

OCTOBER 2020 NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT COULD LEAD THE CREATION OF A DESTINATION DISTRICT

The search for accessible, entertaining spaces is a daily occurrence for people who seek events, activities and places to safely go with their families and friends during the COVID-19 pandemic. The vision for creating a Destination District on the vast acreage surrounding the Alliant Energy Center Campus would serve exactly that purpose – and much more.

Efforts are still underway to explore opportunities to develop this currently under-utilized real estate into a more accessible, functional, inviting and user-friendly destination. The Destination District Vision & Strategy, developed as part of the long-term vision for the campus master plan, embodies a 15-year vision to transform under-optimized lands between downtown and the beltline highway into a cohesive and recognizable Destination District and economic catalyst for our region. This important, largely undeveloped area is anchored by the Alliant Energy Center, lakefront and extensive public spaces and is situated at an important gateway to downtown Madison, the University and other important local gems.

Currently, several signs of momentum are beginning to be seen:

- [The “Post”](#) – a project to redevelop the VFW Post on Lakeside St.
- Completion of Liberty Station restaurant that recently opened on Rimrock Rd.
- Progress in exploration of a sports facility being built in the District.

Members of the Destination District task force have been examining everything from the creation of a land bridge to offer better, safer access between prime lakefront parks and recreation spaces and the Alliant Energy Center campus, to sports venues, parks, housing and entertainment and retail options. Several private developers have indicated interest in exploring projects that are consistent with the community’s vision for this space and would bring value to residents and visitors.

With the master plan and vision as the driver behind the exploration, it is encouraging to see efforts may not have to stall in the wake of pandemic recovery – giving the area a potential jumpstart for making this space a desirable destination that offers direct value for south Madison and residents and businesses across the county and the region.