

**CITY OF STEVENSON, WASHINGTON**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2016 – 289**

**A Resolution opposing expansion of infrastructure whose primary purpose is transporting or storing fossil fuels in or through Stevenson or adjacent waterways**

WHEREAS, the rapid development of fossil fuel resources in the western U.S. and Canada has resulted in numerous facility and infrastructure projects proposed to transport coal, diluted bitumen, natural gas, propane or other fossil fuels through the West Coast; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuels pose risks to safety, health, and livability, including mobility of people, other freight, and other commercial vehicles; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel infrastructure poses considerable risks in the event of a major earthquake; and

WHEREAS, the extraction and combustion of fossil fuels are significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions and major contributors to climate change and pollution; and

WHEREAS, coal contains toxic heavy metals, including mercury, arsenic and lead, and exposure to these toxic heavy metals is linked to cancer, birth defects and other health problems; and

WHEREAS, transportation of coal using open top rail cars results in significant volumes of materials escaping during transit, exposing communities to toxic heavy metals in coal dust and particulates at levels potentially harmful to adjacent communities, workers, wildlife and nature; and

WHEREAS, crude oil, including oil derived from the Bakken shale reservoir, is known to be volatile, highly flammable and to contain elevated levels of benzene, a potent carcinogen; and

WHEREAS, extraction of fossil fuels through fracking and tar sands processing, which has become widespread throughout the Western United States and Canada, has damaging impacts to human and environmental health and fracking increases the potential for earthquakes; and

WHEREAS, transporting crude oil, coal and other fossil fuels into Oregon involves traversing challenging mountain passes, areas laced with significant earthquake faults and numerous older unsafe bridges lacking appropriate infrastructure maintenance or upgrades, significantly increasing the risks of serious accidents; and

WHEREAS, given the record of crude oil and coal or other fossil fuel transport accidents, such as Lac Mégantic in 2013, the 1999 Bellingham pipeline leak or a coal train derailment, an event could have catastrophic effects if it occurred in any of Oregon's populated areas;

WHEREAS, the risks posed by the transportation of fossil fuels through the Columbia Gorge are inconsistent with the Gorge's designation as a National Scenic Area; and

WHEREAS, historically, when environmental accidents do occur, litigation over damages is drawn out over years, deflecting blame while undercutting timely assistance to affected communities; and

WHEREAS, tribal communities in Oregon and Washington have expressed concerns about the safety risks of fossil fuel infrastructure and the related threats to human health, cultural heritage, and environmental quality; and

WHEREAS, economic opportunities presented by expanding fossil fuel infrastructure are modest, with few jobs and little value added when compared to the related environmental costs; and

WHEREAS, local, regional and global economies are transitioning to low-carbon energy sources, and West Coast businesses are leaders in providing energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and services; and

WHEREAS, the future of the fossil fuel industry is questionable given global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, climate change, if unchecked, will continue impact human health, natural systems, and infrastructure, creating new costs for individuals, businesses, and governments; and

WHEREAS, 27 Oregon and Washington communities have passed resolutions addressing fossil fuel transport and export, and hundreds of public officials, including the governors of Oregon and Washington, state and federal agencies, tribes, health organizations, religious leaders and other community leaders, have recognized the harms presented by fossil fuels to the environment and Northwest communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council will actively oppose expansion of infrastructure whose primary purpose is transporting or storing fossil fuels in or through Stevenson or adjacent waterways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution does not restrict:

1. improvements in the safety, or efficiency, seismic resilience, or operations of existing infrastructure;
2. the provision of service directly to end users;
3. development of emergency backup capacity;
4. infrastructure that enables recovery or re-processing of used petroleum products; or
5. infrastructure that will accelerate the transition to non-fossil fuel energy sources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, notwithstanding anything in this resolution, the Council will exercise its duty as a quasi-judicial land use decision making body in an impartial manner consistent with City of Stevenson Municipal Code and Oregon law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution is binding City policy.

**PASSED** by the Council of the City of Stevenson this 21<sup>st</sup> day of July, 2016.

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Frank Cox, Mayor of the City of Stevenson

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Nick Hogan, City Clerk

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Kenneth B Woodrich, PC  
City Attorney