

September 18, 2023

Supervisor Kathryn Barger  
500 West Temple Street, Room 869  
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: Universal's Proposed Outdoor Roller Coaster

Dear Supervisor Barger:

We urgently need your help in addressing issues and concerns arising from Universal Studios Hollywood's proposal to build a massive outdoor roller coaster, called "Fast and Furious," on the hillside directly facing residential and commercial areas in your district.

Since Universal first disclosed its plan to build the project in early July, concerned stakeholders have attempted to engage with Universal to understand the project and to obtain answers to community concerns. While Universal has held several small meetings for select groups, it has not provided written materials about the project or Universal's proposed mitigation measures for noise and other impacts, including illumination and traffic impacts, other than a one page "snapshot" first provided on September 12. Many of our questions were met with a response that they were not authorized to release that information. It appears that Universal is limiting information available to the local community while it proceeds with the project (Universal recently commenced demolition work).

What we have been able to learn is truly frightening:

- Universal plans to run the outdoor coaster from 8 am to 10 pm on most days, and sometimes to 12 or 1 am during "special events" such as Halloween Horror Nights, which runs for 6+ weeks!
- There can be approximately 40-50 trips on the coaster each hour, all with multiple loud screaming events during the ride (this is based on information provided by a Universal consultant).
- Per Universal's sound consultant, the coaster will not meet the County's current noise restrictions without significant mitigation measures, one of which was described by Universal as a new, previously untried approach.
- While Universal has described noise and other mitigation measures in general terms, it has rejected our request that it legally commit to actually implement the measures.

We also learned that Universal conducted sound tests of the coaster using a soundtrack from another roller coaster. These tests were conducted before Universal announced the proposed coaster and without notice of the tests' purpose. While many people in the community heard these intermittent tests, including loud screaming, they did not know what they were. Many thought it was filming activity. Universal has not supplied the

results of these tests to the community.

Since we were having difficulty obtaining information from Universal, some representatives spoke with the County staff members responsible for oversight of Universal's operations and projects. Under the Universal Specific Plan, the County is required to review Universal projects for conformance with the Specific Plan. To our surprise, County staff advised they do not review or verify that projects proposed by Universal will be able to comply with the Specific Plan's noise restrictions.

**The County's position on this most serious issue is directly contrary to the Specific Plan's requirements. We urge you to ensure that the County properly reviews Universal's plans for compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including requesting documentation that adequately evidences the project's ability to comply with noise restrictions at all times of the day and night when it may operate. We note that the Specific Plan gives the County the right to request such information from Universal as part of the County's review process.**

Universal has said it can build the massive outdoor coaster as a matter of right notwithstanding adverse impacts on the local community. It says no environmental review is required under CEQA because the matter was covered in the 11-year-old FEIR for Universal's Evolution Plan.

We beg to differ. We have not yet found any discussion in the FEIR of noise or other impacts of a project like this massive outdoor roller coaster. In addition, we have not found any discussion of the impacts to humans of exposure to constant screaming. Scientific reports issued after the FEIR was completed found that human screaming is a distinct type of sound that affects the human brain differently than most other sounds.

As Universal and the County acknowledged in the Development Agreement for the Evolution Plan, the County remains obligated under CEQA to conduct additional or supplemental environmental review in certain circumstances. (Section 3.1). We believe the County should examine this massive outdoor roller coaster project, including constant human screaming, for potential additional environmental review.

Supervisor Barger, Universal seems to believe that the Specific Plan belongs just to Universal. This is not right, the Specific Plan belongs equally to the local communities around Universal, with the County responsible for overseeing the protections afforded to these communities by the Specific Plan and applicable law. We are asking the County to perform this function on behalf of its citizens.

As representatives of the communities directly impacted by the proposed roller coaster, we respectfully request a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss our concerns and how your office and the County can help us address this situation with Universal. We believe time is of the essence for this meeting since Universal already has started demolition work related to the project.

We look forward to meeting with you. For purposes of arranging a meeting, our point of contact is Greg Thorpe ([gbthor@aol.com](mailto:gbthor@aol.com)).

Sincerely,

Krista Michaels  
CAHUENGA PASS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Connie Elliot  
Barry Johnson  
STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Edward Romano  
Gregory Thorpe  
TOLUCA ESTATES DRIVE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Donald St. Clair  
TOLUCA LAKE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Robert Wexler  
TOLUCA LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

cc: Natalie Vartanian