



# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two years ago, Leon Eplan, former Planning Commissioner for the City of Atlanta and a graduate of Emory University, offered the aid of Urban Land Institute's Atlanta District Council to a community group in the historic Druid Hills neighborhood hoping to revitalize the ailing commercial Village at the gates of the University. The effects of time and road widenings had caused the Village to become difficult and dangerous to access by students, and the quality of businesses there had been declining as a result. Eplan enlisted Georgia Tech Professor Randall Roark and his students to help organize several planning charrettes that brought together neighbors, business people and University personnel, who had historically been at odds, to cooperatively develop a shared vision of the Village's future. The design charrettes held in subsequent months produced preliminary ideas of how the Village could be redesigned and led to formalization of the project's steering committee as the *Alliance to Improve Emory Village*, dedicated to revitalizing the Village as a "pedestrian-friendly, mixed use environment". AIEV raised funds and commissioned Peter Drey + Company, P.C. with a team of consultants to expand upon the charrette's findings.

This document describes the plan that resulted from the public participation meetings and design activities of the team, operating under the direction of the AIEV board. The plan, which includes suggestions for new housing and parking as well as innovative traffic proposals and pedestrian enhancements, was presented at a well-attended community meeting on Emory's campus on May 30, 2002. At the conclusion of the presentation, the plan was overwhelmingly endorsed by over 100 community members attending, encouraging AIEV to endorse the plan and begin planning the implementation of the new Village design.

The Plan document includes a description of the circumstances that led to its undertaking, the process followed by the consultant team to ensure broad community participation, and the recommendations produced as a result.

The recommendations describe a vision for the future of the Village, and outline the steps necessary to achieve it. Changes to DeKalb County's zoning for the Village and modifications to the roadways and sidewalks to better handle the mix of pedestrians, vehicles and bicyclists will create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and encourage new growth. This growth will be accomplished through additions to the existing mix of buildings that will include new parking and residential facilities as described in the document. The plan encourages preservation of the Village's existing inventory of historic structures, and suggests improving Peavine Creek and its tributaries as amenities. Estimates of the costs of the improvements are provided in the appendices, as well as a suggested implementation schedule.

To substantiate the viability of the plan's recommendations, market analyses were conducted and suggestions about how to model the future Village marketplace have been developed. Buying habits of likely shoppers in the Village were analyzed to produce an idealized market mix of shops and services that is described in the plan.

An assessment of the quality of the historic resources in the Village is included as well, and recommendations about how to build new structures in this historic context are made.

Design guidelines are included to help direct the redevelopment of the Village into a consistent, high-quality form that will support the concepts collectively produced through this consensus-building planning process.