



DATE: January 24, 2023 AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.A.

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Greg Powell, Principal Planner, and
Mike Janusek, AICP, Associate Planner

REVIEWED BY: Andrew Trippel, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: LABCON NORTH AMERICA EXPANSION PROJECT
Zoning Amendments & Site Plan and Architectural Review
3200 Lakeville Highway & 1677 Fisher Drive
File# PLZA-2022-0006 & PLSR-2022-0025

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions regarding the Labcon North America Expansion Project:

1. Adopt a Resolution (**Attachment A**) recommending that the City Council adopt a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning designation for 6.51-acres of the site from Planned Community District to Business Park and an associated amendment to the Lakeville Business Park Planned Community District to remove all references to that portion of the site within the Lakeville Business Park Planned Community District; and
2. Adopt a resolution (**Attachment B**) approving Site Plan and Architectural Review to allow for the construction of an $\pm 176,000$ square foot manufacturing building and associated site improvements.

SUMMARY

Labcon North America operates in two locations in Petaluma, using 3200 Lakeville Highway for warehousing since 2018 and 3700 Lakeville Highway for manufacturing since 2004. According to the applicant, Labcon North America operates 24/7 and currently employs 290 people with a max at any one time of 140 employees. With this project, Labcon North America expects to expand overall staffing by 25-30%.

The Labcon North America Expansion Project (the project) involves a 16.33-acre parcel consisting of a 9.82-acre portion of the project site along 3200 Lakeville Highway that is within the Business Park (BP) zone and is developed with $\pm 111,000$ square feet of gross floor area, and a 6.51-acre

portion of the site along Fisher Drive that is within the Planned Community Development (PCD) zone and is undeveloped open land.¹

The project proposes construction of a ±176,000 square foot, two-story manufacturing building with associated onsite improvements including parking and loading areas, landscaping, and required public improvements on a 16.33-acre parcel in Lakeville Business Park. The new development would be all electric. The project also requests a Zoning Map amendment and an amendment to the Lakeville Business Park Planned Community Development to rezone the 6.51-acre portion of the site to the Business Park zoning district and to remove the site from the Lakeville PCD (the project and the amendments are described in greater detail below).

The Labcon North America Expansion Project would be funded in part by a \$59.3 million contract award from the U.S. Department of Defense on behalf of and in coordination with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. According to the applicant, the award was granted to support Labcon's production of pipette tips and tubes as part of the supply chain for COVID-19 diagnostic testing. Additional information regarding Labcon North America and this project may be found in **Attachment G**.

This project is comprised of two elements:

1. *Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) and associated amendment to the Lakeville Business Park Planned Community Development (Lakeville PCD)*: The ZMA is requested to change the zoning designation for 6.51-acres from Planned Unit Community District (PCD) to Business Park (BP) and an amendment to the Lakeville PCD to remove all references to the parcels that comprise the 6.51-acres that are subject to the zoning map amendment. This amendment is requested to have the site under a single, standard BP zone. The Lakeville PCD will otherwise remain as adopted by City Council Resolution 2016-173. A full description of this ZMA begins on page 8 of this report; an analysis of the amendments begins on page 9 of this report.
2. *Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR) - New Construction*: SPAR is requested to allow for the construction of a new manufacturing building with ±176,000 square feet of floor area, associated parking, and other on-site improvements. A full description of the project begins on page 11 of this report; an analysis of the project per [Section 24.050 \(Site Plan and Architectural Review\)](#) of the Implementing Zoning Ordinance (IZO) begins on page 18 of this report.

Review of the project is subject to Section 21083.3 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15183 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines which mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified, shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. An Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review was prepared for this project to document compliance with CEQA, and may be at **Attachment F**.

¹ This portion of the site is developed with a 35-space parking lot along South McDowell Boulevard that provides parking for the adjacent Adobe Creek Shopping Center.

PROJECT SETTING & BACKGROUND

Location and Context

The project is located in southeast Petaluma, roughly two miles southeast of downtown Petaluma. It is in an area designated by the [2025 General Plan](#) as the Lakeville Highway Planning Subarea and the South East Planning Subarea abuts the site to the north. Both subareas are served by Lakeville Highway (State Route 116), a four-lane, divided highway that serves as the main thoroughfare to the area and is a roadway that is designated by the General Plan as a gateway to Petaluma both from the Highway 101 interchange and the approach from the unincorporated areas within Sonoma County to the southeast.

The Lakeville Highway Planning Subarea consists of marshlands, public trails, open space along the river, business and light industrial parks, and a residential neighborhood. The area south of Lakeville Highway includes retail and service uses within the Adobe Creek Shopping Center, light industrial uses to include Scott Laboratories, Petaluma Poultry, Clover, Cowgirl Creamy, and BioMarin Pharmaceutical, and a public-serving use at the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility. The area north of Lakeville Highway includes a large low-density residential area, including the Casa Del Oro and Southgate neighborhoods. Within the Lakeville Highway Planning Subarea, public recreation opportunities can be reached from a public pathway that extends south from Cader Lane to Shollenberger Park.

The project area (outlined in blue) is depicted within the context of applicable and adjacent General Plan Subareas in **Figure 1**, below:

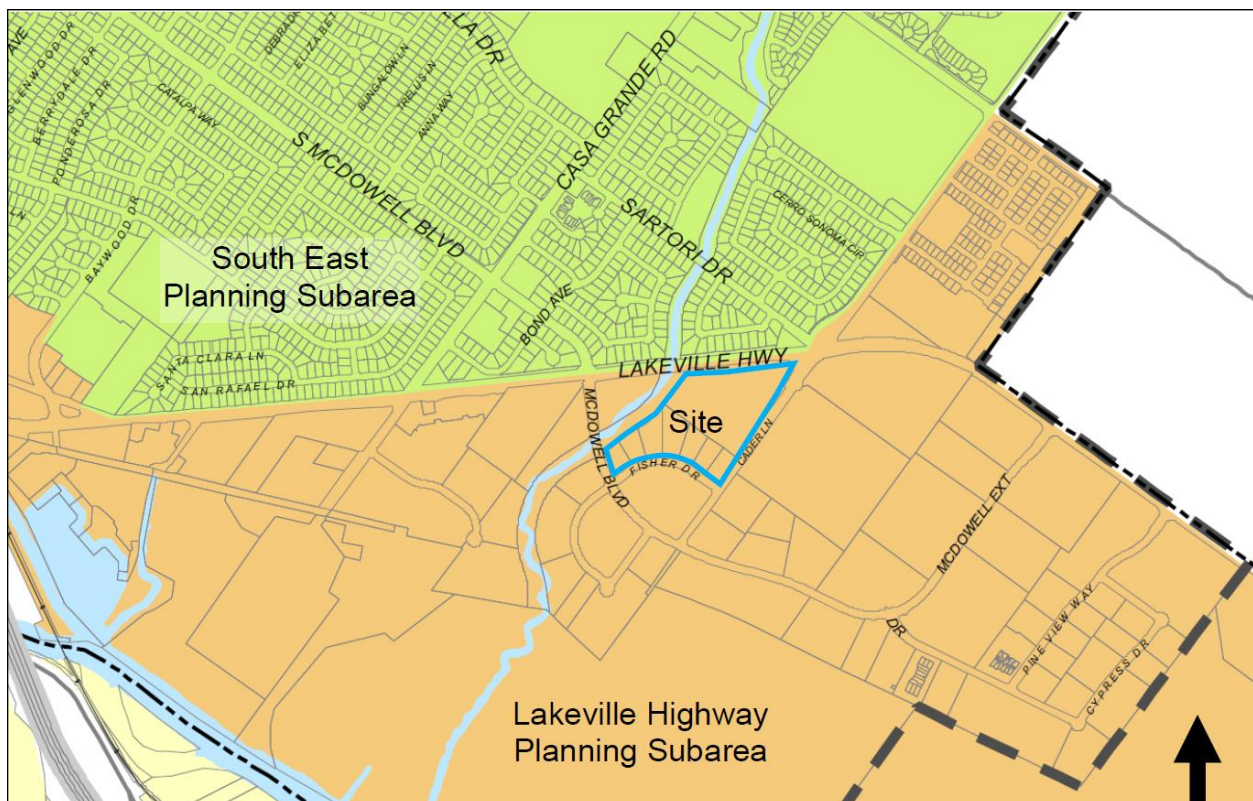


Figure 1: Petaluma General Plan 2025 – Planning Subareas

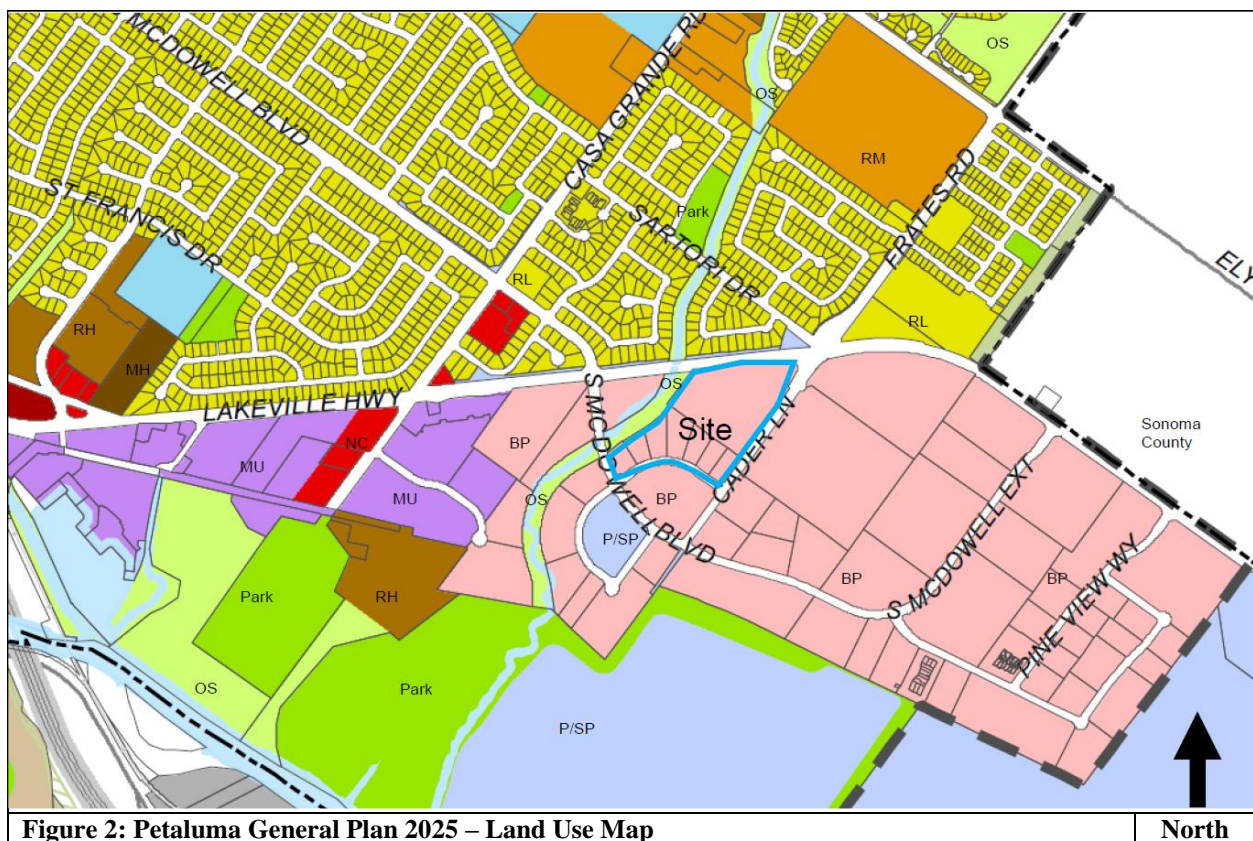
North

For the Lakeville Highway Subarea, a General Plan Policy relevant to this project is Policy 2-P-28, which directs the City to support infill and intensification of business park and light industrial uses at the eastern end of the Lakeville Highway subarea.

The General Plan land use classification for the site is Business Park, which calls for business and professional offices, technology park clusters, light industrial operations, and visitor service establishments, with retail only as a secondary use. The maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) allowed under this designation is 1.5.²

The project site is comprised of a 9.82-acre portion along Lakeville Highway zoned BP with the remaining 6.51 acres along Fisher Drive zoned PCD. According to the IZO, the BP zone is intended for business and professional offices, technology park clusters, research and development, light industrial operations, and visitor service establishments, with retail as a secondary use only.

The General Plan land use classifications in the vicinity of the project, and the project area (outlined in blue), are shown in **Figure 2**, below:



As stated in [Section 19.010 \(Purpose\)](#) of the IZO, the PCD zoning district “was originally designed to allow non-residential development with a mixture of uses, or unusual building density or layout, or with design characteristics which would not normally be permitted in a single commercial or industrial zoning district and which would achieve unique and innovative community design

² The maximum FAR can be as high as 3.0 if all required parking is structured (within or below a building).

superior to that which would otherwise be allowed by applicable standards, as well as to provide long-range planning for large tracts of land at the developing fringe of the City's urban area." While amendments to an existing PCD are allowed, the creation of a new PCD zone is not permitted.

The BP and the PCD zones are consistent with and implement the Business Park land use classification of the General Plan. The Zoning within the vicinity of the project, and the project area (outlined in blue), are shown in **Figure 3**, below.



Site - Existing Conditions

The 16.33-acre site abuts Adobe Creek to the west and is bounded by Lakeville Highway to the north, Cader Lane to the east, Fisher Drive to the south, and South McDowell Boulevard to the southwest.

At present, a 9.82-acre portion of the site along 3200 Lakeville Highway is developed with ±111,000 square feet of gross floor area, and a 6.51-acre portion of the site along Fisher Drive is undeveloped open land.³ The building at 3200 Lakeville Highway was expanded in 2018 (pursuant to PLSR-2016-0007) and is currently occupied by Labcon North America (±40,000 square feet), PRS Stainless Fabrication (±23,000 square feet), and Steris Corporation (±40,000 square feet). Other existing site improvements include asphalt pavement for drive aisles and parking, concrete loading berths and paving for high truck traffic areas, concrete flatwork for pedestrian paths to

³ This portion of the site is developed with a 35-space parking lot along South McDowell Boulevard that provides parking for the adjacent Adobe Creek Shopping Center.

connect to sidewalks along Lakeville Highway and Cader Lane, and appropriate site landscaping.

The project vicinity, public streets, and the project area (outlined in blue), are depicted in **Figure 4**, below:



Figure 4: Project Location and Surrounding Vicinity

North

Existing access to the project site is limited to the 9.82-acre developed portion of the site where vehicular access is provided via two driveways along Cader Lane, and pedestrian access is provided via sidewalks along Lakeville Highway and a portion of Cader Lane. Class II bike lanes exist on both sides of Cader Lane (from Lakeville to South McDowell on the east side of Cader and to just south of the existing driveway along the west side of Cader). The site includes meandering sidewalks along the developed frontages that abut Lakeville Highway and Cader Lane.

Internal vehicular circulation is provided around the entirety of the existing building at 3200 Lakeville Highway, and these internal drive aisles also serve as fire lanes to provide emergency access and a truck turnaround.

The project site and existing conditions are depicted in **Figure 5**, below:

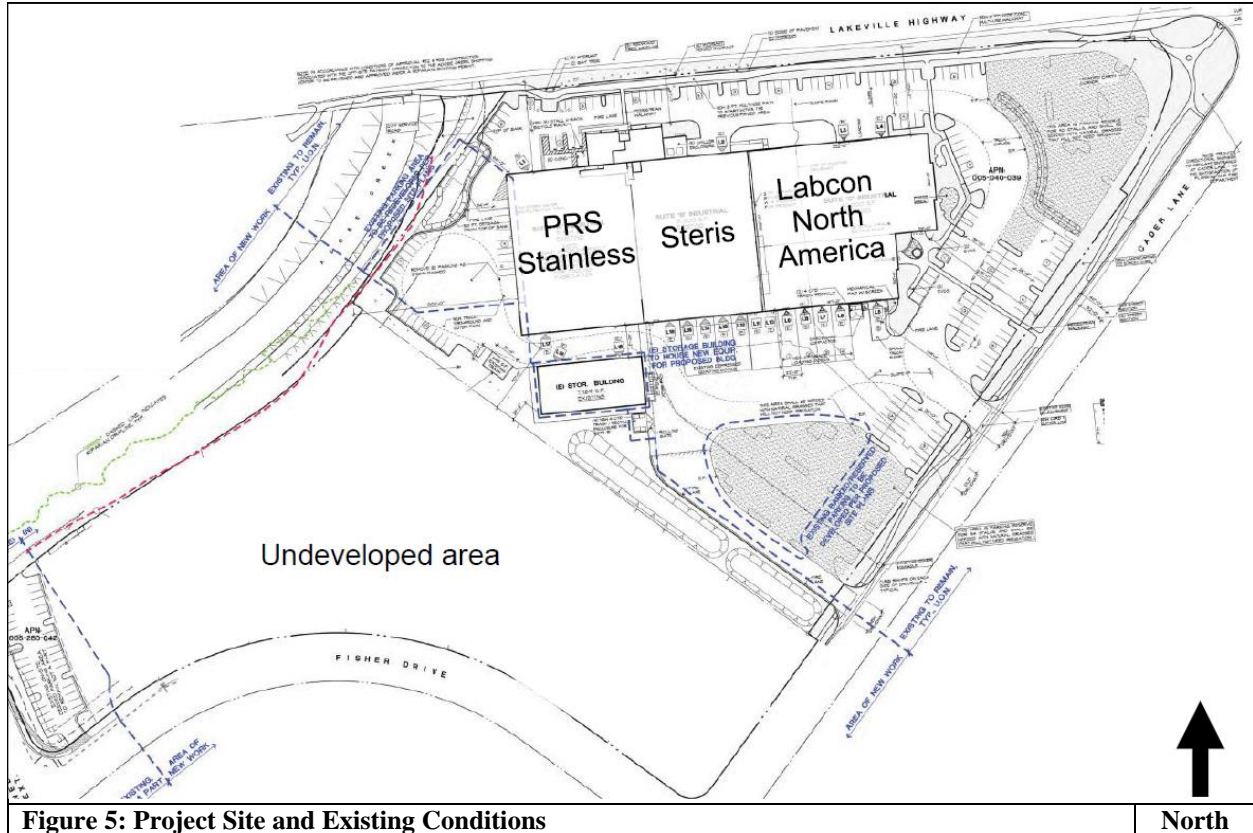


Figure 5: Project Site and Existing Conditions

North

ZONING MAP & LAKEVILLE PCD AMENDMENTS

Background

The City established the Planned Community District (PCD) zones to “establish a needed level of preplanning for development of large tracts of land and to encourage innovative design solutions while retaining good land use relationships and compatibility of uses. A specific function is to facilitate the variation of standards of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, under proper planning, to achieve unique and innovative community design wherever it can be demonstrated that such variation will result in an environment superior to that possible under normal application of standards. The P-C District is intended to be employed principally at the developing fringe of the urban area where large tracts of agricultural or vacant lands are being urbanized” (Source: Section 19-100 of the Zoning Ordinance in place prior to adoption of the Implementing Zoning Ordinance in 2008).

The City established the Lakeville PCD in 1981 to “promote more harmonious and coordinated industrial development than would be possible under the provisions of the standard M-L (Manufacturing – Light) Industrial Zoning District⁴.” The Lakeville PCD implements the Goals and Policies of the General Plan in much the same manner as the IZO, by promoting and limiting

⁴ The M-L zone was eliminated in 2008, and within the vicinity of the project, replaced with the new BP zone to reflect a new land use classification created by the 2008 General Plan.

certain land uses, setting design and development standards for buildings, fences, landscaping, signs, parking, and lighting, and requiring SPAR review.

Amendments to change the zoning for a property or to amend a PCD may be adopted by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission. For this proposed amendment, the change to zoning that applies to the site must be accompanied by a related change to the Lakeville PCD.

Description of the Proposed Amendments

The ZMA is requested to change the zoning designation for the 6.51-acres (shown as lots 2-8⁵ in **Figure 6**, below) from Planned Community District (PCD) to Business Park (BP) and an amendment to the Lakeville PCD to remove all references to lots 2-8 that comprise the 6.51-acres. The amendments were requested to apply a single zone to site and to allow for one set of rules to apply to all proposed development of the site.

The Lakeville PCD, and the portion of the project area within the Lakeville PCD (outlined in blue), are depicted in **Figure 6**, below:

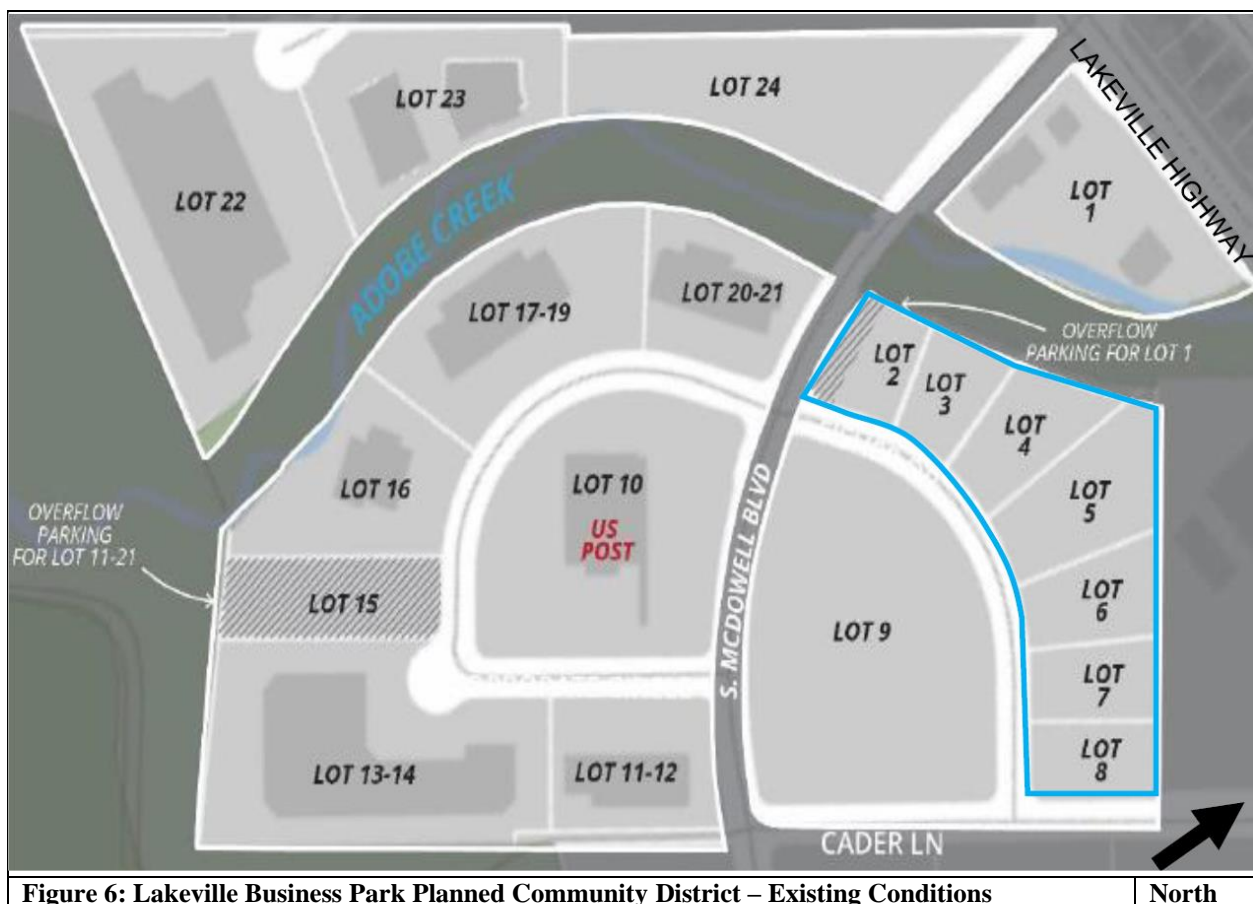


Figure 6: Lakeville Business Park Planned Community District – Existing Conditions	North
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⁵ Lots 2-8 referred to in the Lakeville PCD, and the lot that contains 3200 Lakeville, were separate parcels when this application was submitted to the City in July 2022. However, in October 2022, the City approved a lot merger to merge the eight parcels into one parcel.

Project Compliance with the Lakeville PCD

The project described on pages 11-18 was reviewed by staff for compliance to the Lakeville PCD and was found to be fully compliant with the permitted uses and development standards. Thus, the ZMA is not required for the project to proceed. Instead, the ZMA was requested to apply the BP zone across the entire project site.

Standards of Review - Amendments

The ZMA and amendment to the Lakeville PCD have been reviewed for compliance with the following standards of review. Applicable policies are generally discussed under each document identified below.

1. General Plan
2. Implementing Zoning Ordinance:
 - a. [Chapter 19 \(Planned Unit District and Planned Community District\)](#)
 - b. [Chapter 25 \(Amendments\)](#)

General Plan

The General Plan Land Use designation for the site would remain Business Park, and the proposed zoning amendment would be consistent with the General Plan Business Park designation in that BP zoning district is an implementing zoning district of the Business Park land use designation. The ZMA would remove the project site from the current PCD and result in Business Park zoning for the entire project site. The General Plan has two policies that inform the review of this amendment (each policy is shown in *italics* and is followed by Staff's analysis):

1. *Promote a range of land uses at densities and intensities to serve the community within the Urban Growth Boundary (Policy 1-P-1).*
2. *Use land efficiently by promoting infill development, at equal or higher density and intensity than surrounding uses (Policy 1-P-2).*

The development potential for infill development at this site will be unchanged by this amendment; the site may be used and developed at the same density and intensity under the Lakeville PCD or BP designations.

Chapter 19 – Planned Unit District and Planned Community District

The Lakeville PCD would be modified to remove references to Lots 2 through 8 and, with the related change to the Zoning Map, would result in a single zone (BP) to the existing parcel.

Revision to the Lakeville PCD subject to review by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, and the change to the Lakeville PCD must be accompanied by a related change to the Zoning Map. In recommending approval of a modification to a PCD, the Commission must find that a PCD, or modification thereof, “clearly results in a more desirable use of land and a better physical environment than would be possible under any single zoning district or combination of zoning districts” pursuant to [Section 19.030 \(Findings\)](#) of the IZO.

The Modification to the Lakeville PCD to remove references to Lots 2 through 8 is subject to the findings set forth in Section 19.030 of the IZO which are shown in *italics* and are followed by Staff's analysis.

1. *That any PUD or modification of a PCD, is proposed on property which has a suitable relationship to one or more thoroughfares, and that said thoroughfares are adequate to carry any additional traffic generated by the development.*

The development potential for this site will be unchanged by this amendment; thus, any existing or planned thoroughfares in the area will continue to be adequate to serve the site and surrounding properties.

2. *That the plan, or modification thereof, for the proposed development presents a unified and organized arrangement of buildings and service facilities which are appropriate in relation to adjacent or nearby properties and that adequate landscaping and/or screening is included if necessary to insure compatibility.*

New development under the PCD or BP zones is subject to Site Plan and Architecture Review. As demonstrated on pages 18-25 of this report (findings to support SPAR approval), the proposed project reflects development that is appropriate for the proposed use and is appropriate in relation to adjacent and nearby properties, and the project includes adequate landscaping and screening. The findings provided for the Planning Commission to approve the SPAR under Section 24.050 of the IZO also provide the evidence for the Planning Commission to make this finding.

3. *That the natural and scenic qualities of the site are protected, with adequate available public and private spaces designated on the Unit Development Plan or General Development Plan.*

New development under either the PCD or BP zones is subject to Site Plan and Architecture Review. As demonstrated on pages 18-25 of this report of this report, and as documented within the attached Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review (see **Attachment F**), the natural and scenic qualities of the site and surrounding area will be protected. While public open space is not required by the Lakeville PCD or BP zoning, the site will have private open space along the site perimeter and within the site. The basis for the Planning Commission to approve the SPAR under Section 24.050 of the IZO also provides the evidence for the Planning Commission to make this finding.

4. *That the development of the subject property, in the manner proposed by the applicant, will not be detrimental to the public welfare, will be in the best interests of the City, and will be in keeping with the general intent and spirit of the zoning regulations of the City of Petaluma, with the Petaluma General Plan, and with any applicable plans adopted by the City.*

As demonstrated on pages 18-25 of this report of this report, and as documented within the attached Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review, the site would be developed in a manner that will not be detrimental to the public welfare, will be in the best interests of the City, and will be in keeping with the general intent and spirit of the Petaluma General Plan and IZO.

In addition, any development of the site is required to comply with IZO land use and development standards, as well as all other applicable City regulations including those contained in Building and Fire Codes. This will ensure that development will not be detrimental to the public welfare.

Chapter 25 – Amendments

Pursuant to [Section 25.010 \(Amendment\)](#) of the IZO, the IZO may be amended by changing the boundaries of any district (this ZMA) or by changing any other provision thereof (the Lakeville PCD amendment), whenever the public necessity and convenience and general welfare require such amendment. The amendments to the IZO may be adopted by the City Council upon recommendation of the Planning Commission. For this project, the amendment of the zoning map must be accompanied by the related change to the Lakeville PCD. The amendment to the zoning map and to the Lakeville PCD is subject to the findings shown in *italics* and is followed by Staff's analysis.

1. *The proposed amendment is in general conformity with the Petaluma General Plan and any applicable plans.*

Pursuant to [Section 4.020.N \(Purpose of Established Zones\)](#) of the IZO, the BP zone implements the underlying BP General Plan land use classification and is therefore consistent with the General Plan. Additionally, the rezoning would create consistent zoning at the project site and across the entirety of the 16.33-acre parcel on which it is sited.

2. *The public necessity, convenience, and general welfare require or clearly permit the adoption of the proposed amendment.*

The public necessity, convenience, and general welfare clearly permit the adoption of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment and amendment to the Lakeville PCD. The amendments will create a single zone for a single parcel of land and will allow for one set of rules to apply to the site for the convenience of the property owner and will allow unity between the existing and proposed building for aesthetics.

Based upon the findings made above, staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt the requested Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning from PCD to BP and to adopt related amendments to the Lakeville PCD as depicted in Exhibit 1 of **Attachment A** (revisions to the Zoning Map) and Exhibit 2 of **Attachment A** (revisions to the Lakeville PCD).

SITE PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Background

The project is subject to the provisions of Section 24.050 of the IZO. The purpose of Site Plan and Architectural Review is “to achieve a satisfactory quality of design in individual buildings and sites, appropriateness of buildings to their intended use, mitigate the environmental impacts of buildings and sites, and facilitate harmony between developments and their surroundings.”

Project Description

The project would involve the construction of a new ±176,000 square foot building with six 40-foot tall, 10-foot diameter silos to store raw materials, associated parking, and on-site improvements including landscaping and open spaces. Proposed site improvements include five full-size loading berths and one smaller loading berth, 132 new paved parking spaces (to include stalls reserved for electric vehicles, fuel-efficient vehicles, and high occupancy vehicles), and 138 new landscaped parking reserve spaces (to support future parking demand, if required). The new

building would overlap with a portion of the existing $\pm 103,000$ square foot building to provide for an all-weather and secure connection (each building would otherwise not be connected and thus the proposed building is not considered an addition). The new building would be all electric and on-site energy consumption would be offset by the planned installation of solar panels on the roof and projecting building awnings.

The project will also include an extension of the existing Class II bike lane south along Cader Lane to connect to the existing bike lane at Fisher Drive and new sidewalks abutting the site frontage along Cader Lane and Fisher Drive.

Post construction, the 16.33-acre parcel would include $\pm 288,000$ square feet of total floor area, with Labcon North America using $\pm 247,000$ square feet as a manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution facility, and Steris Corporation using $\pm 40,000$ square feet as a sterilization facility.

Site Plan

The proposed building would be separated from Adobe Creek to the west by a sidewalk, a two-way drive aisle, parking, and landscaping to create a setback from the property line shared with Adobe Creek that ranges from 54 feet to more than 72 feet. The proposed building would be separated from Lakeville Highway to the north by parking, landscaping, and the existing building, to create a setback of more than 270 feet. The proposed building would be separated from Cader Lane to the east by a sidewalk, a two-way drive aisle, parking, and landscaping to create a setback of 95 feet. The proposed building would be separated from Fisher Drive to the south by a sidewalk, a two-way drive aisle, parking, and landscaping to create a setback that ranges from more than 44 feet to 95 feet.

The proposed site features and areas are outlined in **Table 1**, below:

TABLE 1 – SITE AREAS AND USE		
SITE FEATURE	SQUARE FEET	% OF TOTAL AREA
Total site area	711,507	
Building coverage	258,599	36.3%
Hardscape	273,782	38.5%
Permeable paving	7,447	1.0%
Landscaped parking reserve	64,671	9.1%
Bio retention Landscaping	12,733	1.8%
Landscaping	71,165	10.0%
Deeded parking for others	23,110	3.2%

The proposed site plan showing the location of the proposed building footprint and related site improvements, proposed parking spaces, and site landscaping, is depicted in **Figure 7**, on the page that follows:

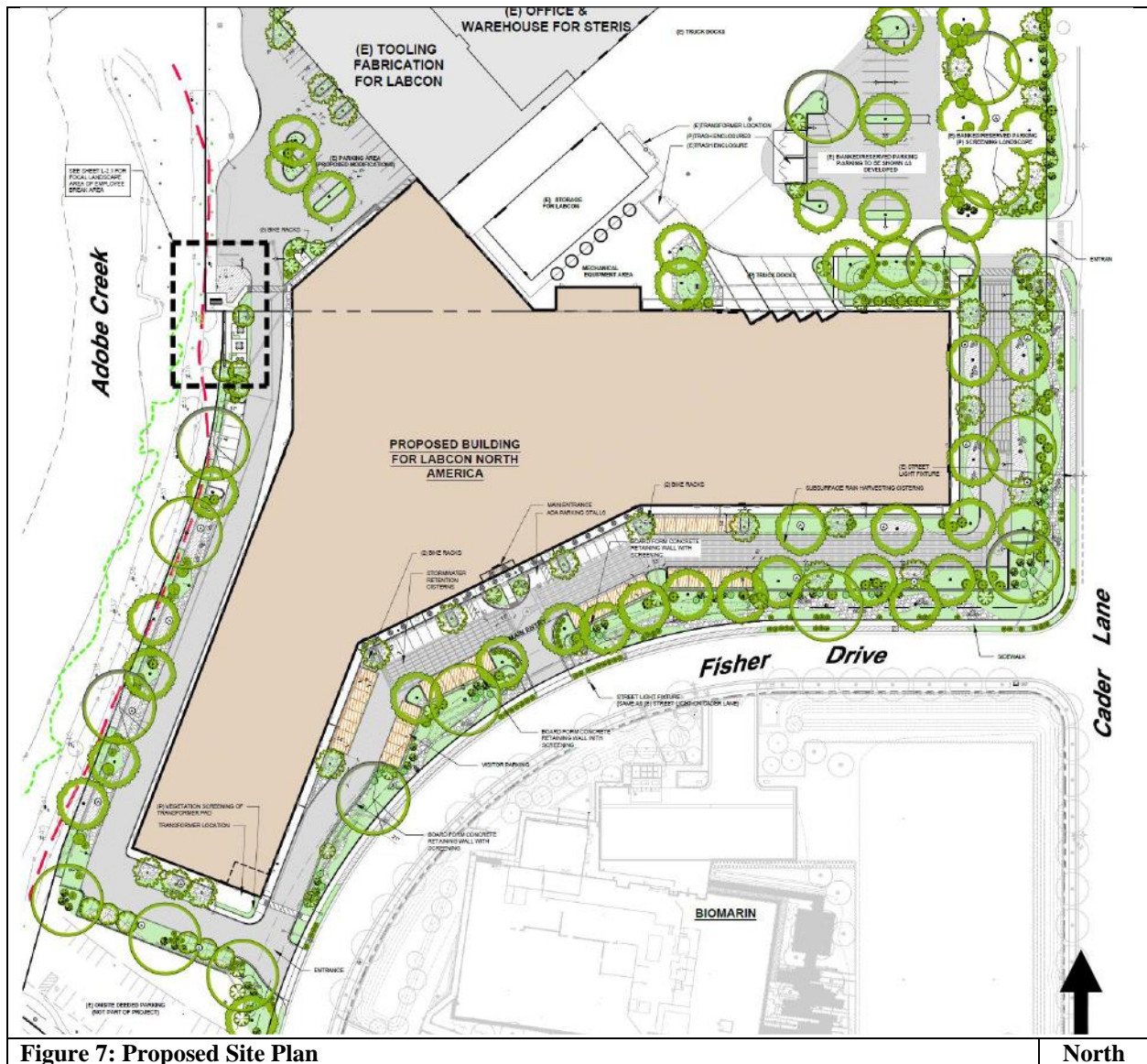


Figure 7: Proposed Site Plan

North

Please refer to **Attachment C** (Sheets A1 and A2) and **Attachment D** (Sheets L-1.1 to L-2.1) for additional details.

Access and Parking

Access to the site would be provided via two new driveways along Fisher Drive and via two existing driveways along Cader Lane. New parking stalls to include parking for electric, fuel-efficient, and high-occupancy vehicles would be constructed. Loading and truck maneuvering areas in the central portion of the site would be accessed via Cader Lane between the existing and proposed buildings.

Of the existing 176 paved parking spaces on the site, 157 spaces are proposed to remain, and an additional 132 parking spaces are proposed to be installed for a total of 289 paved parking spaces. Of the existing 174 parking spaces held in a landscape reserve (to be put into use if needed to support potential future parking demand), 135 spaces are proposed to remain, and an additional 138 spaces are proposed, for a total of 273 spaces held in a landscape reserve. Total parking planned for this site is 562 spaces, and of these, 49 parking spaces would be reserved for clean air

vehicles (fuel-efficient (FE) vehicles, high-occupancy vehicles (HOV), and electric vehicles (EV)). Also, approximately 22 charging stations will be provided.

As described above, the project will extend an existing bike lane and provide new sidewalks along the public frontage. The site includes 14 existing exterior short-term bicycle parking spaces, and 21 interior long-term bicycle parking spaces. The project would install 14 exterior short-term bicycle parking spaces and 10 interior long-term bicycle spaces, to increase onsite bicycle parking to 59 spaces. To support the use of bicycles, the project would include on the ground floor locker room areas to include four employee showers.

Please refer to **Attachment C** (Sheet A1) and **Attachment D** (Sheet L-2.0) for additional parking and access details.

Building Elevations

The architectural design (materials, colors, massing, and form) of the proposed building is intended to continue the existing architectural design exhibited in the current site development in order to present the site and both buildings to the public as a singular visual identity for Labcon North America. Concrete and grooved metal siding is proposed for each building elevation, and building massing is of a simple horizontal form interrupted by windows, changes in materials, horizontal accent trim, and awnings. Metal parapets are proposed to provide further aesthetic cohesion between the existing and the proposed building while also screening rooftop mechanical equipment.

The proposed two-story building has varying roof heights, with an average height of 33 feet and a high point of 40 feet at the south elevation. An enclosed stair to provide access to the roof would project approximately 14 feet above the highest parapet.

As stated above, the architectural design (materials, colors, massing, and form) of the proposed building is intended to continue the existing architectural design; for reference, a rendering of the 2016 addition, as viewed from Cader Lane, is depicted in **Figure 8**, below:



Figure 8: 2016 Building Addition facing Cader Lane (East Elevation)

As shown in Figure 9, on the page that follows, each building elevation would include windows to provide for natural light into the building, and additional, larger windows would be provided on the north and south elevations to serve offices and breakrooms on the second floor. Portions of the

proposed building, as viewed from the south, west and east, along the Fisher Drive public right-of-way, are depicted in **Figure 9**, below:



Looking northeast along Fisher Drive



Looking North from Fisher Drive to show the Main Building Entrance



Looking Northwest along Fisher Drive

Figure 9: Proposed Street-facing Elevations

Please refer to **Attachment C** (Sheet A10 and Sheets A12 to A19) for additional details.

Floor Plans

The ground floor would provide $\pm 82,000$ square feet for production, $\pm 40,000$ square feet for warehouse, and $\pm 23,000$ square feet for offices, locker rooms, restrooms, and the primary and secondary building entrances. The second floor would provide $\pm 27,000$ square feet for offices and $\pm 2,000$ square feet for warehousing. The ground and second floors are depicted in **Figures 10 and 11**, that follow:

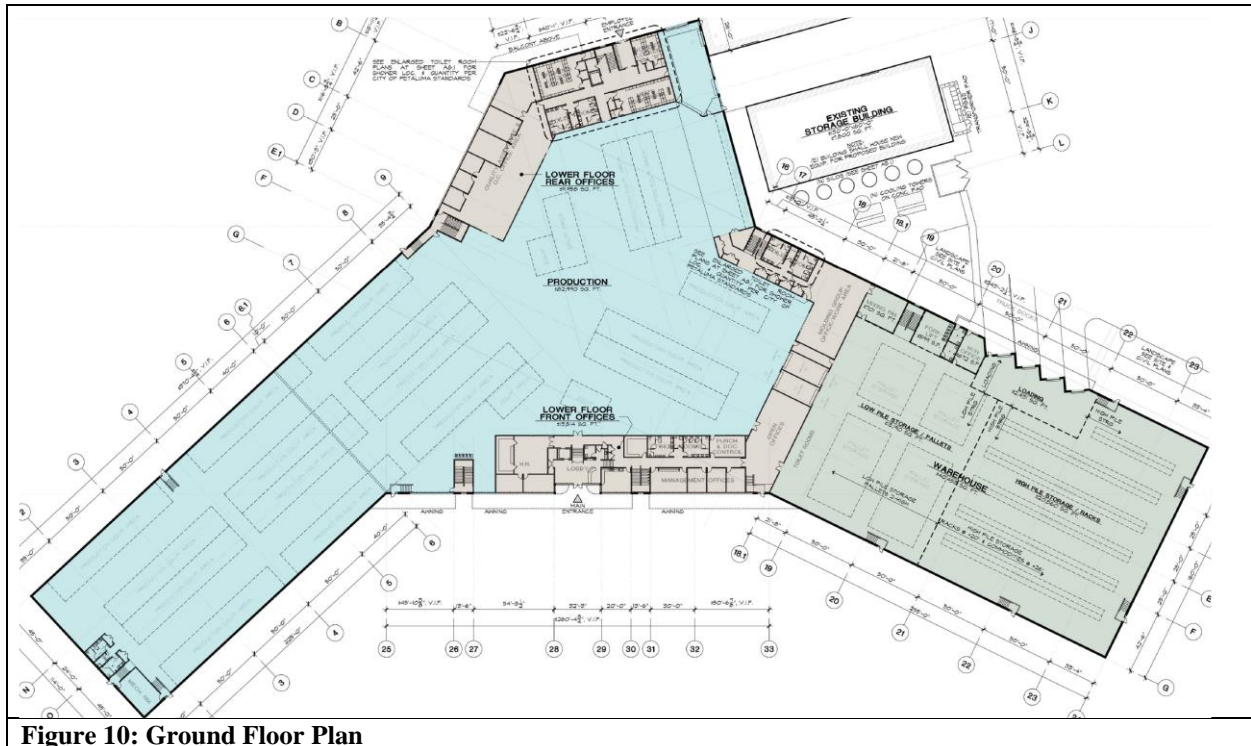


Figure 10: Ground Floor Plan

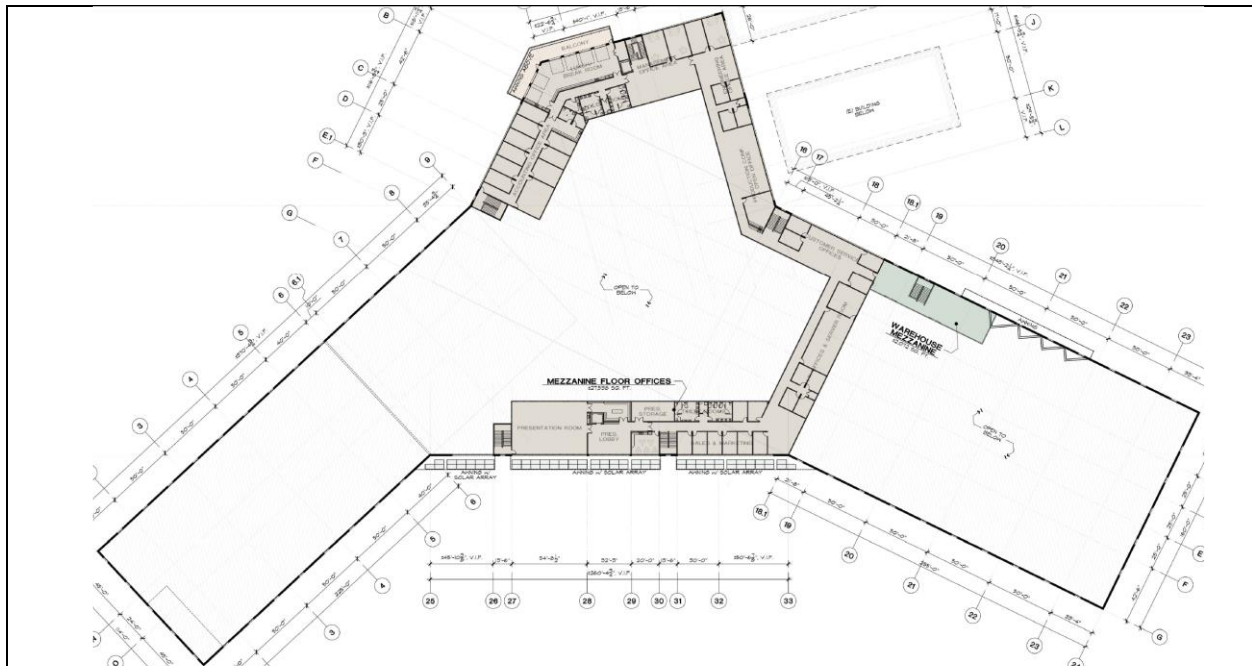


Figure 11: Second Floor Plan

Please refer to **Attachment C** (Sheets A8 to A9) for additional details.

Landscaping and Lighting

The project would remove 51 non-native and unprotected trees and five protected Redwood trees to plant 60 non-native and 65 native trees. New landscaping is proposed throughout the site to include trees, shrubs, grasses, perennials, and vines. Landscaping is concentrated at site and building entrances, along street frontages, and along Adobe Creek. Landscaping would also be installed along and within each parking area to provide ground cover and tree cover, and to ensure that the site does not have more than eight parking spaces continuous parking spaces in a row. Landscaping along the public right-of-way would screen and soften the view of the proposed building and site. New plantings would also provide for stormwater filtration and shade paved areas. Landscape areas along Adobe Creek use a combination of native plantings to enhance the riparian habitat and hardscape furnishings to provide a gathering space and provided visual access to open space.

Irrigation consists of volume drip sprinklers, automatic controllers, and a rainwater harvesting system. Onsite improvements would capture stormwater runoff and convey flows to new onsite bioretention facilities for filtration and then to the City's storm drain system. A rainwater harvesting system would collect rainwater from the building rooftop for storage within an underground system of cisterns for use in the dry season to irrigate onsite landscaping. The rainwater harvesting system is estimated to provide approximately 1.8 million gallons of water for landscape irrigation each year.

The irrigation system will also include pre-installed purple pipe for potential future connection to a non-potable recycled water source provided offsite. All landscaping will include plants that are low water use to include a mix of native and non-native species. For example, the project would plant 65 California native trees including California Buckeye, California Sycamore, Valley Oak, Coast Live Oak, Western Redbud, and one non-native: Chitalpa 'Pink Dawn.'

New wall, pole-mounted, and bollard lighting would provide exterior lighting adjacent to the proposed building, along drive aisles and parking spaces, and along the Cader Lane and Fisher Drive frontages. All wall-mounted exterior lights will be below the height of the proposed building, and pole-mounted lights will be no higher than 20 feet above grade. All lights will be shielded to limit glare or spill-over lighting. In addition, to limit off-site glare and reduce energy use, all exterior lighting will be on timers and/or motion sensors to provide nighttime lighting only when needed.

Please refer to **Attachment D** (Sheets L-1.0 to L-4) for additional details.

Accessory Structures

New accessory structures would be constructed on the site, including new silos, cooling towers, trash enclosures, and retaining walls/fences.

The site would include six 40-foot-tall silos and two new 16-foot-tall cooling towers that would be located roughly central to the site, between the new building and the existing 7,800-square-foot accessory building, and would be setback roughly 320 feet from Cader Lane. Please refer to **Attachment C** (Sheets A1 and A5.1) for details.

The existing free-standing trash and recycling enclosure would be replaced. The proposed enclosure would be roughly nine -feet tall, would be located roughly central to the site, between the new building and the existing building, and would be setback roughly 190 feet from Cader Lane. The new enclosure would consist of concrete block walls painted to match the buildings, ribbed metal gates, and metal roofing. Please refer to **Attachment C** (Sheets A1 and A5) for details.

Short retaining walls would separate the proposed landscape areas from adjacent parking areas along Fisher Drive, and each retaining wall will include a low fence/trellis to support vines to provide screening of these parking spaces from Fisher Drive. Please refer to **Attachment D** (Sheet L-2.0) for additional details.

Standards of Review - SPAR

The proposed development of a new manufacturing building with approximately ±176,000 square feet of floor area and related site improvements is subject to the following standards of review:

1. General Plan
2. Implementing Zoning Ordinance:
 - a. Table 4.4 (Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements for Commercial, Business Park, and Industrial Zones)
 - b. Table 4.12 (BP and I Zone Development Standards)
 - c. [Chapter 11 \(Parking and Loading Facilities, Off-street\)](#)
 - d. [Chapter 17 \(Tree Preservation\)](#)
 - e. Section 24.050 (Site Plan and Architectural Review)

General Plan

Each standard is shown in *italics* and is followed by Staff's analysis.

Land Use, Growth Management, and the Built Environment

1. *Use land efficiently by promoting infill development, at equal or higher density and intensity than surrounding uses (Policy I-P-2).*

The project proposes the expansion of existing industrial operations on a site that is partially developed with an existing industrial facility. The addition of manufacturing use within the new building would intensify the use of the site within the zone's allowed density and develop a portion of the site that is currently undeveloped. Therefore, the project is consistent with this policy.

2. *Encourage innovative site and building design to address parking solutions such as shared, structured, and/or underground facilities (Policy I-P-27).*

The project would provide parking to comply with the minimum required by the IZO (with the landscape parking reserve granted pursuant to [Section 11.070.J \(Standards for Off-Street Automobile Parking Facilities\)](#) of the IZO) to supply parking spaces for the existing and proposed uses, and the potential future parking demand. For demand beyond current employment levels, parking spaces would be held in a landscape reserve (to be put into use if needed to support potential future parking demand) instead of being paved. The use of a landscape reserve is an innovative design approach that will soften the massing of the proposed building when viewed from public streets, allows for additional shade trees and landscaping, and enhances potential groundwater recharge (through the introduction of native grasses rather than pavement) while also demonstrating that additional parking facilities can be constructed if warranted in the future. Additionally, the site includes 14 existing exterior short-term bicycle parking spaces, and 21 interior long-term bicycle parking spaces. The project would install 14 exterior short-term bicycle parking spaces and 10 interior long-term bicycle spaces, to increase onsite bicycle parking to 59 spaces. To support the use of bicycles, the project would include on the ground floor locker room areas to include four employee showers.

3. *Preserve existing tree resources and add to the inventory and diversity of native/indigenous species (Policy I-P-49).*

The project would remove 51 non-native and unprotected trees and five protected Redwood trees to plant 60 non-native and 65 native trees. The native trees would be provided within newly landscaped areas on-site and adjacent to Adobe Creek, and would satisfy the minimum tree mitigation requirements of [Section 17.065 \(Tree Mitigation and Replacement\)](#) of the IZO. Accordingly, the project adds to the inventory and diversity of native/indigenous trees.

4. *Support infill and intensification of business park/light industrial uses at the eastern end of the subarea (Policy 2-P-28).*

The project proposes the expansion of existing industrial operations on a site that is partially developed with an existing industrial facility on a site with 6.51 acres of undeveloped land. The addition of manufacturing use within the new building would intensify the use of the site

and develop a portion of the site that is currently undeveloped. Therefore, the project is consistent with this policy.

The Natural Environment

5. *Protect and enhance the Petaluma River and its tributaries through a comprehensive river management strategy of the following programs (Policy 4-P-1):*

- *Create setbacks for tributaries extending a minimum of 50 feet outward from the top of each bank, with extended buffers where significant habitat areas, vernal pools, or wetlands exist. Development shall not occur within this setback, except as part of greenway enhancement (for example, trails and bikeways). Where there is degradation within the zone, restoration of the natural creek channels and riparian vegetation is mandatory.*
- *Expand the planting and retention of trees along the upper banks of the river and creeks to reduce ambient water temperature and shade out invasive, non-native species*

The project implements Policy 4-P-1 by reserving at least 50 feet from the top of bank of Adobe Creek for undeveloped open space along the entire creek frontage. Landscaping improvements are proposed in the vicinity of the 50-foot setback, however, this landscaping is not subject to the 50-foot setback and would be installed using native plantings and any new plantings within the Adobe Creek area would be completed only to stabilize the bank, reduce erosion, or improve the riparian habitat. In addition, the project would install an employee break area near the creek (but beyond the 50-foot setback), to provide for passive human interaction with the natural environment. The project is consistent with this Policy.

6. *Conserve wildlife ecosystems and sensitive habitat areas in the following order of protection preference: 1) avoidance, 2) on-site mitigation, and 3) off-site mitigation (Policy 4-P-2).*

The project complies with the above by locating all new buildings beyond the required 50-foot setback from the top of bank of Adobe Creek, and thus mitigation is not needed.

7. *Protect special status species and supporting habitats within Petaluma, including species that are State or Federal listed as endangered, threatened, or rare (Policy 4-P-3).*

A Biological Resources Report prepared by Huffman-Broadway Group in June 2022, surveyed the undeveloped portion of the site to find that it is dominated by non-native plant species, and that this portion of the site lacked remnant habitat that would support special status plant and animal species, wetlands, or other waters subject to regulatory jurisdiction, and did not provide suitable habitat for native flora, special status plants or animal species. The report also found that of the special status species documented within a 10-mile radius of the site, none had the potential to occur at the site.

8. *Improve air quality through required planting of trees along streets and within park and urban separators, and retaining tree and plant resources along the river and creek corridors (Policy 4-P-6):*

- *Require planting of trees for every significant tree removed at a project site. Replacement planting may occur on the project site or on a publicly owned area, with long-term maintenance assured.*

The project complies with the requirements of Section 17.065 of the IZO, which implements this policy, and is subject to Condition of Approval #10, which requires maintenance of all landscaping. See discussion under Policy 1-P-49, above.

9. *Encourage use and development of renewable or nontraditional sources of energy (Policy 4-P-19).*

The project would include solar panels on a majority of the roof and on building awnings, and would be 100% electric. Therefore, the project is consistent with this policy.

Mobility

10. *New development and/or major expansion or change of use may require construction of off-site mobility improvements to complete appropriate links in the network necessary for connecting the proposed development with existing neighborhoods and land uses (Policy 5-P-4).*
11. *Implement the bikeway system as outlined in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and expand and improve the bikeway system wherever the opportunity arises (Policy 5-P-15).*
12. *Ensure that new development provides connections to and does not interfere with existing and proposed bicycle facilities (Policy 5-P-20).*
13. *Preserve and enhance pedestrian connectivity in existing neighborhoods and require a well-connected pedestrian network linking new and existing developments to adjacent land uses ((Policy 5-P-22).*
- *Improve street crossings and complete gaps in the sidewalk system through development review and capital improvement projects.*
14. *Establish a network of multi-use trails to facilitate safe and direct off-street bicycle and pedestrian travel. At the minimum, Class I standards shall be applied unless otherwise specified (Policy 5-P-25).*
15. *Locate connections to Class I facilities from parallel routes along the parcel line of adjoining properties to provide separation from parking lots and buildings; design connections as Class I facilities (Policy 5-P-27).*
16. *Require all new development abutting any public trail to provide access to the trail (Policy 5-P-30).*
17. *Make bicycling and walking more desirable by providing or requiring development to provide necessary support facilities throughout the city (Policy 5-P-31).*

As stated above, the project proposes new sidewalks and a bike lane to connect to existing sidewalks and bike lanes in the area. The project would also site furnishings and landscaping abutting Adobe Creek providing access to open space. Lastly, the project exceeds the required number of bicycle parking spaces, providing 59 bicycle parking spaces in total and four indoor showers to encourage biking to the site, which enhances mobility. The project is consistent with the Mobility policies identified above.

Implementing Zoning Ordinance

The site is currently located in the PCD zone as shown on the Zoning Map in **Figure 3** above, however, the applicant has requested a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning of the 6.51-acre portion of the site along Fisher Drive to BP. The proposed uses are permitted by-right within both the Lakeville PCD and the BP zones. For the purpose of this section, the report is written to analyze project compliance per the BP zone, and not the Lakeville PCD (but as stated above, the

project is fully compliant with the PCD development standards).

Generally, the BP zone is intended for business and professional offices, technology park clusters, research and development, light industrial operations, and visitor service establishments. Consistent with the General Plan land use classification for BP, the BP zone allows for a maximum FAR of 1.5. The existing building at the site supports warehousing/processing uses, as well as ancillary office uses. The proposed expansion will be occupied by uses most closely associated with the classifications of “Light Manufacturing/Processing” and “Wholesaling and Distribution.”

The proposed project’s compliance with the applicable objective development standards is outlined in **Table 2**, below.

TABLE 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH TABLE 4.12 & SECTIONS 11.060, 11.090 & 11.100 OF THE IZO		
STANDARD	MAX/MIN	PROPOSED
Setback - Primary Structure		
Front (Fisher Drive)	0 feet (min)	44 feet-6 inches
Street Side (S. McDowell Blvd)	0 feet (min)	166 feet-3 inches
Street Side (Lakeville Hwy)	0 feet (min)	274 feet
Street Side (Cader Lane)	0 feet (min)	95 feet-1 inch
Side (Adobe Creek)	0 feet (min)	54 feet
Rear	0 feet (min)	N/A
Height – Primary Structure	40 feet (max)	40 feet (highest point; varying heights)
Height - Accessory Structure	15 feet (max)	9 feet
Parking		
Automobile Spaces	561 (min)	562 (289 paved spaces and 273 spaces held in a landscape reserve ¹)
Bicycle Spaces	56 (min)	59
Loading Berths	14 (min) ²	25
Gross Floor Area (SF)	1,049,976 (max)	288,209
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	1.5 (max)	0.41
1. Section 11.070.J of the IZO prescribes a ‘landscape reserve’ parking standard that allows a portion of required parking spaces, within the BP zone and that exceeds current employment needs, to be reserved as a landscaped area. A condition of approval requires that, if parking demand increases, spaces within the landscape reserved will be converted to parking spaces as needed. 2. Per Table 11.3 of the IZO, 5 berths are required for industrial establishments with 50,000 – 75,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area plus 1 berth per additional 25,000 sq. ft.		

Site Plan and Architectural Review

The project is subject to the provisions of Section 24.050 of the IZO. Each standard is shown in *italics* and is followed by Staff’s analysis.

- The project uses quality materials and the overall design is harmonious and in proportion in itself and in relation to adjacent development, based on the following:*

The project would include the same quality materials that are exhibited in the existing building and will reflect the materials and colors that are commonly found within business park settings and present on adjacent development, such as concrete and metal siding, metal parapets, and glass windows. The use of these materials and colors ensures harmony and proportion with the overall design of the site, as similar colors and materials are used on the existing buildings. The project includes these materials, as well as various architectural design features (e.g. varying roof parapets, changes in wall planes), applied equally across the building elevations

visible from both site frontages.

- a. *The architectural style is appropriate for the project, and compatible with the character of the neighborhood.*

The architectural style of the proposed building is appropriate and compatible with the overall character of the adjacent business park neighborhood in that similar building features (e.g. horizontal massing, varying wall planes, roof form) and siding materials (e.g. concrete, metal) will be used to ensure the project is in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood while also providing a cohesive design aimed at improving the overall aesthetics of a prominent site visible from three public streets.

- b. *The siting of the structures on the property is appropriate for the site and as compared to the siting of other structures in the neighborhood.*

The siting of the building is appropriate for the site and consistent with the siting of other structures in the business park neighborhood. The proposed building is placed outside of the required setback areas for the BP zone as well as the required setback from Adobe Creek. Consistent with surrounding sites within the business park, parking areas and landscaping are proposed between the buildings and the public frontages.

- c. *The size, location, design, color, number, lighting, and materials of all signs and outdoor advertising structures is in accordance with all applicable requirements of this Zoning Ordinance and appropriate for the site and compatible with the character of the neighborhood.*

Although a specific sign design is not proposed at this time, a wall sign indicating the Labcon logo is shown on Sheet A13 of project plans at **Attachment C**. The size, location, design, color, number, lighting, and materials of such a sign, as well as any future building-mounted sign, is not subject to review or approval by the Planning Commission and would be reviewed through a subsequent Sign Permit and in conformance with [Chapter 20 of the IZO \(Signs and Sign Structures\)](#).

- d. *The bulk, height, and color of any proposed structure is appropriate for the site and as compared to the bulk, height, and color of other structures in the neighborhood.*

The bulk, height, and color of the proposed structures are in harmony with existing structures in the immediate neighborhood in that: 1) the roof form is compatible with other structures found within the business park neighborhood, 2) the building would incorporate various roof heights ranging from approximately 27 feet to 40 feet and averaging approximately 33 feet while not exceeding the maximum allowed average building height of 40 feet, and 3) the buildings are painted in tones similar to the existing building. In addition, the proposed building is consistent with the bulk, height, and colors found on abutting and confronting properties.

2. *Landscaping in accordance with applicable City standards and that is appropriate for the site and compatible with the character of the neighborhood will be provided on the site. Existing trees shall be preserved wherever possible, and shall not be removed unless approved by the*

Planning Commission.

The proposed landscaping is in keeping with the character and design of the site and will significantly improve the overall aesthetics of the site. Landscaping is concentrated along public frontages, at site and building entrances, and along Adobe Creek. While the project would remove 51 unprotected trees and five protected trees, replacement trees and landscaping are proposed in landscape planters within parking areas and street frontages and in the riparian corridor adjacent to the Adobe Creek Corridor pursuant to Section 17.065 of the IZO. The project would plant 60 non-native and 65 native trees. Native trees proposed consist of 16 California buckeyes, 3 California sycamores, 8 valley oaks, and 39 coast live oaks. Drought-tolerant landscaping will also be installed within the site, including various trees, vines, shrubs, and ground cover in keeping with the character of the building. Lastly, the applicant is required to comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance at Building Permit through the submission and approval of a Landscape Document Package. Accordingly, the project landscaping is in keeping with the character and design of the site, and the City's Tree Preservation standards in Chapter 17 of the IZO are met.

3. *Ingress, egress, internal circulation for bicycles and automobiles, off-street automobile and bicycle parking facilities and pedestrian ways are designed so as to promote safety and convenience and conform to applicable City standards. Any plans pertaining to pedestrian, bicycle, or automobile circulation have been routed to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee for review and approval or recommendation.*

The site's ingress, egress, internal circulation for bicycles and automobiles, off-street automobile and bicycle parking facilities, and pedestrian ways, promote the safety and convenience and conform to City standards in that: 1) two new driveways will be introduced along Fisher Drive, 2) two existing driveway will be maintained along Cader Lane, 3) internal circulation will maintain access around the entire building, 4) covered and uncovered bicycle parking facilities are proposed in excess of the minimum required, 5) bicycle facilities will be provided along site frontages, 6) adequate automobile parking is provided to accommodate current demand, and any intensification of use that would require more parking may be accommodated by the conversion of the landscape parking reserve to paved parking, and 7) pedestrian facilities will be installed along site frontages and within the interior of the site to provide safe access to and along the site. Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee review was not required as the proposed improvements are an extension of existing facilities. Also, as documented within the Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review prepared for this project (see **Attachment F**), site improvements and ingress and egress to public streets were designed to ensure the safety and convenience for pedestrians, automobiles, and bicycles.

4. *The design is of good character and has been prepared by a professional designer, such as an architect, landscape architect or other practicing urban designer or person with equivalent skill and qualifications.*

As documented within this report, the design is of good character and reflects the skill and qualifications of licensed Architects, Landscape Architects, and Civil Engineers as shown in **Attachments C-E**.

5. *The application and the project for which it seeks approval are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), or the environmental impacts of the project including impacts to or of biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles travelled, land use, population and housing, agriculture and forestry resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, mineral resources, public services, utilities and service systems, air quality, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, noise, and recreation are avoided, or are mitigated by conditions imposed by the reviewing authority so as to be less than significant, or are approved based on overriding considerations in accordance with all applicable CEQA requirements.*

As summarized later in this report, an Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review was prepared for this project to document that the development of the project was planned for and analyzed in the EIR certified for the City of Petaluma General Plan and that there were no project-specific significant effects. As such, the analyses in the General Plan program-level EIR are applicable to the project and provide the basis to document compliance with CEQA (see **Attachment F**).

6. *The proposed structure and use, subject to any conditions which may apply, conforms with the applicable requirements of this Zoning Ordinance and applicable policies and programs of the City's General Plan and any applicable specific plan, and the proposed use will not, under the circumstances of the conditional use application, constitute a nuisance or be detrimental to the public welfare of the community.*

As evidenced by this staff report, the proposed building conforms with the applicable requirement of the IZO and applicable policies of the General Plan. The project would expand the manufacturing and warehousing uses that exist on the site, and these uses are consistent with the General Plan land use classification for the site. Therefore, the proposed building will not constitute a nuisance or be detrimental to the public welfare of the community.

For these aforementioned reasons, staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the application for Site Plan and Architectural Review and adopt the conditions of approval found in Exhibit 1 of **Attachment B**.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Per [Section 24.100.A \(Public Notice\)](#) of the IZO, a neighborhood meeting for a project subject to review by the Planning Commission is required when a project site is within, immediately adjacent to, or in close proximity to a residential neighborhood. A neighborhood meeting was not required for this project because the project is not within a residential neighborhood, and the nearest residential neighborhood is located roughly 375 feet to the north, across Lakeville Highway.

On January 13, 2023, the applicant installed three signs on-site to inform the public of the January 24, 2023, Planning Commission Public Hearing. Pursuant to Section 24.100.B of the IZO, each sign was at least 32 square feet in area and placed in a position most visible to the public along the Lakeville Highway, Cader Lane and Fisher Drive frontages.

On or before January 14, 2023, notice of a public hearing was published in the Argus Courier and mailed to all property owners and occupants within 1,000 feet of the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Section 21083.3 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified, shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. To determine whether this project reflected development that was planned for and analyzed in the General Plan EIR and whether there were project-specific significant effects peculiar to the project or its site, staff prepared an Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review (see **Attachment F**).

The Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review prepared by staff documents that the development of the project was planned for and analyzed in the EIR certified for the City of Petaluma General Plan and that there were no project-specific significant effects as the project is located on an existing site for its intended use that was analyzed under the General Plan EIR. As such, additional environmental review is not required for this project. A more detailed discussion may be viewed in the attached Environmental Checklist.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A:** Draft Resolution to recommend that the City Council adopt a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning designation for 6.51-acres of the site from Planned Community District to Business Park & related amendments to the Lakeville Business Park Planned Community District to remove all references to the portion of the site within the Lakeville Business Park PCD, with Exhibits:
Exhibit 1: Zoning Map
Exhibit 2: Revised Lakeville PCD
Exhibit 3: Draft City Council Resolution and Ordinance
- Attachment B:** Draft Resolution to approve Site Plan and Architectural Review to allow for the construction of a manufacturing building with ±176,000 square feet of floor area, with Exhibit:
Exhibit 1: Conditions of Approval
- Attachment C:** Architectural Plans, dated October 5, 2022
- Attachment D:** Landscape Plans, dated October 5, 2022 & January 4, 2023
- Attachment E:** Civil Plans, dated October 5, 2022
- Attachment F:** Environmental Checklist for Streamlined Review, dated January 2023
- Attachment G:** Applicant Statement/Project Description, dated January 17, 2023