



Plaza in Queretaro



Plaza in San Miguel



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president

Visiting Mexico and Lessons Learned

On my recent visit to the magical towns of San Miguel, Queretaro, and Guanajato in Mexico, I was able to experience the most beautiful, exotic, and vibrant historic centers I have seen anywhere. These are highly valued places, spotlessly maintained, beloved by local residents and highly patronized by visitors. The Plaza or “Jardin” as the locals refer to their public spaces, is usually anchored by a church and is where most of the community come to meet and play.

Of particular interest is the contrast in typology with the American “main street”, which is the quintessential “people place” in our great small towns like Winter Park, Boulder, or Santa Barbara. Our main streets may be anchored by a City Hall or an anchor store and they are based on promenade activity. People like to stroll along the street, window shopping, sidewalk dining, and resting in attractive shaded areas. The essential uses that are attracting people are the stores and the restaurants. We have found that the best “main streets” are about 1500 feet in length or greater (about a 5-minute walk allowing for a 4th of July parade or similar events). In many cases these streets are over 100 years old and were the product of entirely different economic and cultural patterns. A contemporary challenge is the diminishing role of main street retail due to the impact of digital shopping, retail malls, power centers, and big box stores. A 3000 foot main street typically requires better than 100 to 170 stores along the length of the frontage, an increasingly difficult financial model to sustain.

The typical plaza in Queretaro is approximately 1-acre and has a perimeter of approximately 1000 feet. This is of interest from a place making and financial model perspective when compared to the linear frontage of a typical main street that is 1500 feet in length (3000 feet counting the frontage on both sides of the main street). The main street frontage is three times the length of the plaza perimeter. One of the key takeaways is that place making on the plaza is three times easier to accomplish with a significant reduction in cost and the financial burden of attracting and maintaining a large number of retail specialty stores.

Another positive aspect of the Plaza typology is that it lends itself to catering to a broader multi-generational population of users, from toddlers to older people who may not be able to walk the 0.6 mile length of a Main Street. The setting is more tranquil, but equally as captivating.

We continue to explore how the Plaza may be integrated into our new communities and redevelopment/infill sites as a more resilient and adaptive place-based contemporary design solution.

As always, all of us at Canin Associates wish you a happy holiday season and a joyous New Year!

Brian C. Canin

A VISION TAKES SHAPE FOR MERCY DRIVE

During the summer and fall, Canin Associates has been hard at work developing a Vision Plan for Mercy Drive, a predominantly African-American community located about 3.5 miles west of downtown Orlando. After meeting with almost 100 residents and stakeholders in May, and after completing both a housing assessment to review the physical conditions of the community's homes and a walking audit to review bicycle and pedestrian facilities, we developed several physical design concepts and community building programs, all intended to help revitalize the community.

"A safe, attractive, and connected community with quality homes and apartments that empowers neighbors of all ages to learn, build, and create together."

Mercy Drive Vision Statement

During the second workshop at the end of September, residents and stakeholders voted on which of the design concepts and community building programs they thought were most desirable for the future of their community. The design concept that received the most votes was a multi-use

neighborhood center (pictured in the rendering below) that provides public gathering space along with new commercial and small business opportunities. Streetscape enhancements to help mitigate traffic issues, improve walking and biking, and provide community gateway features came in a close second place along with ideas for new higher density single-family housing opportunities on a couple of City-owned parcels.

The community building programs that received the most votes were focused mainly on home maintenance, such as a tool lending library and home repair classes, and increasing community-wide events, some of which could even include partnering with the Orlando Police Department.

With the community's priorities determined, a final vision report was produced that will help guide both public and private investment for current and future Mercy Drive residents. Canin Associates is proud to have partnered with the City of Orlando and the Mercy Drive residents in developing the vision for their future. ■



Conceptual Rendering of the Neighborhood Center

PONTE VEDRA AT EAGLE CREEK EXEMPLIFIES DESIGN EXCELLENCE



Front Elevation

Jones Homes USA's Ponte Vedra model in Eagle Creek deservedly sits at the pinnacle of their Masters Plan Collection. Designed for discerning luxury homebuyers on a 70' wide lot on a championship golf course, the Ponte Vedra has 5,455 square feet of living space with 5 Bedrooms, 5 Bathrooms, a huge second floor bonus room, and a view

deck that lends spectacular views of the golf course. Buyers may choose many interior options and exterior structural options such as a wine cellar, a sports bar, a combo home gym and sauna, or an extended second floor view deck. For more information, visit the Jones Homes USA website at www.joneshomesusa.com/eagle-creek-ponte-vedra. ■



Master Bathroom



Sports Bar

Updating Elegance: Grande Lakes Resort

Upgrades to the landscape at the Grande Lakes resort are complete – and looking fantastic. The CA team led the effort to revitalize the Citrus courtyard into a new wedding venue with an all new Italian parterre garden aesthetic. Additional upgrades include a new 18,000 sq. ft. synthetic turf event lawn and an expanded hardscape event terrace. Stay tuned as more enhancements are currently being planned at the resort. ■



J. W. Marriott Entrance



Citrus Garden View



Citrus Garden View

Western Nassau County, Florida is anticipating significant growth pressure in the coming year and they convened a Technical Advisory Panel to help them get ahead of the planning curve. Greg Witherspoon participated in a panel of professionals that developed recommendations on how the County can grow in the western areas and still maintain its characteristic rural nature. The result of the two-day effort is a set of planning principals and priorities that identify the critical next steps for the County to reach its goals. ■

Tony Weremeichik was quoted in a recent Florida Homebuyer Orlando magazine discussing home design trends. Canin Associates is delivering on these trends by providing home designs that highlight indoor-outdoor connections, functionality, storage galore, outdoor entertaining, and easy flowing floor plans. Contact Tony to find out more about ensuring your home designs have what today's buyers are looking for. ■

Kevin Jones, an alumnus of the University of Miami School of Architecture and a principal in our Urban Planning Studio, recently completed his final ARE exam and is now a licensed architect in the State of Florida! We look forward to seeing our young professionals continue to grow and develop. ■

on the boards at **CANIN**

Making up most of the northern part of Brevard County, the City of Titusville is uniquely situated to take advantage of the incredibly dynamic Central Florida and Space Coast regions. Recognizing this, the City has with Canin Associates to work collaboratively with community stakeholders to develop a Vision for the City's future as well as to update the City's Comprehensive Plan. The final public workshop has recently concluded, and the Vision is coming into focus. Stay tuned to find out how the residents of Titusville want to see their community grow! ■

How do you stay competitive in Orlando's hospitality market? You expand of course. The Canin Landscape Studio is assisting a hospitality client in adding an entirely new ballroom to gain more market share in an aggressive conference market. The plans include an outdoor hub space that flows from an interior hub space highlighting opportunities for informal connections and comfortable respite. The project is just getting started on construction. ■