



Building Champions: The Plan for Student-Athletes

UC Berkeley’s master plan for California Memorial Stadium begins with construction of the new Student-Athlete High Performance Center. There has been a great deal of inaccurate, if not misleading information in the press about this project. The following Q&A sets the record straight, to insure that our community’s conversation is based on fact, not fiction.

Learn More on the Web

The Campaign for Student-Athletes
stadiumcampaign.berkeley.edu

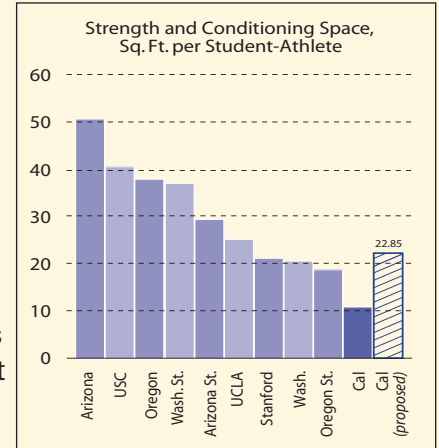
Project Drawings
stadiumcampaign.berkeley.edu/goto/drawings

Nov. 2005 Project Announcement & Related Links
newscenter.berkeley.edu/goto/secampus

UC Berkeley Home Page
www.berkeley.edu

Q: What is the connection between the new student-athlete center and plans to modernize Memorial Stadium?

Before beginning work to upgrade and seismic retrofit the stadium, Cal must first build a facility to house the 450 student-athletes, coaches, and staff who currently work and train under the stadium’s stands. This need creates an opportunity for Cal to provide its student-athletes with seismically safe facilities that are on par with those of its peers. In the Pac-10, Cal now ranks dead last in space available to its athletics program for training and sports medicine. The student-athlete center will bring Cal up near the conference average in these areas.



Q: Will taxpayer money be used to construct the student-athlete center?

No public money will be used. The project is being funded by donors and ticket surcharges.

Q: Is the proposed location of the student-athlete center safe? Isn't it right on top of the Hayward Fault?

Adjacent to Memorial Stadium, the site is near but not on the Hayward Fault. Extensive geologic testing has shown that there are no active faults under the footprint of the planned student-athlete center. The campus hired an independent geological firm to conduct two rounds of testing, followed by a peer review of the findings by another firm and UC Berkeley’s own seismic experts. They all reached the same conclusion: student-athletes using the facility will be safe in the event of an earthquake.

Engineers say there is a vast difference between “on” and “near” when building in the area of a fault. In an earthquake on the Hayward Fault, they say, the new student-athlete center will be as safe as if it were built miles from the fault — in fact, safer than most buildings in downtown Berkeley.

(over)



University of California,
Berkeley

Q: Besides the football team, which Cal athletes will benefit from the center?

More than 400 student-athletes from 13 different teams — seven women’s and six men’s — will use the new facility. While media coverage focuses on football, little has been said about the difference the new center will make for other teams, like women’s field hockey, lacrosse, and soccer, that train and play on fields adjacent to the stadium. Without locker rooms of their own, many of the women on these teams must change clothes in their cars to prepare for games and practice. The student-athlete center will support gender equity and ensure that all Cal teams have safe and suitable facilities.

Q: Couldn’t the university find another site for the student-athlete center, one without trees that need to be removed?

Many locations were studied as possible sites; only one fully met the need to provide student-athletes with convenient access to academic and athletic facilities. It would be wrong, for example, to ask softball or rugby players to practice in Strawberry Canyon, travel to a distant location for medical and locker-room facilities, and get back to campus on time for class.

Almost all of the trees on the student-athlete center site were planted by the campus — the result of a 1923 landscaping project — and are not part of an ancient or historic grove. Cal will preserve nearly all of the trees adjacent to Piedmont Avenue, and will be planting three new trees for every one it removes. Each of the oak trees removed will be replaced by two saplings and one large, nursery-grown specimen tree.

Q: How has Cal responded to the concerns of its neighbors and the City of Berkeley?

Several changes have been made in plans for the area in response to community concerns. The university has

- enhanced landscaping on the new plaza along the stadium’s western edge, including lawn and additional trees.
- conducted additional geologic testing to confirm there are no active faults beneath the student-athlete center site.
- lowered the height of the student-athlete center to maintain the maximum view of the stadium from Piedmont Avenue.
- offered to significantly reduce the number of spaces in the proposed parking facility just north of the stadium. The original plan called for 911 spaces, which included an addition of 300 net new spaces. The revised plan would replace only those spaces that will be lost as the result of construction; no additional parking is planned.
- designed new lighting and sound systems to minimize impact outside the stadium.
- strictly limited the number of non-football events held in the stadium to no more than seven per year, and promised that the venue will not be used for events such as rock concerts that would require additional sound amplification.

In addition, the renovated stadium will have thousands fewer seats than the stadium does today. This will improve the space and comfort of fans, and will also reduce game-day traffic and disruption for Berkeley residents.

Cal’s plan to build safe and suitable facilities for its student-athletes, coaches, and fans is now being held up by a variety of legal challenges. One of the plaintiffs, the City of Berkeley, has allocated a quarter of million dollars from its budget for attendant legal expenses. If you have an opinion about this issue, please let your elected representatives know where you stand.

Email the Berkeley City Council: clerk@ci.berkeley.ca.us