FORM GEN. 160A (Rev. 1/82)

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

LA ART (Aerial Rapid Transit) Project
DOT Case No. CEN22-51410

Date: September 27, 2022

To: Kathleen King, City Planner
Department of City Planning

From: Wes Pringle, Transportation Engineer
Department of Transportation

Subject: **TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED LOS ANGELES AERIAL RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT LOCATED BETWEEN UNION STATION AND DODGER STADIUM**

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has reviewed the CEQA transportation assessment, dated April 2022, and the Non-CEQA transportation assessment, dated September 2022, prepared by Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultants for the proposed Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit (LA ART) project that would connect the Los Angeles Union Station to the Dodger Stadium property in the Central Los Angeles Area Planning Commission. In compliance with Senate Bill (SB) 743 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis is required to identify the project's ability to promote the reduction of green-house gas emissions, the access to diverse land uses, and the development of multi-modal networks. The significance of a project's impact in this regard is measured against the VMT thresholds established in LADOT's Transportation Assessment Guidelines (TAG), as described below.

**DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

A. Project Description

The LA ART project would provide an aerial rapid transit option for Dodger Stadium visitors, as well as, provide access between Dodger Stadium, the surrounding communities, and the regional transit system accessible at Union Station. The aerial gondola system would consist of cables, three passenger stations (Alameda, Chinatown/State Park, and Dodger Stadium), a non-passenger junction (Broadway), towers (Alameda, Alpine, and Stadium), and gondola cabins. The alignment of the LA ART project is generally within the Public Right-of-Way commencing adjacent to Union Station and El Pueblo de Los Angeles (El Pueblo) to Dodger Stadium following Alameda Street; continuing along Spring Street through Chinatown to the southernmost corner of the Los Angeles State Historic Park; and continuing over the western edge of the Los Angeles State Historic Park and the Metro L Line (Gold) to the intersection of North Broadway and Bishops Road. At this intersection, the alignment would turn and continue northwest following Bishops Road toward its terminus at Dodger Stadium, as illustrated in **Attachment A.** When complete, the LA ART project would have a maximum capacity of approximately 5,000 people per hour per direction and a travel time of approximately seven minutes from Union Station to Dodger Stadium. The LA ART project has an opening year of 2026 and a Horizon Year of 2042.

B. CEQA Screening

The CEQA assessment included discussion of the transportation impact thresholds:

T-1 Conflicting with plans, programs, ordinances, or policies

T-2.1 Causing substantial vehicle miles traveled

T-3 Substantially increasing hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible use.

A transportation assessment is required if a transportation project is likely to induce additional VMT by increasing vehicle capacity. The LA ART project would not increase vehicle capacity as it is a mode of transit. Transit transportation projects generally reduce VMT and they are presumed to cause a less than significant impact on transportation. The CEQA assessment, prepared by Fehr & Peers quantifies the VMT reduction benefit of the LA ART project for informational purposes.

In order to accommodate the Alameda Station, which would be located on Alameda Street adjacent to the planned Union Station Forecourt and El Pueblo between Los Angeles Street and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, the northbound left turn pocket on Alameda Street at Cesar E. Chavez Avenue would be shortened in order to accommodate support columns within the roadway median. This station would introduce the only change to the roadway network.

The assessment determined that the LA ART project's transportation impacts would be less than significant under Thresholds T-1, T-2.1, and T-3.

C. Access and Circulation

During preparation of the new CEQA guidelines, the State's Office of Planning and Research stressed that lead agencies can continue to apply traditional operational analysis requirements to inform land use decisions provided that such analyses were outside of the CEQA process. The authority for requiring non-CEQA transportation analysis and requiring improvements to address potential circulation deficiencies, lies in the City of Los Angeles' Site Plan Review authority as established in Section 16.05 of the LAMC. Therefore, LADOT continues to require and review a project's site access, circulation, and operational plan to determine if any access enhancements, transit amenities, intersection improvements, traffic signal upgrades, neighborhood traffic calming, or other improvements are needed. In accordance with this authority, the project has completed a circulation analysis using a "level of service" screening methodology that indicates that the trips generated by the proposed development will not likely result in adverse circulation conditions at several locations in the opening year (2026). The analysis for the Future with Project Horizon Year (2042) indicated that two study intersections will experience adverse queueing conditions. To address this, the project will work with Metro on transit partnerships for the proposed project riders to encourage further use of transit, walk or bike to an ART station. The partnership could include providing a free connecting Metro or Metro bikeshare ride with an ART ticket, or other measures to further encourage a complete transit trip. LADOT has reviewed this analysis and determined that it adequately discloses operational concerns.

**PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

Non-CEQA Related Requirements and Considerations

To comply with transportation and mobility goals and provisions of adopted City plans and ordinances, the applicant should be required to implement the following:

1. Intersection Improvement Alameda Street and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue

In order to accommodate support columns within the roadway median for the Alameda Station, the northbound left turn pocket on Alameda Street would be shortened. All associated traffic

signal work within the City of Los Angeles must be guaranteed through the Bureau of Engineering's (BOE) B-Permit process. BOE or their contractor shall email LADOT's B-Permit Coordinator at ladot.planprocessing@lacity.org to arrange a pre-design meeting to finalize the proposed design needed for the improvement.

2. Worksite Traffic Control Requirements
Prior to the issuance of a building permit for the proposed Project, a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), including street closure information, detour plans, haul routes, and a staging plan, shall be prepared and submitted to the City for review and approval. A construction work site traffic control plan should be submitted to LADOT's B-Permit Plan Review Section for review and approval prior to the start of any construction work. Refer to http://ladot.lacity.org/businesses/temporary-traffic-control-plans to coordinate review of the work site traffic control plan. The plan should show the location of any roadway or sidewalk closures, traffic detours, haul routes, hours of operation, protective devices, warning signs and access to abutting properties. LADOT also recommends that all construction related truck traffic be restricted to off-peak hours to the extent feasible.

3. Development Review Fees
Section 19.15 of the LAMC identifies specific fees for traffic study review, condition clearance, and permit issuance. The applicant shall comply with any applicable fees per this ordinance.

If you have any questions, please contact Eileen Hunt of my staff at (213) 972-8481

Attachment

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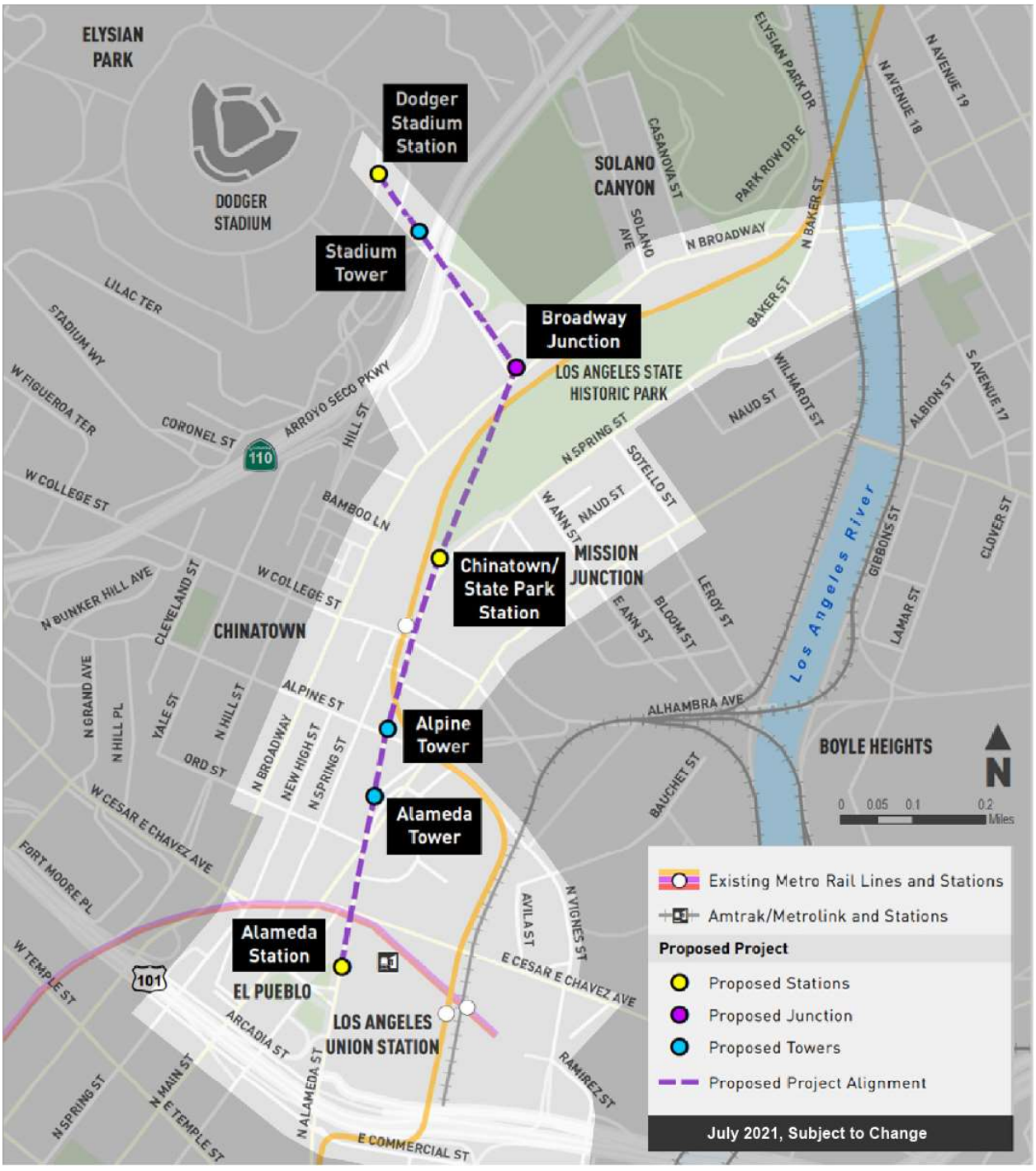
c: Emma Howard, Council District 14
Hokchi Chiu, Central District, BOE
Kaylin Pell, Central District, DOT
Taimour Tanavoli, Case Management Office, DOT
Michael Kennedy, Fehr & Peers

**Figure 1: Transportation Study Area & Proposed Project Alignment**




**SOURCE:** AECOM & Fehr & Peers, 2022.