

Cummings Research Park - History

From its beginning as home to a single engineering services company, Cummings Research Park approaches its 50th anniversary with a highly regarded reputation as one of the world's premier science and technology parks.

CRP is celebrated in numerous publications for its high quality of development, as well as the "Who's Who" list of tenant companies within its boundaries. The Park was named in 1997 as the Most Outstanding Research/Science Park in the World by the [Association of University Research Parks \(AURP\)](#).

Joint Public-Private Initiative

CRP began as a public-private initiative and has become a powerful magnet for corporate investment in the community. CRP was intended to attract and retain the world's top technology and research development companies, and to provide a world-class site for expansion opportunities for existing companies. The Park has served its corporate citizens well, enabling them to achieve significant business growth, which continues to positively impact the region's economy today. This success creates significant new investment and employment opportunities for highly qualified area residents. CRP companies can rightfully claim origins of many of the most far-reaching technology developments in the world over the past 50 years.

In 1962, the public sector entities involved in establishing CRP included the [City of Huntsville](#) and the University of Alabama in Huntsville Foundation, while private sector efforts were led by [Teledyne Brown Engineering](#) (then known as Brown Engineering Co.), with numerous other companies quickly following its leadership. Since then, a steadily increasing number of technology-based companies have invested in the park. [The State of Alabama](#) and the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County are now important partners in the marketing and promotion of the park. In many different ways, some hoped for and others unforeseen, CRP has been extremely successful in achieving the goals set forth by its founders.



Teledyne Brown Engineering (then known as Brown Engineering Co.)

Established in 1962

CRP was formally established when the City of Huntsville first zoned 3,000 acres of land area as a "research park district." This occurred in 1962, and the park was officially named Huntsville Research Park. The first private company to locate in the park was Brown Engineering, which, in concert with support from rocket pioneer Dr. Wernher von Braun, had encouraged the City of Huntsville to establish a new zoning district specifically for high-tech enterprises.

The senior management of Brown Engineering, notably Milton K. Cummings, the company's president, and Joseph Moquin, his successor, was heavily involved in the early development of the park. Moquin, then a vice

president, was tasked with securing the original tract of land, and when Cummings died in 1973, was instrumental in getting the park renamed Cummings Research Park.

Initially Managed by the UAH Foundation

The University of Alabama in Huntsville Foundation became owner of a large portion of land in the research park district. Through the leadership of the UAH Foundation Board, the development of CRP was actively managed to help the entire community achieve substantial economic growth and expansion.

Other companies quickly followed the example of Teledyne Brown, and made investments of their own. These early companies included [Lockheed Martin Corporation](#), [IBM](#) and many others. As America rushed headlong into the space race in the 1960s, development in the Park was brisk, with nearly 1,000 acres purchased and developed by private companies. By the end of the 1970s, the development of what is now known as CRP East was nearing completion.

City of Huntsville Becomes Primary Developer

In 1982, the second major phase of CRP was launched with the planned development of CRP West. A substantial new parcel of land, exceeding 800 acres, was purchased and a master plan was established by the City of Huntsville. This new phase strengthened the development restrictions on the park, rivaling, and in many instances, exceeding the quality of planned research and development parks anywhere in the world. The City of Huntsville continued to acquire land for future growth of the park, ultimately reaching its current size of 3,843 acres.

The master plan for this new section of CRP called for man-made lakes, underground utilities, aesthetically beautiful landscape requirements, and consistent and specific standards for the appearance and maintenance of all structures within the park.

The City of Huntsville also expanded the process of managing the development of the park to include involvement by the actual owners and occupants of CRP, the extended local business community, and a board of business and community leaders appointed by the mayor to provide long-term oversight.

Cummings Research Park, first established as a public-private initiative with bright hopes for the future, had become a stunning success. In 2005, Gov. Bob Riley, attending one of dozens of groundbreaking events for new structures remarked, "This research park is the crown jewel of Alabama's economic development assets." CRP continues to attract significant capital investment, with more than \$1 billion in capital invested in the period from 2004-2010, resulting in more than 5 million square feet of additional office, manufacturing and retail space.

Bridge Street Town Centre

In 1999, the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County made the initial contact with a developer from Los Angeles, [O&S Holdings](#)



On June 28, 2005, local, state and corporate officials met in Cummings Research Park to break ground on Northrop Grumman's \$80 million, five-building complex.

Bridge Street in 2008

LLC. That contact led to an announcement in December 2002 that the company had reached agreement with the City of Huntsville to begin development of a specially zoned district in the park, known as the CRP West Commercial Services District. Located in the southeast corner of CRP West, at the intersection of Research Park Boulevard and Old Madison Pike, this 100-acre tract of land was soon transformed from farmland to a world-class shopping, entertainment, and business destination known as Bridge Street Town Centre.



Today, **Bridge Street** is a regional shopping and cultural destination. Included in the development are more than 700,000 square feet of upscale retail space, Alabama's first Westin Hotel, upscale and casual dining alongside a 10-acre lake, walking trails, multi-tenant office buildings, and other commercial activities such as the Monaco Pictures movie theater and others.