

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

■ **RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION & SUMMARY**

LANDSCAPE AREA NAME

**Amphitheater Green (I)**

HISTORIC NAME(S)

none known

CAMPUS PLAN DESIGNATION

Green

CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION

No historic designation

ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE

Mid-Century

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

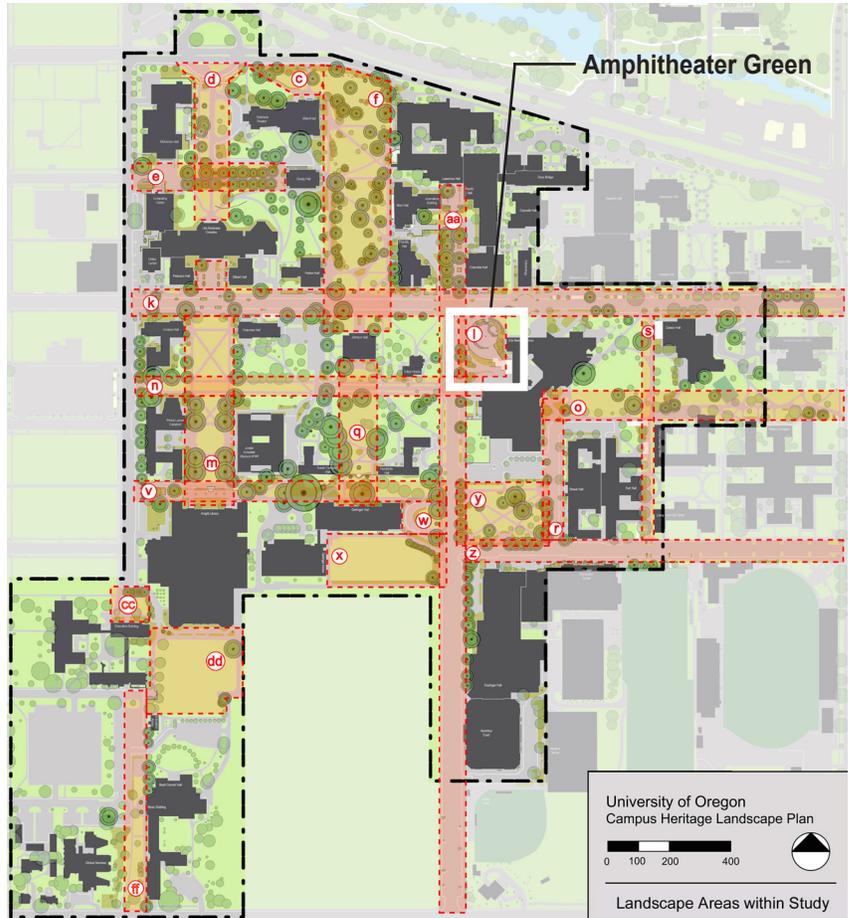
Low

LEVEL OF INTEGRITY

Poor

RANKING

Non-Contributing

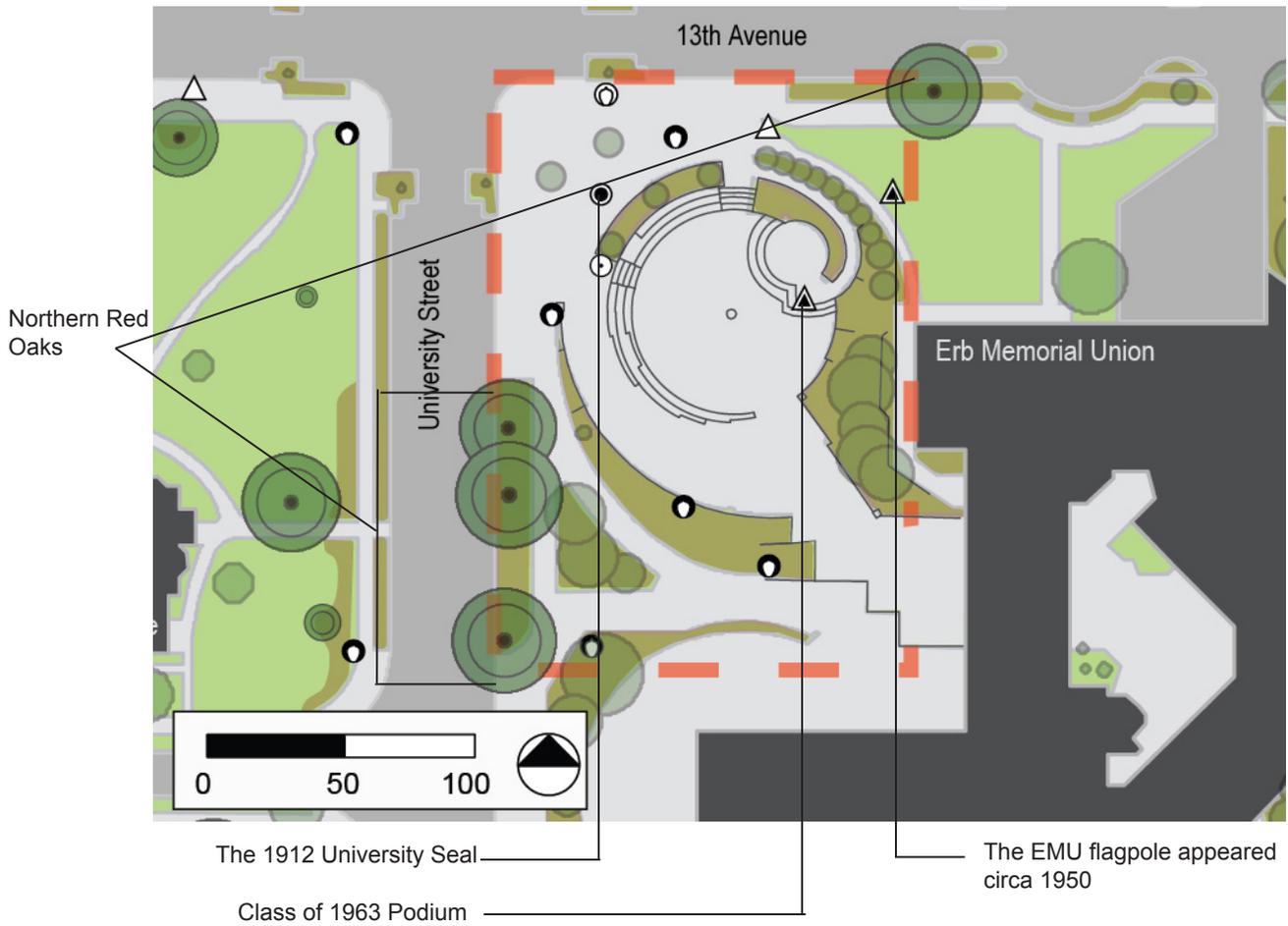


*View looking north, across the amphitheater and toward Columbia Hall.*



Landscape Resource Survey  
**AMPHITHEATER GREEN**

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

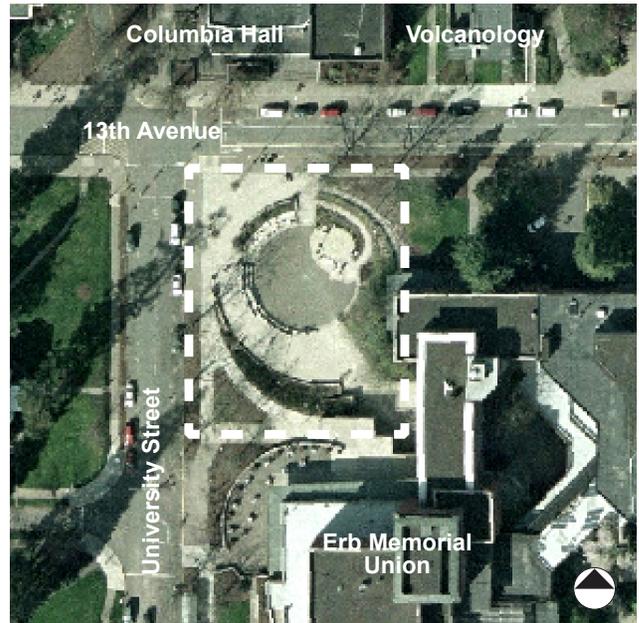


LEGEND			
TRASH CANS		BIKE RACKS	
NEWS STANDS		TREES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
SMALL SCALE FEATURES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE		MEMORIAL TREES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
SMALL SCALE FEATURES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE		CAMPUS TREES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	
PLAQUES AND MEMORIALS FROM PERIOD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

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

**SUMMARY OF EXISTING HISTORIC FEATURES**

The Amphitheater Green has been completely redesigned since the end of the Mid-Century Era. Concrete seat walls and a new planting plan have replaced the level open lawn that used to define the site. During the 1970s the Green was excavated and a breezeway was placed beneath the EMU. A wide concrete ramp provided access from University Street to the breezeway. Grass slopes topped with a row of trees were on either side of the ramp. No other significant changes to the Green were made until 1998 when the site was transformed into its current state. A few small scale features have remained in the Green since the Mid-Century Era, such as The Class of 1963 Podium and the 1912 University Seal, both of which have recently been moved from their original locations. A flagpole was placed in the Green during the 1950s and remains in its original location. Despite the physical alterations to the Green, the space has retained its historic land use as an important open space and public forum on campus.



2004 aerial of the Amphitheater Green



View looking west across the Green and towards the EMU.



The University Seal of 1912, moved from the Villard Hall Green.

Class of 1963 podium.



■ **RESOURCE HISTORY**

**ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE**

Designated Eras within the Period of Historic Significance Determined for this Survey (1876 - 1967) 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**

1950: Erb Memorial Union is completed

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

1973: Excavation of the EMU underway as part of the west addition, creating a breezeway and ramp.

1998: The new amphitheater constructed

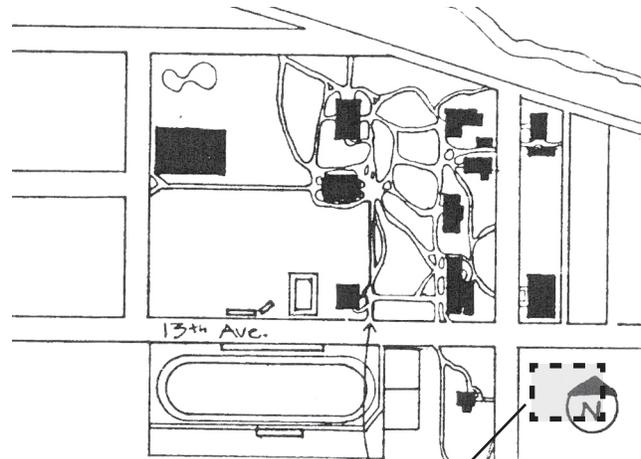


A 1968 aerial

**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

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

The site is a mostly vacant lot in an emerging residential block on the southeast corner of 13th Avenue and University Street. It is of historical interest to note that this site was originally part of a 640-acre donation land claim, staked out by pioneers Fielding McMurry and his wife, who came to Oregon from Kentucky in 1851. They built a two-story white frame farmhouse on the spot where the Erb Memorial Union would eventually be built. McMurry operated a brick making business, the source of the bricks for the university's earliest buildings. Electric cars pass the campus every few minutes on 13th Avenue, connecting campus to the central business district.



Approximate location of the Amphitheater Green

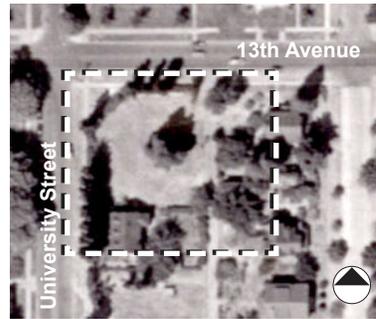
1913 aerial

**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

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

The site remained residential in character through the Lawrence/Cuthbert era, with several houses located on this block. Though the original site for a student union in the 1920s was on the west side of the campus, by the 1940s a site at the southeast corner of 13th and University Street had been selected.

The idea to campaign for a student union building began in 1923, when ASUO president John MacGregor announced his intentions to raise money for the union. Over 300 students took part in the campaign and collected approximately \$219,000. As a stimulus, in 1924 the Board of Regents purchased property for the student union at the half block at 14th and Kincaid Street. That site eventually became a university parking lot.



1944 aerial



1921 aerial

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**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

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

The opening of the Erb Memorial Union in the fall of 1950 was the culmination of 27 years of effort on the part of students, alumni, staff, and friends of the university. At the time of the opening, the Amphitheater Green was a relatively level lawn with a wide diagonal path leading to the EMU's main entrance. This space remained a sparsely planted lawn with a large concrete patio directly outside the EMU's main entrance. The diagonal path leading from the EMU to the corner of 13th and University Street was known as 'Hello Walk' (not to be confused with the Hello Walk in the Old Campus Quad). The 1912 University Seal was moved from its original location in front of Villard Hall and placed in this walk near the main entrance in 1950. The class of 1963 podium was located near the entrance of the EMU, and signified the public-forum character of the Amphitheater Green.



1968 aerial

## ■ DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

### LAND USE

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

The Green was created to serve primarily as a formal and informal gathering place. It is a popular location for live music, public speeches, and similar-type functions. As a link between the Heart of Campus to the Promenade, it carries a large amount of pedestrian traffic.

### DESIGN INTENT

*Describing the overall design intent of the Area.*

The primary design intention of the Amphitheater Green was to direct students towards the EMU entrance. The Green did not originally contain an amphitheater; it was comprised of a large lawn with numerous trees. Historically, there was no breezeway under the EMU and the entire Green was on grade with the main western entrance of the building.

### SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

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

To the east and south, the Amphitheater Green is defined by the façades of the original portion of the Erb Memorial Union, providing some space definition and a sense of enclosure. The north and west faces of the Green open up to University Street and 13th Avenue, and the exposure along these major circulation routes brings people into contact with the Amphitheater.

The Amphitheater Green is almost entirely comprised of hardscape. However, there are five European hornbeams planted near the western façade of the EMU that provide the space with some shade and canopy cover.

### TOPOGRAPHY & SITE ORIENTATION

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

The topography of the Amphitheater Green is rather complex due to the multitude of ramps that cross through the space (see diagram below). The original landscape area was on grade with the main entry to the EMU until 1974 when the space was dramatically regraded. The 1974 Amphitheater remodel created a breezeway that passes underneath the EMU towards the Promenade Axis, requiring the excavation of a substantial amount of earth.

The 1998 work enlarged the amphitheater space, requiring the excavation of more soil. Built-in concrete bleacher seating defines the transition from below grade amphitheater to the 13th Avenue sidewalk. The interior of the amphitheater drains towards a central ornamental catch basin.

There is strong solar access in the Amphitheater Green, and seating along the amphitheater is particularly popular on sunny days.

### VEGETATION

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

Although the majority of the Amphitheater Green is hardscaped and unvegetated, there are some discrete vegetated areas planted in 1998.

### NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

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

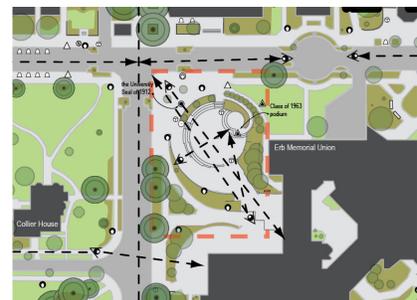
Water flow is directed into several stormwater drains on site. The hardscaped surfaces within the Amphitheater Green provide the space with little habitat value.



*The area's topography.*



*Diagram showing circulation paths.*



*Significant views through the area.*

### **BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES**

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

The only building that is immediately adjacent to the Amphitheater Green is the original portion of the EMU (1950). Across University Street is the Collier House, built in 1886 and one of the oldest buildings on campus. To the north across 13th Avenue are the Volcanology Building (1935) and Columbia Hall (1960).

### **SMALL-SCALE ELEMENTS**

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

There are numerous small scale elements, however most are contemporary and installed during construction in 1998. The two historic small scale features in the Amphitheater Green are the 1912 University Seal moved from the Villard Hall Green and the Class of 1963 Podium. The University Seal is of bronze, and the Podium of brick with precast concrete trim.

### **EDGE CONDITIONS AND ADJACENCIES**

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

The site is defined to the south and the east by the EMU and opens up to University Street and 13th Avenue to the north and south.

### **CIRCULATION**

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

The Green provides an important connection between the Heart of Campus and the Promenade. There are also important adjacent pedestrian walkways on University Street and 13th Avenue (see diagram, pg.6). Two main ramps originating along the northwest corner of the site lead up to the main entrance of the EMU and down to the breezeway.

### **VIEWS/VISTAS**

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

The Amphitheater Green is easily viewed from the heavily trafficked intersection of University Street and 13th Avenue. These views are significant as they attract people to the various functions that occur within.

■ **DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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**CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION**

- City Landmark
- National Register - full listing  
name:
- 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.*

The Erb Memorial Union was the culmination of 27 years of effort on the part of students, alumni, staff, and friends of the university. The Green was closely associated with this achievement, however its design and material integrity have changed significantly since then.

**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.*

Not Applicable

**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?*

Almost nothing remains from the Amphitheater Green since the 1974 remodel.

### DESIGN

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

The Green did not retain any of its design integrity from the era of significance.

### MATERIALS

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

No historic materials remain.

### WORKMANSHIP

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

The landscape has changed so drastically that all traces of characteristic workmanship within the Green have been lost. However, the façade of the adjacent EMU does retain some characteristic workmanship from the Mid-Century Era.

### FEELING

*Does the landscape evoke the period of significance?*

The era of significance is no longer evident.

### ASSOCIATION

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

Most all associations have been lost.

## ■ 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).*

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.

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Hendricks, Leland G. ed. The Oregana volume V (Eugene: the class of 1914, 1914).

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Lowrie, Chris, "University acquires 13th Avenue." Eugene, Oregon Daily Emerald, 26 January, 1971.

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

McMillan, Adell, A Common Ground. (Eugene, Oregon: Erb Memorial Union, 2003) 1-637.

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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.

Teague, EH. (2004, Oct. 10). The Architecture of the University of Oregon. Retrieved Mar. 1, 2006, from <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/architecture/oregon/>

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.

University of Oregon Catalogue: 1913-1914. (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, 1914) 1-276.

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

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

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, 1947.

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

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, 1968.

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

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