

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM
University of Oregon Cultural Resources Survey
Eugene, Lane County, Oregon
Summer 2006, Updated 2025

RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION

Current building name: Onyx Bridge
Historic building name: Science Building East Wing
Building address: 1230 Franklin Blvd.
Ranking: Non-Contributing

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Architectural style classification: Structural Expressionism
Building plan (footprint shape): rectangular
Number of stories: 4
Foundation material(s): concrete
Primary exterior wall material: concrete
Secondary exterior wall material: structural steel
Roof configuration/type: flat
Primary roof material: BUR
Primary window type: modular units with metal frames in a variety of arrangements using large rectangles and small rectangles
Primary window material: metal
Decorative features and materials: exposed structural steel diagonal trusses
Landscape features: none
Associated resources: straddles Cascade Annexes East and West, attached to Pacific Hall (to the west) and Klamath Hall (to the east) accessible via glass enclosed walkway with offices; adjacent to Science Courtyard
Comments:

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Date of construction: 1962
Architect: Lawrence, Tucker, Wallman
Builder/Contractor: Vik Construction Company General Contractor
Moved? (yes/no): No Date of move(s): n/a
Description/dates of major additions/alterations: Exterior trusses were originally covered with asbestos fireproofing, which was removed in 1984.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS & SIGNIFICANCE

Original use(s) or function(s): Offices and Laboratories

Current use(s) or function(s): Offices and Laboratories

Area(s) of significance: Education, 20th c. Architecture

Period of significance: 1962

Statement of Significance (use continuation sheet if necessary):

In 1960 construction was underway on the new East Wing to the Science Building. The building was constructed to house laboratories and offices. Later named Onyx Bridge, so named because it was designed to straddle Onyx Street (although the street was closed during construction and never reopened), the unique building was a result of a new type of architectural design - an external structural support system. The entire building is supported by steel girders, covering the outside, and towers at each end of the "bridge." By using this method, no further support was required within the structure. The idea behind this design was so that the internal structure could be changed at any time without concerns of load support or stress on the structure. Therefore, with no permanent interior floor plan, the windows were placed without regard to what they would look like on the exterior. The criss-crossed exterior girders are supposed to be the only noticeable feature of the completed building. Faculty later complained of too few windows and vibration.

After the building's completion and subsequent inspection, the exterior supports were covered in asbestos as a fire safety precaution. By 1984, removal of the asbestos was ordered and an exterior fire sprinkler system was installed. As originally designed, four additional stories were planned for Onyx Bridge for a total of eight stories. This design was never carried forward.

This building has good integrity, but it lacks architectural significance. It is categorized as a non-contributing resource due to its very low significance.

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTHistoric Significance (check one): High Medium Low Very Low or NoneIntegrity (check one): Excellent Good Fair PoorCondition (check one): Excellent Good Fair PoorBuilding designation: City Landmark National Register National Historic Landmark Not listedPreliminary National Register eligibility findingsBuilding is potentially eligible: Individually or As a contributing resource in a district only

If eligible individually, applicable criteria (check all that apply):

- A. Associated with significant events C. Distinctive architecturally
 B. Associated with significant persons D. Archaeologically important

If applicable, building qualifies under NR Criterion Considerations: Yes No If yes, which apply:Building is NOT eligible: Intact but lacks distinction or Altered/loss of integrity or Not 50 years old

DOCUMENTATION

Indicate resources consulted when researching this building (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University archives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UO Planning Office files | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sanborn maps | <input type="checkbox"/> Building permits | <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO files |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library | <input type="checkbox"/> State Historic Society |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Historic Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical encyclopedias | <input type="checkbox"/> Obituary indexes | Other : <u>See below</u> |

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCESNewspapers

Daily Emerald, "New science building to have eight stories," 05/19/1960, 6

Daily Emerald, "Cold damages Science addition," 01/25/1962, 1

Daily Emerald, "Strange science building design resembles giant checker board," 10/10/1961, 3

Daily Emerald, "Four scientists will dedicate new building", 04/05/1962, 4

UO Planning Office, Facilities Services, building drawings.

Skidmore Owings and Merrill, Preliminary Architects, UO Science III, Report of 31 March 1967

Onyx Bridge – General File

RECORDING INFORMATION

Researched: Melissa Stoller/Kathryn Burk, Winter 06

Recorded: Susan Johnson and University Planning Office, Summer 2006

Photo number or name:

PHOTOGRAPH



SITE PLAN

