Flad

A TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH LOOP: CONNECTING INNOVATION TO IMPACT

UCLA RESEARCH PARK

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THE PARK

Two miles south of UCLA's main campus in Westwood, the new UCLA Research Park has a big idea about sharing big ideas.

Flad is partnering with UCLA to transform the former Westside Pavilion retail mall into a new global destination for translational research and innovation. Designed to connect academic researchers, corporate partners, startups, investors, government agencies, and the community, it aims to act as a catalyst by facilitating groundbreaking research and translating it into previously unimaginable solutions to some of society's most complex challenges.

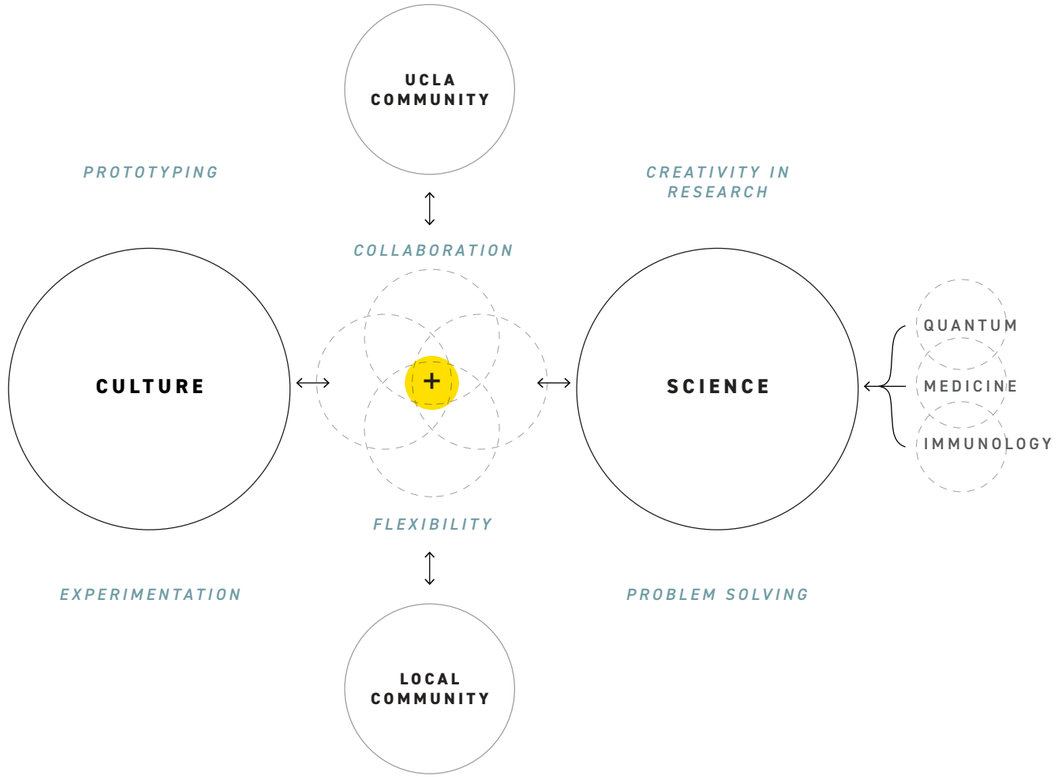
Developed through a partnership between UCLA Capital Programs, UCLA Research, developer Breakthrough Properties, and Flad, the comprehensive master plan transforms the site into a vibrant 800,000-square-foot, mixed-use regional research hub. Translational research is the defining aspect of next-generation research parks, and changing economic factors are impacting the planning and design of these types of projects.

An aerial view rendering of the new UCLA Research Park.

Conceptual Research Park West pavilion entry.

Driven by large investments from state funding and a private founders group, UCLA Research Park is well positioned for the changing funding landscape. This new model relies on private industry and federal partnerships to realize intellectual property (IP) as the new funding source for research. Collaboration is at the heart of the concept, and the off-campus Research Park offers an environment to build and strengthen these partnerships while offering students an extension of the campus experience.

The adaptive reuse master plan calls for a phased development, beginning with Research Park East, which focuses on sparking ongoing scientific discovery. It features laboratories, offices, incubator space, and collaborative environments designed to foster interaction among academic institutions, industry leaders, and emerging startups.



RESEARCH PARK WEST

Research Park West will activate and engage the surrounding community, city, and state. It offers a front door into the park with spaces that are open to the public and for hosting events. It will merge art, culture, and science and build off the site's previously established relationship with the community as a commercial center to create a shared cultural experience for future generations.

THE CONNECTOR

East and West are linked by The Connector, a program-rich bridge and concourse that connects the arrival areas for both sides of the campus.

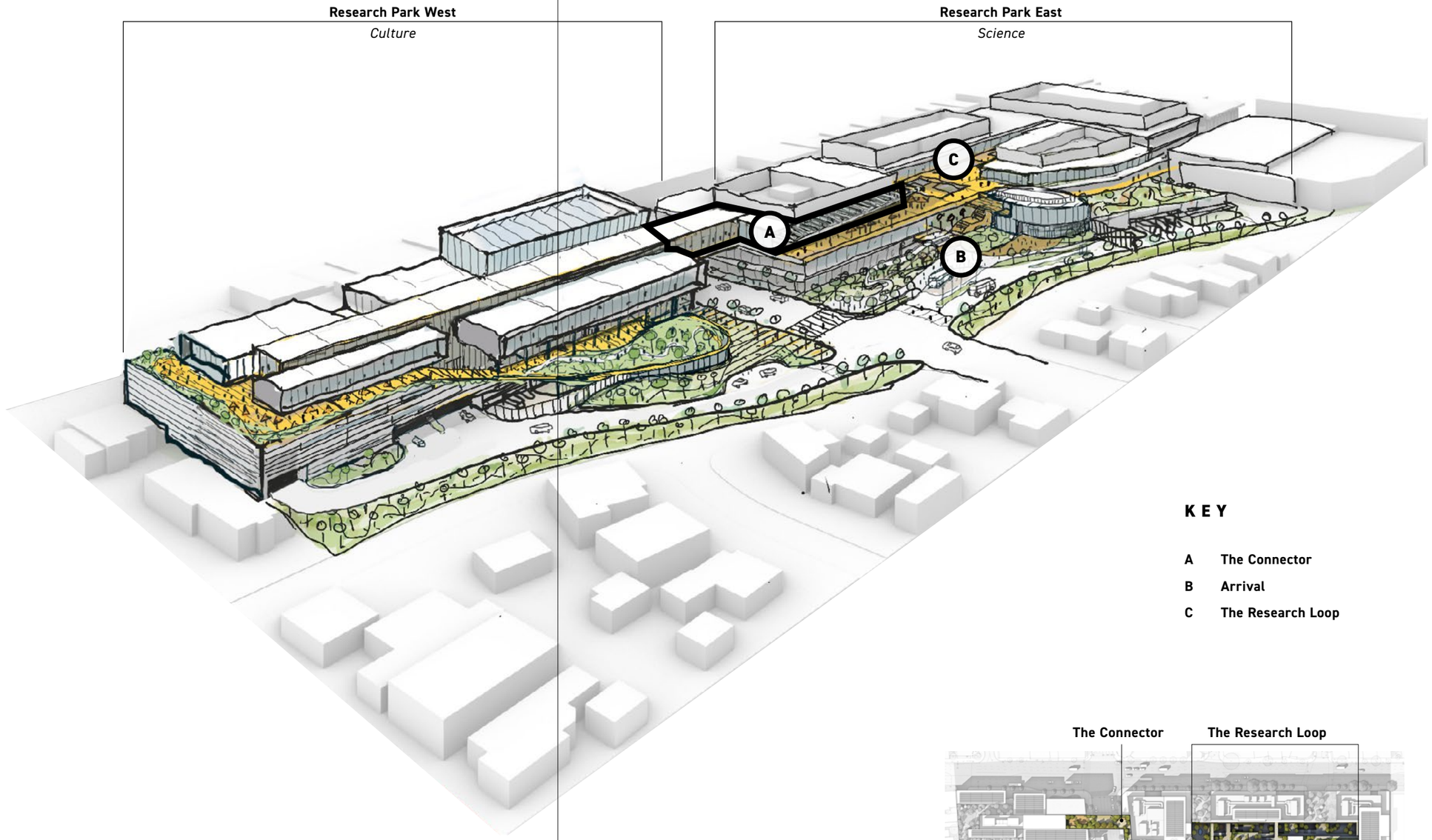
It features a cluster of formal and informal meeting spaces with views to Westwood. Further highlighting the campus connection, The Connector hosts a curated collection of art and scientific work occurring at UCLA.

RESEARCH PARK EAST

Creating an environment to unite breakthroughs from the biosciences, quantum science and engineering, and other emerging technologies has far-reaching potential to save lives and revolutionize healthcare outcomes worldwide. This environment supports the full continuum of innovation, from fundamental research to commercialization.

Initial Occupants Include:

- **>> California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy**
- **>> UCLA Quantum Innovation Hub**
- **>> Research space for UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine**



KEY

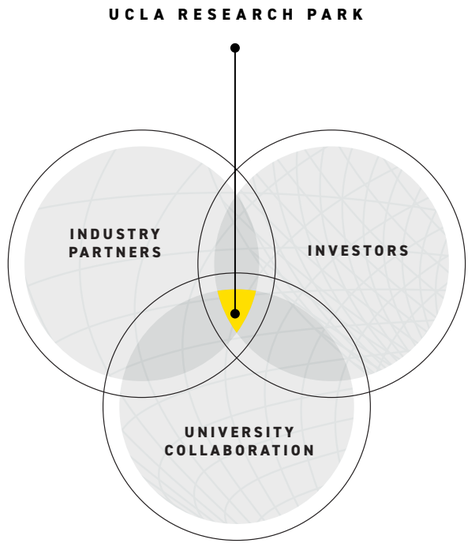
A The Connector
B Arrival
C The Research Loop

ECONOMIC CHANGES FUELING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

While advancing science and the promise of improving health outcomes are the drivers of the UCLA Research Park, changing economic factors are impacting the planning and design of these types of projects.

Recent shifts in policy have led to uncertainty in long-term federal research funding, opening the door for more public-private partnerships. This reflects a broader shift in the ecosystem.

Rather than viewing research buildings as isolated academic facilities, the planning framework encourages a network of industry partners, investors, and university collaboration.



Loop connector between Research Park East and West.

BENEFITS OF OFF-CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

As an off-campus development, the research park is able to operate without restrictions related to commercialization and intellectual property activity, making the site more attractive to donors, private partners, and startups.

For the design team, this flexibility encourages the creation of hybrid research environments that combine elements of a university campus with private research firms where office, laboratory, and collaborative spaces coexist.

The design team stressed seamless connectivity with a variety of shared cores and resources in pre-competitive areas of the campus to help drive research forward. Occupants will have the ability to move freely between a variety of formal and informal support spaces in a highly collaborative environment that encourages knowledge sharing, open-innovation research, and access to foundational knowledge and technology.

Research Park East entry plaza.

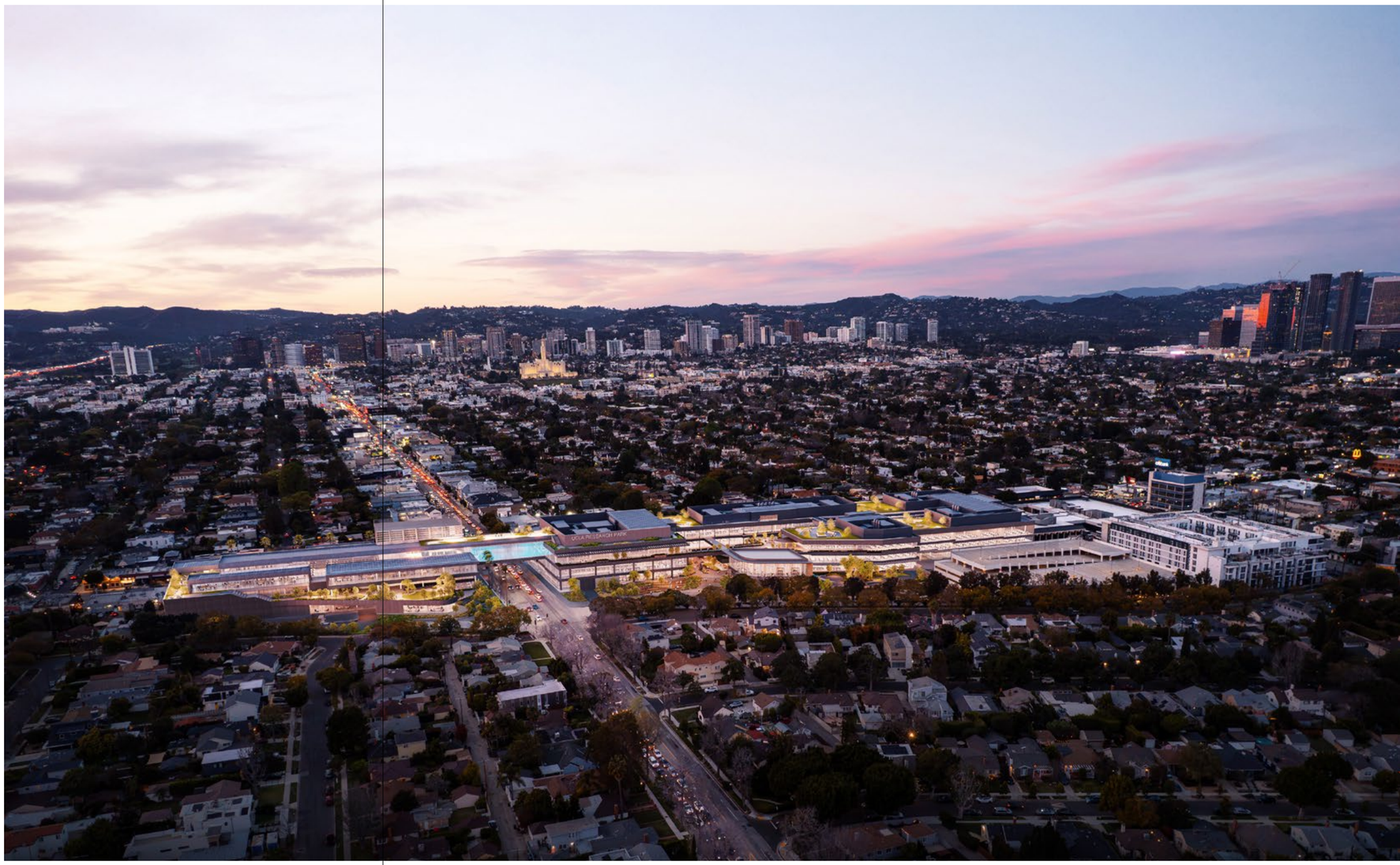
A PARADIGM SHIFT FOR RESEARCH PARKS

Academic research is in a moment of transformative change.

The introduction of computational strategies in modeling and parsing large data sets, advances in artificial intelligence, and the steady advances in translational medicine represent a shift from foundational to interdisciplinary research.

The next generation of high-performing university research parks will advance their own potential faster by providing the infrastructure for collaborative teams working across disciplines, across public and private institutions, and through increasing their engagement with investment partnerships.

Research parks today must do many things well, and the list of requirements is always growing and evolving.

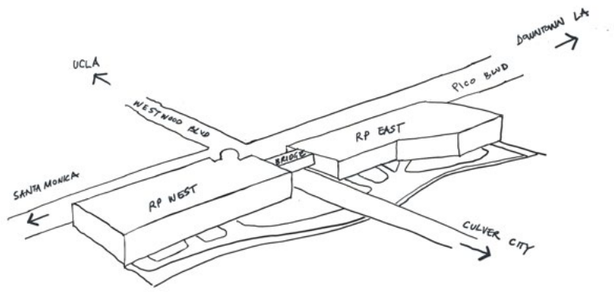


ALIGNING AND PLANNING

Aligning the various stakeholders for a project of this scale requires the flexibility to adapt as needs evolve throughout planning and design.

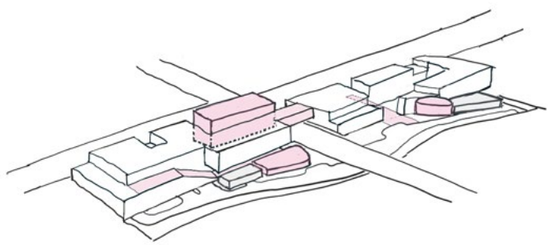
Planning these complex spaces also requires a deep understanding of the potential workflows, space types, and equipment needs for a diverse set of tenants.

Existing



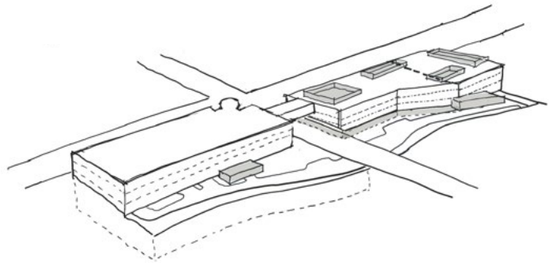
Program Amenity

- Impact Center (Atrium)
- The Connector
- Ramp



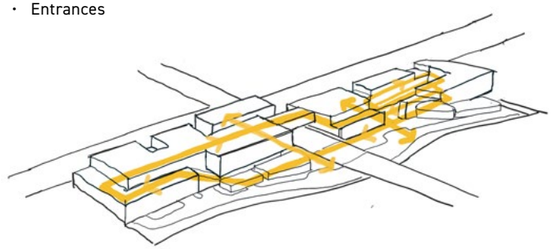
Science Ready

- Structural / Vibration
- Mechanical
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Service / Access
- Basement
- Seismic & Separation



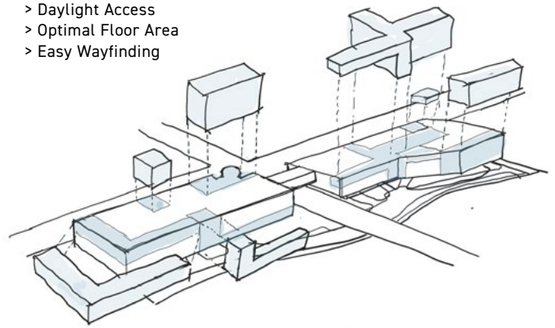
Placemaking "Loop"

- Science Loop
- Research Park Loop
- Entrances



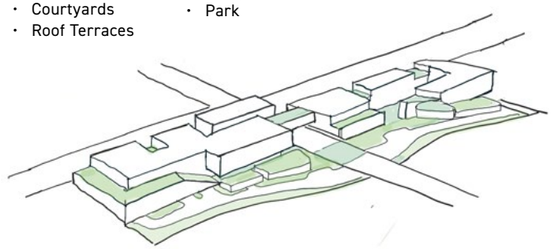
Daylight + Orientation

- Strategic removal of floor plates for:
  - > Daylight Access
  - > Optimal Floor Area
  - > Easy Wayfinding



Connection To Nature

- Entry Plaza
- Commons
- Courtyards
- Roof Terraces
- The Connector
- Ramp
- Park

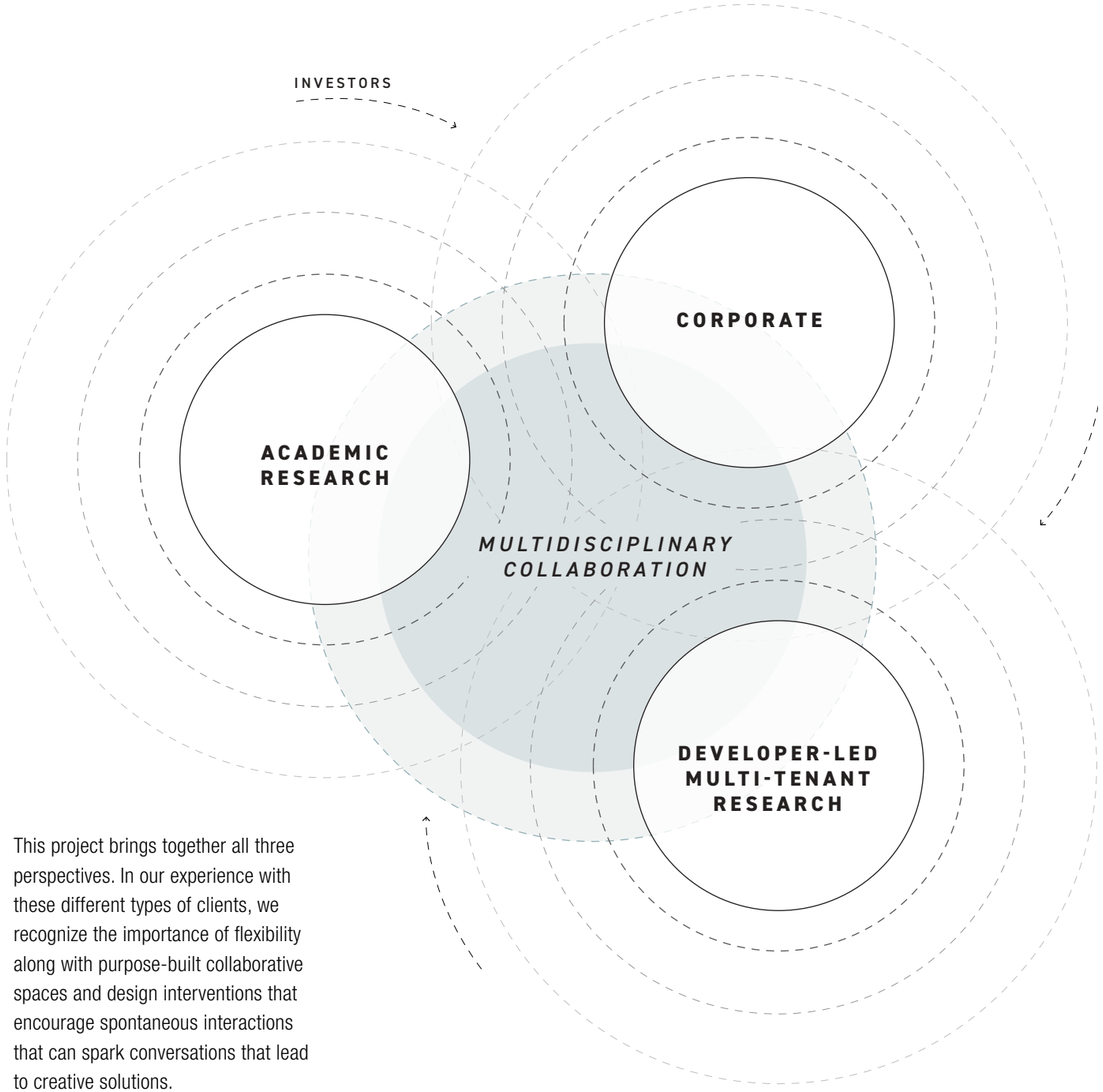


DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Flad has a unique perspective from working with clients in the academic, corporate, and developer S&T markets. Each offers their own insights into the demands for scientific research space, based on the intended user and purpose.

Academic research environments typically support the foundational interests of principal investigators with program space varying based on funding, while corporate environments house multidisciplinary teams with the goal of generating innovations that can be scaled up and commercialized. Developer-led, multi-tenant research campuses look to anticipate market needs and provide an infrastructure that can adapt to unknown tenant demands.

Conceptual lobby at Research Park East.



This project brings together all three perspectives. In our experience with these different types of clients, we recognize the importance of flexibility along with purpose-built collaborative spaces and design interventions that encourage spontaneous interactions that can spark conversations that lead to creative solutions.

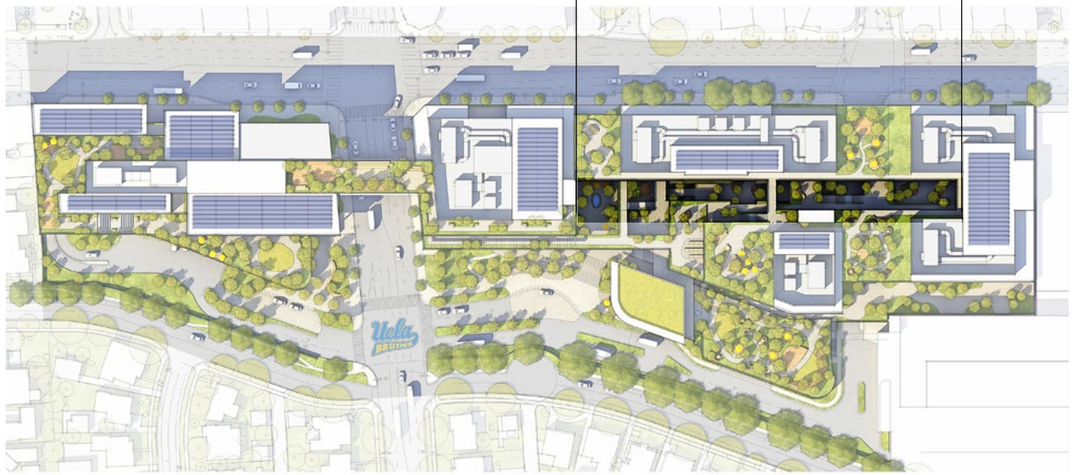
THE RESEARCH LOOP

Embracing the essential role of collaboration in driving innovation, Research Park East is organized around The Research Loop. The Research Loop is a pedestrian network that connects the front doors for all research tenants and businesses at the Research Park along an extensive array of outdoor connective walkways. This interconnected framework promotes spontaneous encounters, knowledge exchange, and cross-disciplinary partnerships that can lead to transformative discoveries.

Interactive spaces are programmed along the length of The Research Loop, with eddies consisting of resources for individual meetings and informal collaboration, as well as support for individual health and well-being.

The Research Loop reinforces the connection between Research Park East, Research Park West, the UCLA campus, and the surrounding community in a seamless ecosystem of discovery and collaboration. More than a physical framework, it creates a continuous cycle where ideas, talent, research, and investment converge to accelerate innovation and translate breakthrough discoveries into real-world solutions.

The Research Loop

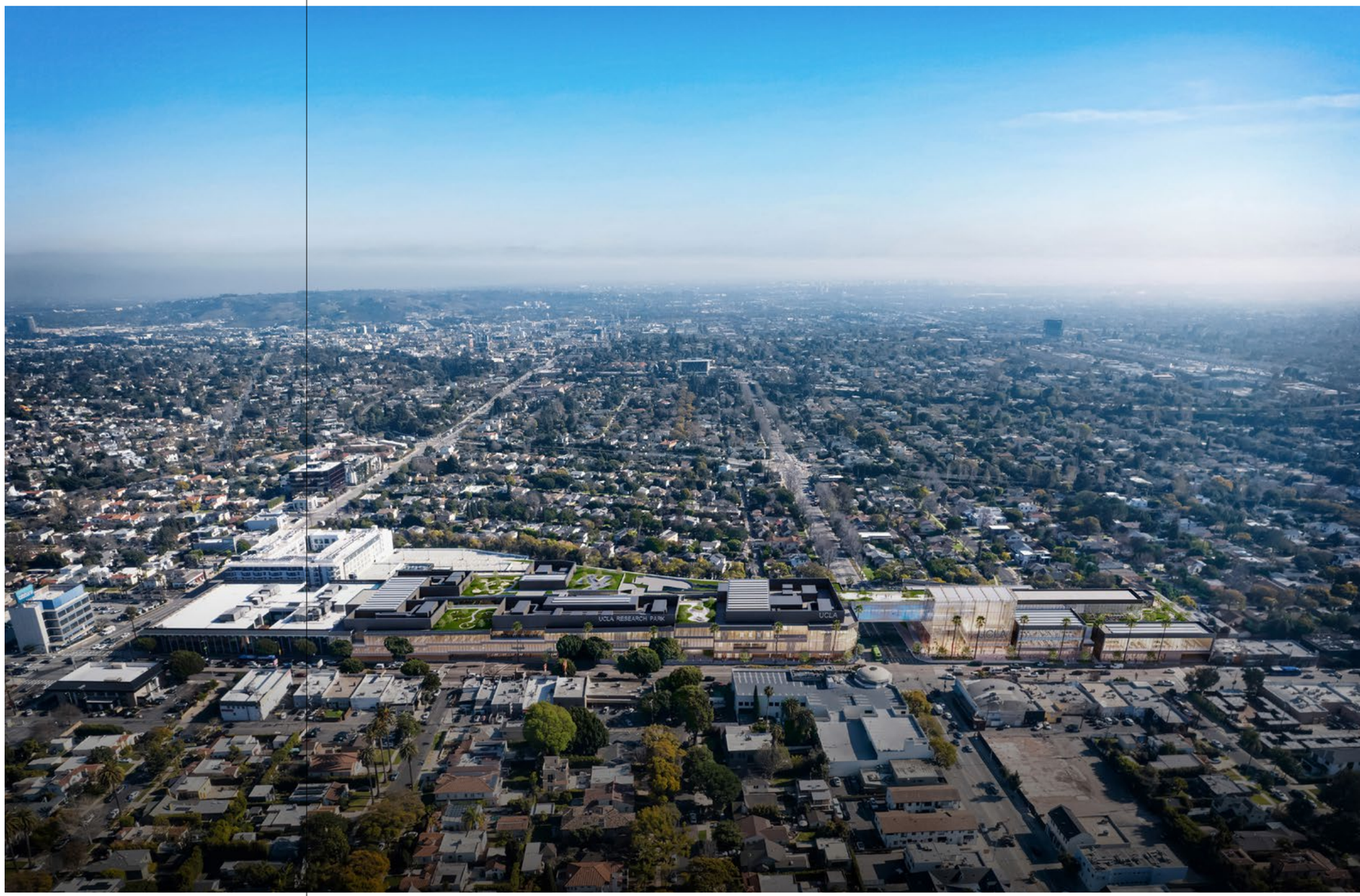


COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A key component of any adaptive reuse project is recognizing and honoring the value of the existing building.

For this project, the site holds notable historical significance in the community. Originally the site of the first drive-in theater in California, it was developed into the Westside Pavilion shopping mall along with a 12-screen theater in the mid-1980s and became a Westside landmark. In the 21st century, many of the shops closed with the decline in popularity of indoor shopping malls.

In 2018 a redevelopment effort began to convert the existing structure into an office building for a major tech company. However, the project was not completed as the pandemic reduced the demand for office space, and UCLA purchased the site.



MORE THAN A RESEARCH DISTRICT

The evolution into the UCLA Research Park represents an opportunity to reestablish and strengthen ties with the Westside community and extend ties throughout Los Angeles, California, and the world. The site has been a local economic center, a social gathering place, and a source of goodwill in the community through multiple iterations and generations.

The master plan recognizes the importance of doing more than establishing a research district. There is an obligation that it remains publicly accessible and connected to the community.

Research Park East entry plaza.

HONORING THE EXISTING STRUCTURE

The original design intent of the mall was to create a social hub. As a result, the existing structure was already well suited to support interaction among research stakeholders as well as between building occupants and the community. The master plan aims to enhance these strengths.

As part of UCLA's long-term strategy to expand its research enterprise through adaptive reuse and sustainable development, the project reimagines existing structures while minimizing the need for major new construction. Targeting LEED Gold certification, UCLA Research Park demonstrates the far-reaching impact of sustainable design coupled with effective planning and collaborative innovation.

Research Loop.

The full impact of the project will be realized over many years and decades, and thoughtful planning today ensures the environment can support generations of discoveries.

The research park creates a smoother path for translational research with the understanding that this project represents a long-term investment. As a result, the master plan emphasizes flexible, resilient environments and a phased development, which offers financial flexibility and the ability to adapt to evolving research needs.

Conceptual Research Park West pavilion entry.

Flad Architects is a national planning and design firm committed to creating environments that enhance human potential. In partnership with leading research organizations, universities, healthcare institutions, and science-based companies, Flad designs innovative facilities that enable revolutionary discoveries that have a profound impact on society.

Over 95 years of passionate and rigorous focus on buildings devoted to the sciences has earned Flad consistently high rankings among the top 20 architectural firms, both overall and in the specific areas of science & technology, academic, and healthcare design.

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