

RESOLUTION NO. 2868

INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL

A RESOLUTION TO URGE THE BANNING OF THE USE OF REMOTE-CONTROLLED TRAINS IN THE CITY OF SPARKS

WHEREAS, railroads operate throughout the City of Sparks over numerous public and private rail crossings accessible to persons of all ages; 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, an enormous amount of rail cargo traveling through the city consists of potentially lethal chemicals and hazardous materials; and

WHEREAS, in addition to accidental derailments, collisions, and spills, 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 experienced, highly trained individuals who are required to be certified prior to operating the locomotive; and

WHEREAS, railroads have been granted permission from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to operate unmanned (remote-controlled) locomotives by less trained, tested, and qualified individuals; and

WHEREAS, the FRA has only established guidelines and not regulations in connection with such remote-controlled operations; and

WHEREAS, the Sparks City Council is charged with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the city; and

WHEREAS, the Sparks City Council believes that significant safety risks exist which must be eliminated before remote-controlled trains are permitted to operate within the city.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Sparks City Council that the Federal Railroad Administration is hereby urged to ban the use of remote-controlled trains within the City of Sparks until the following safety concerns are met:

1. Remote-controlled locomotives be barred from transporting chemicals and hazardous materials and be prohibited from operating on or near (i) tracks occupied by hazardous materials or (ii) facilities which house hazardous materials.
2. Railroads operating a remote-controlled locomotive be required to notify the Office of the Mayor before implementing such operations.

3. Remote-controlled locomotives be barred from operating over a public or private highway rail crossing without a person occupying the cab of the locomotive who has the required skill to stop the locomotive and its attached equipment.
4. The railroad be required to provide effective and reliable protection at the point of movement in any location accessible to the general public for any remote-controlled operation.
5. Remote-controlled locomotives have sufficiently secured operating cabs and controls to prevent against terrorists, vandals, and other unauthorized persons.
6. Railroad be required to install a track-related device to stop a remote-controlled locomotive in the event of a runaway or unwanted access to the mainline.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the FRA is urged to develop comprehensive regulations for the use of remote-controlled locomotives and those who operate them; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the FRA is urged not to authorize the operation of remote-controlled trains within the City of Sparks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Federal Railroad Administration and the Nevada Congressional delegation.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 9th day of June, 2003 by the following vote of the city council.


AYES: Mayer, Salerno, Martini, Carrigan

NAYS: None



Absent

ABSTAIN: Schmitt

APPROVED this 9th day of June, 2003 by:


Tony Armstrong, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to form:

