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January 16, 2023

Cory Zelmer, Deputy Executive Officer
LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-6
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project –
Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
SCH# 2020100007
GTS# 07-LA-2020-04095
Vic. LA-110 PM 24.755L
LA-110 PM 24.755R

Dear Cory Zelmer:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The proposed Project would connect LA Union Station to the Dodger Stadium property via an aerial gondola system with an intermediate station at the southernmost entrance of the Los Angeles State Historic Park. The Project would provide an aerial rapid transit (ART) option for visitors to Dodger Stadium, while connecting surrounding communities, including Chinatown, Mission Junction, Elysian Park, and Solano Canyon, and the Los Angeles State Historic Park, to the regional transit system accessible at LAUS. The aerial gondola system would be approximately 1.2 miles and consist of cables, three passenger stations, a non-passenger junction, three towers, and gondola cabins. When complete, the proposed Project would have a maximum capacity of approximately 5,000 people per hour per direction, and the travel time from LAUS to Dodger Stadium would be approximately 7 minutes. The proposed Project would provide pedestrian improvements, including hardscape and landscape improvements, as well as amenities at the Los Angeles State Historic Park. The ART system has the ability to overcome grade and elevation issues between LAUS and Dodger Stadium and provide safe, zero emission, environmentally friendly, and high-capacity transit connectivity in the Project area that would reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as a result of reduced vehicular congestion in and around Dodger Stadium and on neighborhood streets, arterial roadways, and freeways. The proposed Project would operate daily to serve existing residents, workers, park users, and visitors to Los Angeles.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is SR-110. After reviewing the DEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

Based on the information provided, Caltrans supports Design and Use option E, as it provides a much-needed bike and pedestrian bridge connecting North Broadway to the Los Angeles Historic Park. This connection is critical to the project's success, as it will allow the residents, employees, and students north of the Metro L line tracks to access the park and its new station. This not only improves the potential ridership for the proposed project but provides a greatly enhanced active transportation network for all Californians who will ever visit, live, or work in the area. For these reasons Caltrans would also discourage the selection of Use Option D, which would substitute the proposed Chinatown/State Park Station for a non-passenger junction. This option greatly reduces the project's effectiveness, and needlessly limits accessibility to an additional mode of travel to and from a valuable green space.

Finally, due to the Stadium Tower's proximity to Caltrans right-of-way and the direct aerial crossing of SR-110, the project will require extensive collaboration with Caltrans staff for various permits and design approvals. These reviews, approvals, and encroachment permits will be conducted at the time of permit application so that all concerns can be adequately addressed.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2020-04095.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse