

1 SUMMARY

1.1 Proponent

The proposed Intramural Activities (IMA) Field No. 1 Improvements is sponsored by the University of Washington.

1.2 Project Location

The Seattle campus of the University of Washington encompasses about 643 acres within the area generally bounded on the north by NE 45th Street, on the south by Union Bay/Lake Washington Ship Canal/Portage Bay, on the east by NE Union Bay and Surber Drive, and on the west by 15th Avenue NE. The University of Washington also operates a number of non-contiguous facilities west of 15th Avenue NE. The general location of the campus is shown in Figure 1-1.

IMA Field No. 1 is located in the East Campus south of NE 45th Street between Montlake Boulevard NE and Mary Gates Way (formerly Union Bay Place NE). IMA Field No. 1 is located approximately midway along the street frontage owned by the University of Washington and is immediately east of the UW Driving Range and the University Slough riparian area. The IMA Field No. 1 Improvements site totals about 200,000 square feet (4.6 acres). The area of proposed artificial turf is approximately 150,000 square feet (3.5 acres.)

1.3 Alternatives

The three alternatives considered for this project are described in the following subsections.

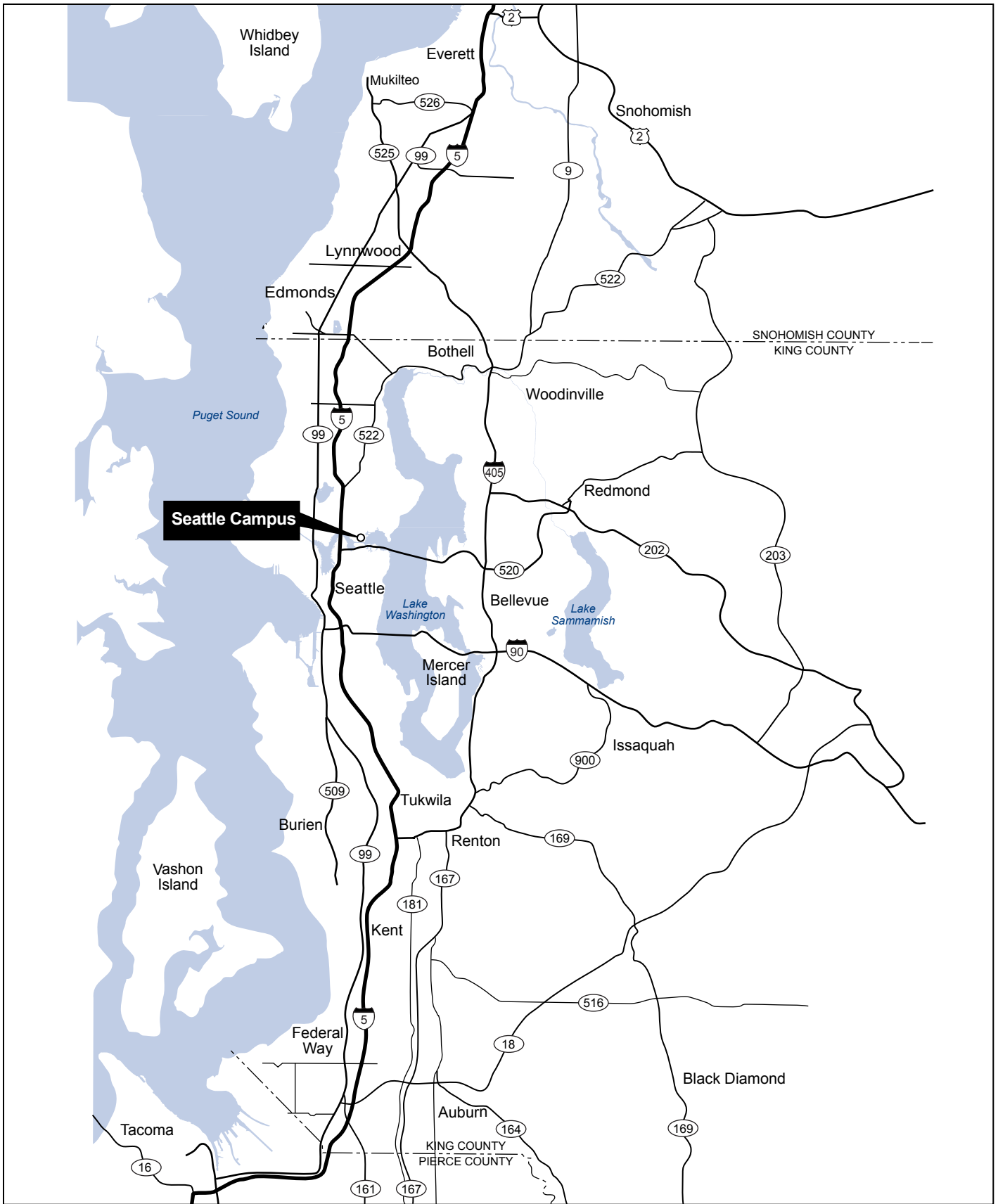
1.3.1 Alternative 1: No Action

This alternative would maintain the current configuration and use of IMA Field No. 1 with continuation of the existing grass turf and no night lighting.

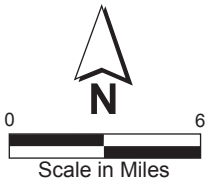
1.3.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements with Field Lights

This alternative would provide the following alterations:

- An area of approximately 200,000 square feet (4.6 acres) would be regraded to reduce the cross-slope grades on the site resulting in a flatter site that would continue to slope from the northeast to the southwest.



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**Figure 1-1
University of Washington
Location**

- Approximately 150,000 square feet (3.5 acres) of artificial turf would be installed. The turf would be striped for multiple uses including one standard full-size soccer field, three intramural soccer-flag football fields (aligned across the standard field), and two softball fields—one with the home plate in the northeast corner and the other with the home plate in the southwest corner.
- Installation of eight light standards to provide field lighting. Two light standards would be provided on each side of the field. These fixtures would focus light on the field and minimize off-site light spillage. Lighting hours would extend to approximately 11 pm, depending on demand and scheduling.

No changes in site access or other site features are proposed.

All improvements would be located more than 100 feet from the University Slough and outside of the City of Seattle Riparian Management Area.

1.3.3 Alternative 3: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements without Field Lights

This alternative would be identical to Alternative 2 with installation of synthetic turf except that lights would not be installed.

1.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

1.4.1 Aesthetics

Alternative 1: No Action

The impacts of the No Action Alternative would include continuation of existing conditions.

Alternative 2: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements with Field Lights

The added elements of eight 70- to 80-foot-high light poles with light fixtures would not substantially change the character of daytime views of the site. This is because the poles would be largely screened by adjacent large trees or blend into the background of large trees. Furthermore, in the context of the site being located in an urban setting, with prominent buildings on the University of Washington campus to the west and a variety of commercial buildings along NE 45th Street, the light poles would not change the visual context of the area or become a focus of attention. See the Light and Glare analysis below for nighttime impacts.

Alternative 3: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements without Field Lights

No discernible aesthetic impacts would result from replacing the existing grass with synthetic turf.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures have been identified.

1.4.2 Light and Glare

Alternative 1: No Action

The impacts of the No Action Alternative would include continuation of existing conditions.

Alternative 2: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements with Field Lights

Spill-over light beyond the field is not measurable except to the north at the University Village Shopping Center where existing light levels are higher than projected from the field. This is due to the lighting design in which fixtures would be aimed downward and would have light shields. The lights would not produce glare that renders a desired object difficult to distinguish due to the instinctive desire to look away. The light arrays would be perceived as a direct light source outside of the field, but would tend to become a feature of the urban light environment common to other existing elements. These elements include existing lighting from the Golf Driving Range, street lighting, vehicle lighting, parking lot lighting, and building lighting. The most noticeable lighted reference points to observers in the area would continue to be prominent building lights at higher elevations on the University of Washington Main Campus.

Alternative 3: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements without Field Lights

No discernible aesthetic impacts would result from replacing the existing grass with synthetic turf without installing lighting.

Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures include a lighting design in which fixtures would be aimed downward and would have light shields to reduce or eliminate measurable light off site, but would not eliminate the visibility of the light arrays as a lighted reference point.

1.4.3 Noise

Alternative 1: No Action

The impacts of the No Action Alternative would include continuation of existing conditions.

Alternative 2: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements with Field Lights

After completion of the improvements, there would be little or no change in noise during games or other activities. Noise during activities would, however, extend later into the evening in the autumn, winter, and spring due to field lighting.

During construction, there would be a temporary increase in sound levels in the immediate vicinity. The majority of this noise would be due to the use of heavy construction equipment (excavators, bulldozers, cranes, generators, etc.) and the hauling of soils and construction materials. The highest noise levels would likely be associated with site grading, which will take place over several months in the summer.

Existing uses would not be disturbed by construction noise during daytime hours during which most construction noise is exempt from city noise limits.

Alternative 3: Proposed Field No.1 Improvements without Field Lights

Construction noise impacts would be the same as under Alternative 2.

Noise from use of the sports fields would continue at present levels. Noise would not occur later in the evening in autumn, winter, and spring.

Mitigation Measures

Construction noise could be mitigated by:

- Use of alternative, less noise-producing construction practices and machinery depending on activity location.
- Mitigation at the source through screening or other means of reducing noise caused by operations or machinery. This mitigation measure may be accomplished by screening stationary equipment and using the quietest available equipment.
- Mitigation along the path of noise transmission. Construction of noise walls outside of the construction site would be ineffective because of topography and distance to potential receptors.

1.4.4 Energy

Alternative 1: No Action

The impacts of the No Action Alternative would include continuation of existing conditions.

Alternative 2: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements with Field Lights

After completion of the field lighting installation, the annual energy use from lights would range from about 98,000 to 163,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) assuming the lights were operated until approximately 11 pm. This usage would result from about 600 to 1,000 hours per year based on the seasonal difference in the time of sunset and a range of assumed demand.

Alternative 3: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements without Field Lights

No energy use from lighting would occur.

Mitigation Measures

The most effective energy conservation is operating the lights less frequently. This would involve a programmable system based on field scheduling rather than a system that turned the lights on prior to sunset irrespective of whether use is scheduled.

1.4.5 Greenhouse Gases

Alternative 1: No Action

The impacts of the No Action Alternative would include continuation of existing conditions.

Alternative 2: Proposed Field No. 1 Improvements with Field Lights

Life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions would potentially originate from the production and installation of the synthetic turf.

Energy used in field lighting is not considered to result in greenhouse gas production because the electricity provided by Seattle City Light does not result in a net increase in carbon released to the atmosphere, either because it is generated by hydropower or carbon offsets have been provided.

Alternative 3: Proposed Field No.1 Improvements without Field Lights

Greenhouse gas emissions would be the same as with field lights because electricity provided by the City of Seattle is greenhouse gas neutral.

Mitigation Measures

Embodied emissions in materials used in construction can be reduced slightly by use of materials constructed with greater recycled content or in more efficient manufacturing processes.