

TOWN OF ALTA

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-R-21

A RESOLUTION BY THE ALTA TOWN COUNCIL IN RESPONSE TO THE UTAH DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION’S LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WHEREAS, the Town of Alta (“Town”) is located at the end of State Route (“S.R.”) 210 within the spectacular Little Cottonwood Canyon (“LCC”);

WHEREAS, because State Route 210 ends within the Town, vehicular traffic and associated peak travel times and congestion significantly affects residents, businesses, and visitors in the Town;

WHEREAS, to address traffic issues in LCC, the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) conducted an Environmental Impact Statement regarding transportation improvement alternatives for S.R. 210 in and near LCC (the “LCC EIS”);

WHEREAS, UDOT issued a Record of Decision in the summer of 2023 (the “Final EIS”), in which it identified Gondola Alternative B (the “Gondola Alternative”), with proposed phasing (“Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3”), as the preferred alternative to improve transportation in LCC;

WHEREAS, UDOT’s implementation of the LCC EIS will affect the Town in ways dissimilar from any other entity; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council (“Council”) wishes to express its position on the UDOT LCC EIS,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1.

The Town Council strongly supports fully funding and implementing the transportation improvements identified in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the LCC EIS, particularly as articulated in Salt Lake County Mayor Wilson’s letter to UDOT dated October 17, 2022, and requests that UDOT implement additional measures in both phases to include:

- Mandatory traction laws for LCC from November 1 to May 1;
- Undertake various efforts to mitigate congestion associated with reliance on the Alta-Snowbird Bypass Road, including but not limited to efforts to maintain roadway operations on the S.R. 210 “Main Line” under Mt. Superior, and

reduce the impact of merging along the Alta-Snowbird Bypass Road on traffic originating in Alta;

- Road closures during peak traffic hours;
- Reconsider the location of tolling infrastructure to prevent congestion at the tolling point within the canyon;
- Construct snow sheds to protect the road from key avalanche paths.

The Town Council believes only a comprehensive and coordinated implementation of Phases 1 and 2 will reveal whether additional measures are required to improve traffic congestion in LCC.

The Town Council strongly opposes UDOT's implementation of the Gondola Alternative B for the following reasons:

- The scenic and environmental impacts of building the proposed gondola will fundamentally and severely alter the appearance of Alta and LCC;
- The gondola will deliver thousands more visitors to an environment that already strains to accommodate existing visitors;
- The extremely high cost of the gondola would be an unfair burden on non-skiing taxpayers and would vastly exceed the benefits to transportation in the canyon;
- The gondola is a high cost, rigid infrastructure that is unsuited to an era where increasing greenhouse gas concentrations are causing highly variable and uncertain climatic conditions. Future conditions may be quite different than the past and any near term developments must be sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing conditions;
- The gondola is not appropriate for LCC, will forever negatively impact the views in the canyon, and is an inexcusable waste of public funds.

Section 2. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage.

APPROVED by the Town Council on the _____ day of October, 2023.

By:

MAYOR ROGER BOURKE

ATTEST:

JEN CLANCY, TOWN CLERK