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Cable Car Plan for Old City of Jerusalem Submitted

1 message

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Cable Car Plan for Old City of Jerusalem Submitted for objections

After a protracted public struggle, and despite widespread criticism by planning organizations, the cable car plan was submitted Monday, January 28th, 2019 for reservations and objections by the district committees and the public. After the plan's submission, the public has approximately 60 days to present critiques and objections. The countdown will begin with the publication of the announcement in the weekend newspapers. This means that objections must be submitted by April 1.

As part of the public campaign against the cable car, [dozens of intellectuals and academics](#) – including five Israel Prize laureates and four recipients of the Honorary Citizen of Jerusalem Award – joined to sign a communiqué calling for the cancellation of the plan. In addition, two important professional associations, the Israeli Association of Architects and Town Planners and the Council for the Preservation of Sites, also expressed unequivocal opposition to

the plan and [called for its removal from the agenda](#).

The position of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) is of crucial importance for the advancement of the cable car project, since most of the planned route passes over the Jerusalem Walls National Park, which is under its jurisdiction. The INPA's position is that the cable car is alien to the historic landscape, but that if it helps to significantly alleviate the traffic congestion leading to the Old City Basin, it is prepared to support the plan.

In a document presented to the National Infrastructure Committee, the INPA conditioned its support on far-reaching changes in the local traffic arrangements, including transforming large sections of the area into a pedestrian mall in order to significantly reduce vehicular traffic to the Old City and the Western Wall.

Since the plan is being promoted by the Ministry of Tourism, which lacks the authority to determine or alter traffic arrangements, this is a drastic condition whose fulfillment by the plan's initiators and would-be executors .

The cable car plan is a political ploy aimed at strengthening the Elad association in Silwan and the tourist sites that present the Jewish past. , like these sites, the cable car will contribute to rendering the Palestinian presence in the region invisible. The passengers and tourists arriving at the Western Wall by cable car will descend at the station of Elad's Kedem Center and from there continue through an underground passage to the Western Wall, thus moving from one Jewish area to another without seeing and sensing the presence of Palestinian residents and the Arab spaces of Jerusalem.

Although the entrepreneurs tend to present the cable car as a transportation initiative, to the best of our understanding, based on the extensive information we have gathered, the plan will not provide a transportation solution at all. It is not coordinated with the Ministry of Transportation and, by its very nature, cannot serve as part of the mass transportation system for Jerusalem, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry. These basic facts refute the entrepreneurs' claims that the cable car will constitute a transportation solution. Furthermore,

the actual plan that was deposited lacked any content by which it could be considered a transportation plan.

The anticipated timetable:

Submission of public reservations by 1 April 2019.

Discussion of objections by the National Infrastructure Committee (NIC) – a few months later.

Assuming that the objections are not accepted and the plan is approved, the opponents will have to go to court. A petition can delay the implementation of the project, but based on past experience, it will be very difficult to change the committee's decision.

We at Emek Shaveh, together with a coalition of organizations and individuals, will not be deterred from the struggle against the cable car project. As we have stated in the past, this is a destructive plan for Jerusalem. The cable car clashes with the character and uniqueness of Jerusalem as a historical and religious city for the three religions and promotes the political interests of the settlers in Jerusalem's Arab neighborhoods.

For Emek Shaveh's position paper on the cable car plan, [click here](#).

For a previous publication on the plan's submission [click here](#).

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