

## What Is a Business Park?

A business park is a multibuilding development planned to accommodate a range of uses, from light industrial to office space, in an integrated parklike setting with supporting uses for the people who work there. They can range from small parks on several acres to facilities of several hundred acres or more.

The process of planning, designing, developing, and managing business parks is integrated and coordinated. Local master plans and zoning regulations regulate such things as the percentage of site coverage, uses, building setbacks, and easements. Developers may also adopt additional development restrictions such as covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs), design guidelines, or other regulations specific to the project to ensure that the quality of their investment is protected over time.

Business parks service a range of activities and product types, each with specific requirements: warehouse/

distribution; manufacturing and assembly; flex/high-tech businesses; offices; showrooms; incubator space; telco hotels; service businesses, including hotels and conference centers; and convenience retail stores.

Some key design elements help make a business park successful:

- **Flexible Master Plan**—A master plan that anticipates change is essential to serving diverse markets over the long term. Flexibility is maximized by a lot layout that allows parcels of varying sizes to be subdivided or combined based on demand, by a road system that provides access to all portions of the site, and by utility systems that can be easily upgraded or modified.
- **Attractive Landscaping and Public Spaces**—A winning landscape plan ensures that the entire development has a cohesive, parklike appearance that takes advantage of the site's topography and natural features. Particular attention is paid to visible and strategic areas

## A Winning Combination

The first aspect of Indianapolis's Intech Park—high-tech infrastructure—is a prerequisite for any development that claims to be a technology park. The far less obvious accomplishment of Intech Park, however, is its response to the human aspect—the ever-increasing importance of staff recruitment and retention within knowledge-based industries.

Recruiting and retaining highly skilled employees in this industry requires a carefully crafted mix of financial and benefit-related compensation as well as an ability to offer the less tangible quality of life so many people seek. Indianapolis-based Lauth Property Group's development plan for Intech Park offers high-tech infrastructure combined with a high-quality work environment both inside and outside the tenants' space, which it hopes will attract and retain employees.

The 210-acre (85-ha) Intech Park is Indianapolis's largest technology park; its master plan is based on research showing that high-tech employees place a high value on access to natural environments. To capitalize on this fact, Indianapolis-based Ratio Architects developed a master plan that favors an environment that creates a strong identity through the use of natural environments.

The park includes more than 13 acres (5 ha) of waterways, 2.5 miles (4 km) of walking/fitness paths, and a recreation/picnic area. Ratio designed the park around some of the site's natural features, including an eight-acre (3-ha) woodland and a small wetland. Designers moved the park's entrance to preserve its mature trees, including a giant oak tree that is older than the state of Indiana.

The park includes aquatic plants and alternative stormwater management facilities to ensure that the water re-



**Intech Park, Indianapolis's largest technology park, offers a high-quality work environment with fitness and recreation areas.**

leased from the site is controlled in volume as well as cleaned of many nonpoint source pollutants. Wetlands serve as the primary method of stormwater management for the project, and existing natural features have been preserved and enhanced. Ecoswales in the parking areas serve as point-source cleansers for runoff.

Pedestrian pathways and a substantial green spine offer tenants the opportunity for casual exercise in a natural environment. The city is building a safe and user-friendly connection to the 2,000-acre (810-ha) Eagle Creek Park to allow tenants to expand their exercise routines.

The juxtaposition of the natural elements of the Intech site with high-tech infrastructure has created an attractive environment for companies seeking a new location in Indianapolis. ■

Source: Kenneth M. Boyce, "A Winning Combination," *Urban Land*, April 2001, p. 34.