

Industrial Park Infrastructure 101

Know your basic design-build elements.

INDUSTRIAL PARKS are an increasingly common sight these days. Drive along any major highway and you're bound to see at least one. That's because more and more companies realize they can reduce inventory and transportation costs, while at the same time maximize production capability, by locating their assembly, warehouse/distribution, and sometimes their office facilities in one easily accessible location.

Over the past 20 years, industrial parks have come to resemble office parks, professionally landscaped according to the aesthetic tastes of the owner(s) and tenant(s). Therefore, the infrastructure necessary to make industrial parks not only look attractive but, more important, function properly and at maximum capacity, requires extra-careful planning and execution. Prospective tenants who understand the infrastructure of an industrial park are better able to make more informed decisions about where to locate their manufacturing facilities.

Following are some basic design-build elements end users should know about industrial park infrastructure.

◆ **Traffic flow.** First and foremost, how do vehicles move into and out of the park, and within its interior? Main road arteries feeding from the highway into the park ought to have proper turning lanes to allow sizeable vehicles enough lateral space. Similarly, interior roads within the park must have the proper radius so there is easy maneuvering between warehouse, distribution, and assembly facilities. Think synchronicity. You want all traffic to flow smoothly, efficiently, and in an orderly fashion.

◆ **Park layout.** When parks are designed, roads and buildings are laid out to maximize building square footage, while considering connection with the utility's systems. Utility infrastructure — including

gas, electric, water, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and telecommunications — are sized and located to support the future building(s).

◆ **Retention and detention areas.** An element critical to the design and construction of any industrial park is the location of its retention and detention areas. A retention area is essentially a wet pond that retains water runoff from storms and sewers. In contrast, a detention area is a dry pond that controls water flow rate via a restrictor as determined by the municipality. Depending on high water level, retention and detention areas can be built as one system or several separate systems stationed in a series. FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) determines the tributary to which the storm water must be conveyed. This must be considered in planning the location of the detention/retention.

◆ **Aesthetics.** Landscaping is the first thing people see when passing or entering an industrial park. A well-designed and attractive park not only enhances the value of its properties but also promotes environment-friendly building practices. When collaborating with the park's developer on an overall design plan, it is essential to discuss details. These include roadway lighting — whether to use high pressure sodium (yellow), or metal halide (white) lamps, square poles or round poles, etc. — as well as the type of landscaping that lines the right of ways: for example, prairie style (with a variety of grasses and fewer trees), or a more traditional landscape (oaks and elms with fewer grassy areas).

Understanding these basic elements of infrastructure will save you time, effort, and certainly a significant amount of money should an opportunity to invest or locate in an industrial park come your way.

By Carmen G. Dodaro,
Executive Vice President, FCL Builders, Inc.



Prospective tenants who understand the infrastructure of an industrial park are better able to make more informed facility location decisions.