Abstract Submitted
for the DPP15 Meeting of
The American Physical Society

Initial design of a beamline for ultra-intense laser-matter interactions at the BELLA-i PW laser user facility[1] SVEN STEINKE, STEPAN BULANOV, QING JI, THOMAS SCHENKEL, ERIC ESAREY, WIM LEEMENS, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory — BELLA, the Berkeley Lab laser accelerator center hosts a 1 PW Ti:sapp laser with 1 Hz repetition rate, where electron acceleration to 4.5 GeV was demonstrated recently [1]. For electron acceleration, irradiances of up to 10^{19} W/cm^2 are desired and these are implemented with a long focal length laser beamline and beam spots of $w_0 = 52\mu$m. Much higher irradiances of 10^{22} W/cm^2 can be achieved when the laser beam is focus more tightly, to a spot of $w_0 < 5$ μm in a shorter focal length beamline. A key requirement for many application of laser-matter interaction in this regime, such as laser-ion acceleration or the generation of relativistic surface high harmonics is the ultra-high intensity contrast of the laser pulse. We will describe our design for a short focal lengths beamline, BELLA-i, including multiple plasma mirrors for ultra-high contrast in the laser pulse. The resulting laser pulses will enable reliable access to many exciting aspects of high energy density laboratory physics and laser-matter interactions in the relativistic regime for a community of users.

[1] W. P. Leemans *et al.,* PRL **113**, 245002 (2014)

[1]This work was supported by the U.S. Department of Energy under Contract No. DE-AC02-05CH11231.

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Date submitted: 24 Jul 2015 Electronic form version 1.4