

Grafton Science Park: A Campus and Services for Innovative Companies



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SUMMARY

JM Holdings Corporation (JM Holdings), a subsidiary of Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine (Cummings), is pleased to provide preliminary background information for the development of a new biomanufacturing facility for your company.

A location at Grafton Science Park has many advantages:

- **Major permits are in-hand**, including local master plan approval and a Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) Certificate by the state.
- Our location offers convenient access to the Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the University of Massachusetts Medical School (8 miles) and to Boston/Cambridge (35 miles), as well as to a number of manufacturing, technology and life science companies already located in Worcester County.
- Town water and sewer are at the site. NStar is providing natural gas service, and National Grid, electric service. Fiberoptic cable is now in Route 30 and can be extended into the park.
- The Town of Grafton is a business-friendly community that supports the project, and Cummings and the town have enjoyed a positive relationship since the school began in Grafton in the 1970s. Grafton's town meeting unanimously approved the state's Chapter 43D "Expedited Permitting" designation, securing state approval of Grafton Science Park as a Priority Development Site in September 2007. As a result, Grafton has also established a local streamlined permitting process.
- Construction of the park's first phase of roadway and public utilities has been completed and natural gas and electric power have been extended to the site.
- The town maintains an attractive, unitary tax structure and is located in a state-designated Economic Target Area (ETA). Subject to approvals from Grafton Town Meeting and Massachusetts Office of Business Development's Economic Coordinating Council, a project demonstrating job creation in an ETA can obtain negotiated municipal tax rates and an up to 6% state investment tax credit for qualifying tangible, depreciable assets.

PROJECT TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

★ Potential locations of new facility



DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The Central Massachusetts Region

Worcester County, which contains sixty cities and towns, is Massachusetts' largest county in land area (1,513 square miles). With over 700,000 inhabitants, it is the second most populous county in the state. It contains 19% of the state's land area and 12% of its population. One million people live within 25 miles, and six million within 50 miles.

Central Massachusetts provides important amenities to the manufacturing, technology, biotechnology, medical device and pharmaceutical industries and their support industries, such as:

- Proximity and easy access to the academic communities of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and eleven other colleges and universities in the Worcester County, as well as Cummings;
- A transportation network that includes ready access to interstates, commuter rail, and airport, and proximity to the Boston/Cambridge academic and scientific communities;
- Proximity to the industry's service providers and suppliers;
- Attractively priced residential and commercial real estate; and an
- Available, well-trained and well-educated work force.

The Grafton Science Park site is located on the Grafton/Westborough line, 35 miles west of Boston and a 10-minute drive from the University of Massachusetts campus and the Massachusetts Biotechnology Research Park in Worcester. The park is well positioned to tap into the region's high technology and life sciences industry clusters and its economic, educational and transportation resources.

The Community

Grafton is a business-friendly community of about 18,000¹ seeking to expand its commercial tax base. Precision Castparts, part of a Fortune 500 manufacturing company, is the town's largest employer; Cummings is its second largest employer. Reflecting this, of total local employment of 4,412, the second greatest number (907) or 21%, work in manufacturing. The largest employment category, educational services, employs 983 or 22%. The estimated median household income was \$105,283 in 2018² and Grafton's median housing unit price was \$362,200.³ The combination of industrial and residential diversity, housing affordability, relatively easy access onto the Massachusetts Turnpike, and a picturesque historic commons district have provided Grafton with high marks on quality of life issues.

Historically, Grafton has had a positive relationship with Cummings. Besides providing employment opportunities, the school contributes to the local public schools, town government administration, and public safety. Reflecting broad support of Cummings' plans, Grafton's town meeting unanimously approved the biotechnology friendly zoning overlay district zoning for this site in 1994. In May 2007, Grafton's annual town meeting approved the state's Chapter 43D "Priority Development Site" designation for the park, intended to streamline the entire local permitting process. In addition, Grafton maintains an attractive unitary tax structure, at \$16.66 per \$1,000 for FY2019.

¹ Population of 17,765 in 2010 from U.S. Census and 18,023 in 2017 from Town Records.

² Grafton income data from <https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/MA/Grafton-Demographics.html>

³ <https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/MA/Grafton-Demographics.html>, Median Value of Housing Unit with Mortgage, 2018.

The Site

The science park site is located on the western portion of the 594-acre Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine campus, which straddles the boundaries of the towns of Grafton and Westborough. About three-quarters of the campus (433 acres, including the 84-acre science park site) and all of the campus buildings are in Grafton; one quarter of the campus (149 acres) is in Westborough.

The school occupies approximately 500,000 gross square feet of building area. Since Tufts University created the veterinary school in the late 1970s at the former Grafton State Hospital, it has renovated and converted a number of hospital buildings to accommodate the needs of the school and its faculty. The school has also accommodated business users, renovating buildings for a veterinary diagnostic lab and a biotechnology business incubator. Genzyme Transgenics Corporation and Diacrin, among others, have invested in facilities at the school that house collaborative research projects. Current tenants include Woodland Pharma, Astellas Institute for Regenerative Medicine and Axol Bioscience. Cummings has also built new buildings, including state-of-the-art teaching hospitals for large and small animals, a medical library and xenotransplantation facilities. The New England Regional Biosafety Laboratory, a 41,000 GSF BSL-3 and ABSL-3 laboratory owned and operated by Tufts, was the first facility constructed in Phase I of the Grafton Science Park, and is now in operation. Tufts Farm Service maintain approximately 200 acres on the Cummings campus for agricultural uses.

The Grafton Science Park site shares its eastern bounds with the main Cummings campus. To the north, the site offers frontage on Route 30 and access to the regional transit system. The immediate neighborhood contains well-buffered residential uses to the south and land owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to the west. CenTech Park, a 120-acre research and manufacturing park, is located to the north.

The science park site is in the Office/Light Industry (OLI) zoning district, and two overlay districts provide additional opportunities and conditions. The Campus Development Overlay District (CDO) bylaw expressly permits research, development, and manufacturing in the fields of: biotechnology, medical, pharmaceutical, physical, biological, and behavioral sciences and technology; environmental science, toxicology, wildlife medicine, genetic engineering, comparative medicine, bioengineering, cell biology, human and animal nutrition, and veterinary medicine. In addition, the CDO bylaw expressly permits research and development in the fields of alternative energy and renewable energy, including production of equipment. Offices, administrative and support facilities related to these uses are also permitted, along with the commercial facilities (like food, postal and banking services, conference, convention and housing accommodations) required to support these uses.

In January 2007 and April 2014, the Grafton Planning Board approved the amended campus master plan for the expansion of facilities at the veterinary school and the development of the science park. The state approved the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the planned science park in October 1999. It is estimated that having these permits in hand or in process will shorten the project development timeline by at least a year. Moreover, in May 2007, Grafton also approved a Chapter 43D designation for the park, which will expedite local permitting. In March 2015, Grafton approved an increased height limit in the CDO— to 95 feet —specifically to encourage biopharmaceutical manufacturers to locate in the park..

Transportation and Access

State Route 30 (Westborough Road) traverses the campus and connects the school to the town centers of Grafton and Westborough. Route 30 also connects to Route 140, which provides access to communities to the north and south of the site, and Route 9, which provides east-west access.

Interstate 90 (the Massachusetts Turnpike, Exit 11) is 3.5 miles from the site, providing regional highway access via State Routes 122 and 30. The site is also 6.0 miles west of I-495, which can be reached via State Routes 9 and 30. Near this station, CenTech Boulevard, a connector road to Route 20, was opened in 2007, providing additional north-south access to Grafton Science Park.

Recent traffic analysis has determined that if Grafton Science Park is built as envisioned, traffic impacts associated with the development will be incremental in nature and spread out over a 20-year development period.

The site also has ready access to four major airports for regional, national and international travel. Proximate to the Grafton site are the Worcester Airport, T.F. Green Airport (Providence), Hanscom Airport (Concord) and Logan International (Boston). All are located within a 25-45 minute drive from the site.

Utilities

Public water and sewer mains, and electrical, telecommunications, and natural gas service are available to the site. Water is provided to the site from a 12-inch ductile iron water main, which is connected to an existing 12-inch line on Westborough Road (Route 30). A new 8-inch sanitary sewer main connecting to the existing 8-inch main (constructed in 1980) on the Tufts campus also serves the site.

National Grid provides electric power transmission in the area; generation of electricity has been open to competition from a number of suppliers since March 1998. Fiber optic cable is available in Route 30. NStar provides medium pressure natural gas to the site; an 8-inch main providing 50,000 CFH is installed in Phase I of the park.

Hydrology and Soils

Wetlands cover approximately 35 acres of the science park site and were delineated to assure that development complies with state and local wetlands bylaws, as well as the federal Clean Water Act. With the exception of minor grading for storm water basins, the park's conceptual master plan proposes no work within the limits of wetland resource areas.

GRAFTON SCIENCE PARK

JM Holdings Corporation (JM Holdings), a subsidiary of Tufts University, is now actively seeking additional tenants for Grafton Science Park, located on approximately 84 acres of university-owned land at the Grafton campus of the veterinary school. Current tenants include the New England Regional Biosafety Laboratory. Customized parcels are available for long-term (65-year) ground lease.

The park is permitted for 702,000 GSF of building area devoted to research and development, manufacturing, and other activities by biotechnology, medical, and pharmaceutical companies as well as those in the physical, biological, behavioral and environmental sciences, including alternative and renewable energy. The park may also contain ancillary facilities for office, food, administrative, hotel and conference use. The approved master plan proposes development in two phases, as market conditions warrant. Phase I would contain up to 348,000 gross square feet (GSF), with 307,000 GSF remaining; Phase II would contain up to 354,000 GSF. One 41,000 GSF facility has already been constructed. The balance of the land is undeveloped or used for agricultural support for the school.

Grafton Science Park has many advantages:

- The site is adjacent to Cummings, New England's only veterinary school. The school has an international reputation for excellence in both veterinary education and biomedical research. Cummings will enable access to its unique research services and skilled-labor pool to science park companies.
- Cummings already has over 35 companies annually as research, testing and service clients. Three of these occupy over 24,000 GSF of space on campus.
- **Major permits are in-hand**, including Master Plan approval by the Town of Grafton and a Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) Certificate by the state. The town previously adopted NIH recombinant DNA guidelines, which have been recently updated, and has streamlined the overall local permitting process, by approving the park's designation as an expedited permitting site.
- The Town of Grafton is a business-friendly community that supports the project, particularly in its partnering with Tufts in applying for infrastructure grants and streamlining the local permitting process. Cummings and the town have enjoyed a positive relationship since the school began in Grafton in the 1970s.

Tufts' Competitive Advantages

Along with competitive real estate pricing, the presence of industry "magnets" becomes important in developing a vibrant industry cluster. Primary attractions for Cummings' client companies, particularly the six currently located on campus, include access to the school's faculty for assistance with research protocols, access to technical personnel, and access to appropriate specialized facilities that companies do not include in their own build out.

Cummings has been expanding its research facilities, including the opening of the New England RBL in 2010. Paralleling its physical expansion, the school has expanded its corporate contract research services such as animal model work, veterinary pathology, biocontainment work, neurobehavior, liver physiology and infectious disease research. Our faculty expertise and teaching hospitals cover a broad range of medical specialties. The school is also increasing its capabilities in cloning, transgenic animal production, xenotransplantation, and infectious disease research. It could expand services further to include shared use of specialized facilities and equipment, and satellite animal facilities, to further serve corporate clients that locate in Grafton Science Park.

Infrastructure Improvements

Roadway construction and the extension of utilities to Phase I of the park have been completed, and the road was subsequently accepted as a public way.

Other Incentives

Grafton Science Park is located in an Economic Target Area. Subject to approvals from the Grafton Town Meeting and the Massachusetts Office of Business Development's Economic Coordinating Council, a project involving a non-manufacturer demonstrating job creation can obtain negotiated municipal tax rates and an up to 3% state investment tax credit for qualifying tangible depreciable assets. A manufacturer can also obtain a 3% state investment tax credit. In September 2007, following the town's approval of Chapter 43D for the site, the state's Interagency Permitting Board also approved the park's designation as a Priority Development Site, making it eligible for streamlined local permitting, statewide marketing, and priority for other state funding.

To attract and retain its business base, the Town of Grafton has historically used tax increment financing agreements, and has such agreements with four companies. They have provided for municipal tax exemptions between 40% to 80%, and have a typical duration of ten years with the highest tax relief in the earliest years.

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