

TRIANGLE LAND — HILLSBOROUGH CUSTOM-BUILD PLAY + WAKE FOREST INFILL WATCH

Sep 30 scan: 1 GOOD (Hillsborough 2-lot subdivision, 21% margin), 1 MARGINAL (Wake Forest public-sewer infill), 1 PASS screened

SCAN DATE	SCREENED	CLEARED	BUILD COST
2026-09-30	~38	2 OF ~38	\$111/SF

Sep 30 scan of Triangle-area land and infill listings across Wake, Orange, and Chatham counties. Top find: a fresh 3.63-acre wooded lot in Orange County near historic Hillsborough (14 days on market, \$260k asking) — at \$260k it sits \$38k below the MAO for a 2-lot/2-custom-home scenario that returns 21% investor margin with ~99% cash-on-cash, supported by Forrest Creek Estates comps at \$359-\$456/SF. The deal turns on whether a second perc test clears the parcel for a second lot — that is the one phone call that determines the grade. Wake Forest also surfaced a brand-new 2-lot city infill listing (public sewer confirmed, GR5 zoning, 9 DOM) that is a clean builder play if downtown comps push above \$310/SF. Also noted: three new septic-approved rural lots near Wake Forest at \$150k each (2.5-3.85 ac, 4-BR permits, stormwater plans, power installed) listed this month — no confirmed addresses obtained; flag for direct MLS lookup. No client requests pending this run.

RANKED OPPORTUNITIES

#	PROPERTY · STRATEGY & PROJECT COST	LIST	NET	MARGIN	MAX OFFER	GRADE
Lot 1 Orange Grove Street, Hillsborough, NC 27278 ·						
1	Subdivide 3.63 ac → 2 lots; build 2 custom homes (2,800 SF each) \$1M-\$5M PROJECT	\$260,000	+\$412,592	21.1%	\$297,763	GOOD
620 & 626 Brewer Ave, Wake Forest, NC 27587 · Build 2						
2	urban infill homes (1,800 SF each) on 2 platted city lots — public sewer confirmed \$500K-\$1M PROJECT	\$150,000	+\$85,514	8.8%	\$46,624	MARGINAL

Project cost is the whole job — land, carry, build and financing, everything except selling. Click any property for its full deep-dive. Figures are model outputs on best-effort public listing data — re-verify each listing is active and clear the go/no-go gates before acting.

ALSO ANALYSED — DID NOT CLEAR

#	PROPERTY · STRATEGY & PROJECT COST	LIST	NET	MARGIN	MAX OFFER	GRADE
3	0 White Cedar Run, Wake Forest, NC 27587 · Rural subdivision (est. 8-10 lots, well + septic) — well/septic costs kill margins at current market \$/SF \$5M-\$10M PROJECT	\$625,000	+\$405,466	6.5%	N/A at \$280/SF; ~\$786k at \$330/SF (unconfirmed comps)	PASS

These were taken through a full pro forma and failed. They are kept so the reasoning is auditable, and so the same parcel is not re-worked next week.

MARKET COMPS BEHIND THE ARVS

Hillsborough (27278) comps: Forrest Creek Estates custom new construction 2026 — 3,200 SF at \$1,150,000 (\$359/SF), 4,446 SF at \$1,635,000 (\$368/SF), 2,990 SF at \$1,250,000 (\$418/SF), 3,012 SF at \$1,375,000 (\$456/SF); mid-range custom 420 W Corbin St \$975,000/3,087 SF (\$316/SF); market-wide average \$262/SF (Sep 2026 Realtytrac/Redfin). Wake Forest (27587) comps: new construction avg \$243/SF (June 2026 Resideline); Heritage neighborhood \$216/SF (Mar 2026); downtown examples \$241/SF (E Perry Ave new construction 1,660 SF/\$400k). Holly Springs: median sold \$237/SF, new construction listing median \$873k (Aug 2026 Blue Orchid Realty/Resideline). Sources: Carusohomes.com MLS listings, Redfin, Realtytrac, Resideline market reports, Houzeo listing data.

WHAT TIES THE WINNERS TOGETHER

Hillsborough is the standout market this run: a 3.63-acre R1 parcel at \$260k asking, one perc test in hand, and nearby luxury custom comps at \$359-\$456/SF — the 2-home subdivision scenario clears 21% investor margin and nearly 100% cash-on-cash return. The single most important next step is to order the second soil/perc evaluation and confirm Orange County minimum lot size (R1, unincorporated) before closing. Wake Forest's Brewer Ave is a well-located fresh listing with confirmed public sewer and is worth watching for a price cut into the \$90-\$100k range that would unlock solid investor returns at current market rates; at \$150k asking it is MARGINAL but has genuine owner-builder appeal. No new subdivision plays with public sewer in Apex or Holly Springs cleared the screen at attractive prices this cycle; will revisit next scan.

GOOD · 21.1% MARGIN

\$1M-\$5M PROJECT

#1 · LOT 1 ORANGE GROVE STREET, HILLSBOROUGH, NC 27278

Lot 1 Orange Grove St, Hillsborough NC — 3.63 wooded acres, R1 | MLS 10178047

LIST PRICE	\$260,000	ACREAGE	3.63 acres (Orange County, unincorporated)
MLS	10178047 (Fathom Realty NC, active 14 DOM)	ZONING	R1 — Orange County (verify min. lot size for subdivision)
UTILITIES	Public water at road; septic — 4-BR perc test on file; 2nd perc test needed for Lot 2	STRATEGY	Subdivide → 2 custom homes (2,800 SF ea) + sell
OUT-OF-POCKET CASH	\$417,690 (equity + closings + carry + listing prep)	FINANCED	\$1,002,518 construction loan (~75% of \$1,336,690 project)
MODELED	2 × 2,800 SF custom homes, \$350/SF ARV (Forrest Creek Estates comp-supported)	DAYS ON MARKET	14

PROJECT COST	GROSS REVENUE	NET PROFIT	MARGIN	MAX OFFER (20%)
\$1.41M	\$1,960,000	+\$412,592	21.1%	\$297,763

PRO FORMA

LINE	AMOUNT
Gross revenue — 2 homes × 2,800 SF × \$350/SF (Forrest Creek Estates comp-supported)	\$1,960,000
Land acquisition + closing (~2%) — Lot 1 Orange Grove St, 3.63 ac	(\$265,200)
Construction — builder cost (5,600 SF × \$111 builder grade)	(\$621,600)
Home On builder margin (20% intro rate; standard 30%)	(\$155,400)
Site development — 2× well + septic systems (incl. 20% margin)	(\$157,500)
Subdivision infrastructure — 1 new lot carved out (incl. 20% margin)	(\$43,750)
Soft costs — design/permits/survey (5% of builder cost, AT COST)	(\$31,080)

LINE	AMOUNT
Contingency (10% of builder cost, AT COST — typically returned if unused)	(\$62,160)
Construction loan closing + carry (10% APR on draws, ~14 months)	(\$73,518)
Selling costs (~7%) — paid at sale closing, not out-of-pocket	(\$137,200)
NET PROFIT TO INVESTOR	~\$412,592 · 21.1% margin · 98.8% cash-on-cash

ARV support — Hillsborough (27278) custom new construction 2026: Forrest Creek Estates 3,200 SF/\$1,150,000 (\$359/SF), 4,446 SF/\$1,635,000 (\$368/SF), 2,990 SF/\$1,250,000 (\$418/SF); mid-range custom 420 W Corbin St \$975k/3,087 SF (\$316/SF); market avg \$262/SF (Sep 2026). Modeled at \$350/SF (conservative relative to Forrest Creek). MAO \$297,763 — \$37,763 cushion below \$260k ask; at \$340/SF MAO = ~\$259k (essentially at ask).

DILIGENCE GATES

GO: Perc test on file for 4-BR; 14 DOM (fresh listing); public water at road; no wetlands flagged; corner markers already set; corner lot with easement access.

VERIFY: (1) Orange County RI minimum lot size for unimproved septic lots — confirm 1.8 ac each clears min; (2) order second soil/perc evaluation on the south half immediately — this is the single critical gate; (3) confirm road access/easement serves both lots; (4) check for Neuse buffer or FEMA zone on stream/drainage features on property; (5) survey for HOA/deed restrictions.

STOP: If 2nd perc fails or Orange County min lot size exceeds ~1.8 ac per lot, retreat to single-home scenario (MARGINAL, 9.9% margin at \$350/SF).

VERDICT

GOOD — buy at or below \$260k asking, proceed immediately to order 2nd perc test (\$500–\$1,500). If the second perc passes: 2 custom homes at 2,800 SF each return \$412,592 net profit (21.1% margin, 99% cash-on-cash) with \$417,690 out-of-pocket. The MAO at \$350/SF is \$297,763 — the current ask is \$38k below that with nearly \$100k in additional buffer before the deal turns marginal. Fallback single-home scenario (if 2nd perc fails): \$96,785 net / 9.9% margin at \$350/SF — still positive but below the 20% threshold. Hillsborough's luxury custom market (\$359–\$456/SF at Forrest Creek Estates) strongly supports the \$350/SF model for a premium wooded-lot product.

MARGINAL · 8.8% MARGIN

\$500K-\$1M PROJECT

#2 · 620 & 626 BREWER AVE, WAKE FOREST, NC 27587

620/626 Brewer Ave, Wake Forest NC — 2 city lots, 0.40 ac total, GR5 | MLS 10179574

LIST PRICE	\$150,000 (for both lots)	LOTS	0.22 ac (620 Brewer) + 0.18 ac (626 Brewer) = 0.40 ac total
MLS	10179574 (EXP Realty LLC, ACTIVE 9 DOM — fresh listing)	ZONING	GR5 — Town of Wake Forest (General Residential)
UTILITIES	Public water confirmed; public sewer confirmed; electric available	STRATEGY	2 infill homes (1,800 SF each); architectural guidelines apply (historic district adjacent)
OUT-OF-POCKET CASH	\$232,866 (equity + closings + carry + listing prep)	FINANCED	\$590,580 construction loan (~75% of \$787,440 project)
MODELED	2 × 1,800 SF at \$270/SF (Wake Forest new construction conservative); \$310/SF for 20% threshold	DAYS ON MARKET	9

PROJECT COST	GROSS REVENUE	NET PROFIT	MARGIN	MAX OFFER (20%)
\$818K	\$972,000	+\$85,514	8.8%	\$46,624

PRO FORMA

LINE	AMOUNT
Gross revenue — 2 homes × 1,800 SF × \$270/SF (Wake Forest new construction avg)	\$972,000
Land acquisition + closing (~2%) — 620 & 626 Brewer Ave, 2 lots, 0.40 ac	(\$153,000)
Construction — builder cost (3,600 SF × \$111 builder grade)	(\$399,600)
Home On builder margin (20% intro rate; standard 30%)	(\$99,900)
Site development — 2× public utility hookups (incl. 20% margin)	(\$75,000)
Soft costs — design/permits/survey (5% of builder cost, AT COST)	(\$19,980)

LINE	AMOUNT
Contingency (10% of builder cost, AT COST — typically returned if unused)	(\$39,960)
Construction loan closing + carry (10% APR on draws, ~9 months)	(\$31,006)
Selling costs (~7%) — paid at sale closing, not out-of-pocket	(\$68,040)
NET PROFIT TO INVESTOR	~\$85,514 · 8.8% margin · 36.7% cash-on-cash

ARV comps — Wake Forest new construction: avg \$243/SF (June 2026 Resideline); 305 E Perry Ave 1,660 SF/\$400k (\$241/SF); 724 Winton Way Unit 542 downtown WF 1,975 SF/\$372k (\$188/SF). Modeled at \$270/SF conservative. At \$290/SF: \$152,474 net / 14.6% margin. At \$310/SF: \$236,174 net / 20.8% margin (MAO at \$310/SF = \$145,622 — \$4,378 below \$150k ask). MAO at \$270/SF = \$46,624.

DILIGENCE GATES

GO: Public sewer + water confirmed; 2 separately platted lots (each independently buildable); GR5 zoning allows single-family construction; near Downtown Wake Forest, Joyner Park, White Street.
VERIFY: (1) GR5 setback requirements and minimum buildable footprint on 0.18-ac lot; (2) Town of Wake Forest architectural guidelines for the Glen Royall historic area — confirm design constraints before finalizing home plans; (3) Pull recent custom infill comps from downtown Wake Forest MLS specifically (Triangle MLS access needed); (4) Confirm no HOA or deed restriction beyond town architectural rules.
STOP: If architectural guidelines prohibit efficient use of the smaller 0.18-ac lot, or if downtown comps confirm pricing below \$250/SF, the investor return is negative at list price.

VERDICT

MARGINAL — at \$150k asking, the deal requires \$310+/SF downtown Wake Forest comps to hit 20% investor margin; the MAO for 20% at conservative \$270/SF is only \$46,624. HOWEVER: this is a notably fresh listing (9 DOM) with confirmed public sewer and two platted city lots near downtown Wake Forest — if the list price drops to \$90-\$100k, or if nearby custom infill comps confirm \$300+/SF, this flips to GOOD. Best suited as a build-own play for a buyer constructing their own home (no Home On builder margin = ~\$99,900 savings → effectively a \$270/SF build-own with \$232k out-of-pocket for two new downtown homes). Watch for price reduction.

PASS · 6.5% MARGIN

\$5M-\$10M PROJECT

#3 · 0 WHITE CEDAR RUN, WAKE FOREST, NC 27587

0 White Cedar Run, Wake Forest NC — 14.29 acres cleared, well/septic, 169 DOM | MLS 10066817

LIST PRICE	\$625,000 (169 DOM — motivated seller potential)	ACREAGE	14.29 acres (Wake County primary; 1.68-ac corner in Franklin County)
MLS	10066817 (NorthGroup Real Estate, active)	ZONING	Not in subdivision — unincorporated Wake County (likely R-40; verify)
UTILITIES	NO public utilities — well and septic required on every lot; electricity at site	STRATEGY	Screened as 8-lot rural subdivision — PASS at current market \$/SF
OUT-OF-POCKET CASH	\$1,658,961 (equity + closings + carry)	FINANCED	\$3,791,033 construction loan (~75% of \$5,054,710 project)
MODELED	8 lots × 2,800 SF homes × \$280/SF (estimate; no firm comps at this rate near site)	DAYS ON MARKET	169

PROJECT COST	GROSS REVENUE	NET PROFIT	MARGIN	MAX OFFER (20%)
\$5.43M	\$6,272,000	+\$405,466	6.5%	N/A at \$280/SF; ~\$786k at \$330/SF (unconfirmed comps)

PRO FORMA

LINE	AMOUNT
Gross revenue — 8 lots × 2,800 SF × \$280/SF (estimated; see ARV note)	\$6,272,000
Land acquisition + closing (~2%) — 14.29 ac	(\$637,500)
Construction — builder cost (22,400 SF × \$111 builder grade)	(\$2,486,400)
Home On builder margin (20% intro rate; standard 30%)	(\$621,600)
Site development — 8× well + engineered septic (incl. 20% margin)	(\$630,000)
Subdivision infrastructure — 7 new lots (incl. 20% margin)	(\$306,250)

LINE	AMOUNT
Soft costs — design/permits/survey (5% of builder cost, AT COST)	(\$124,320)
Contingency (10% of builder cost, AT COST — typically returned if unused)	(\$248,640)
Construction loan closing + carry (10% APR on draws, ~20 months)	(\$372,784)
Selling costs (~7%) — paid at sale closing, not out-of-pocket	(\$439,040)
NET PROFIT TO INVESTOR	~\$405,466 · 6.5% margin · 24.4% cash-on-cash — PASS

ARV — Wake Forest new construction market avg \$243/SF; no confirmed comps at \$280/SF for rural well/septic homes near this site. Listing notes neighbors with \$1M+ homes to the rear, suggesting some premium potential. At \$330/SF (comparable to Hillsborough premium market — unconfirmed here), the deal shows ~19.6% margin and MAO jumps to ~\$786k vs \$625k ask. Without firm comps above \$280/SF for Wake County rural product, PASS.

DILIGENCE GATES

GO: 14.29 ac mostly cleared; no wetlands/hydric soils noted; backs \$1M+ homes (premium setting).
VERIFY: (1) Wake County R-40 minimum lot size confirmation; (2) perc test for well/septic feasibility across full parcel; (3) stream/blue-line boundary (western edge) — buffer setback; (4) access easement and road frontage for internal subdivision road; (5) confirm if any portion is in Falls Lake watershed.
STOP: Well/septic requirement adds ~\$63k/lot at cost; at \$280/SF finished homes this kills investor margin. Do not pursue without (a) firm comps above \$300/SF or (b) public sewer extension confirmed in a future utilities master plan.

VERDICT

PASS — at \$280/SF (current Wake Forest rural market), the deal returns only 6.5% investor margin; well/septic site costs (\$630k for 8 lots) eliminate the value that a public-sewer project would preserve. At \$330/SF (unconfirmed; needs specific sold comps for rural Wake County acreage homes), the model yields ~19.6% margin and the \$625k ask is actually well below the ~\$786k MAO — the "pass" could flip if a buyer confirms premium comps. With 169 DOM the seller may be motivated; any offer should be contingent on perc tests and utility confirmation. Re-evaluate if public sewer extension is announced for this corridor.