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Organization:

Title:

Comments: These comments are in regards to the proposed Sandia Peak Ski Area Mountain Coaster Project.

As an avid outdoors person who suffers from anxiety, it has been of immeasurable value for me to be able to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city and get some fresh air along the many trails in the Sandias. I often see other people hiking up there as well, and everyone is always happy and courteous as these are other fellow outdoors people who know how to enjoy this land in a respectful manner. Because the trails are so versatile, I enjoy them in the summer for hiking and then for snowshoeing in the winter time. A friend of mine often snowshoes up the mountain and snowboards down, letting our dogs run beside us. It is an incredible experience that I'm so lucky to be able to partake in.

Installing a mountain roller coaster would not only remove this peace and quiet that I, among so many others, enjoy and use as a form of therapy. I like to hike quietly and respectfully, and because of that I have been gifted with seeing many different forms of wildlife such as deer, many different types of birds, and even a young black bear. The noise that would be the result of not only the installation/maintenance of the coaster but of the actual operation would be devastating to the wellbeing of the nearby fauna, as the clattering cars on the tracks as well as screaming people would be extremely disruptive. Areas where wildlife are free to roam are harder and harder to come by, and the mountain coaster could be a death wish to populations of animals that many of us in surrounding areas enjoy seeing in their natural habitats.

In addition to the actual structure and its operation being disruptive, the potential increase of car traffic is also an important factor to consider. As someone who often drives that road, I know first hand that all the turns and switchbacks can be a little tricky. With a lot more traffic, especially consisting of people inexperienced with the drive, the road could potentially become dangerous. In summer the road can be difficult, and in the winter it could be absolutely dangerous to inexperienced drivers between the twists and the shaded patches that can become icy.

I realize the mountain coaster would allow for people to recreate in a different way, and make the mountain more accessible to disabled populations. However, I would argue that the Tram, which is already in place and completely functional, properly serves that purpose. Differently abled people would be able to enjoy the mountain using a preexisting framework.

Please take these concerns seriously. The Sandia mountain wilderness is a sacred and therapeutic area for me and so many others. It is a place of solitude and rejuvenation, and is one of the many reasons why I love living in this city. Please don't take this quiet and beautiful place away from our community, it is so very cherished and enjoyed in its current state.