OSU Research Council’s input on guiding principles for research
Infrastructure recapitalization

The research mission of Oregon State University (OSU) as well as its capability to attract outstanding investigators and to provide high quality educational experience requires the availability of a safe and reliable environment in which research activities can be conducted. In this context, we believe that the large number of deferred maintenance issues regarding OSU’s infrastructure can compromise the quality of the research it supports. Acknowledging that limited resources are available to address this problem, a mechanism to identify priorities for the recapitalization of research infrastructure should be established. For this reason we propose the following four main guidelines for the prioritization of research infrastructure recapitalization:

A- PRESENT RESEARCH OBLIGATIONS AND LONGTERM RESEARCH VISION

1) Ensuring the infrastructure needs required in order to fulfill the University’s contractual obligations with the state and funding agencies:
   Ongoing activities supported through research grants and contracts require the availability of a safe and reliable infrastructure. The aging of many of our buildings, as well as the expansion of our research facilities in them puts at risk the safety and reliability of the spaces in which research activities are carried. For this reason, the maintenance and upgrading of the basic research infrastructure should remain a priority. Some of these basic priorities include:
   - Campus wide stable and high quality electricity.
   - Stable and high quality heating and cooling systems where needed.
   - Safety and accessibility of research spaces.
   - Integrity of research spaces (e.g. roof and window leaks).
   - Adequate lighting and hoods.

2) Addressing need that will enhance the efficiency of the research enterprise at OSU, such as:
   - Increase the availability of adequate research space. Many research units on campus find themselves limited by the availability of adequate laboratory space.
   - Improving our IT infrastructure that facilitates the sharing of data and documents while ensuring security and privacy.
   - Enhancing communication capabilities with colleagues around the world.

3) Identifying future needs:
   - Investment in Infrastructure recapitalization should prioritize support in the three signature areas of distinctions identified in our University’s Strategic Plan.
   - Long lasting solutions should be used when possible.
   - Effects on faculty recruitment and retention should be considered.

B- BREADTH OF IMPACT ON THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

Some potential examples are:
   - Recapitalization projects, such as the availability campus wide of a stable power source should receive high priority.
   - Infrastructure supporting research facilities that serve broad campus needs

C- COST ANALYSIS:

Some criteria used to address cost analysis should include:
   - Projects that cannot be funded through alternative mechanisms.
- Infrastructure that supports research leading to potential revenue and with strong social and educational impact.
- Project costs are an important component of resource allocation decisions

D- REVIEW MECHANISM:
- Research Infrastructure Recapitalization mechanism should be announced broadly.
- Proposals should be solicited and reviewed annually or at some other set periodicity.
- Proposals should be reviewed by Research Council, or another university wide body.