The seven Oregon University System campuses, the Cascades branch campus, and the university centers represent 50% of all state-owned facilities. Altogether, the facilities constitute over 23 million gross square feet of academic, auxiliary, and utility space. The current replacement value (CRV) of the Education and General (E & G) space alone is almost $3.9 billion. Construction of new facilities and the renewal of existing buildings and infrastructure play a vital economic role, both locally and for the state as a whole.

The purpose of the Capital Construction Program is to ensure that OUS campuses have the physical resources they need to meet their overall academic mission. To that end, the Capital Construction Program focuses on investments in higher education to protect OUS facilities and enhance their value.

Half of the university system’s buildings were constructed between 1960 and 1975 as colleges across the country expanded to meet the needs of the post-WWII baby boom generation. Now, 40 years later, the buildings’ major subsystems (roofing, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, building envelope) have exceeded their expected life span and require replacement. OUS has developed a 20-year plan to address the maintenance backlog, improve seismic safety, and reduce energy consumption, so that future generations will find a welcoming physical environment at Oregon’s public universities.

OUS is an emerging leader in sustainable practices and earthquake disaster management. In response to an executive order by the governor, OUS now requires all public improvement projects to meet or exceed guidelines for sustainable practices as outlined in the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Silver program. Good energy management practices, together with Oregon’s temperate climate, allow OUS universities to rank among the best nationally for low energy usage.

In 2006, OUS contracted with Sightlines, a nationally respected facilities asset advisory firm, to measure, monitor, and benchmark facilities space at the seven system campuses. The study represents the university system’s first comprehensive evaluation of Education & General space for its physical characteristics, maintenance profile, energy consumption, and associated operating budget. Sightlines’ database of institutions (over 200 institutions in 30 states) gives OUS the ability to compare facilities and operating efficiencies against similar-sized institutions nationwide.