November 4, 2015

Position Statement of the Jack London Improvement District Regarding the Transport of Coal through Oakland:

Whereas: The Jack London community is aware of health hazards and recent accidents involving hazardous materials spills, fires, and resultant loss of lives and property damage associated with the transport of coal by rail through Oakland. Hundreds of homes and businesses in Jack London are within close proximity to rail, heightening our concern about rail safety and the potential adverse economic and public safety impact of the transport of coal on the District. Oakland’s rich network of transportation systems-- and proximity to rail in particular-- should be leveraged as an economic driver and asset to accessibility, instead of creating a burden and liability to its communities.

We believe the adverse impacts of transport of coal by rail through the Jack London District will detract from the creation, promotion and maintenance an inviting environment for people who visit, live or work in the Jack London District, due to:

- Safety concerns that detract from the quality of our living environment;
- Decreased property value;
- Increased insurance premiums that burden property and business owners and increase the cost of doing business in the District;
- Potential development restrictions due to the proximity of property to the tracks that transport hazardous materials; and
- Long range impact on climate change due to increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Jack London Improvement District supports action by the Oakland City Council to limit the transport of coal through Oakland, and advocate for improved rail safety and other appropriate measures at the State and Federal levels to mitigate the adverse impacts of hazardous material transport by rail on the Jack London District’s economic well-being and quality of life.