

Think you know Johnston County?



Unless you've visited us recently, there's a great deal you likely haven't seen.

Whether viewed as a destination for global corporations, entrepreneurs, families or daytripping tourists, Johnston County (we call it "JoCo") truly stands out.

JoCo leaders have made bold moves in creating the assets and amenities of a worldclass community. It starts with sensible growthoriented strategies that connect the county's businesses and residents with the Research Triangle Region through broad highways, modern infrastructure and collaborative leadership.

Nowhere have those investments yielded more lucrative returns than in education. Our schools are a priority, with a consistent drive for modern instructional facilities and resultsoriented curricula designed with input from our employers. Moreover, Johnston Community College works with K-12 schools and area universities to create seamless talent pipelines that provide innovation-minded businesses with the skills-sets of the future.

At the same time, JoCo maintains its historical links to Eastern North Carolina -- with a thriving agribusiness sector, ample lands and diverse vibe that welcomes everyone.

That's why people and companies from around the world have made JoCo their home. Our highly diversified economy is proof of that: from life sciences, healthcare and advanced manufacturing to logistics, consumer foods and retail, our business landscape has remained resilient in the face of shifting economic winds.

And don't let JoCo's downhome charm fool you. We've worked hard to shape our corner of the Triangle into a formidable competitor for 21st century opportunities.

As you discover the great things happening

here, I hope you'll agree that now is the ideal time to "Grow With JoCo."

We hope to welcome you here soon!

Grace and Peace,

Chris Johnson, Johnston County Economic Development





For more information, contact Chris Johnson

growwithjoco.com 919-205-1232 Located at the crossroad of American on I95 and I40... and soon Interstate 42, Johnston County is in an enviable position for recruiting new, high-tech companies with close proximity to the RTP, RDU and three renowned research universities. Plus it's a great place to raise a family and call home!



Education and training help prepare future workforce

orkforce readiness is the foundation of economic growth and sustainability – for companies and communities. In Johnston County, skills-based curricula and real-world job training programs are providing students of all ages with academic opportunities, essential job skills training, and work experience.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The crown jewel of workforce training initiatives in Johnston County is the Workforce Development Center (WDC) in Clayton. This 30,000 square foot state-of-the-art educational and technical skills training center focuses on life sciences programming, business training, and workforce development in biotechnology and other sciences that align with the region's economic landscape. The innovative center

30,000 square feet

The size of the Workforce Development Center, in Clayton. This state-of-theart facility focuses on life sciences programming, business training and workforce development in biotechnology and other sciences. features a simulated life sciences manufacturing facility and curriculum designed to train students for skilled jobs and careers in the biomanufacturing and pharmaceutical industries. Through Johnston Community College, a BioWork associate's degree and certificate, and continuing education courses are also

offered at the WDC. Approximately 150 jobready students graduate each year with a certificate or degree from the BioWork program.

The WDC is a public-private collaboration with Johnston County, the county's Office of Economic Development, Johnston County Public Schools, and Johnston Community College. Corporate partners Grifols and Novo Nordisk support the WDC through the state's Research and Training Zone (RTZ) initiative, and have provided the center with equipment, labs, and other resources to facilitate training.

JOHNSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In addition to Johnston Community College's (JCC) leadership role in the county's Workforce Development Center, JCC offers a variety of associate degrees, certificate programs, and continuing education and professional development courses. JCC serves 13,000 students annually at campuses across the county, and is campus host to Johnston County Public



Johnston County is conveniently located near top institutions for higher learning.

Schools' Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) programs: Johnston County Career and Technical Leadership Academy and Johnston County Early College Academy.

JOHNSTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – K-12 EDUCATION

Johnston County Public Schools (JCPS) serves more than 37,000 students in grades prekindergarten through twelfth grade. Doubling its student population over the past 15 years, Johnston County currently has 23 elementary schools, 12 middle schools and 10 high schools, all of which are fully accredited.

The district is also a staunch supporter of STEM curricula and provides unique learning opportunities for students to advance their knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and math. Most recently, a STEM cohort from Smithfield-Selma High School became the first team in North Carolina to be chosen by NASA to compete for a chance to build and launch a small satellite, known as a CubeSat, into space with the NASA CubeSat Launch Initiative program. Johnston County's team is collaborating with teams from Nebraska and Florida on a joint mission proposal. Winning teams will be announced in 2021.

Digging deep into scientific inquiry, every student in Johnston County gets the opportunity to "Discover the Plasma" in 8th grade. The 5-unit curriculum raises awareness of plasma-derived therapeutics for the treatment and prevention of rare and chronic diseases. This unique science core program was developed by Grifols pharmaceutical company in partnership with the school district and Johnston Community College.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

As part of the Research Triangle region, Johnston County boasts access to some of the best colleges and universities in the world, including Duke University, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University. These three Tier One research universities combine to spend close to \$2 billion annually on research initiatives. More and more, these and other nearby institutions are actively pursuing options to commercialize their research, leading to new jobs and business investment in Johnston County.

Pro-business JoCo helps enterprise expand

Companies with plans for expansion are finding premium assets with probusiness terms in Johnston County. Affordable and abundant land, modern infrastructure, businessfriendly policies and incentives, plentiful housing options, and a skilled workforce position this county as a top tier community for enterprise investment within close proximity to Research Triangle Park. **Biopharmaceutical manufacturing** giants, including Spanish-owned Grifols and Danish-owned Novo Nordisk, are among the many companies and industry sectors that are choosing Johnston County for their long-term growth.

GRIFOLS

Grifols, Johnston County's largest private employer, is investing \$351.6 million in an expansion that will add 300 jobs at its Clayton campus. The company plans to build a new

plasma fractionation facility and logistics center in response to growing global demand for its medicines. In response to COVID-19, Grifols is manufacturing convalescent plasma from donors into a hyperimmune therapy specific to COVID-19 at its Clayton campus. The company currently employs more than 1,735 people in Johnston County.

NOVO NORDISK

Novo Nordisk, manufacturer of diabetes



medications, has been operating in Johnston County since 1993 and continues to invest heavily in its facilities here. Located in Clayton, Novo recently completed construction on a \$2-billion active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) production facility. The expansion is the largest single manufacturing economic development investment in state history and will help the company meet increasing global demand for its diabetes medicines. The 825,000-square foot API facility spans 95 acres and is the company's first location outside of Denmark where diabetes active pharmaceutical ingredients will be produced. Novo's other Clayton manufacturing facility measures 464,602 square feet. Between the two operations, Novo has created more than 1,200 jobs in Johnston County.

OPW

Retail fueling giant OPW continues its commitment to growing in Johnston County with a \$15-million capital investment at its Smithfield manufacturing facility. The investment expands OPW's manufacturing capabilities to include above-ground retail fueling equipment. OPW's local facility has historically manufactured belowground fueling equipment such as piping and containment systems and storage tanks.

DOLLAR GENERAL

Tennessee-based retailer Dollar General is investing \$13 million to assume 320,000 square feet of cold-storage space at the Carolina Distribution Center in Clayton. The move is expected to generate over 100 jobs.

From life sciences to retail, global manufacturers and forward-thinking corporations have found Johnston County to be an exceptional partner and location for doing business.

County offers unique investment opportunities for developers

NORTH CAROLINA CERTIFIED SITES

North Carolina's official Certified Sites program streamlines the building process for industrial land use and reduces risks associated with developing raw land. Certified sites meet a stringent list of requirements including price transparency, access, proper zoning, completed environmental audits, topographical analyses and maps, and availability of public utilities.

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Johnston County is home to four, federallydesignated Opportunity Zones (OZ). The purpose of an OZ is to stimulate economic growth in lowwealth areas through private investment and job creation, while providing tax benefits to investors. The OZ program was created under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.

Visit growwithjoco.com for information on state-certified sites and OZs in Johnston County.

BIOPHARMA CRESCENT CONSORTIUM aids biotech companies' relocation to region

The life sciences industry is thriving in the Research Triangle Park (RTP) region. In response, Johnston County, already home to major global biopharmaceutical manufacturing facilities, and four neighboring counties formed the BioPharma Crescent consortium to help companies locate or expand their operation within close proximity to RTP.

BioPharma Crescent partners, including the NC Biotechnology

Center's Greenville office, understand the unique land use and utility requirements for biotech manufacturing, are active in workforce development programs, and participate in incentive grants for new and expanding companies.

Learn more at biopharmacrescent.com.



Transportation hub supports global economy

ransportation infrastructure is a critical advantage to doing business in Johnston County. Here, the region's transportation network is continuing to expand and includes major interstate highways, air service, commuter alternatives, freight rail, and easy access to deepwater ports to support global commerce.

HIGHWAY NETWORK

Johnston County sits at the intersection of two major interstates: I-95 (north/south) and I-40 (east/west). This choice location at the midpoint of the eastern seaboard is a boon for logistics and distribution operations. Extensive improvements to highway infrastructure

\$2B local funds dedicated to improving transit over the next decade, including light rail, commuter rail and bus rapid transit

50+ miles of new freeways added since 2000. More are planned or already under construction. are underway in Johnston County to meet demand as the county continues its trajectory as one of the fastest growing regions for business and residential development in the Triangle area. More than 50 miles of new freeways have been added since 2000, and many more are under construction or planned.

Currently under construction is the I-540 Southern loop. Upon completion, I-540 will cut commute time to the Research Triangle Park (RTP) and Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU) by 15 minutes. Complete conversions of key regional thoroughfares are also in the works. The US Highway 70 corridor east of Raleigh is being transformed into I-42; US Highway 64 will convert to I-87; and US Highway 264 will become I-287. Commuters from Raleigh to Johnston County can expect improved travel times with the widening of I-40.

AIR SERVICE

The Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU) is a 40-minute drive from Clayton. RDU regularly serves 65+ nonstop destinations with more than 400 daily arrivals and departures provided by major carriers, including but not limited to: Alaska, American, Delta, JetBlue, Southwest, and United. In addition to convenient access to RDU, Johnston County offers air service from Johnston Regional Airport (JNX) located off of US Highway 70, west of Smithfield.

JNX, operated by Johnston County Airport Authority, maintains a 5,500-foot long, 100-foot wide runway that can support 65,000 pounds for dual-gear aircraft. The airport offers a full instrument landing system (ILS) with distance measuring equipment and associated approach lighting, and JET A and AVGAS fuels are available. JNX serves corporate, military, and general aviation aircraft.

departures provided by major carriers.

The airport is welcoming a new tenant to its grounds. Blue Line Aviation is expanding its general aviation operation from RDU to JNX to meet increased demands for aircraft services and pilot training. The company's new 50,000-square foot Blue Line Aviation Complex and headquarters at JNX is currently under construction and will house the company's Professional Pilot Training Center, as well as a hangar, office space, and rooftop restaurant. Construction is scheduled for completion in 2021.

RAIL

The railroads within Johnston County have been instrumental in the county's economic history. CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern Corporation provide rail service to many local industries as well as passenger service for Amtrak. These two railroads converge in Selma on I-95.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Two-billion dollars in local funds have been dedicated to improve public transit such as light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit in Johnston County over the next decade. The county is also helping to support the Triangle Region Commuter Rail Study to examine long range plans for commuter rail and its benefits to Johnston County businesses and residents. Potential stops include Clayton, Wilson's Mills and Selma, possibly extending east to Pine Level and Princeton.

INTERNATIONAL PORTS

Johnston County companies benefit from the region's close proximity to major international ports along the Southeast coast including:

- the Port of Virginia in Norfolk, Virginia;
- Port of Wilmington in Wilmington, North Carolina;
- and Port of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina.





The Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU) is a 40-minute drive from Clayton.

RDU regularly serves 65+ nonstop destinations with more than 400 daily arrivals and

Business-friendly incentives support local investment

Companies looking to locate or expand their operation in Johnston County will find a wealth of business-friendly incentives from state- to local-level that support economic development.

JOB DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT GRANT

The Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) is a performance-based, discretionary incentive program that provides cash grants directly to new and expanding companies to help offset the cost of locating or expanding a facility in North Carolina. Grant funding is based on a percentage of the personal income tax withholdings associated with the new jobs.

Factors involved in calculating a JDIG award include: county tier designation, number of net new jobs, wages of the jobs compared to the county average wage, level of investment, and whether the industry is among the state's targeted industry sectors. Grant funds are disbursed annually, for up to 12 years, following the satisfaction of pre-established performance indicators. In Johnston County, which is a Tier 3 county, 75 percent of the annual grant is paid to the company, and 25 percent is transferred into a utility account.

Companies that bring major investment and employment opportunities to a region are eligible for special provisions under JDIG. The High-Yield Project (HYP) provision applies to companies that create 1,750 jobs and invest \$500 million. HYP grants are worth up to 90 percent of personal income withholdings for up to 20 years. For companies that create 3,000 jobs and invests \$1 billion, the Transformative Project provision provides a grant worth up to 90 percent of personal income withholdings for up to 30 years.

ONENC

The One North Carolina Fund (OneNC) is a discretionary cash-grant program administered

by the North Carolina Department of Commerce that allows the governor to respond quickly to competitive job-creation projects. Awards are based on the number of jobs created, level of investment, project location and economic impact, and the importance of the project to the state and region. By statute, OneNC requires that a local government provide an incentive to match the OneNC funding. In Johnston County, the local government must provide no less than one dollar for every one dollar provided by One NC.

JOHNSTON COUNTY

Johnston County and the incorporated municipalities within take a custom approach to local incentive grants aimed at jobs creation and capital investment. The county and municipalities do not have prescribed incentive policies, which enables them to craft aggressive incentive grants specific to each opportunity.





Ag industry continues to sow economic opportunities

Farming is a centuries-old tradition in Johnston County and today more than 1,000 farms continue to produce field crops, create jobs, and support economic development throughout the county. In addition to crop farming, the county's agriculture industry, which delivers over \$300 million in local economic impact, casts a wide net to include forestry; fruit cultivation; dairy; livestock; beekeeping; nursery; marketing, processing, and distribution of agricultural products; and tourism. Several Johnston County farms open their facilities for special events and weddings, pick-yourown produce operations and farm tours, and many partner with local restaurants in the farm-to-table dining movement.



\$300M

The local economic impact of the county's agriculture industry.

Learn more at johnstonnc.com.

participate in the program agree to keep their land in agricultural production for a designated period of time. Benefits of VAD designation include: persons buying land in rural areas do so with the knowledge that an agricultural operation exists nearby; member identification on county maps that are displayed for public view in county offices; increases pride

The county's Voluntary Agricultural Districts program promotes and encourages agricultural production.

To ensure that Johnston County's agriculture economy continues to thrive, the county implemented a Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VAD) program to promote and encourage agricultural production. Farmers who and identity in the agricultural community; promotes the production of locally grown produce and crops; and helps protect water, air and wildlife resources.



Grow with JoCo Explore the fun side









eisure and recreation are among the many things at which Johnston County excels. From museums and Civil War-era landmarks to festivals and concerts, to antiques and brand name shopping, to farm tours, delicious dining, and trails, rivers and lakes, Johnston County offers exceptional options to re-energize -- whether the getaway is a few hours of respite or an extended stay. Here are a few fan favorites: was the largest battle fought in North Carolina. This historic Civil War site features guided tours, exhibits, and trails.

- **2 Ava Gardner Museum** An extensive collection of artifacts traces the private and professional life of Hollywood star and Johnston County native Ava Gardner.
- **3 Selma Antiques Shopping District** Find treasures of yesteryear among the largest concentration of antique shops along I-95.

1 Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site The Battle of Bentonville



of Johnston County



- **4** Howell Woods Enjoy 2,800 acres of outdoor recreation including hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, and camping.
- Carolina Premium Outlets Shop for bargains and the latest fashions and home goods at more than 80 brand name stores.
- Mountains-to-the-Sea Trail The 1,175-mile hiking trail traverses North Carolina and is accessible in Johnston County.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHNSTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

Keeping visitors and residents safe from COVID-19 is a top priority for Johnston County. Local businesses are following state and county guidelines for social distancing and safe interactions. Contact the Johnston County Visitors Bureau (johnstoncountync.org) for the latest details on business operations throughout the county.



Along the Beer, Wine, and Shine Trail

Raise a glass to Johnston County's famous Beer, Wine, and Shine Trail. This popular self-guided experience celebrates the region's agriculture heritage and legacy for craft beverages – including once-illegal spirits that legend says spurred NASCAR racing. The Beer, Wine, and Shine Trail is the first of its kind in North Carolina and showcases three breweries, two wineries, and two spirits distilleries, each with its own style and story. Enjoy site tours, tastings, and Johnston County hospitality any time of year.

Visit beerwineshinetrail.com.



(top row) Scenes from HINNANT VINEYARD and DEEP RIVER, and (bottom row) FAINTING GOAT BEER, BROADSLAB TASTING ROOM and GREGORY VINEYARDS. All are featured stops on Johnston County's Beer, Wine, and Shine Trail.

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ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT Blue Pack Marketing

Blue Pack Marketing (BPM), founded in 2014 by brothers Keegan and Corey Rush, specializes in brand development, supply chain logistics, and digital marketing. The Johnston

County (JoCo) startup placed 1,188th on the Inc. 5000 Rankings list for 2020 and is one of the fastest growing tech-based companies in the region. The dynamic duo explains why JoCo is good for business.

Comments have been edited for space.

What are the competitive advantages to operating your business in JoCo? We've been offered deals to move the company out of state, but this is simply our home and where we plan to stay. There is something about playing home games versus going on the road that's helped us recruit the best talent, provide a fun atmosphere, and expand our footprint without spending excessively on square footage.



Brothers Keegan and Corey Rush founded **BLUE PACK MARKETING** in 2014.

COLDWELL BANKER ADVANTAGE

How does JoCo support entrepreneurs?

When we moved into our first office in Clayton, we were visited within 30 days by the county's economic development director to connect us with other scaling businesses. The county absolutely supports local businesses

and is always looking for ways to build networking opportunities between teams.

How does the local talent pool meet BPM's workforce needs?

The talent pool here has allowed us to scale quickly. Since our team not only handles marketing/creative services, but also the physical production of our online consumer products, we've needed people with very diverse backgrounds and amazing work ethics. Whether we've needed a graphic designer or a shipping specialist, we've been able to hire successfully here.

What's in store for BPM in the next 12 months?

Our goal is to continue to grow intelligently and offer opportunities to the amazing people of Johnston County.

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Quality neighborhoods suit homebuyer needs

omebuyers searching for quality housing in the Triangle are finding exceptional options in Johnston County. From upscale living in rural settings to familyoriented neighborhoods and master-planned communities, house hunters have much to choose from, with more on the way to meet increasing demand. Highlighted here are just a few opportunities.

FLOWERS PLANTATION

Flowers Plantation, located in Clayton, is a 3,000-acre planned community comprising over 40 neighborhoods with a mix of singlefamily homes, cottages, and townhomes. When fully developed, the community will feature approximately 8,000 homes. In addition to homes. Flowers Plantation features two commercial centers with national and regional retail brands and restaurants, including Harris Teeter and Publix; River Dell Elementary School and East Clayton Elementary School;

FLOWERS PLANTATION 3,000 Acres Neighborhoods 8,UU Homes

East Triangle YMCA; and 20 miles of walking trails that connect residents to the Neuse River Parkway. Thales Academy, a prestigious private school, is expected to open by 2022.

Flowers Plantation was named the top masterplanned community in the Raleigh-Durham area, and 40th in the nation by John Burns Real Estate Consulting Group. It is the largest planned community in the Triangle region. According to

Flowers Plantation CEO Reid Stephenson, the development makes up 15 percent of new construction homes sold in Johnston County. "With our convenient location to Raleigh and no municipal tax, we have become a top choice among homeowners who are looking for attractively priced residences without the long commute," says Stephenson.

Flowers Plantation enjoys a unique place in Johnston County history. The community and surrounding land are part of a family legacy that dates back to the early 20th century when Joshua Percy Flowers began purchasing land to farm. His daughter Rebecca Flowers, owner of Flowers Plantation, inherited the property from him in the early 1980s. Ms. Flowers' vision and passion for the land have ensured that Flowers Plantation remains one of the most desirable places to live in the region.

PORTOFINO

Portofino is another esteemed planned development community in Clayton. The community's four distinct neighborhoods are



COURTESY OF JOHNSTON COUNTY

THE WALK AT EAST VILLAGE is a planned 55+ community with new construction homes designed with active seniors in mind.

designed for upscale living with many home sites ranging in size from .5 to 5 acres. Portofino amenities including over seven miles of nature trails, a fishing pond, bridges and elevated walkways, access to the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, pool and clubhouse, and a premier equestrian center with a custom-designed, 22-stall barn with paddocks, pastures, large arenas, trails and a cross-country course. Portofino is among a select few communities in North Carolina to be certified as an Audubon International Signature

Program member.

PORTOFINO is among a select few communities in North Carolina to be certified as an Audubon International Signature Program

member.

Of Portofino's larger home sites, high level amenities, and sophisticated ambiance, Portofino developer Norwood Thompson, main partner and principle of Walthom Group and Ironwood Properties, says, "We

create the desirability that

people want." Thompson is one of the most experienced developers in the area and has completed numerous industrial and commercial projects, in addition to residential development.

"It's a pleasure to do business here," he says. "Johnston County has available land; good government, infrastructure, and schools; and the opportunity to create unique developments." Thompson expects to break ground in 2021 on a new residential community in Johnston County – Cattail Village off of I-42, which will be modeled after the success of Portofino.

ONE27HOMES

Local residential builder One27Homes is delivering homeownership opportunities at a range of price points, including wide selections for first-time homebuyers. The company, founded in 2015 by Johnston County native Reid Smith, is known for building quality homes that are affordable and located in some of the county's most desirable and up-and-coming neighborhoods.

"One27Homes was founded on the

ONE27HOMES

delivers quality, affordable products in the county's up-and-coming neighborhoods.

belief that there is an underserved population of our Johnston County community who desire to be homeowners, but don't want to live in a big city or don't need 2,500 or more square feet of space," says Smith, CEO of One27Homes. "We are

committed to delivering a quality, cost-conscious product for the future residents of Johnston County."

One27Homes new-home communities range from small neighborhoods of a few dozen residences to multi-phase residential developments of a few hundred units. One of the builder's latest projects, and currently under construction, is Academy Pointe located within walking distance of downtown Clayton. At build-out, the neighborhood will feature approximately 200 units to include a mix of single-family homes, townhomes, and apartments.

READY TO UPGRADE YOUR BUSINESS? EASTFIELD



YOUR EXPERIENCED TEAM OF EXPERTS:







Neighborhoods

Continued from Page 12

EASTFIELD CROSSING

One of the largest developments underway in Johnston County is the mixed-use Eastfield Crossing development in Selma. Spanning over 400 acres, Eastfield Crossing is located in one of four federally-designated Opportunity Zones in the county. The master-planned community's

EASTFIELD CROSSING will feature

1.5M Square foot business park

Square feet of retail space

multi-family homes and senior housing – all of which developer Kevin Dougherty, president and owner of AdVenture Development, says will define a cohesive live/work/play environment. "We're looking ahead and making certain that this

residential mix includes single- and

community is relevant for the long term through smart city initiatives and attention to quality of life amenities where people can connect," says Dougherty. The first phase of residential units is



COURTESY OF JOHNSTON COUNTY

RIVERWOOD is a golf community located near Clayton with beautiful homes and outstanding recreational amenities.

expected to become available in early 2021.

In addition to carefully planned neighborhoods, Eastfield Crossing will feature a 1.5 million-square-foot business park, hotels for business and leisure travel, medical offices, a town center with 500,000 square feet of retail space, farmers market, and a labyrinth of recreation trails.

With these and dozens of new residential developments on the horizon, Johnston County's housing market is delivering a premier selection of options for residents to establish roots in one of the fastest growing regions of North Carolina.



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