The 78-year-old Hunt Hall, above, is set to be torn down this summer, kicking off major north campus restoration work at Eastern Oregon University. The work will be funded with $2.985 million in bond funding through the State of Oregon. Initial steps for the demolition of the building will begin with hazardous materials crews removing asbestos in the building complex later this month and should be completed by the end of June. (Dick Mason/The Observer)

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EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

**Hunt Hall demolition to begin in July**

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**Hunt Hall history**

Written and oral stories will also be collected as part of the legacy preservation process of Eastern Oregon University’s Hunt Hall. Anyone who would like to submit a written story or give an oral interview about Hunt Hall should go to the North Campus Restoration portion of EOU’s website, [www.eou.edu/north-campus-restoration/](http://www.eou.edu/north-campus-restoration) and click on “Story & Photo Submission.”

“If you have stories, we want your stories,” EOU’s North Campus Restoration project manager Luke Aldrich said.

Decades ago, Eastern Oregon University’s Hunt Hall had a small playhouse named No Name Theater. Today, 27 years after the theater closed, the final act of Hunt Hall’s long story is beginning.

The 78-year-old Hunt Hall, a former residence hall, is set to be torn down this summer, kicking off major north campus restoration work. The work will be funded with $2.985 million in bond funding through the State of Oregon.

Initial steps for the demolition of Hunt Hall will soon begin with hazardous materials crews removing asbestos in the building complex later this month and should be completed by the end of June, according to EOU Director of Facilities and Planning David Lageson. Demolition will begin in early July and should be finished about four weeks later, Lageson said during a North Campus Restoration project presentation Tuesday.

Hunt Hall, composed of four wings built between 1939 and the 1960s, is being torn down because decades of deferred maintenance have created an “irreparable state for the majority of the building,” according to the North Campus Restoration portion of EOU’s website.

“It would cost less to build a new building than it would to restore it,” said Luje Aldrich, EOU’s North Campus Restoration project manager.

The general contractor for the demolition and restoration will be W.C. Construction of Elgin.

Aldrich said steps will be taken to preserve Hunt Hall’s legacy, including an extensive set of photographs to be taken of Hunt Hall. The pictures will be taken to conform with Historic American Buildings Survey standards and will be sent to the State Historic Preservation Office in Salem.

“If someone later wants to build a building exactly like Hunt Hall they could (with help from the photos),” Aldrich said.

Much of Monday’s presentation focused on the restoration work that will follow the building’s demolition. A goal of the project is to restore the campus mall in front of Inlow Hall’s south entrance.

Eric Bode, of PLACE Studio architects in Portland, which is helping design the restoration project, said EOU had an expansive campus mall in front of Inlow Hall’s south entrance for the first five decades of its history. Bode said plans call for the mall to be expanded to its original size by removing the parking lot now on the north side of Hunt Hall and replacing it with a grass field.

A new parking lot will be created where Hunt Hall stood.

Bode said the expanded mall will improve Eastern’s appearance, which might play a role in attracting and retaining more students.

“Studies show that many high school students choose colleges based upon the appearance of campuses,” Bode said.

Restoration funds will also be spent creating Americans with Disabilities Act-approved pathways in the northeast portion of campus. The paths would connect Ackerman Hall, the Gilbert Center, Pierce Library and Inlow Hall. Hunt Hall will be gone when fall term starts in late September, but an unseen part of it will remain on campus. Bode said Hunt Hall’s concrete walls will be ground up and used to fill the hole created by the removal of the structure.

Bode said once Hunt Hall, a four-story building, is removed, it will be much easier to see Inlow Hall and other portions of campus from different vantage points.

“There will be tremendous views,” he said.

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