

MOTION

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

The extraction, refining, and burning of fossil fuels such as crude oil and methane gas is the primary driver of climate change and creates local air pollution and other hazards in communities throughout Los Angeles. As part of the City's broader strategy to address climate change, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 187709 in 2022 that amended Sections 12.03, 12.20, 12.23, 12.24, and 13.01 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) to prohibit new oil and gas extraction and make existing extraction activities a nonconforming use in all zones. The City has determined that activities associated with oil and gas extraction are detrimental to public health and safety and the environment.

The Office of Petroleum and Natural Gas Administration and Safety (Petroleum Administrator) was established in the Board of Public Works in 2016 to consolidate various activities related to oil and gas extraction and transportation in Los Angeles and bring greater oversight and coordination to this industry. In particular, the Petroleum Administrator manages leases for oil and gas drilling and oversees pipeline franchise agreements among other duties.

In the City of Los Angeles, there are two types of pipelines used to transport extracted fossil fuel products: common carrier pipelines which serve multiple parties and proprietary pipelines which serve a single party. The state oversees the agreements related to common carrier pipelines while the City oversees and has discretion over franchise agreements related to proprietary pipelines in the City's right-of-way.

The West Pico Oil Drill Site has long been a concern to the adjacent communities due to odors, noise, air pollution, and other environmental hazards along with numerous code violations. This problematic operating history most recently resulted in the City Council adopting a motion in 2021 directing a complete review of the site (Council File 20-1223). Additionally, neighbors and activists have continually raised concerns about the pipelines at this site as they too have a history of code violations, including an oil spill in late 2021.

The Petroleum Administrator has confirmed that the franchise agreement for this pipeline has expired and the pipeline is operating on an interim basis until the franchise is renewed. Given the City Council's previous and ongoing concerns regarding oil extraction at this and other sites and its adoption of an ordinance that will effectively phase out oil drilling in the City of Los Angeles, it is imperative that the City Council take all actions necessary to protect public health and the environment.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the Los Angeles Fire Department, the Petroleum Administrator, and other departments as appropriate to investigate violations over the past twenty years by the operator of the pipeline serving the West Pico drill site and levy all appropriate fines, including any potential accrued interest on fines for past violations, within 60 days.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council request the Petroleum Administrator to prepare options within 30 days to terminate the now-expired franchise agreement for the pipeline serving the West Pico Oil Drill Site as soon as possible.

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I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council direct the Petroleum Administrator to report on the status of all proprietary pipeline franchise agreements citywide to identify all pipelines that are operating on an interim basis as of January 2024 within 90 days.

Presented by 
Katy Yaroslavsky,
Councilwoman, 5th District

Seconded by 

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