

LANDSCAPE RESOURCE SURVEY
University of Oregon Campus Heritage Landscape Plan
Eugene, Lane County, Oregon • June 6, 2016

RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION & SUMMARY

LANDSCAPE AREA NAME

North Waterfront

HISTORIC NAME(S)

Unknown

CAMPUS PLAN DESIGNATION

Designated Open Space (DOS)

CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION

N/A

ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE

Mid-Century (1947 - 1974)

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Low

LEVEL OF INTEGRITY

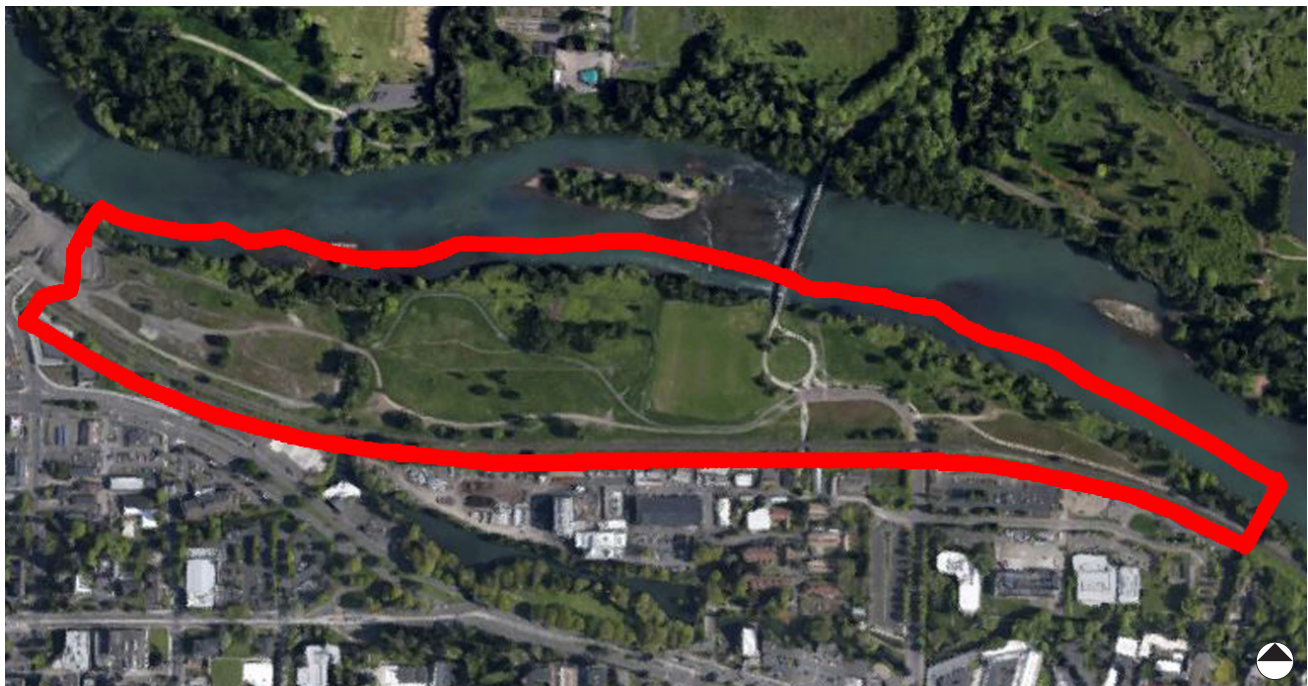
Medium

RANKING

Tertiary

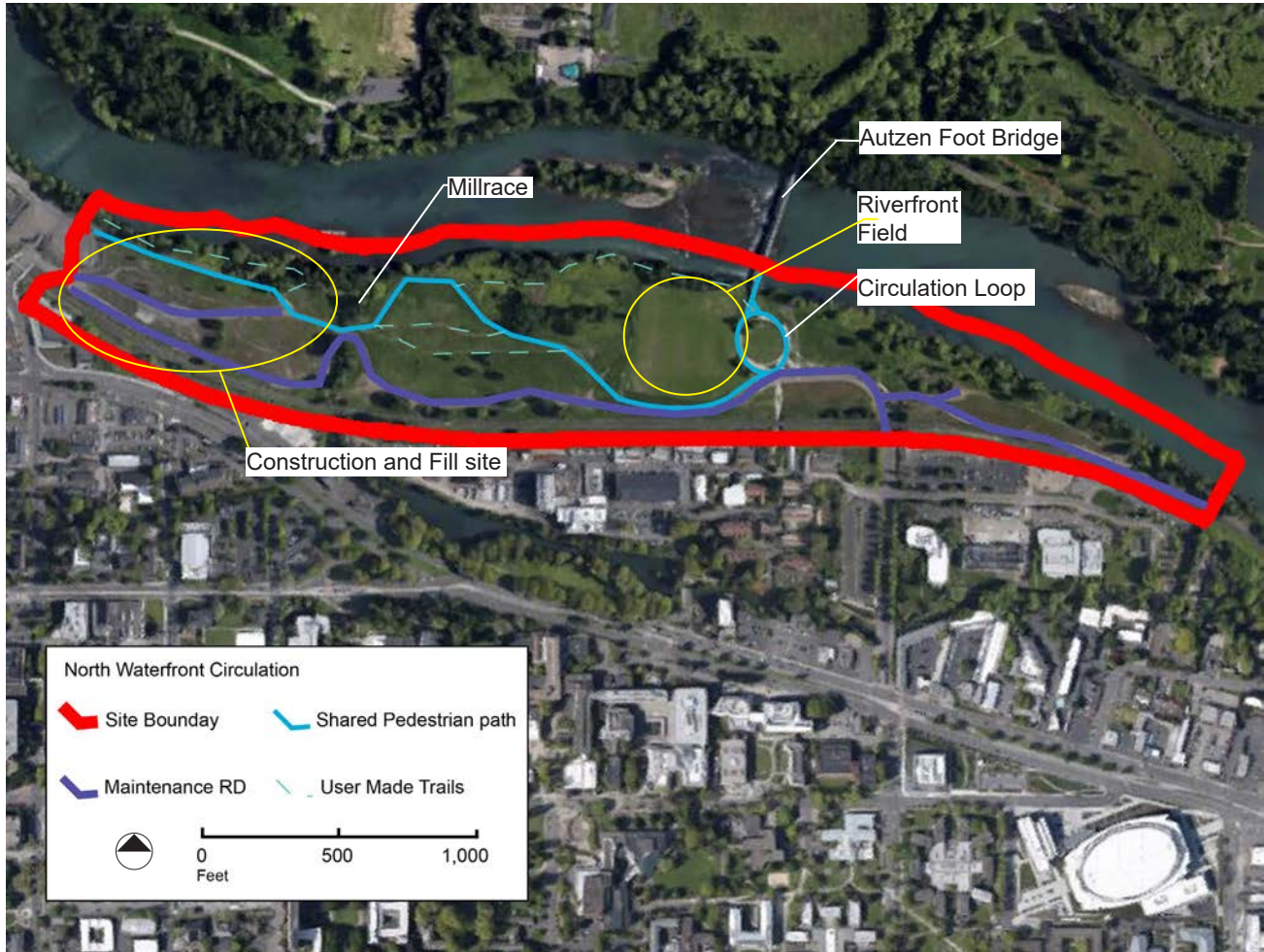


Aerial of North Waterfront Site Boundary with the main University of Oregon Campus to the south



Aerial of North Waterfront Site Boundary

LANDSCAPE AREA CIRCULATION MAP — Highlighting existing elements from the period of significance and today.



Bike and Pedestrian Path



Connection to Autzen Foot Bridge and circulation loop

SUMMARY OF EXISTING HISTORIC FEATURES

Millrace, fill area, Autzen Foot Bridge and some open space.



Millrace connection to Willamette River



Fenced off fill area

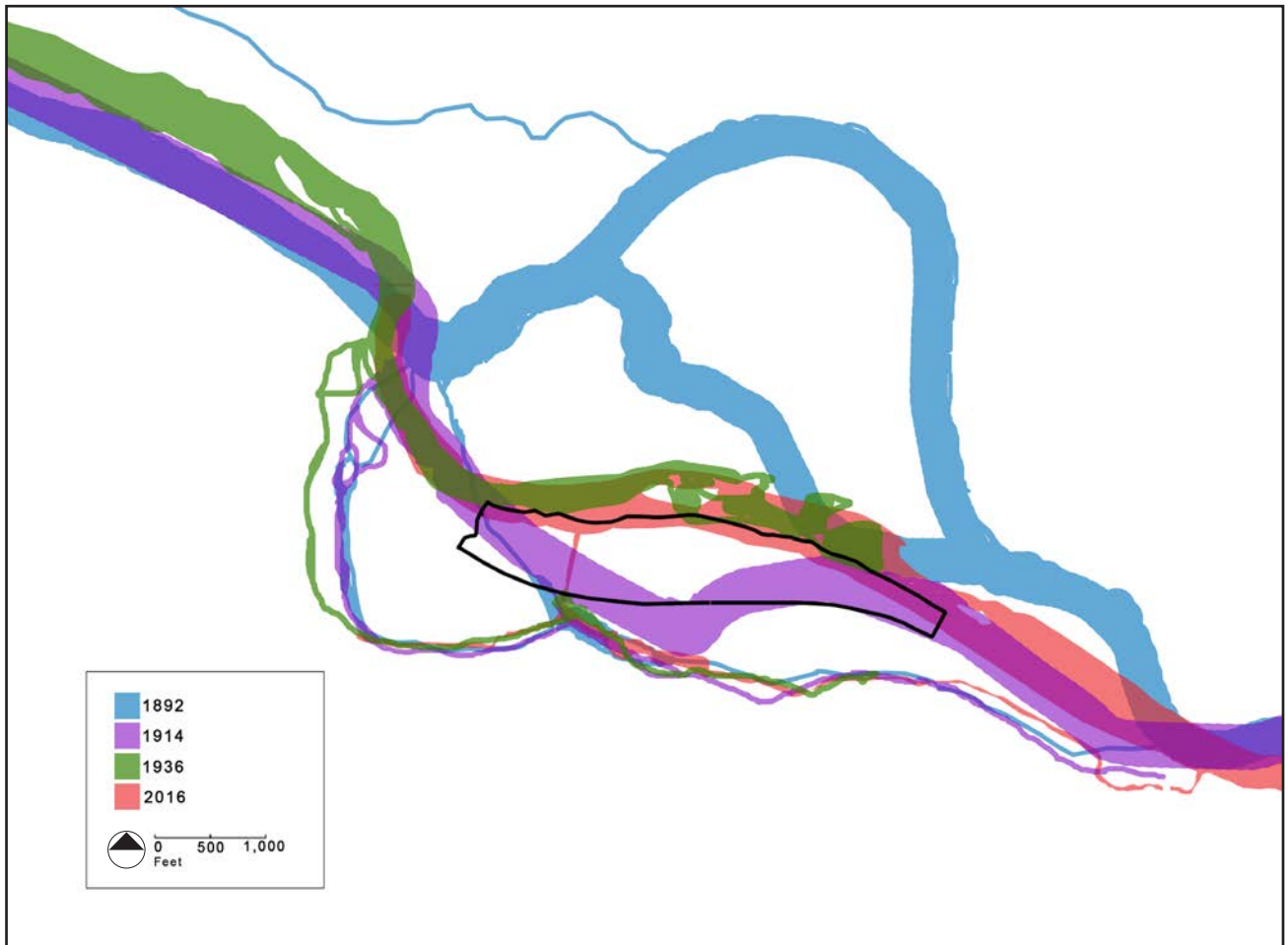


Diagram of the Willamette River's meandering nature

RESOURCE HISTORY

ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE

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

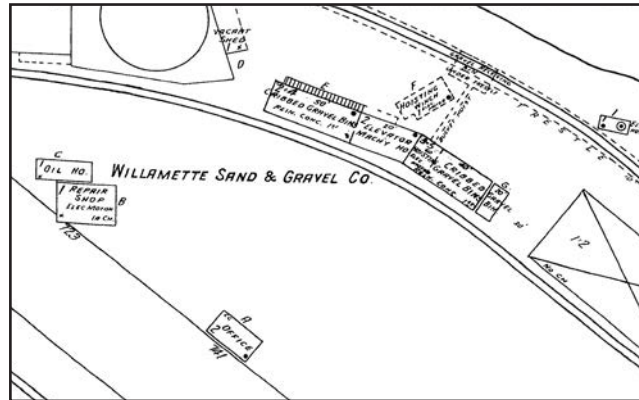
- Inception Era (1876 - 1913)
- Lawrence/ Cuthbert Era (1914 - 1946)
- Mid-Century Era (1947 - 1974)
- The Oregon Experiment Era (1975 - present)

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

- 1962: Columbus Day Storm wipes out trees
- 1960-1970: Fill and dumping activity
- mid 1970's construction of path system

MAJOR ALTERATIONS OCCURRING AFTER ERA(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE

1980's Riverfront Fields constructed and site paths improved as a part of the Urban Renewal Plan



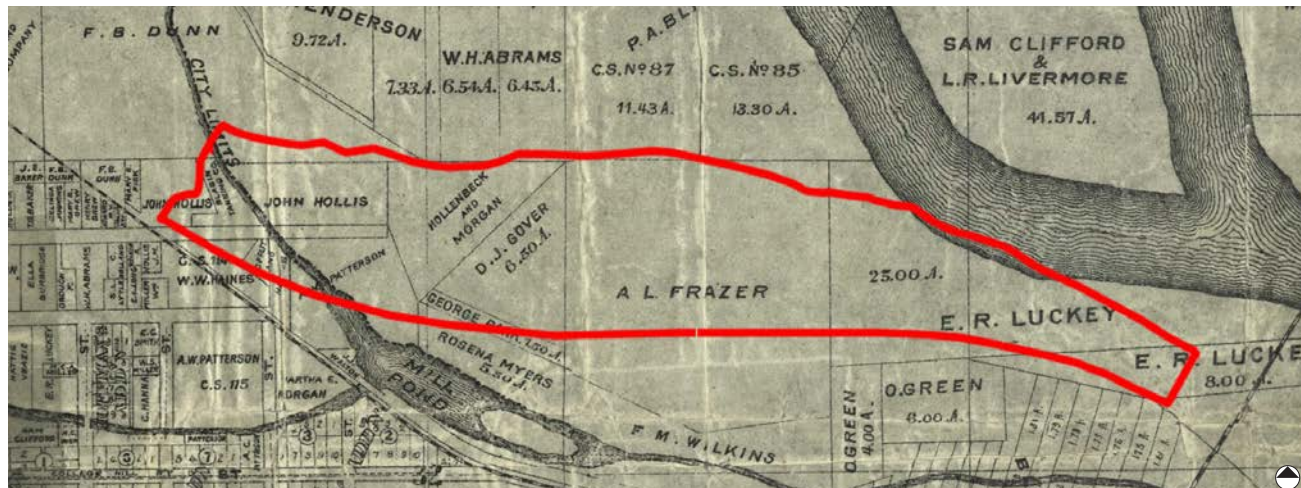
1925 Sanborn Map, close-up of gravel excavation area located at the western portion of the Waterfront site.

ERA DESCRIPTION:

Inception Era (1876 – 1913)

A variety of land owners occupied the site in the late 1800's; it is probable that these land owners benefited from the Donation Land Act passed by Congress in 1850 which allocated acreage to white settlers. The Eugene Sand and Gravel purchased

the land in 1900 and constructed facilities to manufacture aggregate. The Willamette River flooded in 1881 and 1891. In addition, several mills opened in the late 1880's within close proximity to the site.

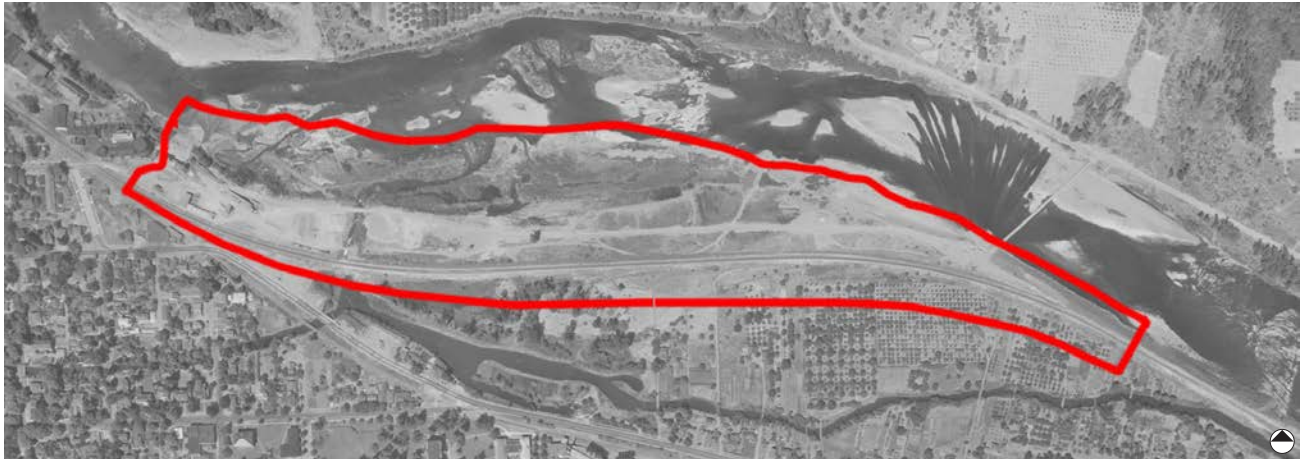


1892 aerial of the North Waterfront site, Map Source: Lane County Maps, Knight Library

ERA DESCRIPTION:

Lawrence/ Cuthbert Era (1914 - 1946)

Franklin Boulevard (Hwy 99) was widened in the 1940's and the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks were located from along Franklin to the north side of the Millrace. Gravel and sand excavation for I-5 and infrastructure development begins.



1944 aerial of the North Waterfront site, Photo Source: Lane County Maps, Knight Library

ERA DESCRIPTION:

Mid-Century Era (1947 - 1974)

Campus development from the Cuthbert Era continued but with a less formal master plan. Large scale open spaces with smaller interior areas that create a greater landscape complexity. Circulation patterns streamlined, some meandering pathways were built. Columbus Day storm of 1962 saw

extensive loss of tree canopy and the replanting trees after the storm. Under-story shrub borders, lawn and double rows of street trees planted.



1960 aerial of the North Waterfront site, Photo Source: Lane County Maps, Knight Library

ERA DESCRIPTION:

The Oregon Experiment Era (1975 – present)

During this era the ASUO passed the campus greenway initiative (1989) and in 1997, 200 students protested development along the campus North Waterfront property. Trammel Crow signs agreement to not build north of the railroad.

Improvements were made to the circulation, including a circular path connecting the Autzen Foot Bridge to the UO campus.



1982 aerial of the North Waterfront site, Map Source: Lane County Maps, Knight Library



2005 aerial of the North Waterfront site, Map Source: Lane County Maps, Knight Library

DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

LAND USE

Describing both the historic and current use of the Area.

The North Waterfront site is currently a Designated Open Space by the University of Oregon as well as a Special Property Use Zone by the City of Eugene, stated with the intention of the site to remain as an open space that can be used for education related activities. The multi use area serves as a bike and pedestrian connector between the University of Oregon campus, Eugene, Springfield, Alton Baker Park and Autzen Stadium. The site also is host to multi use recreation fields (Riverfront Fields) which provides a place for student organized sports and activities.

A distinctive aspect of the North Waterfront property that has contributed to the cultural landscape's physical character is the development of industry on the banks of the Willamette River. Flooding mitigation efforts consisted of dams further upstream and infill of the low lying floodplain both of which had a dramatic affect on the landscape.

The Eugene Sand and Gravel Company took ownership of the riverfront property beginning in 1900. In 1968 The University of Oregon purchased the 35 acres from Eugene Sand and Gravel Co. In the 1950's the City of Eugene zoned the area between the millrace and the river for industrial use. Later the zoning changed to protect the land from development and encourage the space as an educational setting. Filling of the floodplain dramatically altered the banks of the Willamette and is responsible for the steep embankment visible today. The content of the fill and whom exactly filled the area is unclear.

DESIGN INTENT

Describing the overall design intent of the Area.

The site has multiple design intents including: designated open space that serves as a connector between Eugene, Springfield, the UO campus, Alton Baker Park and Autzen Stadium. This site has been sited as a future outdoor classroom and research area. There is much debate over the future of this site.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

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

Arterial bicycle paths carry users through and around the site including an underpass connection that leads beneath the railroad to campus. The site's paths also connect to a circulation loop that is lined with maintained trees and vegetation which leads to access across the Willamette River via Autzen Footbridge bridge.

TOPOGRAPHY & SITE ORIENTATION

Describe/document gradient, slope orientation and solar access.

Topography is relatively consistent throughout the majority of the site. There is noticeable incline along the shared pedestrian path as it approaches the Autzen footbridge. On the north portion of the site a steep decline defines the banks of the Willamette River. The slight variation in topography reflects the path's route along the edge of the river. The majority trees line the northern side of the site, leaving the remainder of the site open to southern sun exposure.

VEGETATION

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

This portion of campus is primarily naturally occurring, consisting of mostly large trees such as Poplars, Ash, and Honeysuckle with a dominant understory of willow, ivy and blackberries. There are large swaths of wild grasses further away from the river edge.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

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

Located within the flood zone, this site is comprised of two dynamic habitat systems. At the north edge of the site a riparian corridor parallels the Willamette River which creates a sensitive



Eugene Sand and Gravel looking Southeast across site, Franklin Blvd to the right. Photo from the Lane County Historical Museum



View across wild grassland area on site

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habitat for many species. It is in this area that a majority of recreational activities occur. The North Waterfront site is in the Willamette Watershed and flood zone. South of the river the landscape merges into an upland prairie habitat with areas that have wetland potential.

BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES

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

Autzen Foot Bridge was constructed in 1970. The railroad overpass leads pedestrians under the railroad and connects the open space to campus life.

SMALL-SCALE ELEMENTS

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

There are athletic fields and two fenced backstops on opposing sides of the Riverfront Field, including a set of bleachers on the west end. There is a recycling collection site on the east starting point of the shared pedestrian paths. At the west end of the site a chain-link fence encloses an area that is known to be contaminated. Throughout the site there are small signs informing users of the sites rules which are enforced by officers who patrol the area.

EDGE CONDITIONS AND ADJACENCIES

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

The north edge of the site is entirely comprised of the Willamette River. The south end is designated by the railroad. EWEB currently owns the land parcels to the west. The bike path system connects the site to downtown Eugene, the Millrace studios, and Agate St. The Autzen footbridge connects to more paths systems and Autzen Stadium. The eastern end of the site leads to neighboring communities of Glenwood and Springfield.

CIRCULATION

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



Primary pedestrian and bike path on site

There are combinations of maintenance roads, shared pedestrian paths, and user made trails. The roads and pedestrian paths were improved in 1984, as a part of the Urban Renewal Project. Users on the site have created trails which venture off the provided path that lead to the river or cut across the site, most likely for efficiency.

VIEWS/VISTAS

Describing focal points and views to and from the Area.

A series of view-sheds have been created as a result of the bike path system and existing clusters of vegetation - though it is unclear whether this design was intentional or a de facto result of the design. Directing sight-lines down the bike paths, across the river, and towards the recreational fields. These view-sheds encourage the users to enjoy the outdoors. and contribute to the pastoral character of the site.



Unmanaged recreation area along river's edge



Riverfront Field

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Photograph looking westward towards fill area located on the western portion of the site. This area is fenced off to the public.



Photograph from a major intersection looking south towards the Millrace Art Studios and the larger campus area.

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION

- City Landmark
- National Register - full listing
name: Library & Memorial Quad
- National Register - partial listing
name:
- 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.

In 1968 the University of Oregon purchased the north waterfront property from Eugene Sand and Gravel. Over the years there has been minimal alterations to the landscape which continues to be used as open space. This site connects the campus to the river, providing both formal and informal recreation areas. Several human related activities have dramatically influenced the north waterfront landscape including the Army Corps of Engineers damming of the Willamette River in 1965 and fill activities that occurred from 1965 – 1975 along the west river banks. A variety of debris was filled along the river banks by Eugene Sand and Gravel.

Criterion B: Significant People

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

N/A

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.

N/A

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 dynamic quality of the river has changed the landscape over time through erosion and deposits of various aggregate. The site has remained an open space however the environment and natural features have changed due to natural and human influences. Human influences include the addition of accessible paths and recreation.

DESIGN

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

In addition to the circular path that runs adjacent to the Riverfront Fields, natural processes have altered the landscape since the mid-century.

MATERIALS

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

The vegetation and paths have remained the same however there has been intermittent repairs and enhancements over the years.

WORKMANSHIP

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

None.

FEELING

Does the landscape evoke the period of significance?

The mid-century era included a time when open spaces were becoming more valued, in this way it does evoke the period of significance.

ASSOCIATION

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

While it is difficult to discern the specific historic industrial activities that took place on the site, the open space - including the contaminated area is partly a result of the period in time when the Eugene Sand and Gravel altered the landscape dramatically. The continued use as an open space reflects the student campus body's commitment to keeping the space open to the community and the university.

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

RELATIONSHIP TO TRAJECTORY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Discuss if/how the Landscape Area expresses historic landscape traditions, using examples of reference landscape(s) from those traditions, making sure to highlight both the similarities and differences between the Landscape Area and the reference landscape(s), and noting the influence of physical and cultural context for both landscapes.

INTERPRETATION

PASTORAL

The North Campus Waterfront is a pastoral landscape that fits seamlessly into the naturalistic setting. Human activities have influenced the design in a variety of ways including land alteration of Eugene Sand and Gravel to the addition of the bicycle and pedestrian pathways.

PRINCIPLES

HUMAN INFLUENCE

Though deceptively “natural looking” the North Campus Waterfront has been dramatically influenced by human activities. Both the federal government’s damming of the Willamette River and industrial dumping of debris have made it easy to create a distinct and identifiable site boundary.

NATURALISTIC IMPRESSION

The area of North Campus along the Willamette River gives the most naturalistic impression compared to any other portion of campus. The historic changes of the river have forced university and city planners to intervene with the rivers course. The vegetation is natural and has little maintenance compared to other quads on campus.

CLUSTERED VEGETATION

The vegetation on site is mostly naturally occurring. The urban landfill has had a negative effect on the soil and the success of vegetation on the Waterfront property. Most of the sites vegetation clusters are found in the form of poplar and willow along the river. The introduction of blackberries has created a challenge for maintenance and public safety.

ELONGATED VIEWS

Due to the installation of the bike path system and the existing clusters of vegetation; intentionally or unintentionally, a series of view sheds have been created. Directing sight-lines down the bike paths and across the river.

RESOURCES

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

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Bronet, Francis, Et Al. University of Oregon Campus Physical Framework Vision. 15 Mar. 2016. The University of Oregon Campus Physical Framework Vision (UOCPFV).

Carter, Elizabeth, Michelle Dennis and City of Eugene Planning and Development Department, Eugene Area Historic Context Statement, April 1996.

City of Eugene Planning and Development Department, Riverfront Urban Renewal District Plan, September 11, 1985 and March 10, 2004.

History - Connecting Eugene. Connecting Eugene. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 June 2016.

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University of Oregon, 1.0 Landscape Preservation Guidelines and Descriptions of Historic Resources: Campus Heritage Landscape Plan, July 2008.

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

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

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

University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection. Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 1982.

University of Oregon Map Library, Aerial Photo Collection. Aerial photograph of the University of Oregon, 2005.

University of Oregon Map Library, Donation Land Claim Map, 1892.

University of Oregon Map Library, Sanborn Map Collection. 1925.

Tefer, Fred. Documentation of When Filled. Interview by Rebecca Shepard. n.d.: n. pag. Print.

Willamette River Fish Recovery. Aug. 2011. Habitat above the Willamette's Fall Creek Dam Supports Spring Chinook Once Again. NOAA, US Department of Commerce

Survey research by Terra Wheeler, Wyle O'Neill, Kayla Byrne

Survey form completed in June 2016, LA 410/510