



North Florida



JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY

Sportsplex Development Opportunities | Jacksonville, Florida

Technical Assistance Panel | August 18–19, 2026

About

Urban Land Institute

Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 45,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions, with members in 80 countries.

Cover: Jacksonville University, on the St. Johns River, has been an important Arlington neighborhood anchor since its founding in 1934.

© 2026 by the Urban Land Institute

2101 L Street, NW | Suite 400 | Washington, DC 20037

All rights reserved. This publication may be reproduced or shared, in whole or in part, for noncommercial purposes with attribution to the Urban Land Institute. Written permission is required for commercial use and for use in training artificial intelligence. All photos are courtesy of ULI unless otherwise noted.

ULI North Florida

ULI North Florida is a district council of the Urban Land Institute, a global organization dedicated to improving the quality of urban areas. ULI is the sum of its members, who themselves deliver the ULI mission through programs and events and positively shape the future of real estate and land use disciplines throughout North Florida. ULI shares best practices through practical professional development education programs and ULI's research and publications. The organization sets the standard for high quality information on urban planning, real estate development, growth and land use. Simply put, ULI North Florida's goal is a built environment that better serves more people.

Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

ULI harnesses its members' technical expertise to help communities solve complex land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. Technical assistance panels (TAPs) provide expert, multidisciplinary, unbiased advice to local governments, private entities, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations facing complex land use and real estate issues. Drawing from its professional membership base, ULI North Florida offers objective and responsible guidance on various land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The sponsoring organization is responsible for gathering the background information necessary to understand the project and presenting it to the panel. ULI panelists spend two days interviewing stakeholders, evaluating the challenges, and ultimately arriving at a set of recommendations that the sponsoring organization can use to guide future development.

Learn more at northflorida.uli.org.

About

Technical Assistance Panel

Will Butler

President and Founder
Real Estate InSync
Tallahassee, Florida

Autumn Calder, AICP, CPM

Director
Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency
Tallahassee, Florida

Evan Eleff

Partner & Executive Vice President
The Sports Facilities Companies
Clearwater, Florida

Amanda Hoffsis

Vice President, Planning, Architecture and
Real Estate
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

Fred Jones, AICP, RSP1

Director - Planning and Design Collaborative
The Haskell Company
Jacksonville, Florida

Scott Jordan

Principal
CIVITAS, Inc.
Denver, Colorado

David Lawrence, CEcD, EDFP

Knowledge Park Development Manager
City of Rock Hill
Rock Hill, South Carolina

Michael McNaughton

Principal
M2 Real Estate Advisors
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida

Krista Trofka

Vice President, Government and
Education Advisory
JLL
Denver, Colorado

Alan Verlander

Founder and CEO
AirStream Ventures
Jacksonville, Florida

ULI Project Staff

Carolyn Clark

Executive Director, ULI North Florida

Marissa Royals

Senior Associate, ULI North Florida

Kelly Annis

Report Writer



ULI panelists discuss their findings and formulate recommendations for Jacksonville University.



Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction and Background	4
Sportsplex Recommendations	8
Master Developer Recommendations	18
Site Planning Guiding Principles	22
About the Panel	21

Acknowledgments

ULI North Florida would like to thank Jacksonville University for inviting ULI to study the development potential for a sports complex and related uses on its south campus. In particular, ULI thanks

[INSERT UNIVERSITY KEY CONTACTS]

for their insights during the panel's briefing and community-wide tour. ULI also thanks the University's board of trustees and community members who generously shared their time and experience with the panel throughout the course of its study.

Executive Summary

As a small liberal arts university in Jacksonville's Arlington neighborhood, Jacksonville University is continually seeking opportunities to excel and differentiate itself in a crowded national higher education landscape. Jacksonville University is known across the Southeast for its nursing and aviation programs. It is steadily expanding its graduate offerings to provide students with ample opportunities for success in an increasingly competitive job market.

Jacksonville University (the University or JU) also excels with its athletics programs. Students from across the United States attend JU, knowing that they will receive a high-quality education in an environment that also fosters success in their sport of choice.

Approximately 15 years ago, the University purchased approximately 40 additional acres along the southern edge of its campus. Of the original acreage, 14 acres were sold to an independent charter school, and 25 remain in the University's holdings. The 25 acres are unimproved and stretch from University Boulevard on the east to the St. Johns River to the west.

To continue meeting evolving student needs, address broader market demands, and incorporate benefits for the surrounding community, University leaders have been in discussions with developers, alums, and designers about the site's future. The concept of a sports complex, related retail, wellness

services, and potentially new housing has become an idea the University is exploring deeply, and recent conversations have expanded to include contacts from the City of Jacksonville, key community leaders, and potential real estate development partners.

As the University considers how best to position the site and potential new uses to meet the needs of its students, the community, and the market, it turned to the Urban Land Institute North Florida District Council (ULI) for guidance. Using its technical assistance panel program, ULI convened a panel of real estate and land use professionals to study and tour the site, interview key stakeholders, and make recommendations the University can consider as it moves forward on developing the 25-acre site. The panel's recommendations are detailed in the following pages and are summarized below.

The Development Concept

As conceived by the University, a youth sports complex at the site would feature a large building housing multiple sports courts, a championship court, and the related spaces needed to ensure the smooth functioning of the facility for traveling sports teams and regional tournaments. This type of sporting venue relies on proximate lodging and dining options and, as such, has the potential to catalyze additional improvements in the area. The sportsplex, however, would be the initial project and the first development project to break ground.

Sportsplex Recommendations

The panel anticipates that the sportsplex will catalyze adjacent development, meet the capacity needs of sports tournaments, and provide recreational access for students as well as the broader Arlington community.

The University's preliminary sportsplex designs generated development cost estimates ranging from \$60 million to \$80 million. Although the University has connected with potentially interested private development partners, the financial viability of the project will likely hinge on a public-private partnership (P3) to bring the project to life, given the borrowing power and favorable interest rates that public partners can more readily access.

Right-size the sportsplex and leverage existing assets to lower costs. Through key design modifications, the panel right-sized the sportsplex, reducing the building footprint by 20,000 square feet (SF). The panel estimates that this reduction in building size would lower overall sportsplex construction costs, resulting in development estimates closer to \$50 million. The savings would come from incorporating the sports championship court into the main building, rather than building a separate court for that express purpose, and leveraging existing infrastructure, namely the River Road Garage, thereby eliminating the expense of a new structured parking facility.

Plan for flexible space. The panel estimated that the redesigned facility could encompass

70,000 SF and accommodate each of the following configurations: 8 basketball courts, 16 volleyball courts, 24 pickleball courts, and 18-24 wrestling mats. Telescoping bleachers and airwalls would enhance the flexibility of the interior spaces, and the panel anticipates that up to 4,500 seats could be included for concerts, graduations, and other large events.

The business case for a P3. Using comparable facilities across the United States, the panel considered the potential annual revenue from the JU sportsplex. Unfortunately, even a high-performing venue may generate only enough revenue to cover annual operating expenses and still fall short of the anticipated debt service on a \$50 million facility. The potential economic impact on Jacksonville and the surrounding neighborhood, as well as the development's tax revenue potential, bolster the case for the development and support a P3 deal structure. The panel noted that similar sports facilities typically generate between \$20-30 million annually in direct spending on lodging, meals, retail, and transportation, and that this amount may increase with the addition of other events at the facility. Similarly, the new destination ecosystem can be expected to generate sales, tourism, and hotel occupancy taxes, further increasing the public value of this project.

Sportsplex P3 deal structure. The P3 envisioned by the panel places the University and the City in partnership with a master developer who is responsible for the projects at the site. The University would contribute

land through a ground lease or through site control; the City would commit lease payments sized to cover the debt service; and the master developer would bring equity investors into the project. The public sector would provide the bulk of the development funding by leveraging a range of financial tools, at a level that aligns with the City's appetite to participate. Bonds, Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) funds, New Markets Tax Credits, and other special taxing mechanisms could be tapped to support the effort. The University may also have funds to contribute and resources such as student fees, sponsorships, grants, and philanthropic avenues should each be explored.

Master Developer Recommendations

In addition to helping guide the framing of the sportsplex development, the panel considered how the University should bring the full 25-acre site to life. The panel strongly encourages using a master developer and a phased approach that leads with the sportsplex development.

Role of the master developer. A master developer will orchestrate development across the site. As it is unlikely that a single developer will have the expertise needed to deliver each new use across the 25 acres, the University should anticipate that the master developer will engage additional developer partners as needed to ensure best-in-class development at each stage. The responsibilities of the master developer

typically include master planning the site in partnership with the University, determining phasing, pursuing zoning and entitlements, and conducting community engagement sessions in collaboration with the University.

P3 early steps for JU. The University would benefit from the leadership and dedication of a person or firm that serves as the project's quarterback every day. Supporting this quarterback should be project champions—people with the leadership and community stature that will garner visibility for the project and support the vision. The University should set goals and expectations for returns on its investment early, and issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) for a master developer as soon as feasible to get the work moving.

Deal structure, additional considerations.

The panel identified several other considerations the University may wish to incorporate into its master developer agreement. These included capital event participation, right-of-first-refusal provisions, design standards, ground lease and sale evaluations, and a thorough review of any potential developer partner's financials.

Site Planning Recommendations

Although the University has a very preliminary site plan, the panel recommended shifting to a more general, less prescriptive planning approach at this early stage. This general planning approach can emphasize broad uses and focus on core principles for the site. The specifics of how those uses are placed should be addressed with the individual

developers as plans take shape, while the guiding principles, listed below, remain firm.

- **Enhance University Boulevard.** The University should coordinate with the City on streetscape improvements and prioritize walkability and public-facing retail along the roadway.
- **Activate the riverfront.** The addition of a sportsplex on the site presents a unique opportunity for JU to be the first to activate its riverfront in a way that encourages community engagement, increases connectivity, and elevates campus visibility. The improvements at the site should also incorporate shoreline resilience measures that support the campus and its natural features.
- **Integrate the campus.** Blur the edges of the campus to blend into and welcome

the surrounding community. Enhance River Road to be a gateway to campus and the sportsplex.

- **Make it authentic.** Integrate JU into Arlington with design and walkability, and tie into other amenities both on campus and across Arlington.
- **Fight for the vision, but stay flexible.** Develop a vision statement and supporting materials, and empower development champions. Keep momentum going while ensuring that nothing built today limits future options at the site and the larger JU campus.

Next Steps

The sportsplex concept has grown in popularity nationally, as the public and private sectors recognize the economic power in

combining youth sports with dwell time and related food and beverage, entertainment and hotel opportunities. Jacksonville's warm climate, attractive coastal positioning and growing national appeal make it particularly compelling for this type of development. The panel believes that time is of the essence in this development pursuit, as competing projects are likely to be proposed across the region. It is important for JU to get ahead of the trend, to stave off competition and establish its position in the market.

As the youth sportsplex poses benefits that extend well into the surrounding community and region, the University and the City should consider the pivotal role the public sector can play in bringing the sportsplex to life. The City has the power to extend the CRA timeline to provide additional funding for the sportsplex; it can bond against the CRA's tax increment finance (TIF) revenue, or it can underwrite the sports facility directly (rather than pursuing a credit tenant lease). Any of these three approaches could prove instrumental to the project's viability.

Jacksonville University is a well-respected institution, with a reputation that stretches across the U.S. The prospects of a new and energizing sportsplex on the south side of this nearly 100-year-old campus will further elevate the visibility of the University among its peers, help raise JU's profile in the youth sports industry, and bring young people to campus, opening the door to their dreams of becoming a future Jacksonville University college student.



The University's south entrance at River Road borders the northern edge of the proposed sportsplex development site.



Introduction and Background

Jacksonville University, in Jacksonville's Arlington neighborhood, has a long tradition of blending higher educational pursuits with top-notch athletic programs. Founded in 1934, the small, liberal arts university has grown steadily and thoughtfully, reaching and stabilizing at an enrollment of approximately 4,000 students. As opportunities to offer more tailored graduate programs have increased, Jacksonville University has responded by welcoming more graduate students than undergraduates to campus for the 2026-27 school year.

Like many universities across the country, JU is continually striving to attract the best and brightest students and faculty to its campus. At the same time, JU recognizes the important role it plays in the broader Arlington neighborhood. JU leaders strive to find balance and advance programs on campus that support its students, the University's institutional and operational goals, and, where possible, the University's role as a welcoming neighbor in the Arlington community.

When the opportunity to purchase an adjoining 25-acre parcel arose, University leaders saw a chance to expand the campus footprint by adding JU services and amenities. Ownership of the land puts JU in the driver's seat, directing potential uses on adjoining land and ensuring that those uses support the University's mission and goals.

Since 2022, the University has been exploring the potential to develop the adjoining parcel into a mixed-use district anchored by a large indoor sports complex, an idea

initially proposed by a Jacksonville-based development team with ties to the University through its alums. Together, the University and developer identified a gap in the market for an indoor sports complex large enough to host regional tournaments and began to design the site around such a facility. In addition to the sports venue, early concepts also envisioned retail spaces, restaurants, a hotel, and multifamily housing, all of which would be welcoming and accessible to both University students and the general public.

As envisioned, the indoor sports complex concept addresses the University's three primary criteria for pursuing any new project: meeting a demand, addressing student interest, and fulfilling a public need.

- **Market demand.** In this case, there is a significant gap in the market for this type of venue in the Southeastern United States, with recent observations by developers noting a lack of such a venue between Atlanta, Georgia, and Orlando, Florida. With the rise in the popularity of youth club sports and clubs regularly traveling to compete, the market seems poised for this type of use in northeast Florida.
- **Student interest.** JU has a strong reputation as a top-choice liberal arts school for student athletes. As such, opportunities to elevate the University's sports facilities and tournament venues are of interest to University leadership. The recent conversion of JU's football stadium into a top-tier lacrosse facility has been a welcome campus improvement



The University's campus boundary is noted by the blue dashed line, while the 25-acre expansion site is encircled by the red dashed line.

and elevated the stature of JU's program. A sportsplex could provide the University's basketball and volleyball programs with new, high-quality facilities for practices, games, and tournaments.

- **Public need.** In addition to broader market demand, there is an opportunity to provide amenities for the Arlington community through a sportsplex at the site. To serve the traveling teams, the University anticipates that new retail and restaurants will be located on the parcel, close to University Boulevard. This will bring additional dining options to a neighborhood that is currently eager for more food choices. University leaders have also been in discussions with the YMCA about locating on the parcel, which would bring additional health and wellness programming to the neighborhood. Finally, the University recognizes that development at this site may provide new and welcome opportunities for the public and students to connect with the St. Johns riverfront, an underutilized amenity that runs along the entire western edge of the campus.

The University anticipates needing to form a public-private partnership (P3) to develop the sportsplex. This partnership would bring together the University, a private developer, and the City of Jacksonville, benefiting from the addition of a world-class tournament venue near downtown and the city's other sports and entertainment venues. Early investigation into similar projects illuminated

TAP Questions

Jacksonville University leaders posed the following primary questions to the ULI panel.

- What are the best ways to approach from a P3 partnership perspective? Should we consider an RFI/RFQ/RFP?
- How should we approach the financial component of this project? What financial structure best serves the University in both the short and the long term?
- How do we go about motivating investment in the sportsplex and the project?
- What are the best ways to incorporate and introduce this plan to the community?
- Outside of retail, housing, hotel and marina, what are the elements we should be considering having in this mixed use?
- What are the keys to a fruitful partnership with the City of Jacksonville and helping them fulfill their goals of a becoming a

championship city and assisting with the revitalization of downtown?

In addition, the University asked ULI to also address the following secondary questions.

- What are the best ways to integrate this project into the campus and our broader master planning?
- What is the outlook from a timing perspective and the urgency to move the project forward?
- How do we build-off of the previous TAP for the CRA and how do we incorporate with the CRA plan?
- Pulling from other examples, what are best and most creative ways to activate the waterfront?
- What other risks and opportunities are we not considering?



The panel launched its study with a briefing and campus tour, led by University professionals.

both the need for public subsidy and the potential for positive economic impact on the surrounding community, boosting the earning potential of nearby businesses. Early conversations with developers have also surfaced interest from teams in a potential partnership with the University, but development agreements have yet to be drafted, and conversations remain preliminary.

Early meetings with representatives from the City of Jacksonville, including municipal staff and elected leaders, generated public-sector interest in the project. Yet, the extent to which the City is interested in or able to participate in such a development remained an open question at the time of this study.

To help the University envision a practical and attainable path forward for the sportsplex, it turned to the Urban Land Institute North Florida District Council for guidance. Using its trusted and objective technical assistance panel (TAP) program, ULI convened a panel of ten real estate, land use, and economic development professionals to address specific development questions posed by the University. Following an initial briefing and campus tour led by University leaders and staff, the panel interviewed key public officials, municipal staff, University trustees, and key community stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities apparent on site. The two-day TAP culminated in a presentation of the ULI panel's findings and recommendations to the University.

What the Panel Heard and Observed

The panel heard several themes during the stakeholder interviews, observed multiple development opportunities, and noted potential barriers that may impede progress on the 25-acre parcel.

- **Neighborhood.** Arlington has a rich and storied history. Neighbors are interested in what happens at the site, and community leaders are hopeful that new development in the area will help catalyze new investment and support the City's Renew Arlington Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) efforts to address blight and benign disinterest in the area.
- **Riverfront.** Much of the Arlington neighborhood is disconnected from the river, and the University has not fully activated its riverfront. The site offers potential for both. With the addition of a marina at the site, there is also potential to connect residents and students directly to downtown Jacksonville, the Jaguars' stadium, and other destinations via water taxis and other marina services.
- **University profile.** The location of a new sportsplex at JU will raise the University's profile across the southeastern United States. Bringing youth sports teams to this new youth sports mecca can also open the door to JU for young people who may not have otherwise known about or considered JU for their higher education journey.
- **Physical campus.** In addition to the sportsplex, the University anticipates



The key themes from the stakeholder interviews were captured in this word cloud.

that the site will provide additional retail, primarily food and beverage, amenities to the neighborhood and to University students, faculty, and staff. New housing at the site can provide graduate students with additional housing options and provide more multifamily opportunities close to the water. Intentional connections to the rest of campus will be important for fully integrating the amenities and housing into the broader campus ecosystem.

- **Captive market.** The sportsplex concept is considered a “sticky” use, meaning the athletic participant is rarely the only member of the family on-site. This translates into extended visitation and downtime for family members eager for activities, entertainment, and experiences beyond the sporting event at hand. A successful sportsplex district will be engaging not only for the athlete, but for the extended visiting family and friends as well.
- **Project execution.** This type of development will require partnerships, public and private financing, and a project champion who wakes up every day thinking about advancing this work. The existing area CRA may prove helpful in financing the development, as might bond opportunities through the City.
- **Public sector.** The public sector is an important partner in this work. The 19 City Council members will have a voice in the City’s participation, and

each brings distinct perspectives to the table. At the same time, the statewide [Amendment 3](#) initiative to eliminate property taxes, which is up for a vote in

November of 2026, has the public sector pressing “pause” on most new financial conversations until the votes on this important financial measure are counted.



Looking from River Road to the south, the study site sits within the fence line in the above image. The land is currently unimproved, marked by significant vegetation, and holds some wetlands close to the river.



Much of the western edge of the campus borders the St. Johns River and is mostly green open space.



Sportsplex Recommendations

Given the University's focus on developing a sports complex at the study area site and the potential for that complex to catalyze additional improvements, the panel first focused on the feasibility and development of the sports complex itself. The panel addressed how the sizing, placement, functions, and delivery of this facility could set the stage for development across the broader study area and remaining acreage.

Sportsplex Outcomes

As the panel considered the design and delivery of the sportsplex, in the context of the University's goals and vision, the following desired outcomes emerged.

- **Be catalytic.** Using approximately five-acres, the site can easily support an indoor sports complex that could become a signature destination and a great experience for students, athletes, and their families. The sportsplex should attract visitors, drive traffic to the University's campus, and contribute to campus life. The anticipated activity should support the success of any additional mixed-use assets developed elsewhere on the site. Those mixed-use assets should be accretive to a tournament destination experience, JU campus life, and the broader community's sense of place.
- **Provide capacity.** The facility should provide capacity for approximately 4,000 seats and serve as the University's signature basketball arena.

- **Create access.** The sportsplex should function within and support an open campus environment that enhances the Arlington community's access to sports, recreation, and wellness.

To determine the success of the enhanced public access objective, the University will need to quantify the impact the facility has on the community. Measuring the facility's impact on health, social well-being, safety, educational attainment, and the economic conditions of the surrounding community will require baseline measurements as well as regular measurements over time. Planning for positive outcomes, the University should prepare to communicate these impacts with the JU community, its Arlington neighbors, and the University's development partners.

Potential Challenges and Solutions

The stakeholder interviews and tour of the study area illuminated several possible challenges that may arise as the University pursues a sportsplex development. In identifying those challenges, the panel also offered strategies to help mitigate them.

Limited capital commitments in place. Early estimates from the University indicate that the sportsplex could cost between \$60 and \$80 million. Even with the revised, lower panel estimate of \$50 million, there are few capital resources ready for deployment.

Reliance on City funds. The lack of adequate private capital creates a greater need for a

strong public sector partner. At the time of this study, the City had committed \$4 million in pre-development funding, a commitment tied to conditions that JU was still evaluating. Additional public funding will be required for the building's construction.

Clarity of ownership and governance. As a likely P3, there are a number of entities that might potentially participate in the project. At the time of the TAP briefing, the roles of each potential partner and their associated ownership stakes were unclear. This lack of clarity may be hindering additional developer interest in the project, as well as potential financial or partner support.

Motivating ancillary development and gaining forward momentum. The University anticipates that the sportsplex will catalyze retail and hotel development at the site. These ancillary development partners would benefit from a clear timeline, active communications, and additional motivation. These factors can help speed those developers along, so they are not waiting on the sportsplex to deliver a proof of concept before they break ground. Momentum is a powerful force, but until motion begins, inertia can be just as powerful.

The following strategies may assist the University in addressing the above challenges.

Right-size and define uses for the pre-development funding. The panel learned that the University may have access to \$4 million from the City for pre-development work. In addition to confirming the amount of pre-

development funding actually required, the panel strongly cautions the University to plan the use of these funds carefully. A sequenced approach can help ensure that studies, actions, and related efforts occur in the right place and at the right time.

Reduce the size and cost of the sportsplex.

Using a critical design eye, the panel identified key design modifications to the proposed sportsplex structure, resulting in a significant reduction in the estimated development costs. Other similar savings may be found, or expenses deferred to a future date when the facility is generating revenue, to help reduce early capital needs.

Leverage existing assets and infrastructure.

The University has existing buildings and infrastructure adjacent to the site that could be leveraged to achieve cost savings. The underutilized River Road Garage could be used to park visitors to the sportsplex and the unused adjacent dorm facilities could be renovated and house visiting teams for a fee. These steps can facilitate near-term activation as the facility grows into its full sportsplex potential and may help reduce early development expenses.

Diversify sources of low-cost/no-cost capital. Public funding will likely provide the bulk of the sportsplex's low-cost capital. Diversifying those sources beyond the City of Jacksonville can help reduce potential over-reliance on any single source, which may reduce development risk and bring the project closer to breaking ground.

Sportsplex Development, Anticipated Costs

Use of Funds	Low	Mid	High
Land Cost	TBD	TBD	TBD
Hard Cost	\$32,217,064	\$35,796,738	\$39,376,412
Field and Sport Equipment Cost	\$2,144,031	\$2,382,257	\$2,620,482
Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment	\$5,474,540	\$6,082,822	\$6,691,105
Soft Costs, Construction	\$4,644,393	\$5,160,436	\$5,676,480
Soft Costs, Operations	TBD	TBD	TBD
Escalation	\$3,478,655	\$3,865,172	\$4,251,689
Working Capital Reserve	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total Use of Funds	\$47,958,683	\$53,287,425	\$58,616,168



The panel provided a revised facility design that delivers eight basketball courts, 16 volleyball courts, 24 pickleball courts, or 18-24 wrestling mats.

Explore and explain community and socioeconomic impacts. Public access to the recreational and wellness resources in the new development is key. Studies show that children with regular access to activity are roughly one-tenth as likely to be overweight as their inactive peers. The ability to reach and be welcoming to the Arlington community is a powerful addition to the development's value proposition, and the provision of positive health access should be clearly articulated throughout the work.

Facility Recommendations

Drawing on data from existing and comparable sports complexes elsewhere, the panel estimates that one 125,000-square-foot (SF) sportsplex will meet the needs of the University and the tournaments it hopes to attract. This development scenario no longer requires the construction of an additional 20,000 SF "championship court" space with its additional service areas, locker rooms, and circulation space.

The center mass of the building is 70,000 square feet of flat-floor, column-free, high-bay court space. This space offers flexible inventory for both sporting and non-sporting events, such as concerts. Another 35,000 square feet would be set aside for meeting space, administrative offices, and support space, while 20,000 SF would be dedicated to circulation areas, mechanical systems, and storage space.

With 70,000 SF, the space is designed to be divided to accommodate each of the



THE SPORTS FACILITIES COMPANY



THE SPORTS FACILITIES COMPANY



THE SPORTS FACILITIES COMPANY

A variety of sports can be accommodated in the panel's revised design.



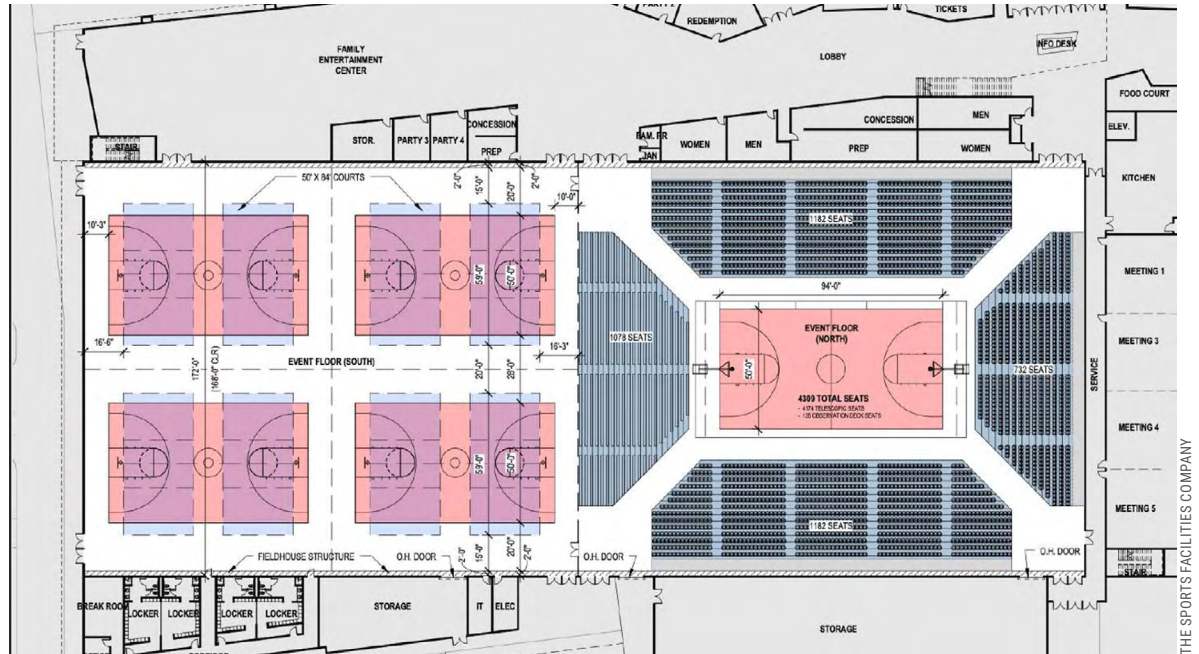
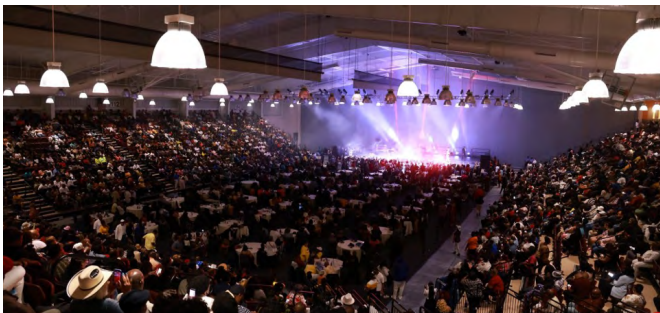
following configurations

- 8 basketball courts
- 16 volleyball courts
- 24 pickleball courts
- 18-24 wrestling mats

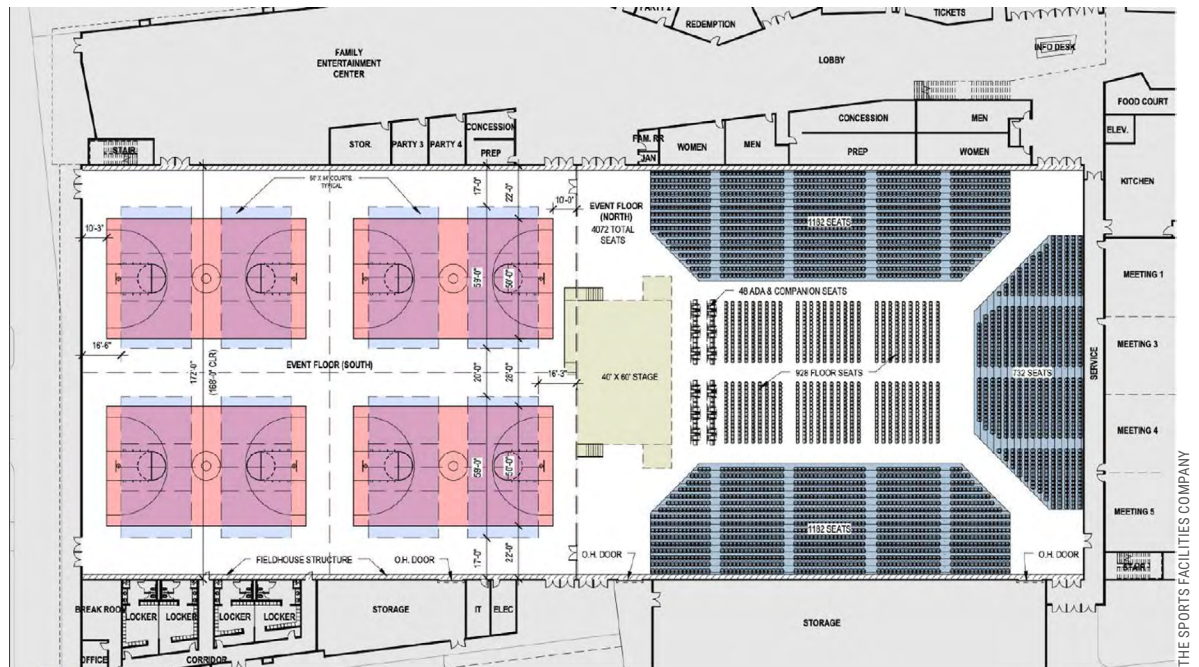
Spectators would be accommodated using telescoping bleachers and additional seating in between courts.

For championship games, additional telescoping bleachers and airwalls would separate the championship space from the remaining courts and provide seating for approximately 4,000 spectators.

Live events, such as concerts, theatrical performances, or graduations, could likewise



The new design can also accommodate a championship court while retaining space for four courts at the same time.



Space for live events, including live performances and graduations, can also be accommodated in the championship court area.

use the partial facility setup, with telescoping bleachers and floor seating, providing room for approximately 4,500 people.

On non-game/non-tournament days, the space can serve as an indoor event space for the University or community, hosting vendor fairs, community festivals, and more.

Parking could be accommodated in the existing River Road Garage, allowing the project to move forward without the additional expense of constructing more surface parking, which would consume otherwise developable land, or the extraordinary expense of constructing a structured parking facility at approximately \$25,000-35,000 per space.

These modifications to the design of the sportsplex, specifically reducing the total square footage by approximately 40,000 square feet and eliminating the additional parking structure, reduce the original \$80 million estimates down to approximately \$50 million while delivering the same capabilities and sporting and event capacities.

Potential Financial Performance

In its evaluation of the sportsplex development, the panel took a closer look at the facility's potential financial performance. Using performance data from similar operations across the country, the panel incorporated local and regional socioeconomic, demographic, and sports participation data into its calculations. The result was a revenue and expense range that the University might anticipate for a 125,000

square foot sportsplex. Its key findings are detailed below and highlighted in the tables to the right.

Annual revenue may fund ongoing operations. When properly programmed and operated, the sportsplex may reach a break-even point on its annual operating costs. Some high-performing facilities have achieved annual net revenues between \$400,000 and \$600,000, which, in this case, could cover the facility's operating costs and potentially generate a small surplus for reserves and capital replacement.

Funding caveat: Operational self-sustainability does not mean the facility would be self-funded. The operational revenues will still fall short of the debt service typically expected for a \$50 million project.

The sportsplex may drive additional economic impact. A number of community and University leaders shared a vision for a sportsplex that catalyzed additional development. The vision also included community amenities on the 25 acres that would also contribute to the revitalization of the broader Arlington neighborhood. With these insights, the panel sought to quantify the potential economic impact of such a development. The panel noted that sports facilities, such as the one contemplated for JU, typically generate between \$20 and \$30 million annually in direct spending on lodging, meals, retail, and transportation. With the addition of live entertainment at the facility, the panel estimates that a JU sportsplex could generate \$22.5 to \$40 million in spending.

Sportsplex Development, Estimated Revenues, Operating Expenses, and Net Income

Revenue	Benchmark Thresholds		
	Low Perf.	Mid Perf.	High Perf.
Indoor Courts	\$728,000	\$1,092,000	\$1,456,000
Leased Space	\$100,000	\$125,000	\$175,000
Food and Beverage	\$259,000	\$649,725	\$1,039,560
Sponsorship and Advertising	\$129,945	\$175,426	\$256,890
Miscellaneous and Other	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$1,217,835	\$2,042,151	\$2,930,450

Operating Expenses	Benchmark Thresholds		
	Low Perf.	Mid Perf.	High Perf.
Cost of Goods Sold	\$487,134	\$714,753	\$879,135
Operations and Maintenance	\$852,485	\$1,225,290	\$1,465,225
Total Operating Expenses	\$1,339,619	\$1,940,043	\$2,344,360

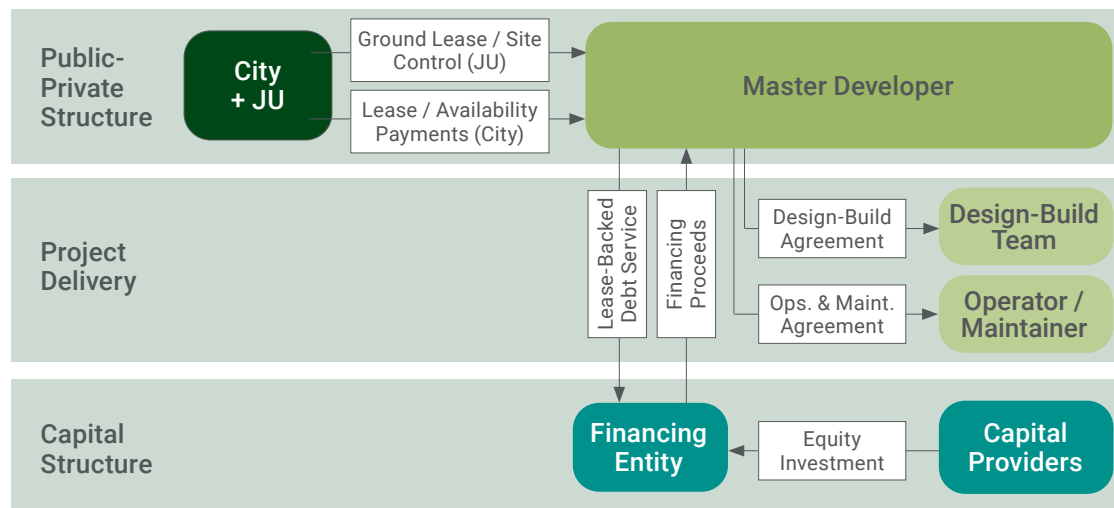
Net Operating Income	Benchmark Thresholds		
	Low Perf.	Mid Perf.	High Perf.
	(\$121,784)	\$102,108	\$586,090

Estimated Sportsplex Economic Impact

Category	Allocation	\$22.5M	\$30.0M	\$40.0M
Lodging	34%	\$7.65 M	\$10.20 M	\$13.60 M
Meals and Beverage	28%	\$6.30 M	\$8.40 M	\$11.20 M
Retail	12%	\$2.70 M	\$3.60 M	\$4.80 M
Entertainment	8%	\$1.80 M	\$2.40 M	\$3.20 M
Transportation	10%	\$2.25 M	\$3.00 M	\$4.00 M
Miscellaneous and Other	8%	\$1.80 M	\$2.40 M	\$3.20 M
Total Direct Spending	100%	\$22.50 M	\$30.00 M	\$40.00 M

Annual Direct Spending	State Sales Tax	Local Sales + Tourist Tax	Total Tax Generated
\$22.5 M	\$1.350 M	\$0.797 M	\$2.147 M
\$30.0 M	\$1.800 M	\$1.062 M	\$2.862 M
\$40.0 M	\$2.400 M	\$1.416 M	3.816 M

Sample P3 Deal Structure for the Sportsplex



Tax generation. The development of the sportsplex facility and its ongoing operations can be expected to generate new state and local sales tax. The total of these taxing opportunities—sales, tourist, and hotel occupancy taxes—is an important factor, and, when taken together with the other taxes generated by the surrounding new destination ecosystem, the public value of this project becomes clearer.

Public-Private Deal Structure

One panelist noted that of the 40 sports complex projects his team had worked on in recent years, 38 of them involved public-private partnerships. These projects often included mixed-use components, were large, and regularly delivered direct benefits to the surrounding neighborhood and the broader jurisdiction in which they were located.

For the JU sportsplex, the panel envisioned a development deal structure in which the public sector—the University and the City—would partner with the private sector—a master developer—to lead the effort. In this scenario, the roles align as follows:

- The University contributes the land, likely through a ground lease or site control.
- The City commits lease payments sized to cover the debt service.
- The master developer brings in the equity investors who provide the capital to build the facility. The master developer also directly engages the entities that design, build, operate, and maintain the facility.

Ultimately, the facility revenues would flow to the master developer to repay capital partners' equity investment.

Potential Funding Sources

The anticipated economics of this potential development—including the location, the University's and City's vision for a catalytic development, and the associated community amenity goals—point to a P3. The project cannot generate the type of revenue needed to fund a \$50 million development.

Potential public revenue sources. To help the University envision how the project might find funding, the panel considered a broad array of dedicated public revenue streams that may be tapped to provide the required capital.

- **Revenue lease bonds.** If the City issues revenue lease bonds, a private developer typically receives a minimum revenue guarantee or a fixed facility payment. In this instance, any surplus revenue goes first toward repayment obligations. Traditional bonds or revenue bonds could also assist with broader financing needs.
- **New Market Tax Credits (NMTC).** NMTCs support community development and economic growth by attracting private investment. Those investors receive tax credits to use against their federal income tax obligation in exchange for making equity investments in specialized financial intermediaries tied to development.
- **CRA.** The area is within the Renew Arlington Community Redevelopment Area

Sample Development Funding Sources

PUBLIC	Taxpayer Backed	Example: City issues GO bonds repaid from general fund property tax or broad taxing authority.
	Dedicated Public Revenues	Example: Hotel/occupancy tax or sales tax pledged to revenue bonds for a sports complex.
	Shared Repayment	Example: City issues lease-revenue bonds with annual appropriation, plus a private operator provides a minimum revenue guarantee or fixed "facility use" payment.
	Project Revenues	Example: Facility issues debt repaid primarily from program revenue (memberships, rentals, tournaments) with limited backstop, like a DSRF and conservative covenants.
PRIVATE	Private Balance Sheet	Example: Developer funds construction with bank debt + equity, repaid from their broader portfolio and project cash flow, often under a long-term ground lease or ownership.

Sample Development Funding Sources for Sports Tourism

	Taxpayer Backed	Dedicated Public Revenues	Shared Repayment	Project Revenues	Private Balance Sheet
Public-Private Partnerships		Most Common Source of P3 Repayments			
Operating Models	Local Recreation				
		Sports Tourism			
			Non-Profit		
				For Profit	
Federal Funding Opportunities	Grants				
		New Markets Tax Credits			
					Opportunity Zones

and is already eligible for its tax increment financing (TIF) funding. This funding could assist with needed infrastructure work at the site, and a possible extension of the CRA past its scheduled sunset could extend the funding support.

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding.** In July of 2026, FEMA announced funding available to “help Florida strengthen community resilience, restore critical infrastructure and invest in mitigation measures to reduce future disaster damage.” It may be possible to access some of this funding to support the sportsplex development if it is built to also serve as an emergency shelter or staging facility in times of emergency.
- **Other public sources** might include special taxing districts, tourism and

prepared-food taxes, or other dedicated public revenues.

Potential University revenue sources. The University may also be able to tap into grants and other additional supportive capital.

- **Refinanced resources.** In 2028, the University is expected to complete a refinancing, which may free up capital that could be allocated to this project.
- **Student fees.** Student recreational fees are a common funding source for projects like this, particularly given the potential associated campus-life benefits.
- **Sponsorships.** The project’s socioeconomic impact could be valuable in early funding conversations, opening the door to sponsorships or naming rights. A ten-year naming deal, paid at

signing, could help fund construction while delivering a high-visibility connection to the sportsplex, its benefits, and the youth and families who will pass through its doors.

- **Philanthropy.** There may be compelling opportunities to position this project before philanthropic organizations and foundations. The history of the Arlington neighborhood, the strong reputation of the University, and the goals to reconnect the community to the University and the river may be a story that catches the attention of a philanthropy. Similarly, the facility’s health impacts and wellness potential, particularly for a neighborhood that has been historically under-resourced, could also provide a meaningful narrative for a philanthropic organization.





Master Developer Recommendations

The broader TAP study area, the 25-acre parcel held by the University and abutting its southern edge, is bordered by University Boulevard on the east and the St. Johns River to the west. The site is generally flat, with minor topographic changes in the middle of the site, sloping down to the river, where some wetlands may impact development.

The University has developed new campus buildings in the past, but is unlikely to have an interest in or capacity to become the master developer for the entire site. Similarly, a developer who is well-versed in sports complex development may not be interested in developing the anticipated surrounding retail and hospitality uses. In this context, the panel sought to equip the University with recommendations to help it work most effectively with a master developer across the entire 25-acre site.

The site's master developer orchestrates development across the site, partnering with designers and contractors with specialized expertise to bring the University's vision to life. The master developer may develop certain aspects of the site directly or partner with specialized developers to deliver the best possible product in collaboration with the broader team.

Role of the Master Developer

The site's master developer orchestrates development across the site, partnering with designers and contractors who have the

specialized expertise to bring the University's vision to life. The master developer may develop certain aspects of the site directly or it may choose to partner with specialized developers to deliver the best possible product in collaboration with the broader team.

Generally, a master developer receives development rights in phases, with each phase tied to performance milestones and success in one phase unlocking development rights in the next. For the 25-acre site, the panel anticipates that the master developer will be responsible for the following aspects of development.

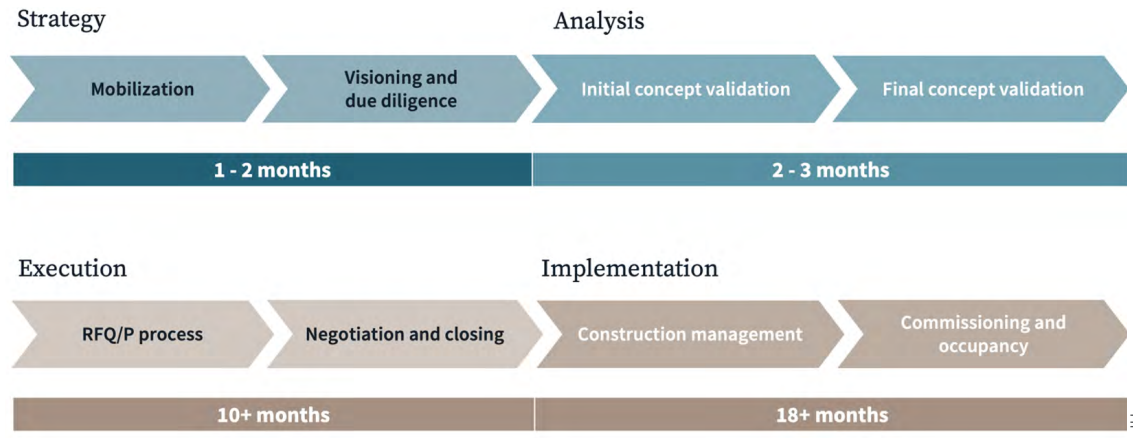
- **Master plan.** In partnership with the University, the master developer creates a master plan for the site and develops the business plan, pro forma, and schedule of project delivery.
 - **Phasing plans.** The master developer is responsible for detailed plans throughout each phase, starting with broad scoping plans and then refining the work as each phase is built out.
 - **Zoning and engagement.** Again, working in close partnership with the University, the master developer works with the City on any required rezoning matters and community engagement processes.
 - **Entitlements.** The master developer is responsible for securing entitlements, addressing infrastructure improvements, and developing certain vertical assets.
- **Directly develop or manage.** The master developer will either directly develop individual parcels or serve as the landlord for parcels handed off to other niche development teams.

P3 Early Steps

The prevalence of P3s in the current development environment means there are well-established models for their formation and structuring. While the University does have some experience with P3s, the panel stressed the importance of the following measures and recommends that each be included and addressed in this current development project.

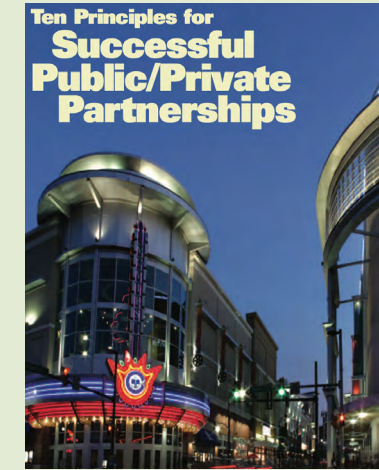
- **Hire an owner's representative.** The University would benefit from the leadership and dedication of a person or firm whose job is to advance this project every day. The ideal candidate should have experience in developing a mixed-use district anchored by a sports facility. While this person does not have to be a direct University employee—it could be a third party or firm—this person would act as the project's day-to-day project manager.
- **Identify and empower a champion.** In addition to and separate from the owner's representative, a project champion would be the public face of the project. The University is encouraged to identify a champion who can deeply understand the development vision and pair that story with the execution of the project.

P3 Advisory Methodology



- **Define clear goals and return on investment expectations.**
 - » **Identify the ROI goals.** The University should set project goals that will deliver a return on investment (ROI) over time. The land has real and actual value that should be factored into the deal structure.
 - » **Identify return on vision goals.** Just as important as the financial return, the panel viewed the University's return on vision—its "why" for the development pursuit—as important to articulate clearly from the start. Measurement of the "why" could include analysis of reputation, recruitment, and other outcomes meaningfully tied to the site's evolution.
- **Develop a request for qualifications (RFQ) for a master developer.** An RFQ process is an important step for a project of this size and complexity. An RFQ will help the University identify qualified master developers from which to select a primary partner.
- **Develop a short list and negotiate deal terms.** Developing a shortlist of one to three developers can help the University understand the developer talent interested in the project and select the best fit for JU. Material deal terms should be negotiated before moving to the financial closing stage, as this is where the University will have important negotiating leverage.

Public-Private Partnerships



From the ULI publication, [*Ten Principles for Public/Private Partnerships*](#), "a transparent process, achieved through open communication, information-sharing, and participation in the decision process, increases the potential for broad support for public/private partnership projects, particularly from non-stakeholders."

Deal Structure, Additional Considerations

Having worked through similar P3 scenarios, the panel identified other considerations that the University may wish to evaluate and incorporate into its deal for the 25 acres.

- **Incorporate additional capital event participation.** The development agreement will detail financial terms, addressing returns and shortfalls. Should the project deliver a higher capital return beyond a defined return threshold, the panel recommends that the University build in a “promote” provision to share in that additional return. For example, upon any sale or refinance, the University receives 50 percent of any return that exceeds the 16 percent threshold.
- **Retain rights in any sale.** The University should incorporate a right of first refusal or a right of first offer in any sale of property across the entire project site. This allows the University to continue to

participate in and direct land use at the site to fit its broader vision.

- **Continue to consider the pros and cons of a ground lease versus a sale.** The University is encouraged to use a new ground lease for each phase of the development. This allows the University to evaluate, with each new project, the potential benefits of a lease or sale, providing it with maximum structural flexibility. This approach also allows the developer to maximize the term for each new development.
- **Develop design standards.** Creating and enforcing design standards across the site will serve the development and the University well, helping to ensure that the

look, feel, and quality of the development are delivered as envisioned. A “pattern book,” created specifically for the 25 acres, can assist in this pursuit and should be tied to the property through mechanisms such as an exhibit to the ground lease or a covenant.

- **Review any potential developers’ financials.** To help ensure that the University pursues only developments with the required financial backing, the panel recommends that the University hire an expert to conduct detailed balance sheet reviews of the shortlisted developers. This can help ensure that time is not wasted on potential developer partners who cannot perform financially.





Site Planning Guiding Principles

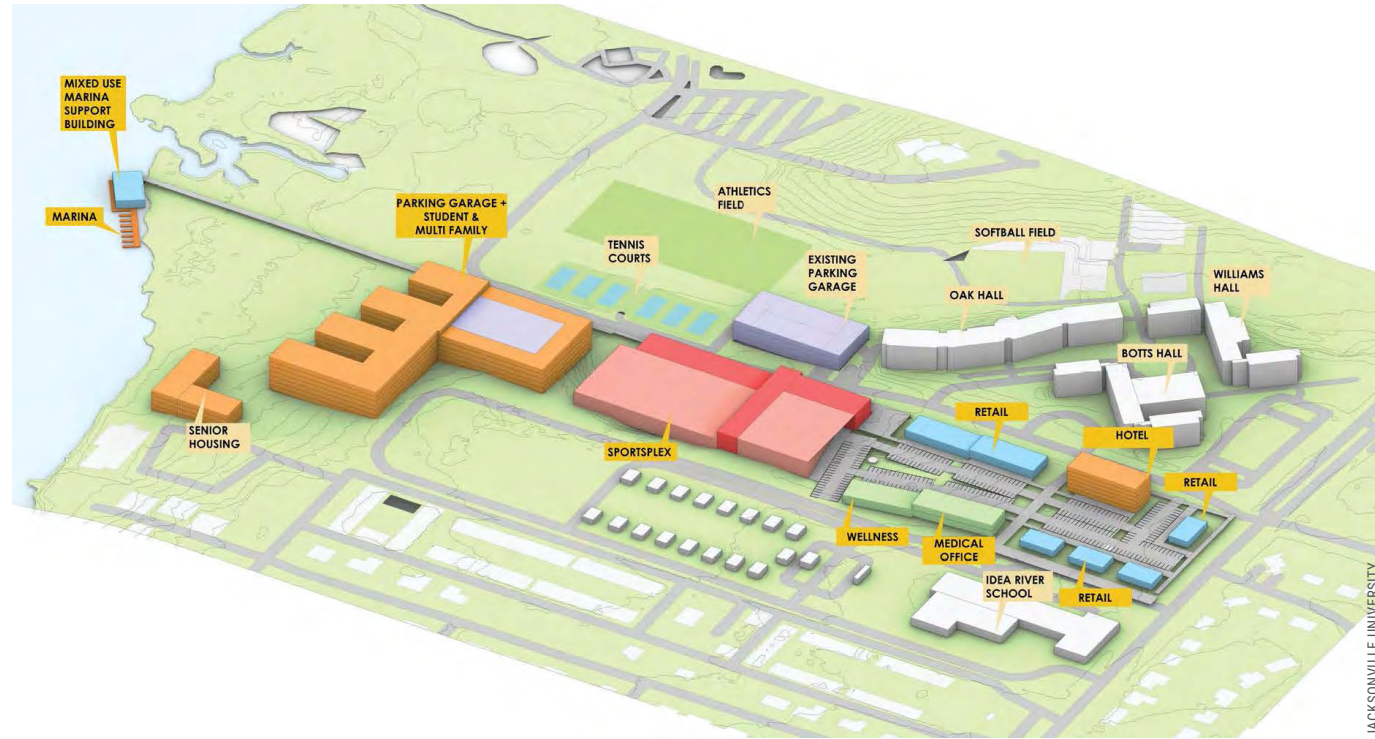
At the start of the TAP process, the panel was provided with a draft site plan for the 25-acre expansion site. While highly preliminary, the plan provided the panel with an early concept of how the University had envisioned uses across the acreage and how those uses might complement the existing campus design and building placement.

Stepping back from this detailed approach, the panel recommends using a more general conceptual plan, leading with principles that guide use, rather than specifying building placements that may feel prescriptive. The panel's proposed site diagram features a mixed-use town center along University Boulevard, followed closely by the sportsplex further west. The panel also noted that a more active riverfront experience should be a feature of the site, finally allowing the University to leverage its riverfront presence.

Over the course of stakeholder interviews and meetings with University leaders, the panel identified five guiding principles to help the University and its development partners shape the site into the connected, active, and accessible development the University envisions.

Enhance University Boulevard

The City has planned \$29 million in streetscape improvements for University Boulevard starting in 2027. The work is focused on turning the boulevard into a Complete Street from the Arlington Expressway to the roundabout at Dolphin Drive/Merrill Road.



The University shared a very early and draft potential site plan for the 25-acre study site.

- **Coordinate on improvements.** As these improvements will impact the primary arrival experience at the University, the University should be actively involved in shaping them, which currently include reducing travel lanes, improving sidewalks, burying utilities, and more.
- **Create public-facing retail.** For the envisioned retail developments at the study site, the development should feature ground-floor retail uses integrated into mixed-use residential buildings. This mixed-use format, rather than standalone retail, will bring activity to the area regardless of the time needed to fill retail spaces. Retail pursuits should center on potential uses that will appeal to both students and Arlington neighbors.
- **Prioritize walkability.** Pedestrians should be prioritized over vehicles. River Road should also be redesigned to create another welcoming, walkable, and connected entryway onto campus, improving the existing experience, which feels like a service road edged with street parking.

Activate the Riverfront

The University's riverfront property is genuinely underutilized, as is most riverfront property across the city. The University has an exciting opportunity to lead in the Jacksonville market with something special at this site.

- **Create a resilient shoreline.** There are stormwater considerations along the riverfront, but there are also opportunities to create a resilient shoreline that is activated and yet soft, naturalized, and welcoming. This would be a welcome alternative to the hard urban edges seen downtown.
- **Build out water-based transportation.** Connecting to a water taxi system and building out a marina would tie the campus into the broader downtown riverfront network. This move would benefit students and provide broader connectivity to the campus from other parts of the city, which could also support retail and other uses around the sportsplex.
- **Complement downtown experiences.** A new use here, one that is currently missing in the Jacksonville market, can help draw more visitors to campus and complement rather than compete with other Jacksonville destinations. This could be an exciting opportunity for JU to be a leader in the market by activating its riverfront with new development and destination-type uses that also complement campus life.

- **Test riverfront activations.** Temporary, tactical activations can convert vacant spaces into pilot markets and pop-up gathering spaces until a concept is proven and approved for more permanent siting. Makers Quarter in San Diego used food trucks and informal events to build an identity for the development while it was still under construction; the food truck lot eventually became a permanent town square similar to what is seen at [The Block](#), which was recognized by ULI North Florida as the recipient of its 2026 Award for Excellence in the New Development Under \$20 Million category. Jacksonville's canopy and food-truck setup during the 2026 World Cup is another example of market testing before permanent infrastructure is considered.

The riverfront should be the University's and the neighborhood's new gathering spot. The public should be welcome, and connectivity to the rest of the campus and the surrounding neighborhood should be clear.

Integrate the campus

Development at the 25-acre site should foster integration with the community and broader University campus, functioning as a single system, not two adjacent, disconnected pieces.

- **Blur the edges to integrate the campus.** The clear boundary lines and fences around the campus may have been placed with good intentions, but JU leaders and the community have since



Rather than referencing a detailed site plan, the panel recommended using a more generalized visioning diagram that expresses the University's goals without becoming too prescriptive.

voiced a desire for more integration and a more open campus. Blurring the northern edge of the study site and along University Boulevard will create a more natural transition between public-facing spaces and the rest of campus. When possible, property fences should be removed or replaced with more permeable options that indicate campus property without blocking connectivity. The panels recommends using layered landscaping and screening elements that soften the institutional barrier feel while maintaining safety.

- **Create intentional connections.** In addition to the new roundabout that welcomes visitors to campus, more attention to placemaking at the University's access points can create a greater sense of arrival, make the campus feel special, and make the welcoming experience more intentional.
- **Enhance River Road.** The southernmost entrance to campus feels like a wrong turn, a parking lot, or a service road to the University's back-of-house operations. With the development of the 25 acres on the horizon, River Road should be elevated in importance and redesigned to create another primary entrance to campus.

Make it Authentic

Development in this new section of campus could provide design and building solutions that are relevant to the Jacksonville market,

specifically to Arlington. Rather than taking a generic design approach found on any campus in any other city, the University has an opportunity to create something authentically JU for the site.

- **Integrate JU into Arlington.** Design in this new area should complement the existing campus and the surrounding Arlington neighborhood—another good opportunity to be “of Arlington,” not just “in Arlington.” Authentic references to the region, including Arlington's mid-century modern architecture and its history in the silent film industry, can integrate the new developments while also helping to differentiate the University from its peers.
- **Tie into other amenities.** Integration of the sports facility into the University's other campus health and wellness or medical programs could also strengthen community connections. These connections, specifically to the existing medical campus to the north, have the potential to expand the sportsplex facility into something more community-centric and broader than just a sports destination.

Fight for the Vision, but Stay Flexible

The proposed development at the site has shifted since the University first acquired the land. While these shifts are to be expected and development without ongoing refinement is rare, the vision should remain durable enough to survive any required shifts.

- **Develop a vision statement and supporting materials.** Once the University has set the vision, all of the partners working on and championing this project should use the same language to describe the vision, the site, and the “why” of the development. A vision statement is key, as is the collateral to support it. An economic and community impact analysis will be needed to support the vision and make the case for the work and investments ahead.
- **Empower development champions.** The champion and an owner's representative should understand the mechanics well enough to describe in detail exactly how the development will work and why it matters to the University and the broader community.
- **Use a both/and approach.** Work at the site should progress with the sports facility as the top priority. At the same time, efforts should incorporate the riverfront and broader campus master plan, ensuring that nothing built today limits future options.
- **Continue working with stakeholders and focus lobbying efforts.** The University is encouraged to continue working with community and public-sector stakeholders and to support lobbying efforts. Partners (University, City, ULI members, others) will need to convene regularly to ensure that progress is on track and that all parties are kept informed.



Additional Considerations and Next Steps

The 25-acre study site represents an exciting new addition to the Jacksonville University campus. University leaders have thoughtfully explored development ideas with potential partners, designers, developers, and public sector leaders and are ready to take the next step to bring these ideas to life.

As the University considers its approach to establishing a public-private partnership, the panel recommends that JU also encourage its City partners to address three key issues to bring the sportsplex concept closer to reality.

Extend the CRA timeline. The Renew Arlington CRA is advancing improvements across the neighborhood, and most or all of the funds it generates are currently committed to an existing grant program. Extending the CRA beyond this grant framework and its existing 2035 sunset could open the door to expanded use of the funds, including support for sportsplex development and operations.

Consider bonding against TIF revenue. The City has the authority to deploy its bonding capacity to advance the sportsplex. The TIF associated with the CRA could provide the funding needed to issue a new bond to finance the development.

Underwrite the sports facility. Early conversations with the City have included a possible scenario wherein the City is a credit tenant lessee. It may be possible for the City

to underwrite the sports facility instead, which is anticipated to cost the City less than the credit tenant lease approach; municipal borrowing rates run well below what a private financing partner would charge. The panel strongly recommends that the University seek professional advice to gain a complete understanding of the potential financing picture.

Set the vision and begin a branding and social media push. The University is ready to articulate a clear vision for the site and develop an associated brand for the sportsplex and 25-acre project. This early branding can flex and adapt as the project evolves. Still, the vision, core messaging, and brand identity should remain consistent, helping the community and potential partners better understand and recognize the promise of this exciting new development.

Building momentum—through community conversations, finding and partnering with the best possible partners, and broader messaging efforts—can help raise the visibility of the University and its new sportsplex project. This early momentum and sustained, championed effort will help strengthen the public’s understanding that this project is real, viable, and will mark a new era for the University, the neighborhood, and Jacksonville as a youth sports mecca.





About the Panel



Will Butler

**President & Founder
Real Estate InSync
Tallahassee, FL**



William F. Butler is an accomplished real estate project and portfolio manager with over 30 years of experience partnering with high net worth private, corporate and institutional clients throughout the US on projects ranging from commercial portfolios to mixed-use facilities and residential developments. As founder and principal of Real Estate InSync, Will works closely with clients to assess needs, clarify goals, design comprehensive development solutions and manage programs to strategically reposition assets, brand properties and maximize real estate portfolios valued up to \$100 million.

Will's previous experience includes serving as a senior vice president with The St. Joe Land Company, where he designed and implemented business models for five new product lines involving 250,000 rural acres across a six-county region in North Florida. Prior to joining St. Joe in 2000, Will provided consulting, development, management and valuation services for 12 years as a principal of Boutin Brown Butler Real Estate Services. Additionally, he served earlier as a vice president with New York-based Landauer Associates, Inc., an international real estate firm servicing corporations in the U.S. and Europe, and as a real estate analyst and project administrator with Raymond-Kaiser Engineers, Inc. in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

His expertise, experience and integrity have attracted high-profile clients, including Regions

Morgan Timberland Group, Capital City Bank Group, Florida Retail Federation, City of Tallahassee, the Florida State University Real Estate Foundation, Seminole Boosters, North American Properties, and BBX Capital.

Will's credentials also include the prestigious designation of Counselor of Real Estate signifying professional achievement as a trusted real estate advisor, as acknowledged by his peers in the American Society of Real Estate Counselors. He holds a B.S. in Real Estate from Florida State University and is a graduate of Leadership Florida and Leadership Tallahassee. As a native of Tallahassee, Fla., Will is committed to the long-term success of this community and the North Florida region.

Autumn Calder, AICP, CPM

**Director
Blueprint
Intergovernmental
Agency
Tallahassee, FL**



Autumn Calder is the Director for Blueprint, the Tallahassee-Leon County Intergovernmental Agency responsible for building infrastructure projects funded by the local penny sales tax. As the Director, Autumn manages a multidisciplinary staff that plans, designs and constructs infrastructure improvement projects across the community. From six lane highways with multimodal amenities to skate parks, she works to ensure all projects preserve, protect, and enhance the community's quality of life through the implementation of impactful transportation, water quality, and green space projects.

Autumn, a certified planner, brings eighteen years of experience in public infrastructure planning and development to her role as Director. A Tallahassee native, she earned a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Florida State University. She is a past chair of the Capital Region ULI Board.

Evan Eleff

**Partner & Executive
Vice President
The Sports Facilities
Companies
Clearwater, FL**



Evan is a national leader in the sports, recreation, and wellness industry with more than 20 years of experience in strategic planning, business development, project funding, and venue operations. Since 2012, he has led Sports Facilities Companies' Advisory division, helping guide initiatives in more than 2,500 communities that have resulted in more than \$12 billion in capital investment.

Evan is widely recognized for his expertise in community engagement, destination master planning, and implementation-focused strategy. He has helped lead the development of industry-leading tools and resources, including SFC's Sports Tourism Economic Impact Calculator used by more than 300 destinations and 14,000 facilities, as well as the Parks Impact Calculator, which supports more than 3,000 parks and recreation professionals in measuring and communicating the value of their assets and programs.

He has also advised federal and state agencies on the socioeconomic impact of sports, recreation, and tourism. He has contributed to the Aspen Institute's Project Play and State of Play reports, spoken at more than 30 national and international conferences, and co-authored more than two dozen reports focused on the role of sports and recreation in strengthening communities.

Amanda Hoffsis

**Vice President,
Planning, Architecture
and Real Estate
The Ohio State
University
Columbus, OH**



Amanda serves as the Vice President of Planning, Architecture and Real Estate (PARE) for The Ohio State University. This office of talented professionals manages the real estate assets of the university and several university affiliates, and is responsible for campus planning and design. Amanda oversees all real estate services and campus planning initiatives, including all master plans and facility plans, major project design oversight, and strategic planning for the university's physical environments.

Prior to taking over as PARE's Vice President, Amanda served as Associate Vice President overseeing all real estate activities for the university including strategic sales and acquisitions, leasing, entitlements, property management and strategic real estate planning. Her previous roles with the university included management of the One University Framework Plan, capital planning, and space and facility planning.

In addition, Amanda also leads two university affiliate organizations. As the CEO of Campus Partners, Amanda leads their community development work throughout the University District neighborhoods, including the development and management of multiple mixed-use projects adjacent to campus. She played a pivotal role in the land acquisitions and development of University Square at 15+HIGH

and the development of the Upper Arlington Outpatient Care facility.

She also serves as President of SciTech, managing high-tech research facilities along Kinnear Road and leading the implementation of the university's Innovation District development.

Before joining the university, Amanda worked for an international consulting firm developing facility master plans for large K-12 schools districts. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English from Ohio State and has a Master of Business Administration from Colorado Technical University.

**Fred Jones, AICP,
RSP1**

**Director, Planning and
Design**

**Collaborative
The Haskell Company
Jacksonville, FL**



Fred Jones is director of The Haskell Company's Planning and Design Collaborative. He has more than 20 years' experience in transportation planning, complete streets, urban design, placemaking, transit accessibility and public engagement.

Jones has served as vice mayor of Neptune Beach, where he initiated several strategic planning initiatives, including a citywide visioning plan, the implementation of an active transportation network and a form-based zoning code update. He was recognized as having one of the best Complete Streets Policies of 2018.

Previously, Jones worked as senior project manager with Michael Baker International and senior transit planner with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA). He is a member of the National Complete Streets Coalition Steering Committee and Jacksonville's Downtown Development Review Board, where he was a former chairman.

Jones holds a bachelor of arts in anthropology from the University of South Florida and a master of science in urban and regional planning from Florida State University.

Scott Jordan

**Principal
CIVITAS, Inc.
Denver, CO**



Scott Jordan is a Principal at Civitas, a Denver-based landscape architecture and urban design firm. With over 25 years of professional experience, Scott has led the firm's most complex and challenging projects across North America. Having spent his career transforming public realm spaces in urban cities, he has led multifaceted project teams for a variety of multi-agency client groups. By focusing on transforming urban places into living, breathing ecosystems that blend nature with city life, he has developed a passion for engaging the public in the design process. His collaborative spirit is best embodied by his belief that it does not matter where an idea comes from; what matters most is that it is the best idea for the given problem. Regardless of the project's scale, Scott's approach is to build on a place's authentic and unique attributes to create rich, diverse public spaces. His dedication to the public realm is driven by a desire to foster social interaction and build community by uniting individuals from diverse backgrounds around shared values.

**David Lawrence,
CEcD, EDFP**

**Knowledge Park
Development Manager
City of Rock Hill
Rock Hill, SC**



David works on urban real estate redevelopment projects, economic development planning projects and incentive programs for City of Rock Hill. He has over 30 years of experience in economic development and has held positions in town, city, and county governments in both New York and South Carolina.

David was a key player in the strategy formulation, product development and public solicitation to real estate developers which secured \$230 million in private investment through the creation of University Center, a catalyst 23-acre urban redevelopment project.

David is a graduate of the State University of New York College at Buffalo with a B.S. in Urban Regional Analysis and Planning. He also has earned his Certified Economic Developer certification from the International Economic Development Council and his Economic Development Finance Professional certification from the National Development Council. He is a member of the International Economic Development Council and the South Carolina Economic Developers Association.

Michael McNaughton

Principal

M2 Real Estate Advisors
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL



Michael McNaughton is the Founder and Principal of M2 Real Estate Advisors, with 35 years of commercial real estate experience spanning virtually every asset class and market cycle.

Michael is best known for founding Rouse Properties (NYSE: RSE), which he took public in January 2012. While serving as EVP at General Growth Properties, he built the organization from concept to the 8th largest mall REIT, with 31 assets and over 21 million square feet. He was also part of the four-person team that raised \$2.6 billion to recapitalize GGP through bankruptcy, a roadshow that closed four times oversubscribed.

Before launching M2, Michael was SVP of U.S. Development at Westfield where he oversaw delivery of the World Trade Center and Fulton Transit Center retail projects in Lower Manhattan, and other projects across the country. Most recently, he served as COO of a Jacksonville-based family office, growing its EBITDA over 30% through expansion across the Southeast.

A longtime ULI member and published author, Michael has lectured at MIT, American University, and the University of Wisconsin. He lives in Florida with his wife. Together, they have three children.

Krista Trofka

Vice President,
Government and
Education Advisory
JLL
Denver, CO



As JLL's Education Practice Lead, Krista Trofka advises colleges and universities on portfolio strategy, innovation districts, student housing, public-private partnerships, and mixed-use development. Her work brings together strategy, planning, and execution to help institutions think beyond buildings and leverage real estate for long-term competitiveness and resilience. She believes universities are among the most important place-making institutions in the US, shaping not only education and research but also talent pipelines, housing markets, innovation ecosystems, and regional growth.

With more than 19 years of specialized experience in campus and education real estate, Krista has successfully delivered transformational projects for K-12, colleges, and universities. She specializes in complex real estate strategies and turning institutional vision into market reality.

Krista began her career as a K-12 High School English Teacher with Teach for America and now serves as a lecturer in Real Estate Development at the University of Colorado. A recognized thought leader in education, she is a regular speaker at industry events such as SCUP and P3 Higher Education and delivered the keynote address at the 2025 AUREO Conference. Krista also chairs ULI Colorado UrbanPlan.

Alan Verlander

Founder and CEO
AirStream Ventures
Jacksonville, FL



With more than 33 years of experience as a sports executive, Alan Verlander has played a leadership role in college sports and in the planning, management, and execution of many of the nation's premier sporting events. His portfolio includes leading four NCAA Men's Basketball Tournaments, Davis Cup Tennis, the Navy vs. Notre Dame Football Game, the SEC Women's Basketball Tournament, Spartan Race events, NCAA Track & Field Championships, the annual Florida vs. Georgia Football Classic, U.S. Men's and Women's National Team soccer matches, and USA Cycling competitions.

Throughout his career, Verlander has held executive leadership positions across collegiate athletics, municipal sports development, and nonprofit sports organizations. From 2005-2012, he served as Director of Athletics at Jacksonville University and served on several NCAA national committees and the Recruiting and Personnel Issues Cabinet. Alan also served as Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment for the City of Jacksonville and as Chief Executive Officer of the Jacksonville Sports Council.

In July 2018, Verlander launched Airstream Ventures to create innovative sporting events nationwide while positively impacting communities and leaving a lasting legacy through sports tourism and event development. Airstream Ventures has produced or contracted more than 300 sporting events, generating over \$250 million in estimated economic impact for partner destinations. The company operates in 14 cities across seven states.