

Chapter 24 ZONING*

Article III. Zone Districts*

24-167 Research and business park (RBP) zone.

(a) Purpose and intent The research and business park (RBP) zoning district is designed to encourage and promote the development of high quality, extensively landscaped, and well-maintained, developments in a campus-like environment. The primary land uses are research and development, business/professional corporate headquarters and light industrial and manufacturing geared toward high and advanced technology.

Research and business parks are subject to the high land use standards contained in this zoning district in order to ensure land use compatibility and a quality business environment. Site-specific design requirements specify extensive natural open space areas, active and passive recreational amenities, and complementary landscaping. Design guidelines are required for each research and business park to integrate the natural environment, structural improvements, and landscaping elements to create high quality developments.

The master development plan prepared for each RBP project specify site-specific standards for the design of individual parcels and lots in the RBP project. The design guidelines specify setbacks for buildings and parking areas; extensive landscaping requirements; lighting design requirements; requirements for screening of parking areas, service areas, mechanical equipment; and other design criteria.

The research and business park zone facilitates innovative site planning, including the ability to cluster parcels and development areas in order to avoid constrained lands and preserve common open space. This zone also provides the flexibility to develop a variety of project types and a range of compatible uses. This zone district may only be utilized on lands designated research and business park by the general plan.

Specific components of individual research and business park developments, including land uses, development standards, infrastructure requirements, and site and architectural design, will be defined through the master development plan process.

(b) Research and business park master development plan process. It is the intent of the research and business park (RBP) zone to provide for the ultimate development of all lands within the research and business park with minimal requirement for subsequent discretionary entitlement processing. To that end, development standards and requirements will be established through the business park master development plan process. The research and business park master development plan will serve as a comprehensive program to determine the parameters and standards for the uses, design and maintenance of all land within the research and business park boundary.

Following master development plan approval, applications for site development and building construction within an approved business park are subject to the administrative permit process, as set forth in section 24-167(c) of this zoning district.

(1) Preapplication review: An optional preapplication review is encouraged for all master development plans. Said preapplication review shall occur in accordance with the process established by the director of development services.

(2) Master development plan submittal requirements. In addition to the basic application filing requirements, minimum submittal requirements include the following:

a. Conceptual project design, including the following:

1. Master site development plan showing development parcels and their uses, building areas, vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation, open space areas, landscaping, and parking;
2. Draft design guidelines which establish the architectural standards and requirements for the topics in section 24-167(j) and include a description of the proposed method of administering and enforcing design guidelines and maintaining open space areas;
3. Typical elevations that illustrate the range of architectural styles provided for in the design guidelines.

b. Schematic infrastructure plan (i.e., roads, sewer, water, storm drainage) showing size and availability of facilities and a description of necessary utilities

c. Topographic map A topographic map of the project site and land and structures within one

hundred (100) feet of the project boundaries. The map shall be drawn to a scale of not less than one (1) inch equals one hundred (100) feet with a contour interval of five (5) feet.

d. Slope maps. Maps of existing and final slope depicting the following slope categories: 0–5 percent, 6–10 percent, 11–15 percent, 16 percent and higher shall be shown using contrasting patterns or colors.

e. Preliminary grading, erosion control, and drainage plan.

f. Hydrology report. A hydrology report which shall identify areas of possible inundation, downstream effects, natural drainage courses, primary groundwater recharge areas (as applicable), effect of hydrologic conditions on the proposed development, recommendations regarding the adequacy of facilities proposed for the site, and proposed solutions to mitigate identified hydrologic hazards. The report shall be prepared by a registered civil engineer experienced in hydrology and hydrologic investigation.

g. Biological resource assessment. A biological resource assessment of the subject site by a qualified biologist including the location and species of trees over six (6) inches in diameter at breast height; habitat type; and the occurrence of any special-status species within the area.

h. Traffic study. A traffic study prepared by a qualified traffic engineer to assess current levels of service and needed improvements of both on-site and off-site roads. The study shall also evaluate pedestrian and bicycle opportunities, transit, and unique characteristics of the vehicle mix, etc.

A specific plan, as identified in section 65450 et seq. of the California Government Code or a development agreement pursuant to Butte County Resolution No. 81-229 may be used by the applicant to fulfill the requirement for preparation of a master development plan.

(3) Phasing of development and infrastructure. Business parks may be developed in phases, where so identified in the master development plan.

(4) Master development plan approval. The planning commission will review and consider the draft master development plans. In approving the master development plan, the planning commission must find that it is consistent with the general plan and all provisions of this zoning district. The procedure for review and consideration of a master development plan and for appeals shall be as specified in sections 24-45.20, 24-45.25 and 24-45.30, except that the requirements for findings shall be as specified herein.

(5) Master development plan amendment process. Requests for major amendments to an approved master development plan shall be subject to review by the planning commission, except that minor amendments may be reviewed and considered by the director of development services.

(6) Relationship to subdivision process. A tentative subdivision or parcel map is not a requirement or prerequisite of business park development and master development plan approval. A tentative parcel map or subdivision map may be submitted and processed concurrently with a master development plan. Alternatively, such map requests may be submitted as a condition of master development plan approval.

(c) Administrative permit process. Once a master development plan has been approved by the planning commission, the director of development services is authorized to grant administrative permits for any use consistent with the listing of principal permitted uses. A building permit or grading permit shall not be issued until an administrative permit has been approved by the director.

The director shall determine that all uses and development standards are consistent with the approved research and business park master development plan and within the scope of the environmental review and determination for the overall research and business park. The director shall also verify that the applicant has received design review approval by the research and business park property owners association or other established entity. The c, c and r's, as required in section 24-167(k), shall be submitted for review and approvals.

(d) Principal uses permitted. The following is a partial, representative listing of the principal permitted uses within the research and business park (RBP) zone. Other, similar uses may be permitted as determined by the planning commission or director of development services:

(1) Advanced technology, research and development uses, and facilities used for testing and analysis of products, including, but not limited to the following representative types:

a. Computer software and hardware design.

b. Telecommunications.

c. Biotechnology.

d. Agricultural technology.

e. Pharmaceuticals.

f. University-based research and learning centers.
(2) Business and professional corporate headquarters, including, but not limited to the following representative types:

- a. Banks and other financial institutions.
 - b. Data processing and management centers.
 - c. Insurance companies.
 - d. Health-related industries.
 - e. Direct sales/telemarketing.
 - f. Professional services, including engineers, architects and other consulting businesses.
- (3) Uses that emphasize product development over high volume production (or high value to weight/ volume), including, but not limited to the following representative types:

- a. Computer software and hardware manufacturing.
 - b. Book and magazine publishing.
 - c. Medical and dental products.
 - d. Applied technology.
 - e. Specialty manufacturing.
- (e) Accessory uses.

(1) Retail Uses. Total building square footage shall not exceed one (1) percent of the floor area ratio of a parcel or of the total floor area ratio of the entire research and business park. Retail uses may only be developed after twenty-five (25) percent of the research and business park is built-out, unless such uses are operated by and included within the building of a principal permitted use. The planning commission, during consideration of the master development plan, may allow deviations from these limitations. Following master development plan approval, deviations will be permitted only pursuant to a use permit.

Following are representative types:

- a. Restaurants, coffee shops, delicatessen and sandwich shops.
- b. Health and athletic clubs.
- c. Barber and beauty shops.
- d. Small shops specializing in sundry items, including newspapers and magazines, snacks and candy, tobacco, and similar products.

(2) Plazas.

(3) Amphitheaters.

(4) Gardens and fountains.

(5) Outdoor art, sculptures and exhibits.

(6) Public or quasi-public facilities.

(7) Administrative offices and warehousing to support primary use.

(8) Joint-use facilities, including video conferencing centers and assembly and conference halls.

(f) Temporary uses.

(1) Construction offices.

(2) Sales and leasing offices.

(3) Real estate signs.

(g) Uses requiring use permits.

A use permit shall not be granted for any proposed use which would be incompatible with the construction or operation of any principal permitted use. To the extent possible, uses shall be operated within the parcel and building of a principal permitted use in order to maintain the appearance and character of the research and business park.

Use permits shall only be considered and approved by the planning commission for those uses proposed subsequent to approval of the master development plan.

(1) Representative uses requiring a use permit. The following is a partial, representative listing of uses that require a use permit. Other similar uses may also be considered with approval of the director of development services.

- a. Day care centers, except when operated within the building of a principal permitted use.
- b. Limited stay residential facilities.
- c. Retreat and conference facilities.
- d. Commercial public access communication antennae and towers, including those used for satellite and cellular systems, if not operated as part of a principal permitted use.
- e. Uses or buildings that deviate from the site development requirements in section 24-167(i) or from the accessory use limitations set forth in section 24-167(e)(1).
- f. Special events, such as trade fairs.
- g. Trade or professional college.

(h) Prohibited uses.

- (1) All uses not specifically listed or otherwise determined to be incompatible.
- (2) Billboards and off-site signs.
- (3) Uses with outdoor storage and/or production.
- (4) Recycling centers.
- (5) Food processing plants.

(i) Site development requirements. The following site development requirements shall apply to all uses within the research and business park zone. Any standard may be modified during the master development plan process. For individual projects proposed after master development plan approval, modifications will be considered by the planning commission through the use permit process. A modification may be approved if it is determined that the modification meets the intent of the research and business park zone, would result in a superior development or results in a comparable outcome, and would not result in greater impacts on surrounding properties or the environment in general.

- (1) Minimum research and business park size shall be two hundred (200) acres.
- (2) The following table establishes site development standards based on applicable lot size.

	Proposed Lot Size ¹ : 1–10 acres	Proposed Lot Size ¹ : 10 acres or larger
a. Lot dimension requirements.		
Lot width.	100 feet	250 feet
Lot depth.	150 feet	250 feet
b. Impervious surface limit^{2, 5, 6}	70%	60%
c. Maximum floor area ratio.⁶	0.5:1	0.3:1
d. Building setback requirements³		
Front	40 feet	100 feet
Side/Street side	10 feet/ 40 feet	40 feet/ 100 feet
Rear	10 feet	25 feet
e. Building height limit.	40 feet	40 feet
f. Parking requirements. (Refer to Zoning Ord. Sec. 24-240)		
g. Minimum open space and landscaping requirement.⁴	30%	40%

1. Lot sizes may be smaller if the business park includes commonly-owned space. See also Note 6.

2. Includes buildings, parking areas, and all paved surfaces. Pedestrian paths and recreation facilities in open space and building setback areas are exempt.

3. Building setback areas must be landscaped or maintained as open space. No impervious surfaces are permitted, except for driveways, emergency access, pedestrian walkways, bicycle paths, etc.

4. Includes ornamental landscaping and landscaping for active and passive recreation. Drought tolerant plant species are recommended.

5. In some instances, the maximum impervious surface area will be reduced in order to comply with required building setbacks, which prohibit impervious surfaces.

6. For projects which propose common open space, the floor area ratio and impervious surface limits will be based on the entire project area rather than the individual parcel or lot.

(j) Design guidelines. Design guidelines that adhere to the parameters described in this section shall be prepared and submitted by the applicant and approved as part of the master development plan process described in section 24-167(b) of this zoning district. All uses within the research and business park shall adhere to design guidelines formulated specifically for the research and business park in which the use is located. Design guidelines shall address the topics shown below.

The following guidelines are primarily intended to identify the topics which must be addressed. Secondly, these guidelines provide direction (i.e., establish parameters) in certain topical areas. It is the intent of this section that applicants be allowed considerable flexibility in the manner in which the design parameters are met.

(1) Site design.

a. All development should be sensitive to viewshed preservation for nearby properties within and beyond the business park.

b. Parking lots should not be a visually dominant site feature when viewed from adjacent streets. Large expanses of parking lot surface are to be avoided in favor of smaller units.

c. Wherever possible, employee parking areas should be separated from streets by buildings.

d. Where parking lots are visible from streets, parked vehicles should be partially screened with perimeter landscaping or landscaped earthen berms that does not interfere with sight distance at driveways and road intersections.

e. Well-defined, safe pedestrian walkways shall be provided through all parking areas with connection to adjacent streets.

f. Vacant parcels and areas not subject to immediate development should be planted with annual grasses and mowed on a regular basis.

g. Plazas and courtyards, protected from weather and nuisance factors (such as loading/service areas and mechanical equipment), should be provided within each project for the benefit and enjoyment of employees.

(2) Landscape design.

a. Landscape plans shall include a recommended plant list prepared by a licensed landscape architect. Native plants and drought tolerant species should be emphasized.

b. Plans shall address parking lot shading and screening, streetscape, and all areas of the parcel. All required setback areas, which must be either retained as open space or landscaped, shall be maintained.

c. Xeriscape landscaping is encouraged in order to minimize maintenance requirements and water consumption.

d. All landscaped areas shall be irrigated, except xeriscape plantings.

e. All parking lots shall include shade trees that, within ten (10) years of installation, shade at least fifty (50) percent of the pavement at the summer solstice (June 21).

(3) Architectural design.

a. A range of acceptable building forms, materials, and colors shall be specified.

b. All primary building materials should be able to withstand local weather conditions with little or no degradation in appearance or function.

c. Large expanses of uninterrupted wall planes are discouraged where visible from a street or research and business park property line. Various techniques may be utilized to reduce the visual monotony of such vertical surfaces, including deep off-sets and recesses, windows, trellises, variations in colors and materials, and architectural detailing that creates definite shadow patterns.

d. To the maximum extent possible, the appearance of large, monolithic building mass shall be avoided. Where large footprint, rectilinear buildings are necessary and appropriate, the perception of mass shall be reduced by breaking wall planes into smaller, connected sizes. Apparent building mass can also be reduced by incorporating extensive tree screening.

e. While the site development requirements allow buildings to attain a height of forty (40) feet, consideration should be given to varying heights as a means of improving visual interest.

f. Primary building entrances should be oriented toward the street.

(4) Signage

a. A conceptual design theme for all signs shall be developed. Signs may only identify the name of the building. Individual tenants in multiple occupancy buildings may not be listed in the building sign.

b. Signage not affixed to buildings shall be monument-style and integrated into the landscape design.

c. Only exterior illumination of signs shall be permitted.

- d. Billboards and off-site signs are specifically prohibited.
 - e. All signs shall be constructed of materials able to withstand local weather conditions with little or no degradation in appearance or function.
 - (5) Lighting. All exterior lighting fixtures shall be shielded and oriented downward to minimize light spillage and glare beyond the research and business park.
 - (6) Walls and fences.
 - a. All walls and fences shall be buffered with landscaping and/or landscaped earthen berms.
 - b. Walls and/or fences shall be constructed of durable, low maintenance materials. Chain link fencing is prohibited.
 - c. Solid walls and fences higher than three (3) feet in height are not permitted within the required setback areas.
 - (7) Pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
 - a. A pedestrian and bicycle circulation plan shall be prepared.
 - b. Bicycle lockers and racks are required. Safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access shall be provided from parking areas to buildings, between buildings, to streets and throughout the research and business park.
 - c. Consideration should be given to provision of employee shower and locker room facilities as a means of encouraging bicycle commute travel.
 - (8) Public transit. Provision shall be made for public transit facilities along research and business park streets and in parking areas, in accordance with county transit requirements.
 - (9) Loading and service areas and mechanical equipment. Particular attention shall be given to the siting of loading and service areas to minimize visual and acoustical impacts. Visual and acoustical screening shall be included, where needed.
 - (10) Public facilities and utilities. All utilities shall be installed underground, with the exception of transformers which may be pad-mounted. Pad-mounted facilities shall be screened from off-site view using shrubs.
 - (11) Grading, drainage, and erosion control. Contour grading techniques shall be used to blend site grading into natural topography. Grading shall be designed to:
 - a. Conserve natural topographic features by minimizing the amount of cut and fill and by blending graded slopes and benches with the natural topography; and
 - b. Retain major natural topographic features, including canyons, knolls, ridgelines, and prominent landmarks.
 - (12) Agricultural lands and sensitive environmental and historic features.
 - a. Buffers shall be provided to agricultural lands and sensitive environmental and historic features outside the research and business park.
 - b. Agricultural uses may be integrated into private or common open space or landscaped areas within the research and business park.
 - c. Mature trees, creeks, rock outcroppings and other natural features shall be preserved and incorporated into business parks whenever possible. Historic features, such as rock walls, should also be incorporated.
 - d. Flexible lot sizing and clustering of development areas is encouraged as a means of preserving and incorporating sensitive land features within a research and business park.
 - e. Maintain a building and grading setback of at least one hundred (100) feet from the top of bank or high water mark (whichever is greater) from perennial streams and riparian areas.
 - (13) Streetscape. A consistent streetscape theme addressing all elements of the streetscape, including plant materials, street lighting fixtures, street signage, and pavement, shall be created.
 - (k) Deed restrictions. Where multiple owners or parcels are included, deed restrictions, or covenants, conditions and restrictions (c, c and rs), administered and enforced by a property owners association shall be submitted as part of the administrative permit process. They shall be reviewed and approved by the director of development services and the county counsel's office to assure conformance with the master development plan. All uses within the research and business park shall adhere to the recorded c, c and rs.
- C, c and rs shall give particular attention to administration and enforcement of design guidelines and to maintenance of common open space and landscaping. (Ord. No. 3575, § 1, 1-11-2000)