

Communication from Public

Name: Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance
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NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL SUSTAINABILITY ALLIANCE[®]

January 11, 2024

Re: Opposition to the Dodger Stadium gondola

Dear Los Angeles Metro Board and City Council

We at the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance (LANCSA) voted to oppose the proposed gondola for numerous, diverse reasons:

1. The proposed gondola is reminiscent of the 1950s demolition of the historic Chavez Ravine neighborhoods and evictions of the long-time resident Mexican-American families. Thanks to the [Los Angeles Times](#), we know that this is not about Frank McCourt wanting to make it easier for people to get to Dodgers games. [McCourt still owns a 50% stake in the parking lots surrounding the stadium](#), and if a gondola services the area, the value of that property will likely increase. Hiding behind climate and traffic concerns when the end result will likely be an increase in traffic is not right. Developing the parking lot for housing might not be a bad thing, and in fact might be a good thing, but the sleight of hand involving the very ravine where people were already misled by their government, which led to displacement, is not right. We agree with Stop the Gondola and others that an environmental impact report solely about the gondola when we know that this is about the larger development is disingenuous and improper.

2. Although many of us love gondolas, we remain unconvinced that this gondola is appropriate for this situation. Stadiums are just about the worst use-case for gondolas, since everyone arrives within a short window and leaves at once when the game ends. Gondolas are not appropriate for surge events; rather, they are more appropriate for transporting people slowly over long periods of time across difficult topographies. Gondolas' low-but-steady capacity is a mismatch, and will not be effective public transit for the stadium. Unless the aforementioned development happened, we are concerned that this gondola would be of very limited use, its cost greatly outweighing its utility. The low capacity of a gondola system does not appear to warrant the significant investment and disruption to the Los Angeles State Historic Park and neighborhoods.

3. There are no financial guarantees, and we have not seen a funding plan or feasibility study. If Zero Emissions Transit went bankrupt, we taxpayers could be forced to bail out this project.

4. For some, parks are a place for quiet, and the constant noise and moving cabins could disturb the tranquility, while the cables would disturb the view. This seems particularly problematic given that this park is relatively new in an area with limited access to green space—it feels to many that the community just got this park, and already the government is taking parts of it away.

5. Many trees would be cut down in the park, and the replacement trees would take years to grow to the same height in an area that is traditionally park-poor. Los Angeles already has a significant deficit of urban tree canopy, which is vital to our ecosystems for mitigating the urban heat island effect, improving air quality, reducing stormwater runoff, and capturing carbon in an ever-warming climate. Even if all of the trees are replaced, trees need decades before they are large and mature enough to serve as effective carbon sinks, decades that our climate doesn't have. We need to try to preserve existing trees.

6. Our city is in desperate need of deep investment in pervasive public transit and active transportation infrastructure, such as bus, light rail, bike lanes, etc. The time and investment into something that would only serve tourists and people attending private events runs afoul of the purpose of public transit, which is to provide a public good for the community. The gondola would not provide *public transportation* as is generally understood, as the tickets would likely be priced far higher than tickets on the Metro, and would only provide access to a private stadium.

7. We have learned about several other ideas to help people get to the stadium (which is only .6 mile from the Chinatown Metro station!), and are not satisfied that other much less expensive and invasive options were sufficiently explored in the environmental impact report, including expansion of the Dodger Stadium Express and [an expanded park-and-ride system](#). The operational issues associated with either strike us as fewer than those associated with construction and maintenance of the gondola.

8. Lastly, the existence of the neighborhood council system and the LANCSA is premised on the importance of civic engagement. Metro's/Zero Emissions Transit's outreach and engagement opportunities were, in our opinion, very limited and constrained. We invited both Zero Emissions Transit and Stop the Gondola to participate in a forum designed to allow them to present their respective cases and engage in a conversation, and at the last minute Zero Emissions Transit withdrew their participation, which ultimately was the reason some of us rejected this proposal. It became clear that Zero Emissions Transit/Aerial Rapid Transit Technologies, LLC do not believe their project has the merits to stand on its own or stand up to our scrutiny.

We would have loved to discuss our questions and concerns with supporters of the gondola, but, of course, we did not have that opportunity.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Hart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Hart
Executive Director

Cc:

David Grannis, Director, Zero Emissions Transit
Suja Lowenthal, Board Chair, Zero Emissions Transit
Lucinda Starrett, Board Member, Zero Emissions Transit
Jonathan Parfrey, Executive Director, Climate Resolve
Jordan Lang, President, McCourt Partners
Jennifer Rivera, Senior Vice President, McCourt Partners
Cris Liban, Chief Sustainability Officer, Metro
Laura Rubio-Cornejo, General Manager, LADOT
Cory Zelmer, Deputy Executive Officer, Metro
Randall Winston, Deputy Mayor of Infrastructure to Mayor Karen Bass
Tina Backstrom, Senior Director of Transportation for Mayor Bass
Armando Quintero, Director, California Department of Parks and Recreation
Phil Ginsburg, Chairperson, California State Park and Recreation Commission
Francesca Victor, Vice Chairperson, California State Park and Recreation Commission
Sara Barth, Commissioner, California State Park and Recreation Commission
Danny Bakewell Sr, Commissioner, California State Park and Recreation Commission
Christina Jaromay, Commissioner, California State Park and Recreation Commission
Jeff Williams, Commissioner, California State Park and Recreation Commission
Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council board members
Stop the Gondola