



December 13, 2023

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) AND ONLINE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE
PROPOSED UC BERKELEY CAL SOFTBALL FIELD RENOVATION PROJECT**

Pursuant to the State of California Public Resources Code Section 21091(a) and the Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines), the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) has released for public review a Draft EIR for the proposed UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project. A Notice of Preparation for the EIR was issued on November 2, 2022.

Project Title: UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project

Lead Agency: The Regents of the University of California

Draft EIR Review Period: Wednesday, December 13, 2023, through Monday, January 29, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Project Location: UC Berkeley is located in the City of Berkeley, approximately 10 miles east of San Francisco (Figure 1). As shown in Figure 2, the project site is located within the Hill Campus West of UC Berkeley and the Strawberry Canyon Recreation Area at the site of the existing Cal Softball Field. The project site includes the Cal Softball Field and Witter Lot located on Centennial Drive, portions of Centennial Drive right-of-way and sidewalk, and utility facilities located at the southeast corner of the Centennial Drive and Stadium Rim Way intersection. Witter Rugby Field is directly to the west of the project site, and Strawberry Canyon Recreation and Pool are to the northeast. California Memorial Stadium is located at the terminus of Centennial Drive to the west. Immediately south of the project site is a densely wooded area, which includes an unnamed recreational trail running eastward up into the Hill Campus East. Beyond the wooded area to the south of the project site is the Panoramic Hill Neighborhood. Witter Lot, a 110-space campus permit parking lot for faculty, staff, and students, is located along the northern edge of the project site.

Project Description: UC Berkeley proposes to renovate and improve the existing Cal Softball Field, which is the home for the UC Berkeley Intercollegiate Athletic (IA) Women's Softball Program. The project would preserve and upgrade the existing softball facility to meet modern safety and competition standards for the IA Women's Softball Program and Recreational Sports Intramural softball players, as well as support campus compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 through the provision of equitable athletics facilities for male and female student athletes. The use of the softball facility would remain largely similar to current uses, primarily providing additional spectator and player amenities and seating for up to 1,511 spectators, up from approximately 1,340 spectator seats under existing conditions. The primary physical changes associated with the project would include providing additional permanent spectator seats in place of temporary bleachers, a press box, spectator concourse, replacement competition-grade lights, restrooms, public address system, expanded playing field dimensions, team and locker rooms, a ticket booth, improved training facilities (e.g., batting cages), entry plaza, landscaping, sustainable design features, access and bus stop improvements, and utilities. The proposed project will remove approximately 85 parking spaces and retain approximately 25 parking spaces in the existing Witter Lot. The proposed project also includes the implementation of applicable UC

Berkeley's continuing best practices, a game-day transportation demand management plan, and a project-specific wildfire protection plan.

Scope of Draft EIR: An initial study was prepared and circulated with the Notice of Preparation for the proposed project in November 2022 (see Appendix A-1 and Appendix A-2, Notice of Preparation/Initial Study and Scoping Comments). The Initial Study indicates that the proposed project would result in either no impacts or less-than-significant impacts in the following environmental resource topics: agriculture and forestry resources, air quality, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials,¹ hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems. Therefore, these environmental resource topics are not evaluated in detail in the Draft EIR. Chapter 5 of the Draft EIR, Other CEQA Considerations, also summarizes the results of the Initial Study and further elaborates on these results where needed to respond to scoping comments or to account for additional information that has become available since the release of the Initial Study in November 2022. The Draft EIR provides a detailed evaluation of the following environmental resource topics: aesthetics, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, noise, transportation, and wildfire.

Significant Environmental Effects: The Draft EIR identifies the following effects by environmental topic:

- **Less than Significant without Mitigation:** aesthetics, biological resources (riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, state or federally protected wetlands, resident migratory fish and wildlife movement and native wildlife nursery sites), cultural resources (built environmental historical resources and human remains), noise (operational, excessive vibration), transportation (geometric design and emergency access), and wildfire.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation:** biological resources (candidate, sensitive, or special status species), cultural resources (archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources), and transportation (conflict with a plan).
- **Significant and Unavoidable with Mitigation:** noise (construction noise) and transportation (vehicle miles traveled).

Document Availability:

The Draft EIR is available online at: <https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/environmental-review>

In addition to the digital copy of the Draft EIR available online at the above website, a printed copy of the Draft EIR is available for public review during the comment period at A&E, Berkeley, CA-94720 (By appointment only; please call (510) 495-5786 for appointment)

If assistance accessing documents is needed, including documents incorporated by reference in the Draft EIR, please contact UC Berkeley's Physical and Environmental Planning department at (510) 495-5786 or by email at planning@berkeley.edu.

Public Review and Comment Period: UC Berkeley is soliciting written comments on the Draft EIR during a 45-day public review period that begins on December 13, 2023, and ends on January 29, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. Written comments via e-mail and regular mail can be provided no later than January 29, 2023. Written comments will be responded to in the Final EIR.

¹ Initial Study Section 2.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, includes a question related to adopted emergency response or emergency evacuation plans (question f) and a question related to wildfire risks (question g). The Initial Study indicates that these questions will be addressed in the Wildfire section of this EIR.

Mail comments to: UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project Draft EIR
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Email comments to: planning@berkeley.edu

Include “Draft EIR Comments: UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project” in the subject line.

Public Hearing to Provide Comments: UC Berkeley will host a public hearing on to receive public comments on the Draft EIR. **The public hearing will be held on January 24 starting at 5:00 p.m. exclusively through Zoom videoconference.** Because of time restraints, there will be a time limit of 2:00 minutes for all public comments.

For instructions to access and participate in the Zoom meeting by telephone or from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device, please visit: <https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/public-meetings>

Attachments:

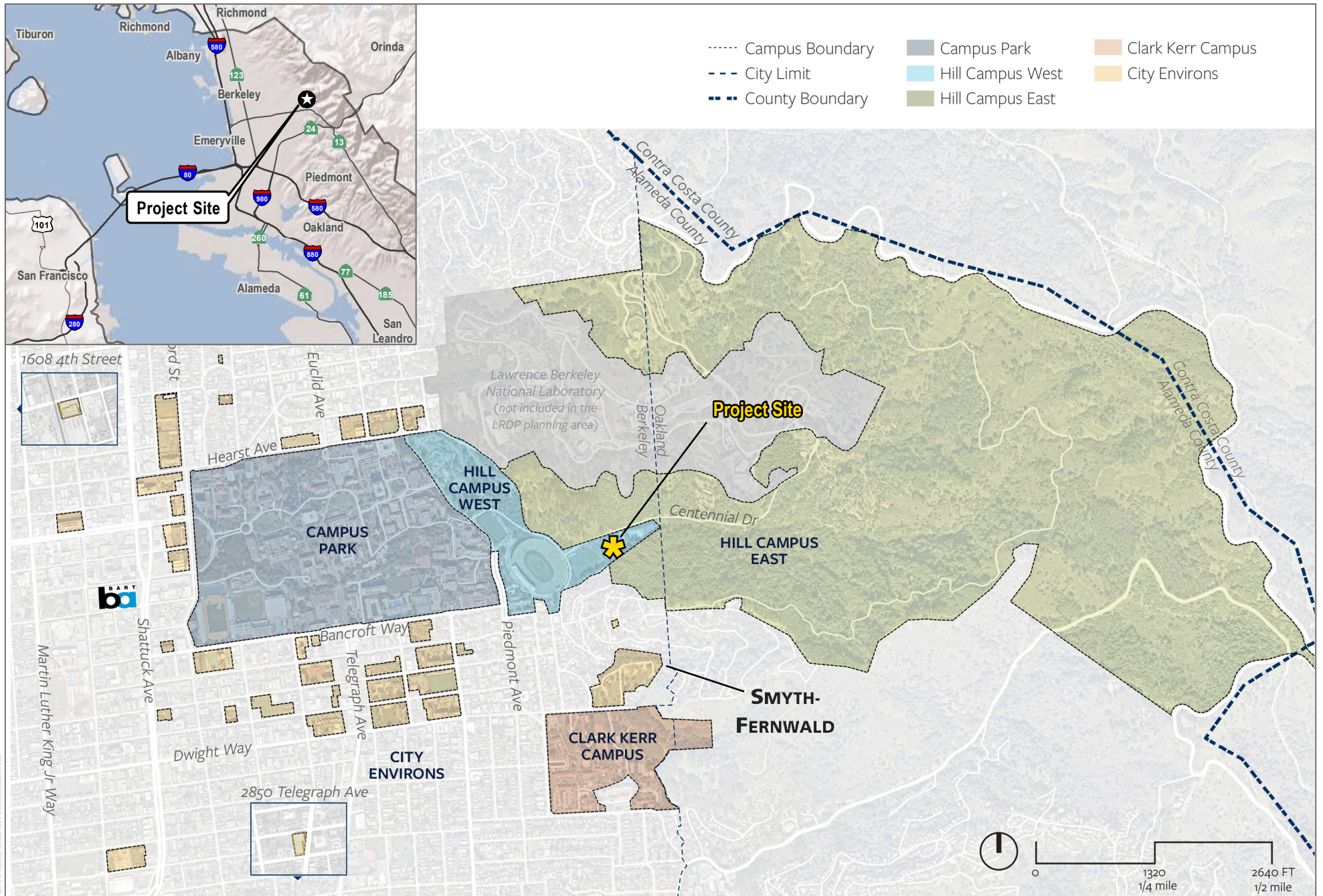
Figure 1: Project Location

Figure 2: Project Site

Figure 3: Existing Cal Softball Field

Figure 4: Overall Site Plan

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SOURCE: UC Berkeley 2018

FIGURE 1
Project Location

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SOURCE: ESRI World Imagery 2018



FIGURE 2
Project Site

UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project

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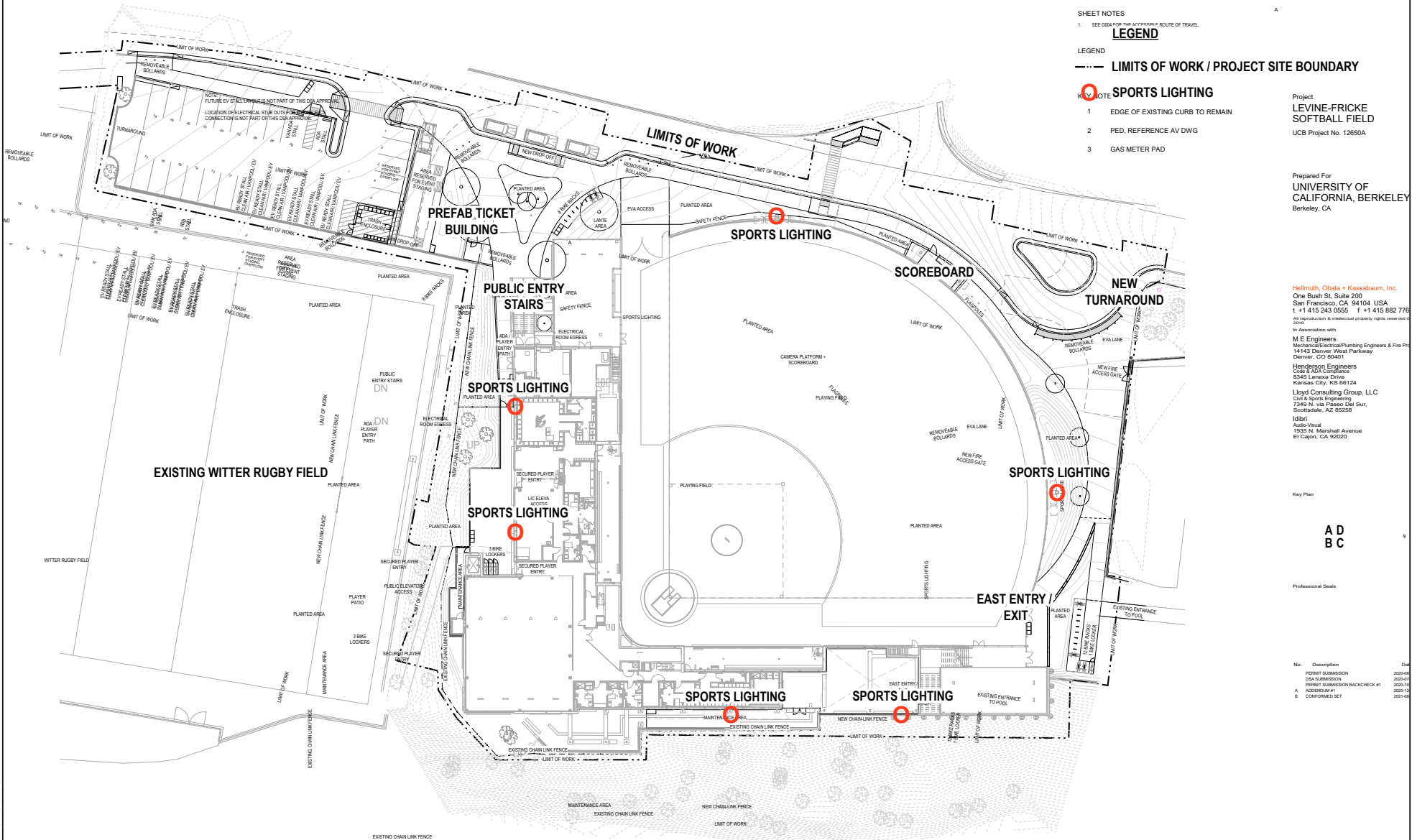
SOURCE: HOK Architects

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FIGURE 3
Existing Cal Softball Field
UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project

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(Project Site Boundary extends west for connection to existing campus utilities.
See Figure 3-2 for full boundary extents.)



SOURCE: HOK Architects



FIGURE 4
Overall Site Plan

UC Berkeley Cal Softball Field Renovation Project

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