

**LANDSCAPE RESOURCE SURVEY**  
 University of Oregon Campus Heritage Landscape Plan  
 Eugene, Lane County, Oregon • Spring 2007

■ **RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION & SUMMARY**

LANDSCAPE AREA NAME

**Dads' Gates Axis (d)**

HISTORIC NAME(S)

Oregon Dads' Gates

CAMPUS PLAN DESIGNATION

Axis

CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION

National Register - partial listing  
 name: Dads' Gates

ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE

Lawrence/Cuthbert Era  
 Mid-Century Era

LEVEL OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

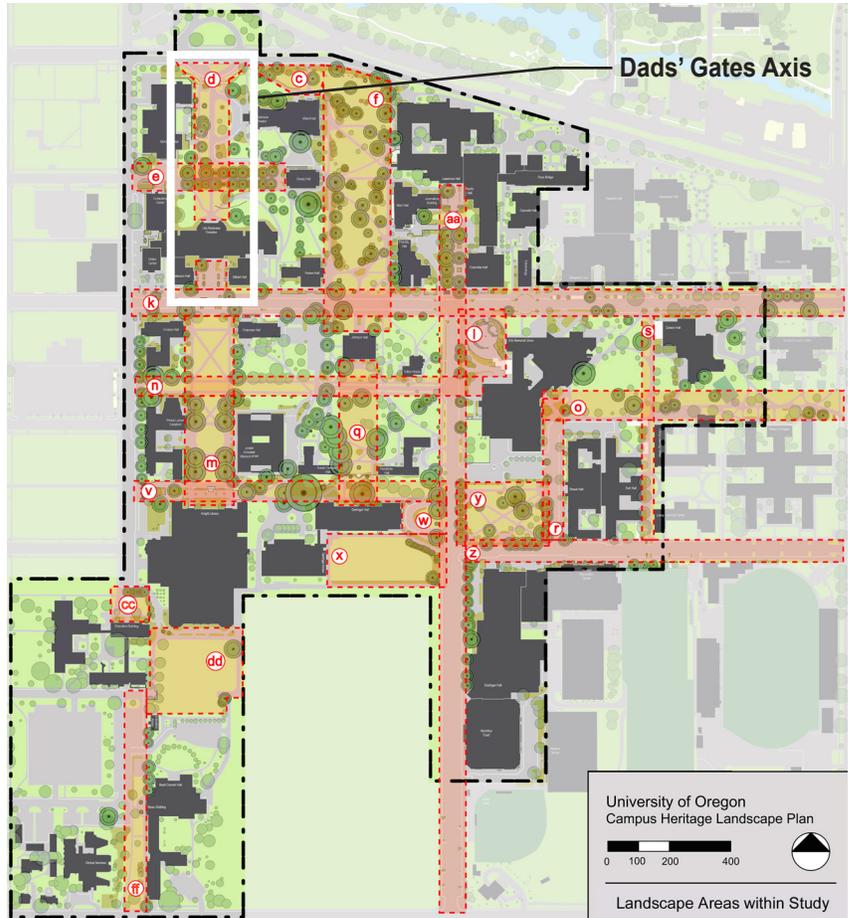
Medium

LEVEL OF INTEGRITY

Fair

RANKING

Tertiary



*View looking north, with the Gates in the foreground, the Robinson Theatre at left and McKenzie Hall at right.*



Landscape Resource Survey  
**DADS' GATES AXIS**

**LANDSCAPE AREA SITE MAP** — Highlighting existing elements from the period of significance (1876-1974).



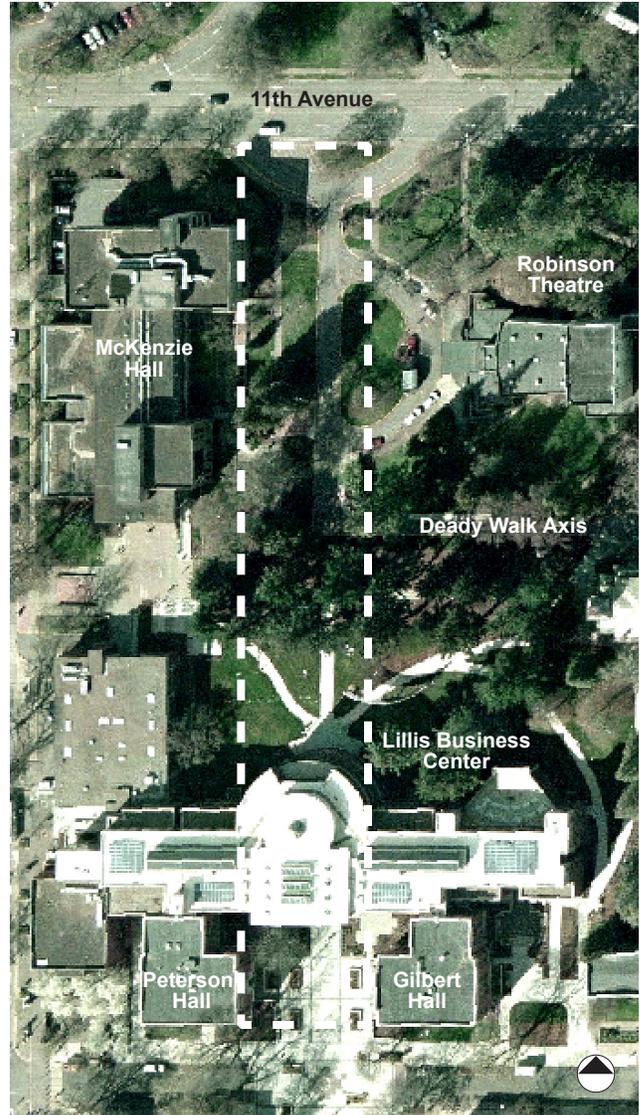
- Dads' Gates, placed in 1940
- Black Walnut appears to be the class tree of 1894
- Class tree replaced by California Bay Laurel
- The Normal Gate was placed here in 1885
- Giant Sequoia, Class of 1880
- "University Day 1911" inscribed in concrete
- Japanese Cedar 1879
- Ohio Buckeye planted here in 1958 after the University of Oregon lost to Ohio State in the Rose Bowl

LEGEND	
BIKE RACKS	
TRASH CANS	
NEWS STANDS	
SMALL SCALE FEATURES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
SMALL SCALE FEATURES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
PLAQUES AND MEMORIALS FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
PLAQUES AND MEMORIALS AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
BENCHES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
BENCHES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
MEMORIAL BENCHES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
TREES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
MEMORIAL TREES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
CAMPUS TREES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
UNIVERSITY STANDARD LIGHTPOSTS	
NON-UNIVERSITY STANDARD LIGHTPOSTS	
LANDSCAPE AREA BOUNDARY	

\* note: Period of Significance refers to the project period of 1876-1974

**SUMMARY OF EXISTING HISTORIC FEATURES**

The Dads' Gates Axis was to be one of Ellis F. Lawrence's formal entries to the campus, connecting 11th Avenue to 13th Avenue, and the Memorial Quadrangle beyond. Two of Lawrence's earliest buildings for the University—Peterson (1916) and Gilbert (1921) Halls—were carefully sited to help terminate the Axis and frame the view south to Memorial Quad. At the time of Lawrence's death in 1946, though, very little of this scheme was realized. He did succeed in locating the gates with the help of the UO Dads' Club, the Works Progress Administration and master blacksmith O.B. Dawson. Fred Cuthbert contributed to the design of the Axis, and some features were realized, including the "cloverleaf" entry drive built in conjunction with the Robinson Theater in 1949. By the end of the Mid-Century Era, the southern end of the Axis became partially blocked with the construction of Commonwealth Hall (1952). Since then, little has been done to reinforce the nature of the Axis. The Lillis Business Complex (2003) replaced Commonwealth Hall, and acknowledges the original nature of the Axis through its glazed atrium.



2004 aerial of the Dads' Gates Axis



View looking north towards the Dads' Gates, with the Robinson Theatre drop-off driveway at right.



The Lillis Business Complex's south courtyard, with Peterson Hall (left) and Gilbert Hall (right).



The Dads' Gates, built in 1940 of wrought iron by blacksmith O.B. Dawson.

■ **RESOURCE HISTORY**

**ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE**

Designated Eras within the Period of Historic Significance Determined for this Survey (1876-1974) are listed below. Check the era/eras determined to be of highest significance for this landscape area.

- Inception Era (1876-1913)
- Lawrence/Cuthbert Era (1914-1946)
- Mid-Century Era (1947-1974)

**DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION DURING ERA(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE**

- 1906: Carson's Lake, also known as the Duck Pond, is constructed.
- 1915: Carson's Lake is filled with soil excavated from the construction of Johnson Hall.
- 1916: Education Hall, now known as Peterson Hall, is constructed.
- 1921: Commerce Hall, now known as Gilbert Hall, is constructed.

- 1940: Dads' Gates installed.
- 1949: Robinson Theatre and associated site work is constructed as an addition to Villard Hall.
- 1949: The Dads' Gates "cloverleaf" entry drive is constructed.
- 1951: Due to the construction of the new Commonwealth Hall, the first landing of the entry stairs to Gilbert and Peterson Halls is removed and the courtyard is elevated. Retaining walls are built around the basement windows.
- 1952: Commonwealth Hall, now replaced by Lillis Hall, is finished.

**MAJOR ALTERATIONS OCCURRING AFTER THE ERA(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE**

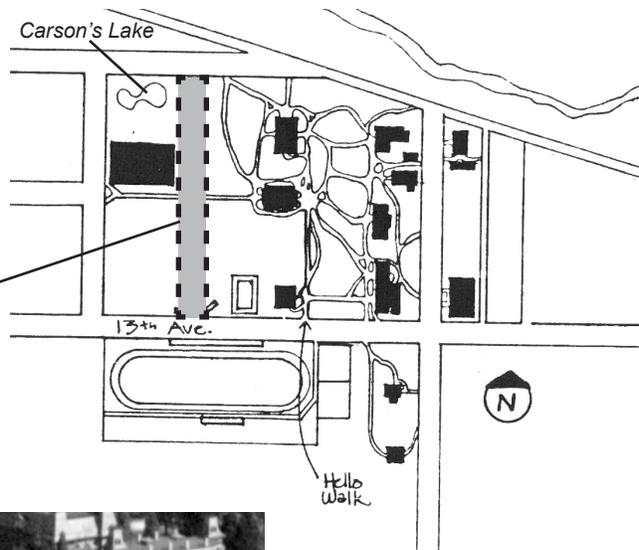
- 1970: McKenzie Hall constructed
- 2003: Commonwealth Hall is razed and replaced by the Lillis Business Complex, and associated site work.

**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

**The Inception Era (1876-1913)**

In 1913 the Dad's Gates Axis was a fairly open landscape of lawns and scattered trees. Carson's Lake was located on the west edge of the Axis.

Approximate location of the Dads' Gates Axis



1913 Campus Diagram

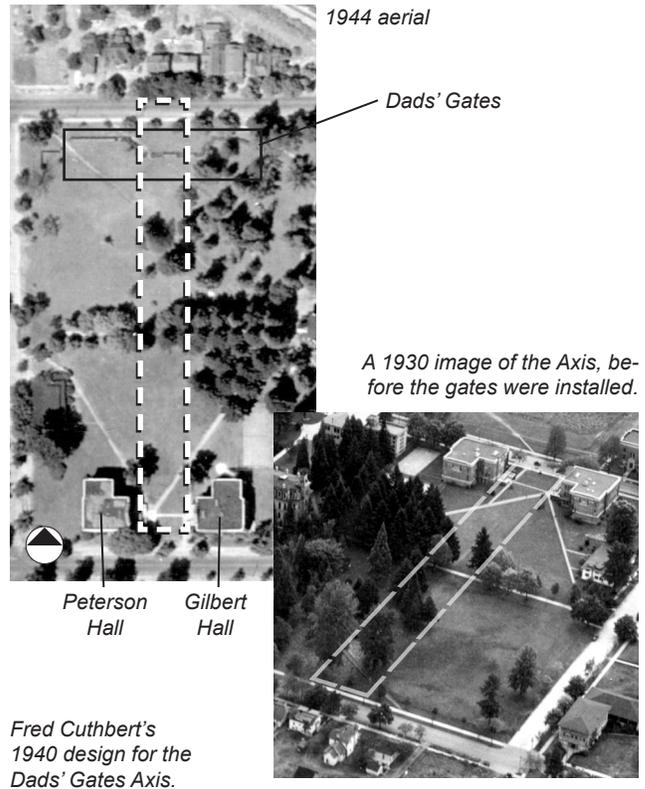
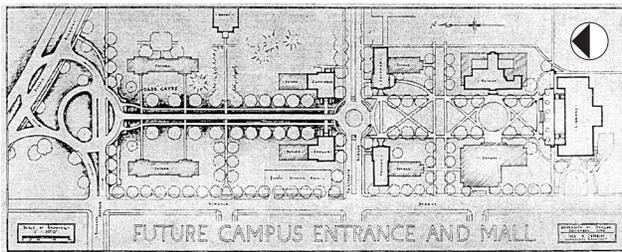


A 1921 image showing Peterson and Gilbert Halls, with the area later to become the Axis extending northward behind them.

**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

**The Lawrence/Cuthbert Era (1914-1946)**

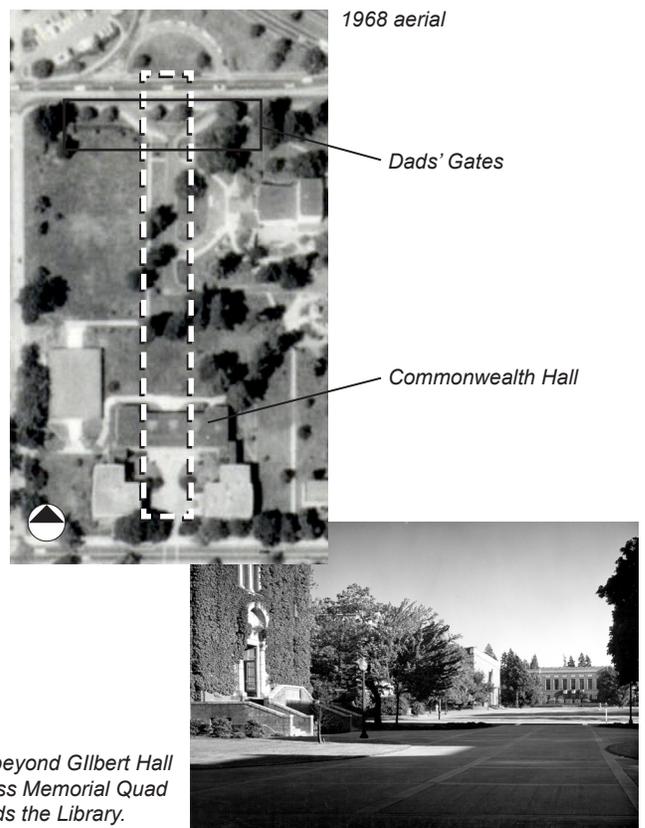
By 1946 the Axis was only partially defined at its ends by the Dads' Gates to the north and the space between Gilbert and Peterson Halls to the south. The landscape was primarily a sprawling lawn and a few scattered trees. A diagonal dirt path cut across the Axis from the corner of Kincaid Street and 11th Avenue to the west entrance of Deady Hall. The Y.M.C.A. (formerly known as the "hut") was located on the future site of the Computing Center. The Dads' Gates was the formal entry to campus from 11th Avenue, yet there was no paved or defined path that led to 13th Avenue. No other landscape elements such as trees were used to reinforce Lawrence's grand entrance onto campus.



**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

**The Mid-Century Era (1947-1974)**

In this era the Dads' Gates entrance from 11th Avenue becomes marked through a "cloverleaf," a circular drive on either side of the Gates. A walk with adjacent grassy parking strips parallels the entry drive running down the center of the Axis. The entry drive turns sharply to the east, connecting to a service parking area between Deady and Villard Halls. The pedestrian walk ends at the Deady Hall Walk, and no other connection is made southward. Commonwealth Hall (1952) was constructed in an east-west configuration, in effect closing off the Axis to points south. This new building, together with Gilbert and Peterson Halls, form a courtyard that opens south towards the Memorial Quad.



## ■ DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

### LAND USE

*Describing both the historic and current use of the Area.*

Today, the Dads' Gates Axis provides vehicular access to the Robinson Theatre and a service parking lot between Deady and Villard Halls. Pedestrians infrequently use the space to enter campus, but this will change with the location of the Emerald Express transit station immediately outside. The southern end of the Axis near 13th Avenue now serves as a bustling courtyard and forecourt into the Lillis Business Center.

### DESIGN INTENT

*Describing the overall design intent of the Area.*

The Axis was originally conceived by Ellis Lawrence to be a formal entry into campus, connecting a proposed train station at the north entrance on 11th Avenue to his proposed auditorium, and eventually the library. The Dads' Gates project was funded by the UO Dads' Club and designed collaboratively, with Ellis Lawrence and architecture students supplying the concept and working drawings to metalsmith O. B. Dawson, who crafted the final work. Fred Cuthbert, through his plans of 1939 and 1940,

emphasized the connection between 11th and 13th Avenues.

### SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

*Describing the arrangement of physical elements that create a three-dimensional sense of space.*

The Dads' Gates Axis is a linear space in alignment with the Memorial Quad, and crossing the Deady Hall Walk Axis. A wide grassy parking strip follows the western edge of the road that circles by the Robinson Theater. The south end is defined by three buildings that form a "U" shape, with their center courtyard facing south.

### TOPOGRAPHY & SITE ORIENTATION

*Describe/document gradient, slope orientation and solar access.*

This north/south axis is virtually flat, with a slight cross slope angling to the west, especially in front of Robinson Theatre (see diagram, below). Solar access is limited by the tall firs of the Deady Walk and several large trees along the west edge of the axis. Most of the solar access is concentrated at the extreme north and south ends, with the southern courtyard being open and sunny.



*The area's topography.*



*Circulation paths through the area.*



*Significant views through the area.*

### **VEGETATION**

*Describing tree, plant, shrub, ground layer groupings and arrangements.*

The vegetation of Dads' Gates Axis is composed of large trees, ornamental shrubs, lawn and duff-like bare ground. Several memorial trees, as well as various class trees (Black Walnut, class of 1894, Giant Sequoia, class of 1880, see map p. 2) are in this area. Also, an Ohio Buckeye sits just south of the Lillis Business Complex and represents the UO loss to Ohio State in the 1958 Rose Bowl. The diversity of tree species provides an added educational value. The landscaping around the gates consists of bulbs, ferns, grasses and assorted perennials. Near the Lillis Business Complex it is mostly lawn.

### **NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES**

*Describing natural processes, water flow, and habitat, if applicable.*

Stormwater collected on the road runs along the curb and exits campus onto 11th Avenue. The pervious portions of the site are fairly level and detain a large portion of the stormwater received. A slight slope moves water from the east to the west, especially in front of Robinson Theatre. Carson's Lake, a natural wetlands, was filled in.

### **BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES**

*Describing built physical elements in and around perimeter of the Area, and their relationship to the landscape.*

The site is bounded to the west by McKenzie Hall (1968) and the Computing Center (1966), to the east by the Robinson Theatre (1949), and to the south by the Lillis Business Complex (2003), Peterson Hall (1916) and Gilbert Hall (1922). The main entry to the Theatre faces the Axis, as does the back entry of the Lillis Business Complex. Peterson Hall and Gilbert Hall display the same planned setbacks from the Axis while the other buildings vary in setback measurements.

### **SMALL-SCALE ELEMENTS**

*Describing elements such as monuments, markers, seating, fences etc.*

The Dads' Gates (1940) is the most significant small-scale historic element of the site. The Gates are ornate wrought iron gates eight feet tall and 120 feet in length. At the center of each of the main

gate doors there is a bronze university seal. Today there exist several newer benches, some built-in bench seating near McKenzie Hall, and several memorial plaques as well. Brick planters and wooden benches are located in the Lillis Business Complex courtyard. Just outside the Axis is the Normal Gate (1885).

### **EDGE CONDITIONS AND ADJACENCIES**

*Describing the perimeter of the site and important adjacent connections to spaces beyond.*

The north end of the Dads' Gates Axis is defined by an auto and pedestrian entrance from 11th Avenue. Most of the edges of the Axis are not formally defined by buildings or landscape features until one enters the newly-designed courtyard on the south side of Lillis Business Complex. Important connections are made to Robinson Theatre, the Deady Hall Walk Axis and the Lillis Business Complex.

### **CIRCULATION**

*Describing movement paths and associated materials for: pedestrian; automobile; bicycle; other (e.g. system, alignment, materials, character).*

The Dads' Gates Axis is oriented north-south, and much of the circulation moves in this direction (see diagram, page 6). To the north the Axis is shared between motorists and pedestrians, with vehicular traffic turning east to a service parking lot. Pedestrians cross the Deady Hall Walk Axis while moving south towards the Lillis Business Complex. The road material is asphalt, and the paths are concrete. The south courtyard is also concrete.

### **VIEWS/VISTAS**

*Describing focal points and views to and from the Area.*

The main view down the Axis is south toward the Lillis Business Complex, and conversely from Lillis Business Complex back toward the Gates (see diagram, page 6). Lillis' semi-transparent atrium allows some visual connection south to 13th Avenue and the Memorial Quad beyond.

## DADS' GATES AXIS

### ■ DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION

- City Landmark
- National Register - full listing  
name:
- National Register - partial listing  
name: Dads' Gates
- National Historic Landmark
- No historic designation

#### NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

##### **Criterion A: Significant Events**

*Describe events with the landscape area that have influenced the broad patterns of campus history.*

Not applicable

##### **Criterion B: Significant People**

*Describe connections with the lives of significant persons, including designers.*

Not applicable

##### **Criterion C: Distinctive Characteristics**

*Describe elements that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values.*

The Dads' Gates Axis meets criterion C for the role it played in the campus plan designed by Ellis F. Lawrence. Lawrence intended the Dads' Gates to be a formal entrance to the University of Oregon with an unimpeded view from the gates to the head of the Memorial Quad. This first appeared in his 1914 Block Plan and was reiterated in his 1923 and 1932 plans. Architects paid homage to Lawrence's great axial vista by leaving an open breezeway beneath Commonwealth Hall in 1952, and in the construction of a glass atrium in the middle of the Lillis Business Complex, completed in 2003. Other masters in their field designed aspects of the Axis. Fred Cuthbert, the university's landscape architect from the early 1930s to the early 1940s built on Lawrence's ideas in his 1940 plan. O.B. Dawson, a master blacksmith, helped to create the Dads' Gates. The Dads' Gates are a rare example of quality wrought ironwork in Eugene, produced collaboratively by a master blacksmith (O.B. Dawson) and a recognized architect (Abbot Lawrence). The gates were funded in part by the Works Progress Administration and the Dads' Club of the University of Oregon.

#### LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rank the landscape area in term of its level of contribution to the historic significance of the university campus as a whole.

- High Significance  
*Considerable contribution to the history of the campus and its growth.*
- Medium Significance  
*Noteworthy contribution the history of the campus and its growth.*
- Low Significance  
*Discernable contribution to the history of the campus and its growth.*
- Very Low/No Significance  
*No discernable importance to the history of the campus and its growth.*

■ **DETERMINATION OF INTEGRITY**

*Integrity of the Landscape Area is evaluated based on the retention of the historic characteristics described in the categories below.*

**LOCATION / SETTING**

*Are important elements still in their original location and configuration?*

The defining element of this site, the Dads' Gates, remain in their original location. Many changes to this Axis, however, have occurred since the end of the Lawrence/Cuthbert Era, including the construction of McKenzie Hall (1970) and the Lillis Business Complex (2003).

**DESIGN**

*How has the general structure of the landscape changed since its period of significance?*

The most significant change to the Axis occurred with the placement of Commonwealth Hall in 1952, (and then later the Lillis Business Complex), which funneled down the view towards the Memorial Quad. Currently, few people enter campus through this Axis, although this number may increase when the Emerald Express transit station becomes operable.

**MATERIALS**

*Are original materials/vegetation that were used to structure and shape the landscape still present?*

There are three historic Class Trees just outside this Axis: the Japanese Cedar from 1879, the Giant Sequoia from 1880 and the Black Walnut from 1894. The majority of the trees within this Axis were planted within the eras of significance.

**WORKMANSHIP**

*Does the landscape retain characteristic workmanship from the period of significance?*

The Dads' Gates themselves still retain a high degree of their characteristic workmanship.

**FEELING**

*Does the landscape evoke the period of significance?*

Portions of the Axis retain their historic feeling, specifically the Dads' Gates and its surrounds. The majority of the remaining elements still evoke some sense of the eras of significance.

**ASSOCIATION**

*Is it possible to associate elements of the landscape with significant people/events?*

The Dads' Gates were financed by both the WPA and the UO Dads' Club. Furthermore, this Axis was featured prominently in the open space and circulation master plan as envisioned by Ellis Lawrence.

■ **INTEGRITY & CONDITION FINDINGS**

**HISTORIC INTEGRITY**

*Determine the level of historic integrity, based on the Era(s) of Significance – check one*

- Excellent Integrity  
*Retains a very high percentage of original fabric, and the original design intent is apparent.*
- Good Integrity  
*Retains a significant percentage of original fabric, with a discernable design intent.*
- Fair Integrity  
*Original fabric is present, but diminished.*
- Poor Integrity  
*Contains little historic fabric, and the original design intent is difficult to discern.*

**OVERALL CONDITION OF LANDSCAPE AREA**

*– check one*

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

## RESOURCES

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— *List all primary sources used (plans, maps, surveys, photographs, drawings, newspapers, periodicals, and autobiographies) and secondary sources (books, theses, guidebooks).*

Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1936. The University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection.

Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1944. The University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection.

Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1947. The University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection.

Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1952. The University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection.

Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1960. The University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection.

Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1968. The University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection.

Cuthbert, Fred A. drawing for the "Future Campus Entrance," 1940. Photograph of original kept in the University of Oregon Special Collections, University of Oregon Photo Collection, Box 3, Campus Plans folder.

Dunton, F.E. and Schwan W.J., A Biological Map of the University of Oregon Campus: Showing the Specimen Trees on the Campus. July 1913. duplicate held by the University of Oregon Planning Office

Force, Rachel. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Dads' Gates, 2004.

Lawrence, Ellis F. drawing for the "Plot Plan, University of Oregon," 1914. Photograph of original kept in the

Lawrence, Ellis F. drawing for the "Proposed Development Of The University Of Oregon Campus, Scheme No. 6," 1932. Photograph of original kept in the University of Oregon Special Collections, University of Oregon Photo Collection, Box 3, Campus Plans folder.

Long, Stephen W. "Historic Continuity A Diagnosis Report" (Eugene: University of Oregon Office of Planning and Campus Development, 1980) 1-67.

Marshall Brothers, 1921 map of Campus, duplicate held by the University of Oregon Planning Office

Sandahl, David A. and Castro, Ricardo. "An architectural history of the University of Oregon," (unpublished manuscript, University of Oregon, 1975) Architecture and Allied Arts Library

Shellenbarger, Michael. ed. Harmony in Diversity: The Architecture and Teaching of Ellis F. Lawrence (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1989), 1-91.

University of Oregon Special Collections, University of Oregon Photo Collection, Box 3, Campus Plans folder.

University of Oregon, 1935 map of Campus, duplicate held by the University of Oregon Planning Office

University of Oregon, 1953 map of Campus, duplicate held by the University of Oregon Planning Office

The University of Oregon Catalogue: 1945-1946. Campus Map (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, 1945)

The University of Oregon Catalogue: 1955-1956. Campus Map (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, 1955)

Electronic version available on the University of Oregon Planning Office web page: <http://uplan.uoregon.edu/projects/HLP/hlpsurveyoflandareas.htm>

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