

CITY OF BURBANK
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

December 11, 2020

David Ryu
City of Los Angeles Council Member, District 4
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Griffith Park Aerial Transit Feasibility Study

Dear Council Member David Ryu,

The members of the City Council of the City of Burbank write to express the City's opposition to the Griffith Park Aerial Tram.

The Griffith Park Aerial Transit Feasibility Study does not take into account potential negative impacts that may directly affect the City of Burbank. The Burbank City Council opposes construction of an Aerial Tram in Griffith Park for the following reasons:

Equestrian Accessibility Issues in Rancho Neighborhood

Currently, there are more than 2,000 horses living in and around Griffith Park (Park), stabled in facilities and backyards on the Park's edges. These communities have a rich equestrian history of over 100 years, especially in Burbank's Rancho neighborhood. Hundreds of horses are also routinely transported to the Park for equestrian events, shows, trail riding, and exercising. Trail access is vital for these residents, riders and horses. Route #1 from Travel Town may result in the loss of Martinez Arena, which would eliminate a critically important equestrian facility and would sever Burbank's access to the extensive equestrian trail network in the Park. The Griffith Park area is one of the very few places for equestrians to ride in the region and loss of equestrian access to the park would irrevocably harm Burbank's equestrian neighborhood.

Recreational Accessibility Issues and Wilderness Values

Griffith Park is a regional amenity that many residents of Los Angeles County use on a daily basis for hiking, walking, bicycling, recreating and more. The proposed routes may create impediments for regular park use. Los Angeles County already has a scarcity of open space where people can be alone with nature. A continuously running gondola will sacrifice the preservation of wilderness for access to a tourist attraction.

Concerns of High Fire Risk

Route #1 from Travel Town would originate next to and travel over an area identified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. With construction activity, increased traffic and ongoing machine operation, the increased possibility for fire in that area will impact the safety of Burbank neighborhoods and other surrounding communities.


Lack of Outreach to Burbank

The City of Burbank was not informed about the feasibility study or possible plans. The possible project will affect the equestrian community and residents in Burbank, as well as the businesses that rely on trails and facilities in Griffith Park. The only equestrian-related group consulted in public outreach was the Los Angeles Equine Advisory Committee, which does not represent the equestrian community in Burbank. A sizable portion of Griffith Park's equestrian use originates in the City of Burbank and the San Fernando Valley region, yet the City of Burbank was not consulted on the possible impacts to equestrians who regularly use Griffith Park. The feasibility study outreach process also did not take into account the potential effect on residential communities and residents north of the Los Angeles River, including the City of Burbank.

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK
2020 DEC 17 PM 2:17

Given the project's likelihood to sever Burbank's equestrian access to the Park, its impact on the Park's wilderness values, its potential to increase fire hazards, and the feasibility study's lack of outreach to Burbank residents, the City of Burbank opposes the Griffith Park Aerial Tramway Feasibility Study and the further continuation of the proposed project.

Sincerely,


Sharon Springer, Mayor


Bob Frutos, Vice Mayor


Jess A. Talamantes, Council Member


Emily Gabel-Luddy, Council Member


Timothy M. Murphy, Council Member

cc: California State Assembly Member Laura Friedman
California State Senator Robert Hertzberg
California State Senator Anthony Portantino
City of Los Angeles Councilmember-Elect Nithya Raman
City of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti
City of Glendale Mayor Vrej Agajanian
Michael Shull, General Manager of Los Angeles Department of Recreation & Parks