

# Destination 2028

DESTINATION STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY

## 6. Destination Development



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### **Priority Focus**

Develop a long-term plan or set of principles with buy-in from both the hospitality and development sectors that will include consideration of a development's potential to help attract overnight visitors in the county's overall planning and development process in the future.

Through the DSP, Wake County has an opportunity to address product development opportunities by encouraging land owners to repurpose or redevelop key parcels throughout the county to serve visitor and resident attraction needs. The concepts and parcels included within this section are merely possibilities to illustrate the potential of concentrating visitor assets and strengthen the county's tourism product inventory. Each must be thoroughly examined, including all due diligence to determine true potential for destination relevance and feasibility. JLL identified these illustrative parcels based on feedback from stakeholders, municipalities, developers and JLL's local market division's knowledge of specific sites. This plan, with a few exceptions, does not prescribe a specific use for the land or redevelopment. Additionally, the plan does not assign a role to a specific group to acquire, develop or operate the resulting development. The parcel examples are one way to encourage municipal planning leaders and individual land owners to consider the perspective of overnight visitor when formulating development concepts and plans. To begin vetting this concept, JLL recommends destination partners and municipal entities engaged in visitor attraction begin an ongoing engagement with Wake County's local and active developers to evaluate future opportunities. The hospitality community can provide great and needed perspective on how a planned development can help to trigger or encourage overnight stays.

### **Overarching Goal**

JLL's interaction with some of the potential future developments raised the importance of considering how a project could ultimately be a visitor attraction. The goal of the Destination Development priority is the development of a long-term plan or set of principles with buy-in from both the hospitality and development sectors that will include consideration of a development's potential to help attract overnight visitors in the county's overall planning and development process in the future.

### **Importance of the Development Community**

Once consensus is built and the development opportunities are vetted and fleshed out, the opportunities should be communicated to area economic development professionals to connect with interested private developers where applicable. Any County funding support for options for the destination development/asset must be fully related to the proposed use of the parcel and expected impact on increasing overnight visitation. These parcels

received specific attention in the DSP based on the likelihood that the development concept would provide a destination amenity, improvement or enhancement. The details of how such development is accomplished and brought to reality should factor into funding decisions if Interlocal funding is pursued. JLL recommends that local and active developers are engaged in the identification and vetting process to give insight on the potential of current and future opportunities for Wake County.

## Opportunities

Destination product concepts are possible within each of the following opportunities. JLL has also included criteria for and a schedule of importance for the opportunities within the DSP’s timeframe.

### Blue Ridge Road

The Blue Ridge Corridor as it is known is a potential opportunity for establishing a scientific, medical, agricultural, sports, entertainment and arts campus. The transformation brings a destination perspective to the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine, the North Carolina State Fairgrounds, Carter-Finley Stadium, PNC Arena, developable land for entertainment and hospitality assets, the North Carolina Museum of Art, Rex Hospital and a number of related business opportunities within the district. The opportunity to develop the area around PNC arena coupled with potential renovation and upgrades to the arena itself has the potential to create new visitor options in the future.

Within this corridor, there are a significant number of anchor institutions but very limited service amenities. Investments within each of these anchor institutions is projected to continue into the future and result in more awareness, interest and visitation to the neighborhood. The prominence of the sports venues along the corridor with both Carter-Finley Stadium and PNC Arena suggest that future parcel development consider entertainment and overnight hospitality amenities to enliven the district during pre-, post- or non-event times. Adaptive reuse of state-owned property should be considered for adding depth to this area, especially through mixed uses that include hospitality and service elements. If development concepts are successful, then adding shuttle transportation connecting the corridor’s assets would be an important next step.

### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

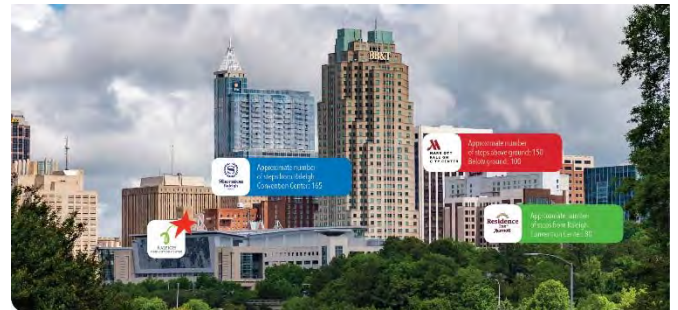
Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	High
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	High



## Downtown Raleigh District

As noted in the Meetings and Conventions section, Wake County has five primary clusters of meetings hotels. One of those clusters is the Downtown District. Within that district is the anchor site of the RCC. This area provides the opportunity for building a stronger support structure for the RCC through added convention focused hotels and hospitality services. Additionally, the expansion and enhancements at the RCC change the level of engagement and visitation to this area.

The plan that has been laid out in the DSP for the future of the RCC will stimulate additional activity in the Convention District. The additional activity will drive demand for more entertainment, hospitality and food and beverage options near the convention center. The City of Raleigh with input and support from GRCVB, the Wake County Hospitality Alliance and the Downtown Raleigh Alliance should plan for the future of the convention district. Understanding the entertainment and service needs of convention and event attendees will help establish future preferred land use and development priorities.



### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	High
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	High

### Cary Towne Center Redevelopment

The redevelopment of the Cary Towne Center could potentially enhance the region as a competitive convention, meetings and sports destination. The location of the mall property is advantageous with nearby amenities and roadway access. IKEA originally targeted the underutilized mall property for its second store in North Carolina, but then changed direction. The development of the Cary Towne Centers site could spawn additional development in and around the site. Potential development would address some of the needs outlined in the DSP would and fill a void in the current marketplace. It is recommended that the Town of Cary work closely with the site owners to develop the direction of this site and the vision for the surrounding area.



#### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	High
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	High

## Government Campus Redevelopment

The redevelopment of the aging governmental campus in the north portion of downtown Raleigh presents a great opportunity to enhance the visitor experience. This area holds promise for mixed-use development with governmental tenants being the primary day user and entertainment and sports offering evening activities. Proposed development has been tied to pursuit of MLS franchise, as mentioned previously in the Sports section of this report. The important consideration in the development of stadium is the ability for the new venue to be active throughout the year. It is recommended that multi-purpose components be factored into the design for the stadium to create a broad spectrum of opportunities including those that will attract overnight visitors. A new venue that can house a major league sports franchise and drive year-round demand has the potential to be a catalyst for the development of this area.



### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	Low
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	Low

\*If state support, including resource allocation, for redevelopment exists this could be a higher priority.

Central Prison/Governor Morehead School for the Blind  
 Potential opportunity for establishing a usable connection between Dorothea Dix Park, downtown Raleigh and N.C. State University. This redevelopment opportunity spans a significant amount of acreage connecting key visitor resources. Amenities and development should include but not focus entirely on visitor needs.

**Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy**

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	Medium *
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	High



### Meadowbrook Golf Course

Conversion to fields for soccer and baseball is the targeted development concept for Garner’s Meadowbrook Golf Course. The proposed redevelopment of the region’s first African-American golf club by the Town of Garner would provide a needed recreational asset in a part of Wake County that is currently underserved by parks of this type. Nearby amenities would add to the attractiveness of this site for tournaments.



#### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	Medium
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	Low

### Knightdale Fields Development

Development opportunity for a regional soccer complex to serve growing population in eastern Wake County. Phased development of the parcel has been proposed with the plan for the first five fields recommended for 2018 Interlocal funding. The complex is tied to continued growth of NCFC. Completion of the full park development concept provided access to tournament quality fields for the underserved eastern portion of Wake County.



#### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	Medium
Opportunity for community transformation	High
Opportunity for destination assets	Low



## Rolesville Frazier Park Development

Potential opportunity for park development in an underserved area of Wake County. Soccer and play fields were originally proposed for the site; however, the concentrated wetlands and watershed running through center portion of the parcel limit access and restrict certain uses. Achieving an optimal field count for tournaments will be challenging for park planners. The Town has involved Sports Facility Advisory to conceptualized possible uses and constraints.

This parcel, based on its layout challenges, will require creative concepts for its overall development as a park. The desired development of field potentially would need to shift to another creative use. One potential creative use would be an adventure fitness park capable of hosting mud runs and obstacle courses. No current regional park provides a dedicated use for adventure fitness and the park could host a collection of traveling events and competitions. The use and potential for return on investment would need detailed further study.



### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	Medium
Opportunity for community transformation	Medium
Opportunity for destination assets	Low

### Potential County Park Land

Exploratory consideration by Wake County of additional parkland and conversion of a former golf course property. Potential opportunities and activities would require co-existence with residential neighborhood. Connections to greenway system would be valuable for continuing to advance the area’s attractive livability. Future opportunities for the county to bond for parks, greenways and nature preserves will add to the attractiveness of Wake County as a destination. Constructing county parks should continue to be an investment priority for providing recreational opportunities to both residents and visitors.

#### Criteria & Schedule for DSP Advocacy

Criteria & Schedule	Level
Development priority by 2028	Medium
Opportunity for community transformation	Medium
Opportunity for destination assets	Low

#### Destination Development Key Takeaway

The development community should be proactively involved when sites are identified. The ability to engage these thought leaders can help them be effective advocates in support of current and future projects. In all cases it is recommended that demand analysis is conducted to study the potential visitor impact and determine what modifications or enhancements will increase attractiveness.