

Resolution of the City of Fort Madison, Iowa on the matter of operation of remote control locomotives by railroads within the corporate limits of Fort Madison, Iowa

Whereas: The City of Fort Madison has a duty to provide for the public safety of its Citizens; and

Whereas: Railroads operate within the geographic boundaries of Fort Madison, over public and private highway rail crossings and on property accessible to persons of all ages and abilities; and

Whereas: Railroad equipment is known to present significant danger to persons and property from collision, derailment, and possible release of hazardous materials; and

Whereas: A significant amount of rail cargo traveling through and moving within Fort Madison consists of petrochemicals and other hazardous materials; and

Whereas: The United States government has issued a safety alert against vandalism and terrorist threats against railroads; and

Whereas: Operation of a railroad is traditionally conducted with the use of locomotives manned by individuals who are rigorously certified and qualified by the standards established by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA); and

Whereas: Railroads have requested from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and been granted authority to operate unmanned (remote controlled) locomotives by persons who are significantly less trained; and

Whereas: These remote controlled locomotives will be operated by railroads in the City of Fort Madison without limitations, by fewer employees who possess diminished qualifications; and

Whereas: The FRA has issued “guidelines” and not regulations to provide for the implementation of these operations; and

Whereas: The various rail carriers, at the direction of the Federal Railroad Administration, have specific rules regarding operating at “restricted speed” and there can be shown no manner in which to comply with these rules without a person located on the leading end of a remotely controlled locomotive.

Therefore: Be it resolved that no railroad shall operate remote controlled locomotives within the boundaries of Fort Madison until all of the following safety considerations are met.

1. Remote Controlled locomotives must be operated in strict accordance with the FRA's rules and regulations and the individual carriers own operating rules with regard to operating at "restricted speed" (commonly referred to as Rule 6.27 of the GCOR).
2. Any railroad operating a remote control locomotive must notify the Office of Mayor before implementing such operations.
3. Remote control locomotives cannot be used to transport hazardous materials, switch cars containing hazardous materials, or switch other cars on or near tracks occupied by hazardous materials.
4. Remote control locomotives cannot be operated over a public or private highway rail crossing without a person occupying the cab of the locomotive who has the required skills to stop the locomotive and its attached equipment and cannot be operated in excess of FRA and the individual carriers rules and/or regulations regarding operating at "restricted speed".
5. A railroad must provide effective and reliable protection at the point of movement in any location accessible to the general public for any remote control operation.
6. Locomotives within a consist of one or more remote controlled locomotives be provided with devices to secure the operating cab and its controls against terrorists, vandals and other unauthorized persons.
7. Remote control locomotives be equipped with a clearly marked external device outside of the operating compartment which is capable of stopping the locomotive in the event of a runaway.
8. An effective track related mechanical device to stop a remote control locomotive in the event of a runaway.

Be It Further Resolved: That the City of Fort Madison requests that in the interest of the safety of the Citizens of Fort Madison that the FRA develop comprehensive regulations for the use of remote control locomotives, and that those regulations ensure the highest level of skill and qualification of persons operating remote controlled locomotives; and

Be It Further Resolved: That all remote control rail operations in Fort Madison cease and desist until such time as the Fort Madison agency responsible for Emergency Preparedness implements a plan to provide for evacuation and emergency response before such remote control rail operations are implemented.