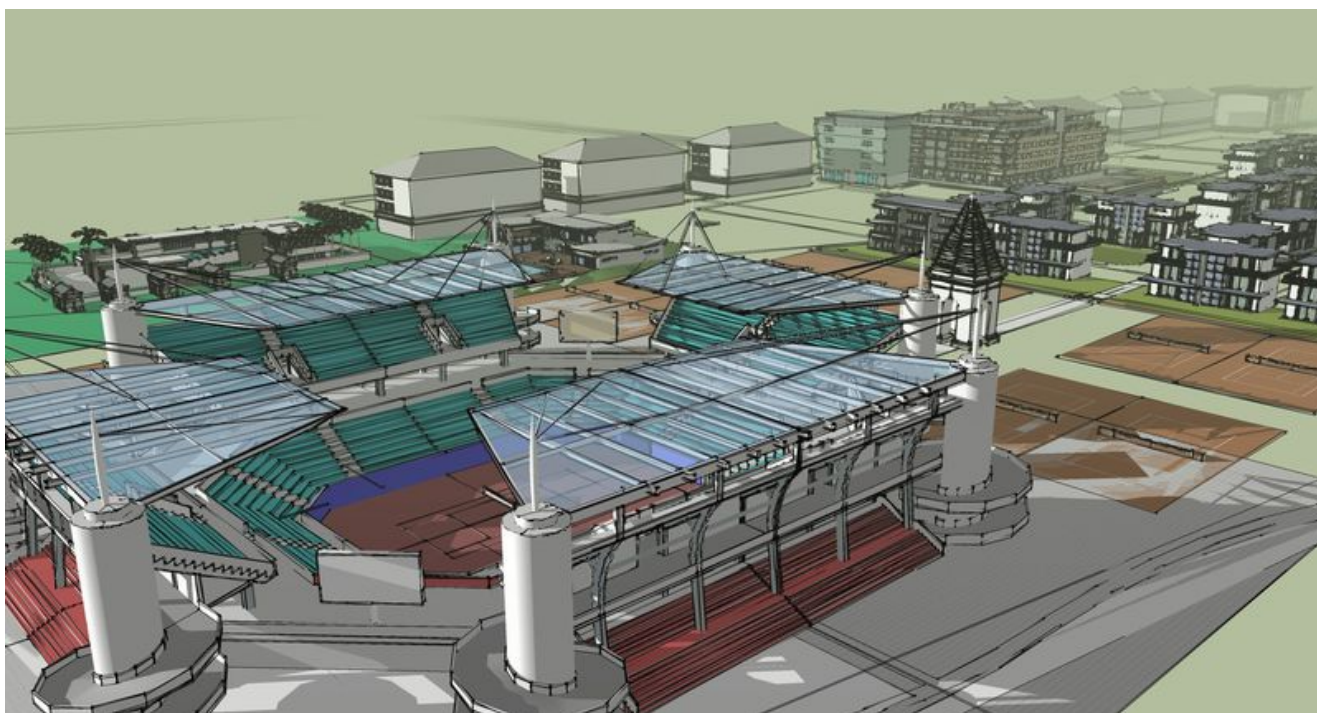


Maury L. Carter & Associates, Inc. is representing the Seller in this transaction.

## Clermont builds on Olympic ties with sports-themed community called Olympus



By LISA MARIA GARZA  
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Rendering of an outdoor stadium with tennis court in Olympus, an upcoming 250-acre sports-themed community in Clermont. (Courtesy Photo)

Athletes from around the world will have a Central Florida hub to train, compete and live in a planned 243-acre sports-themed community dubbed Olympus that plays off Clermont's popularity as a practice spot for Olympic athletes.

Plans for the newly-approved project — touted as “Epic. Every Day” — include multi-sport training and competition venues; wellness, health and fitness facilities; a village of hotels, restaurants and shops; and a residential area of townhomes and apartment buildings.

Pegged for a site along U.S. Highway 27 near the western gate of Disney World, Olympus is the “kickoff” of Lake County’s ambitious Wellness Way plan, which aims to spur health and fitness-centered businesses, said County Commissioner Sean Parks.

Olympus is expected to create more than 6,000 jobs and generate in excess of \$1.4 billion in economic impact over a 10-year period.

“It creates higher-wage jobs, it brings innovation, it’s going to bring visitors into Lake County to spend money and it helps us move away from being just another suburb to Orlando,” Parks said. “It helps us move away from being a housing-based economy.”

The south Lake property, east of Lake Louisa State Park along Schofield and Bradshaw roads, was a former citrus grove that officials said succumbed to greening and freezes and is no longer viable.

“With the freezes, we lost all that citrus and now as fast as we’re growing ... it’s extremely important that we plan for that instead of trying to bury our heads in the sand or do it in piecemeal fashion because that would not have been very good at all for Lake County,” Parks said.

Mike Carroll, Olympus Sports & Entertainment Group co-founder and CEO, said the topography of the site, which is about 30 miles west of downtown Orlando, is “unique to Florida” and made for a “natural fit” for the project.

Although elite athletes are the “anchor of the project,” the master plan for Olympus calls for four development zones that also will appeal to fans, visitors and residents, he said.

“I think you can find pieces of this in certain places — there are sports resorts in Europe — but I don’t think anything has been done in such a complete and innovative way,” Carroll said.

Clermont City Council members on Tuesday gave a series of unanimous approvals for the Olympus project, including annexing the property into the city limits, paving the way for a completion around 2025. No residents spoke out in opposition to the project at the meeting.

For years, Olympic athletes have gravitated to the National Training Center, which is part of South Lake Hospital. Athletes with south Lake ties won a total of 10 medals at the Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

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Olympus will include nine state-of-the-art “broadcast-ready” venues and competition centers that will cater to a mix of traditional, nontraditional and emerging sports such as inland surfing, ice hockey, soccer and red clay tennis.

Plans for the town center — “the vibrancy of the community” — call for hotels, restaurants, shops, an outdoor amphitheater and black box theater, Carroll said.

The sports medicine campus will include a wellness center with traditional spa services and holistic programs, an orthopedic injury diagnosis and rehab center as well as a performance center offering physiology, nutrition and conditioning programs.

Olympus also calls for 1,000 residential units made up of townhomes for sale and multi-family apartments for rent.

“With everything going on in Olympus, we thought it’d be really neat to give people the chance to live there,” Carroll said.

The next phase of Olympus is the architectural design and site work of the project, which is expected to break ground by 2020.

“When all is said and done,” Carroll said, “our mission is to create a legacy for this community for generations to come.”

*Have a news tip? Contact: [lgarza@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:lgarza@orlandosentinel.com); 407-420-5354; [@LMariaGarza](#).*

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