed in 1976, this report recommends using a mix of 60% #57 granite gravel and 40% granite dust. See the Site Furnishings Appendix for material detail. Site managers may install metal landscape edging to contain the gravel at the location of the pine straw landscape bed (described below).

Installation

The gravel should extend across the eastern portion of the site in a narrow band along the north and south sides of the depot. Though a small area of turf was present in the southeast corner and eastern edge of the landscape, due to the alignment of the proposed walkway in this area, this report does not recommend reinstalling this small patch of grass. Instead, the gravel should abut the walkway in this area.

After removing the grass in this area, the NPS should remove the top layer of soil from the gravel zone to eliminate any roots, grass, or other remaining plants. This work may require a skid steer with a road grader attachment. After the NPS has removed the top layer of soil, they should compact the soil to create a level, solid surface. The site should be graded to promote positive drainage away from the depot building and walkways. Next, the NPS should install a heavy duty woven landscape fabric weed barrier on top of the compacted dirt. Installing a weed barrier under the gravel area will significantly lower the amount of weedy vegetation in this area. The NPS should spread and level at least 6 inches of gravel on top of the fabric. The top of the gravel should not exceed the adjacent pavement to prevent spillage onto adjacent surfaces.

Planting Bed Mulch

As detailed in the Vegetation section above, it is recommended that the NPS preserve the existing crape myrtle and reinstall the planting bed, with ten shrubs and one additional crape myrtle (Illustration 5.1, Note 1). During the treatment period, the planting bed was mulched with pine straw. This report recommends reinstalling the pine straw mulch, maintaining the mulch as needed. Site managers may install metal landscape edging to separate the pine straw bed from the gravel installation.

Alternative Three: Rehabilitate Area using Soil Cement:

- While a gravel surface is the preferred, a soil cement ground treatment would allow universal access across the extent of the east area (as opposed to limiting pedestrians to the proposed sidewalk system). The color and overall "graininess" of the soil cement would reference treatment period conditions while maintaining universal access.

Ground Treatment for North Area

During the treatment period, a strip of gravel spanned the area between the north side of the depot building and the railroad spur track. In conjunction with the installation of the interpretive walkway and the rehabilitation of the gravel bed in the eastern portion of the site, this report recommends reinstalling the gravel ground cover in this area (Illustration 5.1). The gravel would extend from the gravel bed in the eastern portion of the site to the intersection of the proposed interpretive walkway and existing north-south section of sidewalk. Installation should follow the gravel installation procedure outlined above.

Ground Treatment for South Area

In 1976, a small strip of gravel extended from the parking lot to the gravel bed in the eastern portion of the site along the southside of the property. This report recommends reinstalling this gravel ground cover where turf currently abuts the French drain on the building's south side (Illustration 5.1).

Signs and Waysides

The depot site includes a number of signs, many of which are replicas of those present during the 1976 campaign. The NPS should maintain the existing replica signs at the site, as they reflect the historic character of the depot and its landscape. Treatment recommendations for other signs and waysides, both proposed and existing, are provided below.

Existing Wayside

Currently, the single interpretive wayside at the site stands separate from the established walkway and faces south, limiting universal access (Figure 5.9). It is recommended that the NPS update the sign with findings from this CLR so that it contains images of the campaign period landscape. Specifications for the wayside's materials are outlined in the Site Furnishings Appendix.



Figure 5.9: Existing wayside. Note its location away from the walkway, which limits universal access. (Source: WLA Studio, 2018).

The current placement and orientation of the existing wayside does not allow for universal access. Below are several alternatives for its treatment.

Alternative One, Extend Walkway and Move Wayside South (Recommended):

- In keeping with the proposed addition of a walkway along the south side of the site, this report recommends moving the existing wayside south to be closer to the new walkway. This wayside would be one of several waysides along the proposed pedestrian circulation leading around the site as shown in Illustration 5.1.

Alternative Two, Move Wayside to the West:

- A second option includes moving the wayside to west of the walkway leading to the Plains Depot entrance door. This location would not require the construction of additional walkway for access. Though a minimal change, this proposed location constitutes a visual intrusion to the historic landscape as it interferes with views of the depot building.

Alternative Two , Reorient Wayside:

- As the current position of the wayside is not universally accessible, reorienting the wayside to face west allows for universal access. Visitors could view the wayside from the walkway leading to the depot entrance door.



Figure 5.10: Circa 1988 photograph of the depot, showing new NPS signage along South M. L. Hudson Street. Note the absence of the railroad tracks closest to the depot. (Source: JICA Archives, Box 18, Folder 21).

Proposed Interpretive Signage / Wayside
Should the NPS install the walkway along the north side of the landscape along the old rail alignment, it is recommended they develop new interpretive waysides that address the history of the site, specifically concerning the town's connection to the railroad, the railroad's role in the agricultural economy, the story of the Gandy Dancers, as well as certain 1976 campaign events such as the Peanut Special ride to Washington D.C. These signs can be widely spaced along the new walkway system as depicted in Illustration 5.1. Specifications for the waysides' materials are highlighted in the Site Furnishings Appendix.

Park Identification Sign
As of 2019, the NPS is in the planning process for installing a park identification sign outside the Plains Depot cultural landscape. After the site became part of JICA, the NPS erected a standard NPS identification sign outside the CLR boundary, on the north side of the railroad tracks facing South M. L. Hudson Street (Figure 5.10). At some point, this sign was removed and not replaced. This is the recommended future location. This report proposes siting a new two-sided sign on non-NPS property. This location is identified on Illustration 5.1.

Given the small size of the site, the proposed rehabilitation of the area east of the depot building, and the need to preserve views within the site, options for sign placement within the site are limited.

Georgia Historical Marker
In early 2019, a vehicle struck and damaged the Georgia Historical Marker located along the eastern edge of the site. The NPS removed the marker and placed it in storage. While prominent, the marker's original placement conflicts with this report's proposed treatment recommendations. When repaired, the sign should be relocated to a different area on site. It is recommended that the NPS place the repaired marker next to the sidewalk and universal access ramp. Here, clustered with additional signage and other site furnishings, the Georgia Historical Marker would be accessible to pedestrians on site.

Other signs
The site contains several other signs, with the potential for others to be added pending the completion of recommended improvements. Material options for these signs are shown in the Site Furnishing Appendix.

Signs within the city right-of-way (stop sign and street sign) should be relocated outside (west of) the proposed sidewalk extension. These signs can be located immediately adjacent to the sidewalk in the gravel area.

Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail Garden Sign:
Should the NPS dedicate space for a butterfly garden, they may choose to install an accompanying sign explaining the project. If the butterfly planting becomes a permanent feature, it is recommended the NPS develop a standard NPS wayside for its interpretation to be in keeping with the overall site aesthetic.

Other Small-Scale Features

The Plains Depot cultural landscape contained various other small-scale features during the treatment period including a mailbox, trash barrels, a vending machine, and a large peanut statue. This report does not recommend the park replace these features due to maintenance, placement, and cost considerations. However, to aid in public use of the site, this report recommends adding trash and recycling receptacles, a water fountain, and a bicycle rack, as noted on Illustration 5.1, Note 6. Material options for these new features are shown in the Site Furnishing Appendix.

Archeology

As the park recently completed archeological testing at the Plains Depot, no additional testing is needed at this time. However, during any improvement project, care should be taken to identify and record any potential archeological artifact or site should it be encountered.

Resilience to Natural Hazards

Cultural resources including historic buildings and small-scale features "are fixed in place or derive much of their significance from the place within which they were created. Many are non-living, and all are unique. As a result, the capacity of cultural resources to adapt to changing environments is limited."[255] Natural hazards can impact cultural vegetation with even the slightest variation in temperature and moisture. As stated in the Director's Policy Memorandum 14- 02, "NPS cultural resource management must keep in mind that (1) cultural resources are primary sources of data regarding human interactions with climate change; and (2) changing climates affect the preservation and maintenance of cultural resources."[256]

The 2012 "Climate Change Trends for Park Planning at Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, Georgia" report by Patrick Gonzalez provides insight into both trends and potential climate change impacts to JICA resources. Gonzalez notes that while as a whole the climate of the United States has been warming, JICA has actually cooled slightly due to a combination of "increased precipitation, the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, and other factors."[257] The report deemed this trend as "not statistically significant," and the long-term prediction has JICA warming between two and four degrees Celsius by the year 2100 with more frequent extreme temperature events.[258] The report notes that climate models do not agree on precipitation trends however, with some models projecting scenarios ranging from a decrease in precipitation to an increase in participation.

Relevant climate changes that are projected for JICA include increased temperature, increased humidity, potentially increased precipitation, and increased extreme weather events.[259] These have distinct impacts on cultural resources within cultural landscapes such as the Plains Depot site, including the following:[260]

- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species, other species favored

255. National Park Service, "Cultural Resources and Climate Change," (n.p., 2016), accessed December 9, 2016, https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/upload/06-CCRP-Cultural-Resource-Brief-FEB-2016.pdf.
256. John B. Jarvis to All National Park Service Employees, memorandum, 10 February 2014, Climate Change and Stewardship of Cultural Resources, Policy Memorandum 14-02, https://www.nps.gov/policy/PolMemos/PM-14-02.htm.
257. Patrick Gonzalez, "Climate Change Trends," 1.
258. Ibid.
259. Marcy Rockman et al., "Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy" (Washington, DC: Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science and Climate Change Response Program, National Park Service., 2016).
260. Ibid.

- Heat stress on culturally significant vegetation
- Increased stress (e.g. desiccation, warping, cracking, etc.) on constructed landscape features
- Decline/disappearance of critical vegetation species, other species favored
- Increased desiccation, warping, and cracking of constructed landscape features
- Limited ability to plant in waterlogged soil
- Loss of historical integrity with improved drainage systems
- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species
- Decreased soil fertility from erosion, waterlogging, leaching
- Loss of landscape features
- Increased susceptibility to destructive fungi
- Wash out or damage to roads, trails, and landscape features throughout parks
- Loss of landscape features
- Variable damage/loss of organic and inorganic materials and landscape features
- Soil erosion
- Immediate alteration/destruction of historic landscape, particularly trees
- Reduction in or loss of access due to washing out or damage to roads, trails, and landscape features.

NPS site managers should be prepared for any number of these impacts, and have actionable strategies incorporated in all planning documents to address maintenance, repairs, and preservation of cultural resources.

Recommendations for Further Research

Preservation Maintenance Plan

Based on the findings of the FY 2020 Historic Structure Report and this CLR, the NPS should develop a preservation maintenance plan for entire site. Items to address in the plan would include moisture monitoring program, vegetation management, and other condition assessment protocol. Additional plan items should include the replacement and maintenance of historic materials and the impacts related to visitors.

Call for Public Assistance

Develop a strategy for public outreach to solicit photographs and information concerning the history of the site. While the depot served as the hub of the 1976 campaign, limited photographic documentation of the landscape during this time exists within JICA archives. Further, aside from aerial images, there is a lack of images of the depot prior to the campaign.

National Register Nomination Update

While a recently completed National Register of Historic Places nomination (NRN) exists for Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, there is at least one potential area of significance not featured in this nomination. Research undertaken for this CLR suggests that an Ethnic Heritage area of significance be added to the nomination to address the role of the Gandy Dancers in the maintenance of the railroad in the Plains area. Additionally, the 2015 National Register nomination lists the period of significance for Jimmy Carter National Historic Site as 1921-2014. This period does not include the construction date of the Plains Depot in May 1890.

Cultural Landscape Inventory

Complete a Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Plains Depot cultural landscape to reflect the findings of the Cultural Landscape Report.

Viewshed Protection Plan

As the NPS has expressed desire to maintain the connectivity between the depot site and adjacent properties, a detail viewshed protection plan is needed. The plan can elaborate on the specific historic views identified in this report and develop on-site and off-site solutions to viewshed preservation.

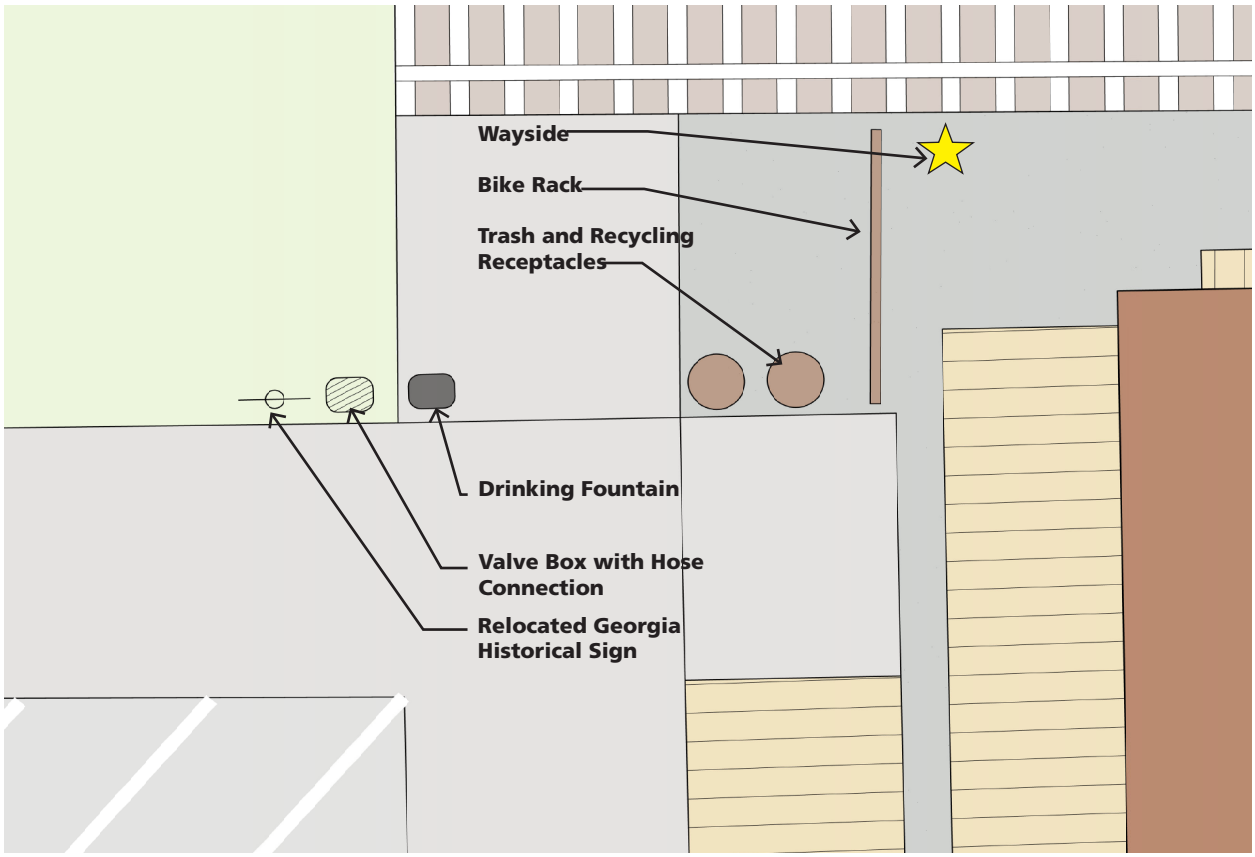
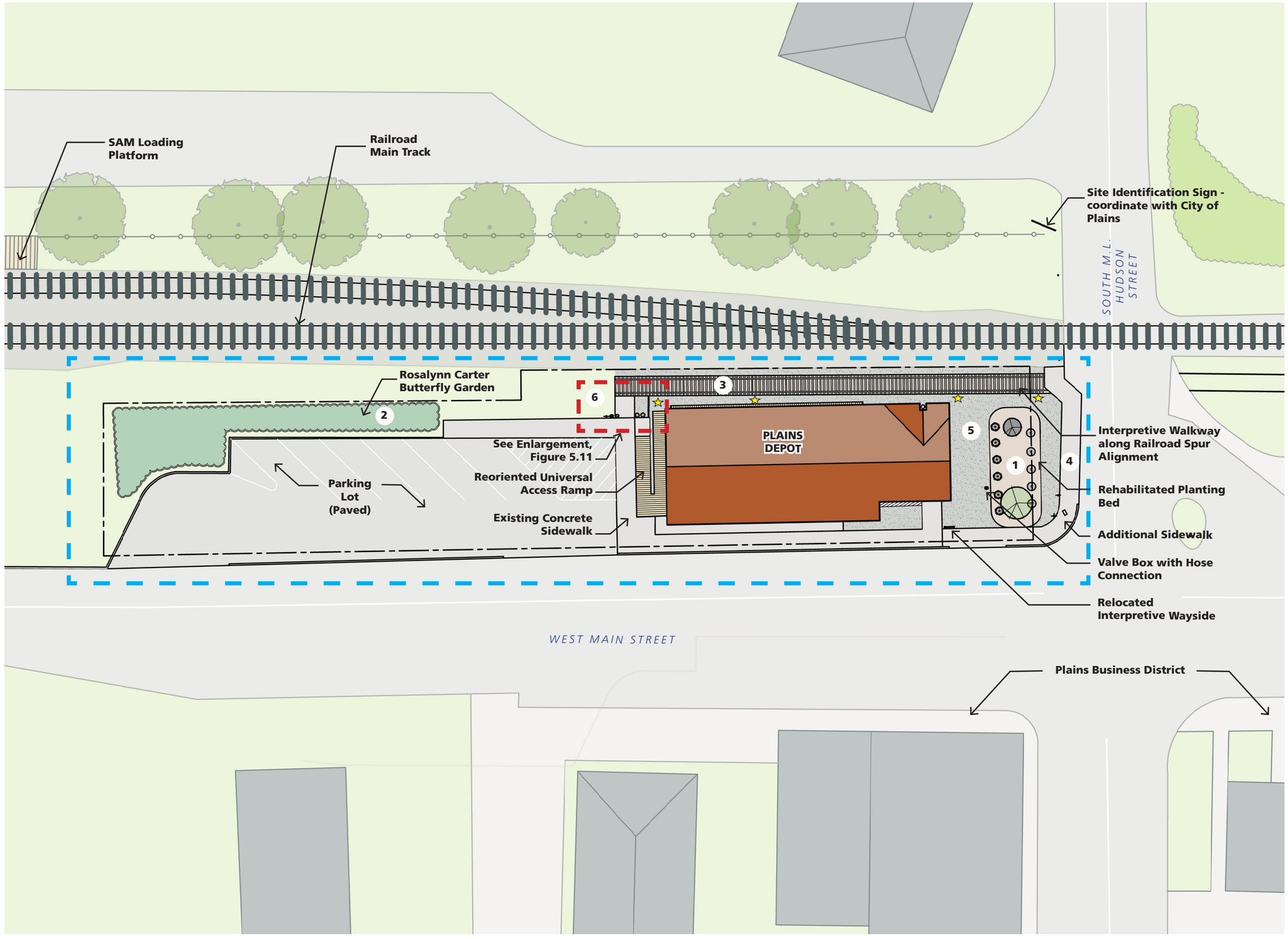


Figure 5.11: Enlargement of site furnishings zone.



Key

- CLR BOUNDARY
- PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- TURF
- ADJACENT BUILDINGS
- GRAVEL
- Proposed Interpretive Wayside

Notes

1. Rehabilitated planting bed. Bed includes the installation of new plant material as well as a pine straw. The existing crape myrtle should remain, with a second similarly sized crape myrtle added on the north side of the bed. Ten shrubs are included in the bed. See Treatment narrative for additional information.
2. Butterfly garden planting. See Treatment narrative for garden placement details, species recommendations, and extent of plantings.
3. The proposed interpretive walkway spans the north side of the property. Improved circulation forms a loop around the primary historic area of the site. The alignment follows the former rail line spur. See Treatment narrative for material details. Interpretive panels should be spaced across the south side of the walkway. The NPS should install a safety barrier on the north side of the walkway, see narrative and Site Furnishings Appendix.
4. Construct additional sidewalk along south and east property boundary. Relocate signs as needed to accommodate walk. Sidewalk expansion may be included in proposed downtown streetscape improvement project.
5. Rehabilitated gravel area. See Treatment narrative for specifications and installation.
6. Site furnishings zone. See Treatment narrative and enlargement (Figure 5.11).

Credits

1. Google Earth
2. Site investigation, October 2018

Illustration 5.1 Treatment

Plains Depot

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
Cultural Landscape Report
December 2019

Site Furnishings Appendix

Introduction

The focus of this site furnishings appendix is to help guide the park in the selection and installation of materials that complement the historic setting of the Plains Depot cultural landscape. This guidance is based on an assessment of treatment period conditions (1976), specifically in terms of landscape materials and color palette. Notable aspects of the treatment period depot landscape included the extensive gravel groundcover, the use of "Carter Green" paint for portions of the depot building, and a relatively uncluttered setting.

With 1976 as a reference point, the ultimate treatment for the Plains Depot cultural landscape is rehabilitation. This treatment philosophy allows for the addition of new site features to the landscape, while preserving and restoring other landscape resources. This appendix offers guidance on selecting the proper materials, colors, and finishes for the rehabilitation of the landscape.

Materials

NPS units look to the local environment, setting, and context when designing or selecting site furnishings. Given the multi-faceted history of the Plains Depot cultural landscape, the park can draw from both a railroad-inspired material palette as well as a political campaign-inspired palette. The following materials are in keeping with the historic use and function of the site and are appropriate for use in site furnishings and improvements.



Wood

Wood is the dominant material for the site's existing buildings and structures. The depot and the universal access ramp are both constructed of wood (Figure 6.1). The depot is painted white with "Carter Green" trim, whereas the universal ramp is unpainted.

Plains' climate and the exposed character of the site warrants consideration before installing a site furnishing made of wood. Using arsenic-free pressure treated wood for any wood-constructed feature is recommended. Additionally, paint protects wood from the elements.



Wood loading platform, stairs, and depot building at the site. Note the weathered character of the wood.

Metal

Given the utilitarian nature of the site prior to its use as a Jimmy Carter's presidential headquarters, metal is a compatible material for site furnishings. Metal finishing can be rustic or polished, and depending on the site furnishing, one finish may be more appropriate than the other.



Adjacent railroad tracks. Steel material.



Cast iron drain pipe on south side of the depot.



Metal pole and associated ladder on the north side of the depot. Note the use of Carter Green.

Concrete

Concrete is not reflective of the materials of the historic period; however, the material is useful for constructing walkways. The site currently features short sections of concrete sidewalks. The proposed pedestrian circulation additions also specify the use of concrete.



Section of concrete sidewalk next to parking lot.



Section of concrete leading to front entrance to depot.



Concrete curb in parking lot.

Stone (Gravel)

A key aspect of campaign-era conditions was the extensive bed of gravel on site. As such, this material reflects the character of the treatment period. Though it is unknown the exact type of gravel that campaign workers installed in 1976, this report recommends using a mix of 60% #57 granite gravel and 40% granite dust. Gravel areas should include installation of a heavy duty woven landscape fabric weed barrier on top of the compacted dirt. See Treatment recommendations for bed preparation and installation technique suggestions.



#57 gravel is larger than pea gravel and is the typical size used in gravel driveways and parking lots, making it common. This is like the size that existed in the eastern portion of the site during the treatment period. (Source: Southern Exposure Landscape Management, https://wemakedirtlookgood.com/product/57-gravel/).

Brick

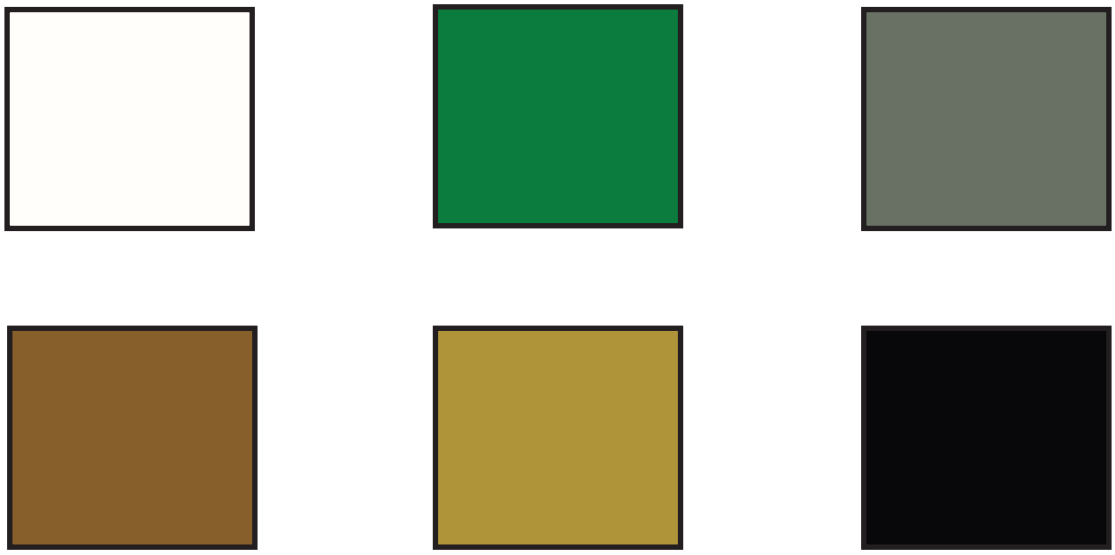
Though not featured extensively, the depot building features brick piers. Therefore, this material is compatible for use in site furnishings and improvements, albeit in a limited scale.



The depot features brick piers. This is the only instance of brick used on site.

Colors

The principal colors that reflect the historic character of the Plains Depot cultural landscape include white and "Carter Green," which is similar to a hunter green. Secondary colors include grey, brown, tan, and black. This report recommends limiting the use of bright, contrasting colors for site furnishings, and instead specify muted colors that will compliment and blend into the landscape. The following are examples of color options for site furnishings:



Site Features

Given the site's small size and the rehabilitation treatment recommendations offered by this report, it is not recommended that JICA add many new features to the landscape. However, limited site furnishings can aid in the function of the park unit.

Trash & Recycling Receptacles

This report recommends installing trash and recycling bins on site. During the historic period research suggests that large lidless steel barrels served as trash receptacles. Though not reflective of the treatment period, the following trash and recycling receptacles are appropriate for the site:



Example of a dual trash-recycling receptical. (Source: http://www.kirbybuilt.com/double-side-load-recycling-container).



Example of single bin receptical, with NPS logo. (Source: http://site-furnishings.columbia-cascade.com).

Drinking Fountain

During the summer months, temperatures on site regularly reach 90 degrees. As a service to the community and visitors to the site, this report recommends installing a water fountain. Below are examples of appropriate designs:



ABA-compliant drinking fountain. (Source: www.upbeat.com/double-ada-accessible-drinking-fountain.html).



Single user drinking fountain. (Source: www.upbeat.com/cylindrical-pedestal-drinking-fountain.html).

Safety Barriers

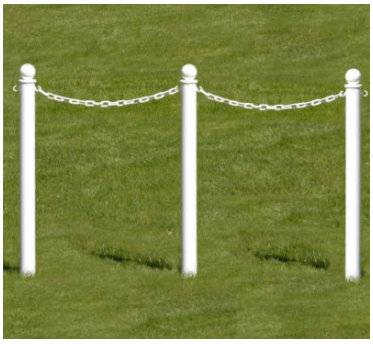


Example of a grey metal swing gate. (Source: www.landmarkwales.com/product/manual-swing-barrier-gates-lmac0206002).



Example of a green metal swing gate. (Source: www.thebarrierpeople.com/news/manual-swing-gates-security/).

The lack of a barrier between the north side of the depot landscape and the active railroad track may constitute a potential safety hazard. The installation of a low post and chain fence can serve to limit pedestrian proximity to the tracks.



In-ground mounting (Source: www.plasticchainlink.com/).



Detail of post and chain attachment. (Source: www.architonic.com).

Bike Rack

To encourage visitors to ride their bikes to the depot (as opposed to taking up limited parking space with vehicles), the park can install a bike rack on site.



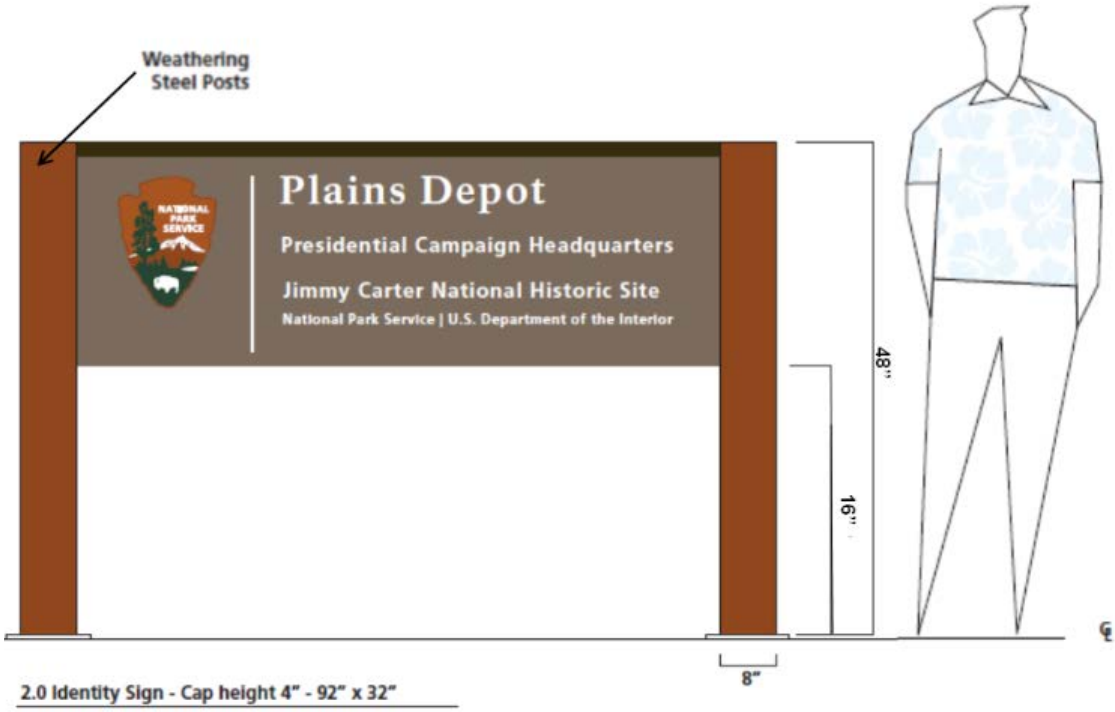
Example of bent tube bike rack. (Source: www.huntco.com/the-rambler-multi-bike-rack).



Example of expandable bike rack. (Source: www.dero.com/product/u-lockit/).

Park Identification Sign

The park currently lacks a park identification sign. The Treatment section offered a location for placement in the landscape. The material specifications for the sign follow the NPS Uniguide Standards. The proposed sign measures 7' – 7" × 4' – 0" and is supported by two flaking weathering steel posts measuring approximately 6" × 6". The sign is brown with white lettering reading: Plains Depot/Presidential Campaign Headquarters/Jimmy Carter National Historic Site/National Park Service; U.S. Department of the Interior.



Mock-up of Park Identification Sign. (Source: JICA, National Park Service).

Waysides

This report recommends the installation of new low-profile waysides to expand the interpretive experience of the landscape. The existing wayside on site is a low-profile design.



Existing wayside on site. This is an NPS standard low profile wayside design.



Existing wayside on site. Note the angled display of map and information.

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Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

Plains Depot
Cultural Landscape Report

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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