



MAYOR JOSHUA A. GARCIA

CITY OF HOLYOKE

September 12, 2022

Holyoke City Council
Attention: Finance Committee
536 Dwight St
Holyoke, MA 01040

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Holyoke, MA

Dear Chairman McGiverin,

I am writing to express my support for Holyoke Gas & Electric's (HG&E) proposed LNG Infrastructure & Resiliency Project in West Holyoke, which will add one LNG storage tank within the existing facility footprint.

Today, Holyoke is at a critical turning point with companies expanding, developers investing, and residents moving in — not out. Due to a significant increase in natural gas demand over the past several years, with no corresponding increase in infrastructure, the natural gas system in Holyoke is operating at capacity. The lack of natural gas availability has had a considerable impact on economic development and our collective sustainability efforts.

Currently, on a peak day, the natural gas system demand exceeds capacity, which caused HG&E to implement a moratorium on new services in 2019. Since becoming Mayor, this issue has been a top priority and I have been working closely with HG&E to find a practical solution that can adapt over time with the changing needs of the community. At present, I am concerned that property owners are installing new propane and oil heating systems, which are higher emitting fuels, when natural gas is not available and an electric alternative is not feasible.

The LNG Infrastructure & Resiliency Project proposes to add an LNG storage tank to HG&E's existing LNG facility in West Holyoke. In operation since 1971, the facility currently has four storage tanks, but was originally designed and approved for five tanks. By installing the fifth tank within the existing facility footprint, HG&E will have the ability to reliably meet customer energy needs over the next 20+ years.

From an environmental perspective, the project will reduce the carbon impact of the heating sector and provide the necessary time for strategic electrification of the local transmission and distribution system. This project will also give residents and businesses time to plan and implement electric technologies, as the community transitions away from fuels with the highest emissions. In addition to aggressive efficiency and electrification programs, this non-pipeline solution will support Holyoke's energy transition goals and provides a bridge to net-zero emissions by 2050.

Over the next few months, HG&E will be connecting with the community to provide updates on this project and will be available to answer questions. As part of the process, HG&E will submit a petition to the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) which will kick off an open and public process before the end of the year.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and I would be happy to discuss further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Mayor Joshua A. Garcia