



Clockshop
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January 12, 2023

Via Email: ZelmerC@metro.net
Corey Zelmer
Deputy Executive Officer
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza , Mail Stop 99-22-6
Los Angeles, CA 90012
RE: Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project (LA ART)
SCH 2020100007 Draft EIR - Comments

Dear Mr. Zelmer:

Below are comments for the Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project DEIR from Clockshop.

Clockshop is a 501c3 nonprofit that has worked in partnership with California State Parks for nearly a decade to provide free community arts and cultural events in public green spaces. Some of our key programs include an annual Kite Festival in **LA State Historic Park**, a Reading and Listening by Moonrise concert series, youth arts workshops, and temporary public art installations by some of LA's most rigorous BIPOC visual artists. Over 10,000 community members yearly take advantage of our free cultural offerings. We often work in partnership with environmental justice advocates, because we see our work in the arts as a key pathway for community members to form emotional connections to public land and advocate to preserve it. As part of that work, we speak out against private developments and government infrastructure projects that negatively affect the communities around the public park spaces that we work within, and advocate for those that provide better access and sustainability for those communities. Clockshop became aware of this project in 2018, and has researched and engaged with partners in assessing the impact of this project on the park and the surrounding communities.

"The Project" we reference is the private aerial tramway that LA ART intends to build on behalf of Frank McCourt to go 1.2 miles from Union Station to near the gold line stop and then over the **LA State Historic Park** and residential communities to Dodger Stadium. The Project has been billed as a sustainable project that will take 3,000 cars off the road. It purports to be a "privately" funded project created to move people to a single private for-profit enterprise and is being billed as a public transportation project. We believe that this is a gross misrepresentation of what this project actually is, which is a private development that will steal public land, negatively impact communities of color, and pre-mitigate shady profit-driven future developments that have not been transparently presented to the public.



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Clockshop is strongly opposed to this project, as it would deeply impact our operations as a non-profit, and would incredibly negatively impact LA State Historic Park, which is the key site for most of our arts and cultural activities. Here are some further details:

1. The aerial tramway will eliminate a beloved annual Kite Festival.

Nearly 5,000 people, 70% of whom were people of color from Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, and Solano Canyon (neighborhoods surrounding LA State Historic Park) attended our last Kite Festival in 2022. The tramway will make this annual, free, and beloved community event impossible to produce, as its pathway travels directly over the park.

2. The tramway will interrupt community arts and cultural programming at the LA State Historic Park.

Free public programming at the park, including readings, conversations, and experimental music, will be negatively impacted by the interrupted viewsheds and noise of the aerial tramway.

3. The aerial tramway is an injustice to the communities that fought for LA State Historic Park.

This park was fought for by the community for decades, and now a private developer billionaire will take part of the park away from them. This is a huge injustice, to take their viewsheds and their park for no reasonable purpose.

4. Over 75 mature-growth trees ranging between 15' and 50' are slated to be removed.

The State's 30 / 30 plan (CA climate change report) is being entirely ignored by LA ART, Climate Resolve, the City, and Metro. 30 / 30 calls for the preservation/conservation of ALL HABITAT in red zones. Los Angeles County is officially a red zone, and the aerial tramway will destroy important habitat.

5. The aerial tramway WILL have a negative environmental impact.

Contrary to LA ART's claims, the pouring of thousands of pounds of concrete and the construction of this station will have a very negative environmental impact on the land and surrounding communities.

6. The aerial tramway is not needed, and is not a public infrastructure project.



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This is a private project, benefitting a private entity. A stop at the Chinatown station is duplicative and is not needed. The Dodger express represents non-invasive buses (soon to be fully electric) already routed and funded. The existing Dodger Express has been consistently cited as the preferred method of transport by community stakeholders. The infrastructure already exists, and the Dodger Express team has committed to electrifying all the buses as a response to climate change. This alternative is preferred by Clockshop, and our community and stakeholders at large as it does not pour thousands of pounds of concrete into an already stressed community, does not remove precious park space, and does not remove important natural habitat.

Conclusion

Clockshop strongly opposes this project, which would layer unnecessary negative environmental impact, remove free public park space and viewsheds, and interrupt or remove free community cultural programs that serve primarily surrounding communities of color. It is not fair, and it is not right to do this to the generations of community members that fought for this public green space with blood, sweat, tears. There is no public benefit to this project that does not already exist in another already funded, already public, free form (i.e. the Dodger Express).

The manner in which electeds and Metro have conducted this process is utterly shameful and displays a flagrant disregard for the residents and communities being impacted, not to mention the law.

Clockshop's staff, board, and diverse community of parkgoers agree that this project should be immediately terminated.

Sincerely,

Sue Bell Yank
Executive Director, Clockshop

Cc: Supervisor Hilda Solis, Mayor Karen Bass, Congressman Jimmy Gomez, Assemblymember Miguel Santiago, Assemblymember Wendy Carillo, Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez