

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

■ **RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION & SUMMARY**

LANDSCAPE AREA NAME

**Villard Hall Green (c)**

HISTORIC NAME(S)

none known

CAMPUS PLAN DESIGNATION

Green

CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION

National Register - partial listing  
 name: Villard Hall

ERA(S) OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE

Inception Era

LEVEL OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

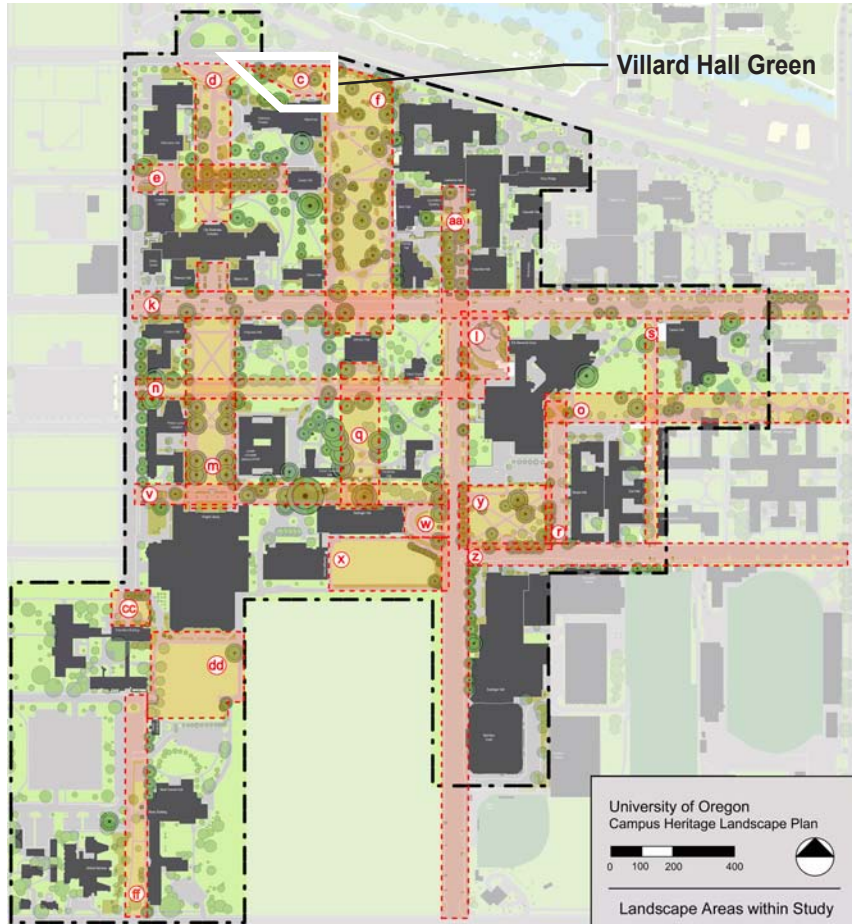
High

LEVEL OF INTEGRITY

Excellent

RANKING

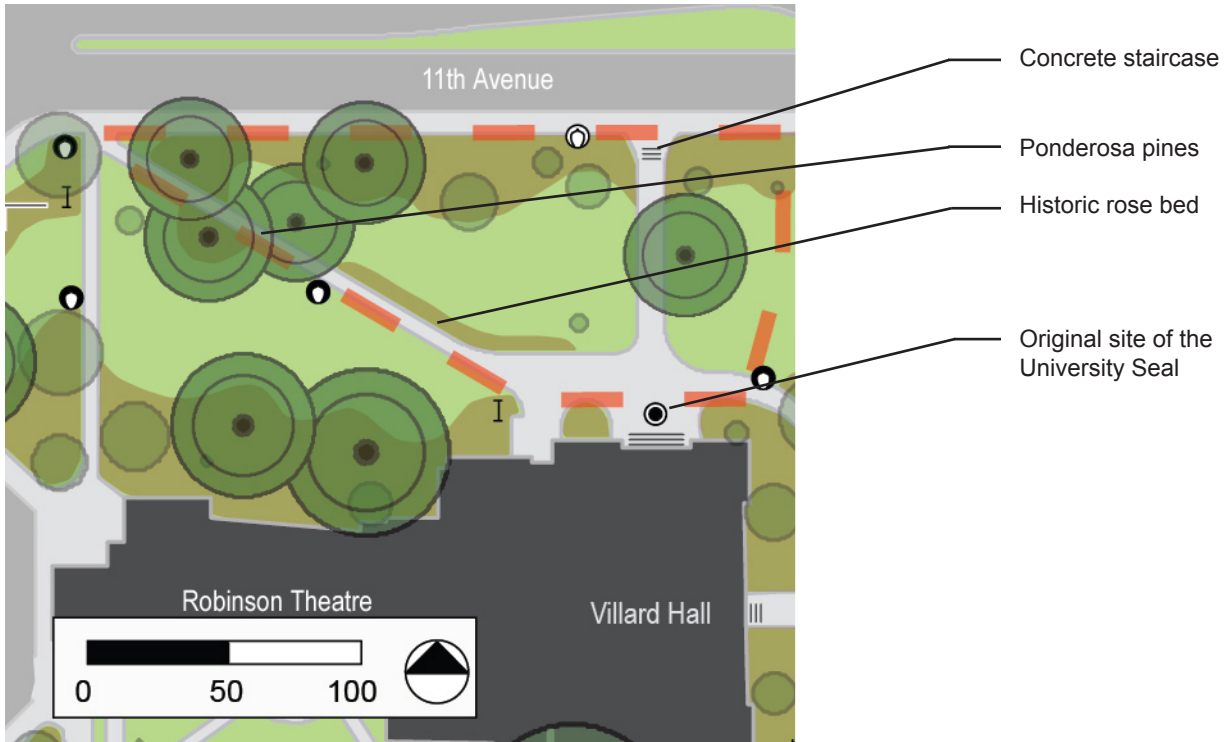
Primary



*View looking east across the Villard Hall Green, with Villard Hall beyond.*

Landscape Resource Survey  
**VILLARD HALL GREEN**

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

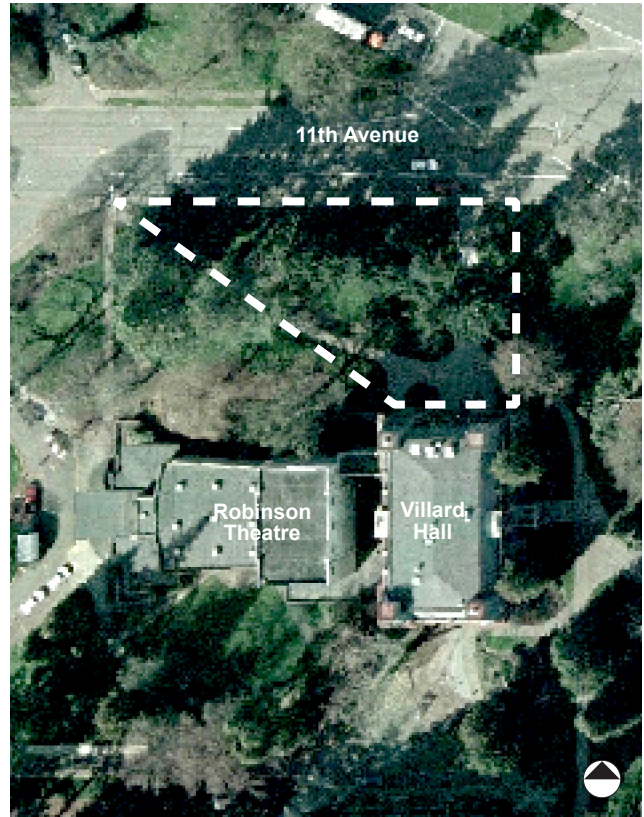


LEGEND			
TRASH CANS	⊕	BIKE RACKS	⏏
NEWS STANDS	Ⓝ	TREES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	●
SMALL SCALE FEATURES FROM PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	▲	MEMORIAL TREES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	●
SMALL SCALE FEATURES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	△	CAMPUS TREES AFTER PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	●
PLAQUES AND MEMORIALS 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**

Villard Hall Green was at one time a well traveled entrance to the campus, and important enough to warrant placing the 1912 University Seal and a flagpole in front of Villard Hall's north entry. Villard Hall Green maintained its character throughout the Inception and Lawrence/Cuthbert Eras with minor changes. As early as 1921 a rose bed was added to the lawn and remains in the same location today. When the Southern Pacific Railroad relocated its tracks across the Millrace at the end of the Lawrence/Cuthbert Era (1943), the vacated space along 11th Avenue and Franklin Boulevard was used to construct a retaining wall at the northern slope of the Green. By the Mid-Century Era the university had grown extensively to the south of 13th Avenue, and the Green received much less pedestrian use. In 1949 the Robinson Theatre was added to the west of Villard Hall, blocking the well-established circulation routes to the Green. Circa 1950 the 1912 University Seal was moved to the Erb Memorial Union. Despite these changes, Villard Hall Green, with its original path configuration, historic trees and remaining small scale features, retains strong associations with the Inception Era.



2004 aerial of the Villard Hall Green



Concrete stairs leading from 11th Avenue up to Villard Hall.



View from Villard Hall northward to the Millrace beyond.

■ **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**

- 1886: Villard Hall is constructed.
- 1912: University Seal located in front of Villard Hall.

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

- 1943: The Southern Pacific Railroad removes its tracks along Franklin Boulevard. Retaining wall constructed.
- 1949: Robinson Theater is constructed.
- 1950: University Seal relocated to the E.M.U.

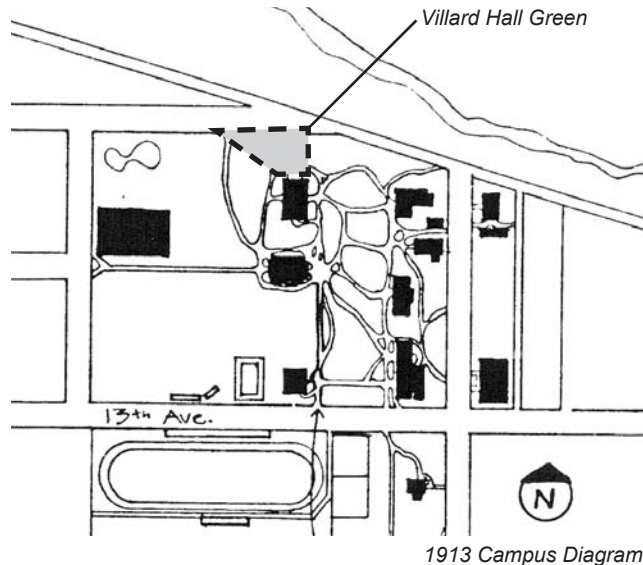


*The Class of 1916 posing on the steps of Villard Hall, with the University Seal in foreground.*

**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

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

By the end of the Inception Era, Villard Hall Green was considered a key entrance to campus. Young trees were planted in the Green. The Green banked down sharply to 11th Avenue, and at the top a white wooden “Kentucky Style” fence marked the edge of the university. A sidewalk sloped gently upward from the corner of Kincaid Street and 11th Avenue, running along the north side of the fence until it intersected with a flight of concrete stairs that remain today. These stairs connected 11th Avenue to Villard Hall’s north entrance. The diagonal path that acts as the southwest boundary of the Green passed by the university’s flagpole and between two young Ponderosa pines. The Southern Pacific Railroad ran along the southern edge of Franklin Boulevard, and electric street cars (the Portland Eugene and Eastern tracks) traveled down 11th Avenue in front of the Green. The class of 1912 placed the University Seal at the north entrance of Villard Hall, and keeping it polished was a duty bestowed upon each freshman class.



*1913 Campus Diagram*

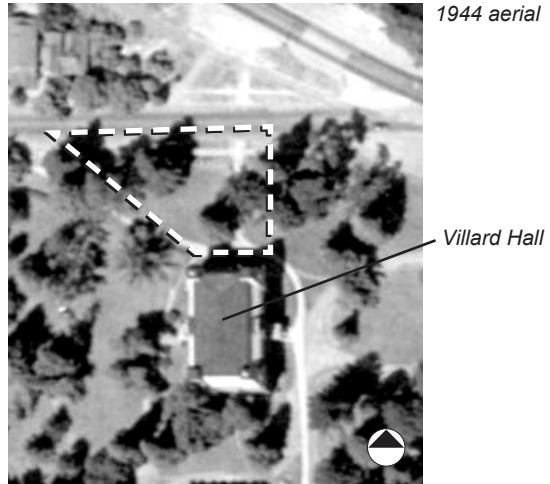
*An 1892 image of Villard Hall six years after its construction, showing the flag pole and white wooden fence.*



**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

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

In 1943 the Southern Pacific Railroad moved its tracks to the other side of the Mill Race, providing the university some relief from train noise. Streetcars no longer traveled down 11th Avenue, and the sidewalk along the Avenue was reconfigured so that it followed the edge of the road at the bottom of the steep bank, intersecting with the base of the stairs descending from the Green. A retaining wall was built next to the sidewalk along 11th Avenue. A rose bed followed the diagonal sidewalk up to Villard Hall, which is now surrounded by large trees. The flagpole and fence were removed during this era, indicating that the Green was no longer considered a prominent entry to the campus.



A 1921 image showing the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, and pathways that cut through the Green.

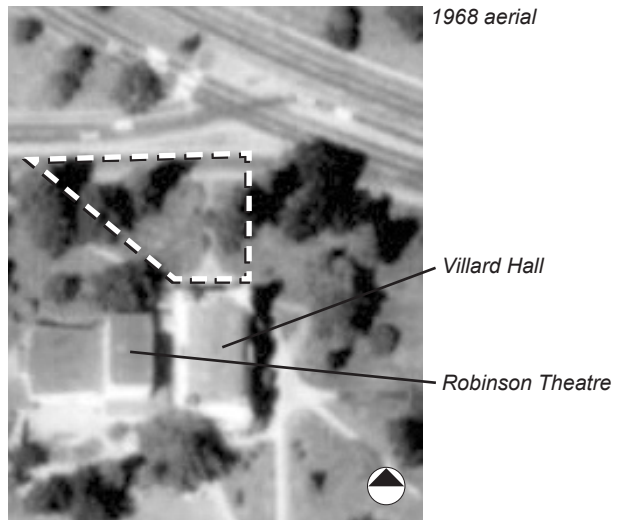


A circa 1920 photo of the walkway that leads up to the north face of Villard Hall.

**ERA DESCRIPTION:**

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

The most significant change to the Green occurred in 1949 with the Robinson Theatre addition to Villard Hall. The Theatre blocked pedestrians from accessing Villard's west entry, changing the circulation patterns within the Green. Also at this time a large Douglas fir (class tree of 1888) was removed from the north entry walk, and the 1912 University Seal was moved to the Erb Memorial Union. During this era a greater emphasis was placed on the Dads' Gates Axis, further diminishing Villard Hall Green's prominence as an entry to campus.



Villard Hall  
 Robinson Theatre

This 1950 aerial shows the prominence of the Robinson Theatre addition and the landscape work around the Dads' Gates, all which reduced the prominence of the Villard Hall Green.

## ■ DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

### LAND USE

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

The current use of this space is as a quiet, front yard area for Villard Hall. The rose garden is a notable feature within this area. The large conifers serve as a porous visual screen of 11th Avenue.

### DESIGN INTENT

*Describing the overall design intent of the Area.*

This area was designed to be used by pedestrians, and is an entry onto campus as it transitions from 11th Avenue to Villard Hall.

### SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

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

The Green is defined by the two pathways that lead to the northern entry of Villard Hall. The straight pathway directly in front of Villard Hall goes down a staircase to 11th Avenue. The curving pathway moves west from Villard Hall, passing by a rose garden and two large Ponderosa pines before terminating near Dads' Gates. The interior of the Green is comprised of turf grass, with groupings of large native conifers with English ivy established underneath.

### TOPOGRAPHY & SITE ORIENTATION

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

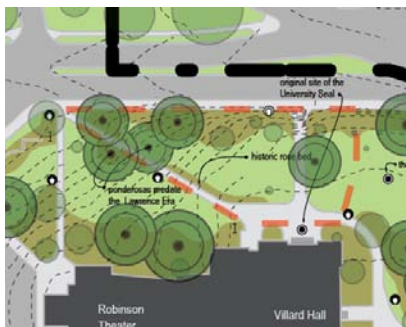
Villard Hall Green is perched approximately 8-10 feet above 11th Avenue along its northern edge, connected by a flight of stairs with seventeen risers. The winding pathway along the west perimeter slopes down until it meets 11th Avenue near the Dads' Gates. The topography dips to the northwest at a slope that varies between 1 and 6% (see diagram below).

There is little solar access in the Green due to the buildings that lie immediately south of the site, along with shade from the large mature conifers.

### VEGETATION

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

There are several large, mature conifers in the Villard Green. A 1912 map of campus identifies the same rose bed that runs along the curving pathway seen today. Two large Ponderosa pines act as a gateway along this walk. These pines and three large Douglas firs date from the Inception Era. English ivy is established underneath the conifers along the embankment that leads down to 11th Avenue. Sparse ornamental shrub foundation plantings are situated near the entrance of Villard Hall.



*The topography of the Green.*



*Diagram showing circulation paths.*



*Significant views through the area.*

### **NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES**

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

The large, native conifers have high habitat value, particularly with campus avian species. There is a near continuous slope that pushes water to the northwest corner of the site towards 11th Avenue.

### **BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES**

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

Villard Hall and Robinson Theatre are directly south of the Green. Villard Hall was the second university building constructed, and is a National Historic Landmark.

### **SMALL-SCALE ELEMENTS**

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

A concrete staircase ascends from 11th Avenue, joining the main entry path to Villard Hall's north façade. The staircase has decorative concrete cheek walls that display a high degree of craftsmanship. Entry stairs into the Hall appear in the same location as during the Inception Era. In the southeast corner of the Green at the base of the entry steps to Villard Hall, a plaque denotes the original location of the 1912 University Seal, later relocated.

### **EDGE CONDITIONS AND ADJACENCIES**

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

The northern boundary of the site is perched 8-10 feet above 11th Avenue and opens to views beyond. Villard Hall acts as the southern border of the Green, and abuts the Old Campus Quad to the east.

### **CIRCULATION**

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

A curving diagonal path connects the north entry of Villard Hall to Franklin Blvd. (see diagram on page 6). The placement of the new Emerald Express Transit station near Dads' Gates will probably increase traffic along this pathway. The formal entry and stairway directly in front of Villard Hall are rarely used.

### **VIEWS/VISTAS**

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

There are three noteworthy views from the Villard Green (see diagram on page 6). There is an axial view of Villard Hall that is aligned with the formal, front stairway entrance. Along the curving pathway there is an oblique view of Villard Hall that is framed between the two large Ponderosa pines. Near the front entrance of Villard Hall, there is a view of the lone remaining Condon Oak and the Millrace beyond. The orientation of the plaque on the tree faces this Villard entrance, suggesting this is a designed view.

■ **DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**CURRENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION**

- City Landmark
- National Register - full listing  
name:
- National Register - partial listing  
name: Villard Hall
- 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 Villard Hall Green meets criterion A because it signifies the growth of the university. The creation of the University of Oregon was an important process in the development of the area as well as the state of Oregon. As the second building on campus, Villard Hall and the Villard Hall Green played a significant role in the inception of the university.

**Criterion B: Significant People**

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

The Villard Hall Green is closely connected to railroad giant Henry Villard. Villard contributed greatly to the development of the railroad throughout the state of Oregon and he also contributed greatly to the University of Oregon. He provided the funds for the construction of Villard Hall and saved the university from financial ruin. Therefore, the Villard Hall Green is associated with Henry Villard, a significant man in Oregon history.

**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 Villard Hall Green was an integral component of the early plans to create an entrance for the University from 11th Street, it also displays distinctive characteristics of the Inception Era and therefore meets criterion C. It represents the design plan that placed this green as the key entrance to the campus. It also contains many features characteristic of the university's Inception Era. These features include the concrete staircase that connects to 11th Avenue, the historic rose beds, and the Ponderosa pines. Other, more general characteristics of the

Era are the curving sidewalks connecting to the building and an open view to the Mill Race and the Willamette River.

**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.*



*Deady and Villard Halls, both of which are listed as National Historic Landmarks.*

■ **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?*

Villard Hall Green retains a high degree of integrity from the Inception Era in its association with Villard Hall and the amount of remaining vegetation that dates back to that era.

**DESIGN**

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

The most significant alteration to this space came from the addition of Robinson Theatre in 1949. This building changed the southern edge of the space, but is respectfully set back a distance from Villard Hall. Another alteration occurred with the removal of the 1912 University Seal around 1950.

**MATERIALS**

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

The majority of the vegetation within the Green dates back to the Inception Era. Significant trees include two ponderosa pines and three Douglas firs. The rose bed that follows the winding pathway also dates back to the era of significance.

**WORKMANSHIP**

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

The plantings and other base elements (pathways, staircase) continue to display their Inception Era workmanship.

**FEELING**

*Does the landscape evoke the period of significance?*

The Inception Era is evoked within the Villard Hall Green.

**ASSOCIATION**

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

The landscape retains a high degree of integrity as an open space dating back to the inception of the university. It is also partially listed with Villard Hall's National Historic Landmark nomination.

■ **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 PhotoCollection.
- 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.
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- 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
- McMillan, Adell, *A Common Ground*. (Eugene, Oregon: Erb Memorial Union, 2003) 1-637.
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- Rice, Donald B. ed. *The Oregana volume V* (Eugene: the class of 1914, 1914).
- 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/>
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- 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)
- Walton, Elizabeth, pre-parer, National Register of Historic Places Inventory -- Nomination Form for Villard Hall, February 1972, 1-9.
- Electronic version available on the University of Oregon Planning Office web page: <http://uplan.uoregon.edu/projects/HLP/hlpsurveyoflandareas.htm>

Survey research by Dustin Welch and Daniel Schaible.

Survey form completed in Spring 2006 under the supervision of Fletcher Farr Ayotte, Inc.

Edited by the University of Oregon Planning Office, Spring 2007