



NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DATE: October 1, 2020
TO: Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties
SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report
PROJECT TITLE: Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project
FROM: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)

Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Technologies LLC is proposing the Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project, which would connect Los Angeles Union Station to the Dodger Stadium property via an aerial gondola system in downtown Los Angeles. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is the lead agency in the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project (proposed Project) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) statutes and guidelines, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000-21178 and California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3 Section 15000-15387). The purpose of the Draft EIR is to evaluate the potential for environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Project, and to provide mitigation measures where required.

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify agencies, organizations and individuals that Metro plans to prepare a Draft EIR and to request input on the environmental analysis to be performed. Metro is requesting comments from public agencies on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to their statutory responsibilities with regard to the proposed Project, in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b). Metro is also inviting organizations and interested parties to submit comments on the scope of the environmental document related to the proposed Project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed Project would connect Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) to the Dodger Stadium property via an aerial gondola system, reducing traffic congestion and expanding mobility options for transit riders. The proposed Project would provide an aerial rapid transit option from LAUS for visitors to Dodger Stadium, as well as the Los Angeles State Historic Park and Elysian Park, while reducing traffic that currently impacts residents of surrounding communities, who can also utilize the aerial gondola system to access the regional transit system accessible at LAUS. The proposed route would travel generally along Alameda Street, Spring Street, and Bishops Road from LAUS to Dodger Stadium. The proposed Project includes options for an intermediate station to provide additional transit service adjacent to the Los Angeles State Historic Park and the location where the proposed Project flies over portions of the Park (the Spring Street Alternative and Broadway Alternative). The proposed aerial gondola system would include aerial cables, passenger stations, a non-passenger junction, towers to support the aerial cables between the stations/junction, and gondola cabins for the passengers. When complete, the proposed Project would have a maximum capacity of approximately 5,500 people per hour per direction, and the travel time from LAUS to Dodger Stadium would be approximately six or seven minutes. Public benefits being considered for the proposed Project include support for a pedestrian bridge between North Broadway and the Los Angeles State Historic Park.



Figure 1 shows the regional location of the proposed Project and Figures 2 and 3 provide an overview of the Spring Street Alternative and Broadway Alternative, respectively. Figure 4 provides examples of modern aerial rapid transit (ART) systems that are currently operating in several urban locations around the world.

PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING: The proposed Project would be located in the City of Los Angeles, within or adjacent to the communities of El Pueblo, Union Station, Chinatown, Mission Junction, Solano Canyon, and Elysian Park. The proposed Project would generally be located within the public right-of-way, and in connection with providing additional transit service adjacent to the Los Angeles State Historic Park, would fly over the Park, which is managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and SR-110 near Dodger Stadium. The surrounding land uses include high and medium density residential, commercial, retail, institutional, transit-related infrastructure (road and rail), parks and open space, and public facilities uses.

PROJECT PURPOSE: The overall purpose of the proposed Project is to expand mobility options for transit riders through a permanent direct transit connection between LAUS and Dodger Stadium, a regional event center, via an aerial gondola system. The proposed Project aims to reduce traffic congestion and associated greenhouse gas emissions during game and special event days. The proposed Project provides the potential to increase transit access for open space, parks, and the surrounding communities by linking to the Los Angeles State Historic Park, Elysian Park, and the region's rapidly growing regional transit system at LAUS. Aerial rapid transit is a proven, safe, quiet, sustainable, high capacity, and highly efficient form of transportation. The proposed Project would function as a reliable rapid transit system, a first/last mile connector, and an iconic new regional tourist destination that offers scenic views of Los Angeles.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES: A "No-Build" alternative will be analyzed, where no aerial gondola system is installed. Alternative locations for passenger stations, a non-passenger junction, and towers, as well as potential arrangements within a non-passenger junction to allow for passengers, may be evaluated.

The proposed Project would generally be located in the public right-of-way and would commence adjacent to LAUS and El Pueblo following Alameda Street and Spring Street in a northeast direction through the community of Chinatown, flying over the Los Angeles State Historic Park to Bishops Road and then flying over the SR-110 and terminating at Dodger Stadium, located in the community of Elysian Park. Two potential alternatives for providing transit service adjacent to, and flying over the Los Angeles State Historic Park, are being considered. In the Spring Street Alternative, near the intersection of Spring Street and Ann Street, the aerial gondola system would travel northwest with a Park Station on Spring Street and fly over the Los Angeles State Historic Park near the Metro L Line (Gold) right-of-way (see Figure 2). The Broadway Alternative would fly over the Los Angeles State Historic Park near the Metro L Line (Gold) right-of-way and continue northwest to an intermediate station at the intersection of North Broadway and Bishops Road (see Figure 3).



PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The purpose of the Draft EIR is to disclose the impacts of the proposed Project on the environment. The Draft EIR will address all environmental topics listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, as listed below.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and forestry resources
- Air quality
- Biological resources
- Cultural and historic resources
- Energy
- Geology and soils
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Hazards and hazardous materials
- Hydrology and water quality
- Land use and planning
- Mineral resources
- Noise
- Population and housing
- Public services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal cultural resources
- Utilities and service systems
- Wildfire

Mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts during construction and operation of the proposed Project will also be identified in the Draft EIR.

VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE AND VIRTUAL SCOPING MEETING: As part of the EIR scoping process, project information will be made available to the public online through two primary means: (1) a virtual “open house”; and (2) a virtual scoping meeting. The purpose of the virtual open house is to provide an overview of the proposed Project, an overview of the CEQA process, and the project timeline for environmental review. The virtual open house will be accessible to stakeholders and the public throughout the public review period. Please access the virtual open house at LAARTvirtualopenhouse.org or through Metro’s website at metro.net/aerialrapidtransit.

The virtual scoping meeting will be held on October 22, 2020, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The virtual scoping meeting will include an introduction to the proposed Project, an overview of the CEQA process, and the project timeline for environmental review. Stakeholders and the public may submit questions during the online meeting. A recording of the scoping meeting will be posted on the Metro website and the virtual open house following the meeting. Please check Metro’s website at metro.net/aerialrapidtransit to confirm the availability of and the instructions for accessing the virtual scoping meeting.

This NOP and a fact sheet will also be available in Spanish and Cantonese via the virtual open house at LAARTvirtualopenhouse.org and Metro’s website at metro.net/aerialrapidtransit. In addition, Spanish and Cantonese interpretation will be available during the virtual scoping meeting.

Attendees are invited to call 213-418-3423 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting for more information, to arrange ADA accommodations and/or to request additional translation support.



COMMENT DUE DATE: A 45-day comment period for this NOP will begin on October 1, 2020, and conclude on November 16, 2020. Written comments on the scope of the Draft EIR, including the Project area and description, the impacts to be evaluated, and the methodologies to be used in the evaluation, will be accepted during the comment period and should be sent to Metro by 11:59 pm PST on **November 16, 2020** at the postal address or e-mail address below. Comments may also be submitted through the virtual open house website at LAARTvirtualopenhouse.org.

ADDRESSES: Written or electronic (e-mail) comments may be sent to Mr. Cory Zelmer, Deputy Executive Officer, Metro, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-6, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or via email at LAART@metro.net.

For more information, please visit metro.net/aerialrapidtransit, or please call 213-418-3423.

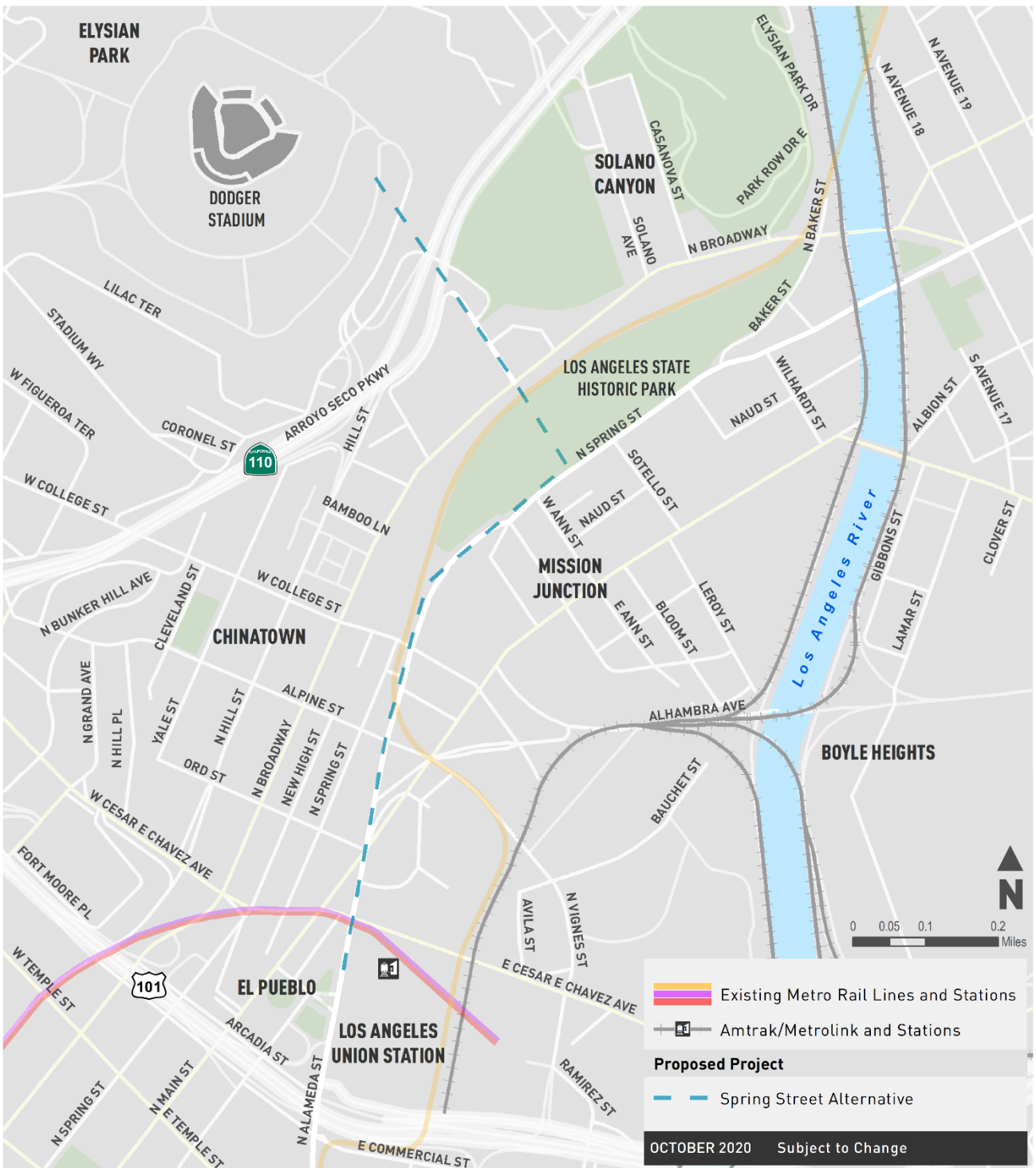


Figure 2:
Proposed Spring Street Alternative

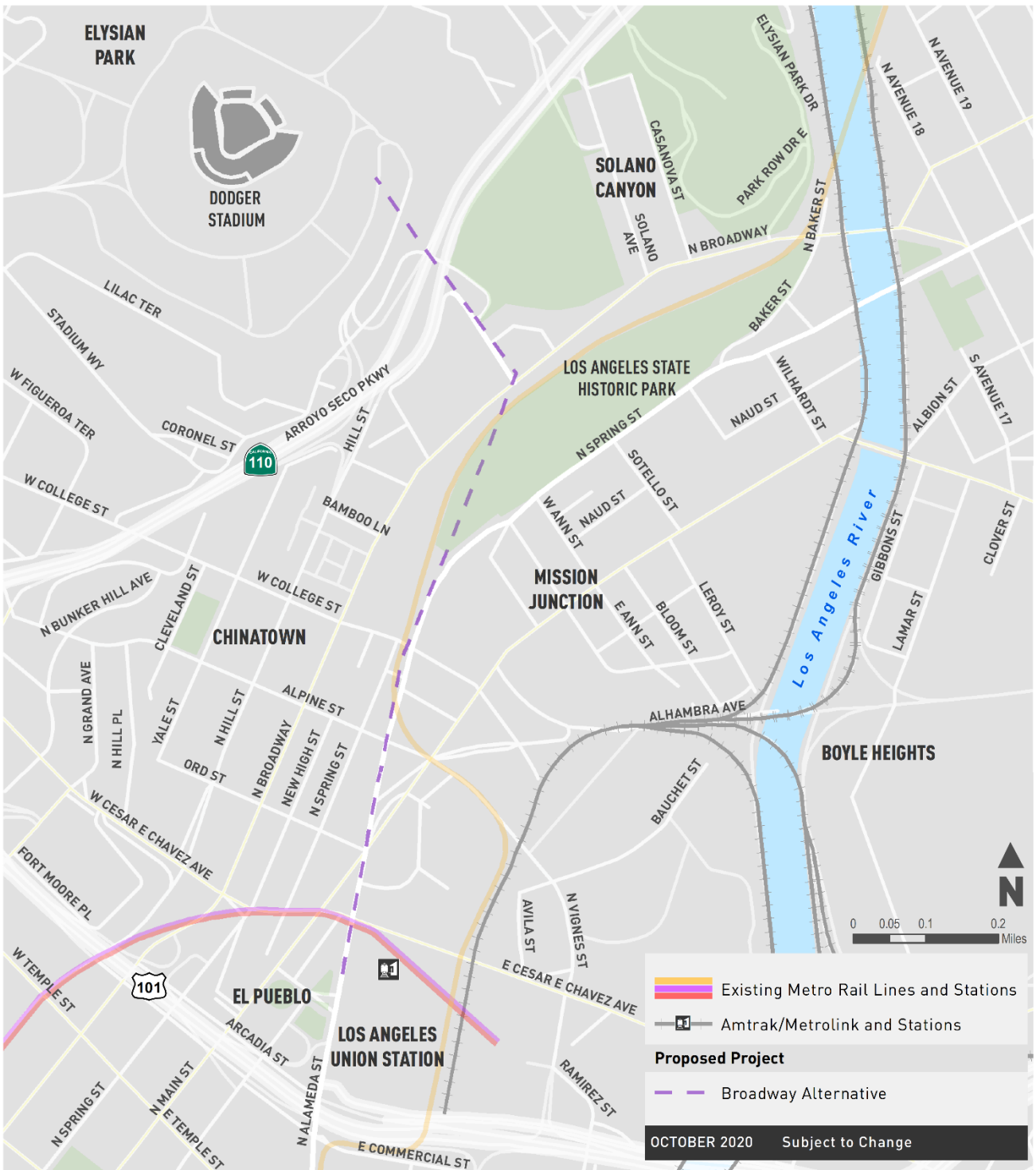


Figure 3:
Proposed Broadway Alternative



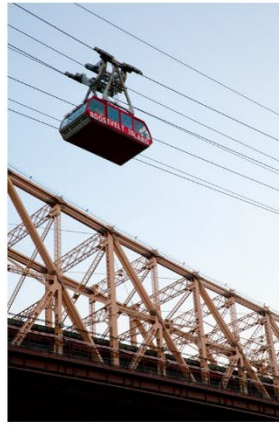
Portland, Oregon



London, England



Koblenz, Germany



Roosevelt Island, New York



Mexico City, Mexico



Lantau Island, Hong Kong



La Paz, Bolivia