

## Frequently Asked Questions for Mt. CB Campus Expansion

### Research and Education

***How important will this project be nationally?*** RMBL has become one of the leading research institutions supporting field science, with an annual federal investment in RMBL-related research of approximately \$10 million/year. This campus will be a big step forward for the nation's scientific infrastructure.

***Why will it be important?*** Biology will transform our lives in the next fifty years, much as the last 50 years brought us electronics, computers, the internet, and iphones. Considerable progress in biology is driven by "model" systems, animals or plants, the large teams of scientists working on similar systems. At RMBL, we are creating fundamental insights by extending that approach to an entire ecosystem. From food, to water, to the air we breathe, the environment is critical to the quality of our lives. RMBL is where many foundational discoveries occur. The Mt. CB campus will allow us a year-round campus and serve as a foundation for bringing emerging technologies and big data to field science.

#### ***Why is RMBL exploring a campus?***

1. More students and scientists want to work at RMBL and we don't have enough space in Gothic. We would like to accommodate that demand in Mt. Crested Butte to reduce our impacts on the Gothic corridor.
2. We have a lot of scientists and support staff that reside in Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte in the summer. It is increasingly difficult for them to obtain offsite housing.
3. We would like to bank some land in case we need to provide housing for long-term employees in the future.
4. Most of our Gothic facilities are unused for most of the year. This location will allow us to support scientists and students year-round, and to provide facilities to the larger workforce community when not needed by RMBL.
5. The project is strategically located to support winter access to RMBL.
6. We would like to operate some of our summer programs in Mt. Crested Butte to reduce pressure on the Gothic corridor.

***What does the project mean for Gothic campus?*** RMBL will continue to use the Gothic campus as it currently does.

***Will this change how RMBL supports K-12 education?*** It will make it easier for us to support year-round programming which is currently difficult due to the lack of year-round usable facilities. We would like to include research space for K-12 education programs alongside scientists.

***What kind of spaces will there be for scientists?*** We will develop year-round office and research space to host scientists.

***What do scientists do in their research space?*** RMBL supports field scientists and they need indoor space for processing field samples. For example, they have balances, microscopes, and balances. More

RMBL scientists are also using equipment to do chemical analyses, such as understanding the fragrances plants use to attract insects, or to explore the different ways in which carbon is stored in soil. RMBL scientists also deploy sensors, such as tiny soil temperature probes or weather stations. The research space is a place where they can store and work on those sensors.

***How much space will be provided for science, education, and administration?*** We are still analyzing this, but it will probably be between 5,000 and 10,000 square feet.

***When will this space be built?*** Seasonal housing will be the top priority, though we have a strong need for research and office space. If fundraising is successful, we could break ground within two years.

### ***Recreation***

***Will the project affect reduce public access to Snodgrass and the associated trails?*** No. There is a dedicated public access easement through the parcel and this project cannot, and will not, change that.

***Will CBMR be able to continue grooming Snodgrass for winter skiing?*** The site will be designed to allow snowcats to access Snodgrass.

***How will this project enhance public recreation?*** We will examine opportunities to improve public parking at the Snodgrass Trailhead and provide developed bathrooms and indoor interpretative space. We will also explore ways to support organizations which provide recreation services in the area.

***Will dogs and horses be allowed on trails?*** Yes.

***Will there continue to be public parking?*** Yes. The existing parking areas are not permanently dedicated to parking, but we intend to address parking as part of the project design. We do not yet know how much parking will be provided.

***Will this change vehicular access to Gothic?*** No.

***Will this change bus access to Gothic?*** No.

***Will this change bus access to the Snodgrass Trailhead?*** The trailhead will continue to support buses. We hope that if there are seasonal workers onsite that Mountain Express will increase their frequency.

***What facilities will be provided for the public?*** Depending upon availability of funding, we are interested in providing a visitor's center including interpretative space, bathrooms, a coffee shop, and lecture space.

***How much developed space will be provided for general public use?*** This will depend upon funding and public support, but it will probably be between 1,000 and 4,000 square feet.

### ***Housing***

***Who will control the seasonal workforce housing?*** RMBL will own the housing. Currently, the plan is for RMBL to control and manage the housing year-round. We remain open to subcontracting out management to another entity.

***Who will reside in summer housing?*** We intend to fill the units with seasonal RMBL employees as well as seasonal employees of scientists.

**Who will use winter housing?** RMBL has only a limited demand for seasonal winter housing. We will make the housing available to seasonal employees from the larger community. Currently RMBL has no agreement with an employer that would restrict use of the housing to employees of a particular employer in winter. We are open to such partnerships.

**Will there be year-round housing in the first phase?** There may be a unit or two for year-round employees, with priority going to a facilities person helping maintain the campus.

**How will people qualify for housing?** We are still figuring this out. One idea we are examining is employer certification; if an employer certifies an employee is working in the Valley, the employee will qualify.

**When will housing be available?** We don't know. The earliest units would be available would be the fall of 2020, though 2021 is more likely.

**What is the relationship between CBMR and RMBL in terms of providing housing?** CBMR has obligations resulting from obligations going back to the 1990's to provide workforce housing. CBMR has agreed to donate the property to RMBL in return for RMBL creating 17 workforce housing units that meet those obligations.

**How is RMBL proposing to meet that obligation?** To satisfy the requirement we are proposing to create housing that reasonably meets the needs of 17 seasonal employees, including sleeping, cooking, bathrooms, living, and storage areas. To provide housing in a financially affordable way to seasonal employees on the low end of pay scales, our project will involve a very efficient design that includes private sleeping and storage areas, but shared cooking, bathrooms, and living facilities.

**Given the small square footages and shared nature of some of the facilities is RMBL's proposal to create a credit based upon accommodating workers reasonable?** We believe so for two reasons. First, the requirement for CBMR to provide workforce housing was based upon the fact that CBMR's development in Mt. CB generates a need for workers that need housing. In other words, the problem the housing agreement was developed to solve was the need to provide housing for workers, not to require a certain type of housing or a certain square footage. Our proposal meets a real and unmet need for housing seasonal workers, in accommodations that are appropriate for those workers, and which those workers can afford.

Second, when this project is added to workforce housing units CBMR has already created, CBMR will have provided a generous number of units. CBMR worked out their housing obligations with Mt. Crested Butte prior to the existing code, which was updated in 2003 to reflect current needs. At the time the housing agreement was reached with Mt. CB, CBMR agreed to provide housing in excess of what a developer would be required to provide for similar projects today. So RMBL's approach will enable the creation of housing for a group of workers whose needs might otherwise go unmet. And the end result will be that CBMR, through its support of this project and other units it has created, will have enabled workforce housing, both in terms of the number of workers housed and total square footage, that exceeds expectations for new developers.

**Who will decide if RMBL's proposal meets CBMR's housing obligation?** Affordable housing regulations are not designed for seasonal employee housing, so the Town Council of Mt. Crested Butte

will have to make a final determination of whether our proposal meets the spirit and intent of the original agreement.

**Could more housing be provided onsite?** As part of our PUD application we will be requesting permission to build up to 30,000 square feet of additional seasonal housing and long-term housing. While we do not have any plans to develop this space in the next few years, we recognize that the challenges of providing housing for scientists, students, and the community's workforce will only grow. Consequently, we will set aside some land in case we need it for additional housing in the future.

**How much will rent cost?** We don't know. However, our goal is to provide beds, cooking facilities, and utilities to the seasonal workforce at a cost that is reasonable based upon average seasonal wages.

**Are there examples of this type of project in other communities?** Yes. The Aspen Music Festival uses the Marolt Ranch for housing in summer, and the facility is available to the larger workforce community in winter. <https://www.apcha.org/176/Marolt-Ranch>.

**What will the units be like?** We are still designing them so we can't say for certain yet. We do know that to provide seasonal housing on an affordable space they will need to be small and we will need to be efficient in terms of bathrooms and cooking spaces. We are exploring efficient designs that involve sharing of bathrooms, living, and cooking areas, as well as efficiency apartments. Ideally there will be a mixture of different types of units.

**How big will the seasonal housing building be?** We currently estimate it will be between five and eight thousand square feet.

**Will pets be allowed in the housing?** We do not know yet. Dogs are not allowed in the Gothic Townsite because of research. RMBL is not exploring this location as a research site, so there are no research reasons to exclude pets. Once we figure out the design and management of the housing, we will consider the issue more carefully. Our preference is to allow pets if it is feasible.

### ***Determining Feasibility of Project***

**How much will it cost to build the housing?** We are too early in the process to know for certain. Between development of the site and construction of the building, our initial estimate is around \$4 million.

**How will it be funded?** A mixture of private donations, grants, and public support. Rent will generate some income, but rental income will be used to cover operations and maintenance of the housing.

**How long will Mt. Crested Butte's PUD process take?** We expect to submit an application sometime between May and July. The fastest process would be four months. However, given the complexity of the project, we think 6-9 months is more likely.

**Will the public have an opportunity to comment?** Yes, RMBL is actively soliciting comments and we intend to have an open house. Additionally, there will be at least four public hearings as part of Mt. Crested Butte's PUD.

**If RMBL receives PUD approval, will the project happen?** No. It will depend upon fundraising.

**Is RMBL taking donations for this project?** We are currently taking pledges from donors.,

**Who do I contact if I want to make a pledge?** Development Coordinator, Erin Fabbre, at [erin@rmbll.org](mailto:erin@rmbll.org) or 940 349 7420. For a pledge of \$10,000 or more, please contact RMBL Executive Director, Dr. Ian Billick, at [director@rmbll.org](mailto:director@rmbll.org), or 970 349 6669.

**Are there naming opportunities?** Yes, we will consider naming opportunities for buildings for gifts of \$1 million or more, and for the campus of \$2-5 million.

**Does RMBL have experience with projects of this scale?** Yes. Recent building projects that have been completed on budget and on time include the Billy Barr Community Center (\$3 million) and the Gothic Research Center (\$2 million).

**Does RMBL have any pledges to the project?** Yes. We have a \$500,000 pledge.

### **Landscape Planning**

**Is RMBL pro-growth or anti-growth?** Neither. We love to see people get outside; it is why everyone comes to Crested Butte. Education is a core part of our mission and visitors give us a chance to reach more people. We are strong advocates for managing impacts, including providing effective signage, ensuring access to bathrooms, and encouraging respect for private property. Our scientists have been working on public lands since 1928 so we work hard to help research and recreation co-exist. As more people come, unfortunately management has to be more active to make it all work.

**How does this project fit with land conservation?** RMBL has directly conserved, or partnered, in approximately 30 conservation projects valued at \$20+ million with a focus on the Gothic corridor. As most of the critical pieces in the Gothic corridor have been preserved, the community focus is turning to management. The location of the campus, which is in a municipality, is perfect to serve as a portal for public access to, and enjoyment of, public lands.

**What does the future of Snodgrass look like?** We don't know. There is a substantial amount of private property on Snodgrass adjacent to this parcel which lies in the town of Mt. Crested Butte, and which has been approved for high density mixed residential and commercial use.

**Will the settling pond be moved?** No, and for security reasons, a fence will need to remain around the pond.

### **Site Design**

**Will you address light pollution?** Yes. Mt. Crested Butte has requirements for exterior lighting. We will use full cut-off fixtures. Additionally, we will be sensitive to light pollution through windows, as well as the impact of light on properties below the buildings.

**How will the project impact the Snodgrass ridgeline?** We are exploring ways to minimize our impact on viewsheds, including keeping the buildings to two or three stories and tucking them into the hillside.

**Will it really be a campus?** Yes. We are working on designs that separate pedestrian and vehicular access. Additionally, we are working on a design that will encourage opportunities for the public, residents, scientists, and students to mix in appropriate ways, involving both inside and outside spaces.