

UNC Asheville Millennial Camous Development Advisory Committee

Meeting 5: May 2026 | Summary

The Committee agreed that future Millennial Campus development should be guided by a clear set of principles, with financial sustainability, campus livability, and mission alignment serving as the foundation for decision-making. Members emphasized that UNCA's development efforts should focus on generating revenue and strengthening the University's financial position. Because UNC Asheville does not have the resources to fund large-scale development on its own, future projects will likely rely on private investment, with the University contributing land.

To guide future decisions, the Committee established a framework organized around six guiding principles:

- **Mission alignment:** Development must advance the UNC System and UNC Asheville missions and the Millennial Campus designation's purposes of research, teaching, service, and economic development. While opportunities for academic partnerships, internships, and applied research remain important, projects must also be financially sustainable.
- **Financial and resource sustainability:** Because the University lacks capital for development, private investment must drive Millennial Campus projects, with the University contributing land. Financial impact must be neutral or positive immediately and cannot depend on enrollment growth.
- **Campus livability:** The Committee emphasized the importance of development that enhances campus life and supports student recruitment and retention, recognizing that amenities are a key part of the student experience.
- **Community connection:** Development should reflect Asheville's neighborhoods and cultural fabric as distinctive assets.
- **Partnerships:** Public-private partnerships and institutional collaborations are fundamental to success, as is sustained community engagement. NC State's Centennial Campus, where the College of Engineering investment catalyzed broader development, is a relevant local model worth exploring.
- **Design quality and landscape management:** Green space should be programmed and actively managed and not left as unmanaged woodland. Addressing landscape early in the design process allows development to generate resources that can improve ecological health and reduce vulnerability to invasive species.

A phased approach to development with a less prescriptive development program will optimize UNC Asheville's outcomes. Phasing will allow for future community input and market

adjustment while preserving flexibility for long-term institutional needs. Site recommendations should provide directional guidance without limiting future negotiations with development partners.

Ultimately, land uses across the Millennial Campus properties should reflect the unique characteristics and challenges of each location.

- **South Campus** is immediately adjacent to UNC Asheville's programmatic heart, and although topographic challenges along its western edge may limit some uses, this site remains the primary focus for catalytic development.
- **The Rhoades property**, located directly on Merrimon Avenue, offers high visibility and accessibility for low-impact programming; UNCA must navigate development guidelines established during its conveyance to the university that may limit its use for more substantial development.
- **The Broadway property** sits on a major corridor and can likely support the development of amenities that do not require adjacency or walkability to UNCA; existing development on this property appears to align with the guiding principles and should be preserved.